



The Lacs: A Materia Medica and Repertory

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This is a monumental book, which looks good enough to drink – the cover is a milky white. It is a large traditionally hardbound volume, which will last for years, comprising comprehensive materia medica information on 20 milks¹, and an extensive repertory.

Full use is made of typography and layout to create different types of information; a typical remedy begins with some keywords or themes, then the source of the proving, maybe some digressions such as poetry, and then a description of the remedy in detail. In a different font and shading are more digressions from practice or other sources which break up the text and add to the interest. Many references from sources are properly credited and footnoted, to articles, books, online references and unpublished materials. They are all a pleasure to read. An interesting example is the note on lactational amenorrhoea on page 144 (*Lac humanum*). I became fascinated by the story of kangaroo milk (*Lac macropi gigantei*) and the aboriginal “dreamtime”. I had never even heard of the milk of the harbour seal (*Lac phoca vitulina*). These materia medica pictures are the highest quality of such information I have encountered.

Compiling a repertory of all this information is a labour of love and attention to detail. Reading a repertory as an unfolding story, for example the new chapter of mammae rubrics, is fascinating but not something one can do for ever. A repertory comes into its own when it is in use as a resource and suddenly a case came up and I could really use the repertory. Then I was stuck. We have our conventions that a rep-

¹ *Lacs: -asinum-cameli dromedari-caninum-caprinum-delphinium-equinum-felinum-humanum-llama glama-leoninum-loxodonta Africana-lupinum-macropi gigantei-maternum-oryctolagus cuniculus-phoca vitulina-suillinum-sus-vaccinum-vaccinum-defloratum.*

ertory starts with the mind and ends with generals and there may be some further idiosyncrasies like themes or concomitants. I can understand the addition of a “mammae” chapter but this repertory has been turned upside down with generals before mentals and many other chapters in the “wrong” place rendering it impossible to use in the manner that has come to be seen as “natural”, and when one is in a hurry to figure out a case. A list of remedy abbreviations will be helpful.

There are other problems. Since the advent of modern repertories “food” rubrics have been united in the Generals chapter; this author has put them back where Kent placed them in stomach so that for example, desires and aversions for “milk” are separated again. Do I need some more *Kali carbonicum*? I found these various displacements to be a real problem, all the more in the context of the high standards of the rest of this work.

Ideally all milks and their derivatives should be included as I have the impression that the aim was to be comprehensive. *Clarke* describes cream as *Lactis vaccini flos*, and curds as *Lac vaccinum coagulatum*. *Lactic acid* and *Sarcolactic acid* are of dairy origin and have many overlaps with milk pathology, which I would add to this class. Meanwhile *Mangialavori* also mentions some animals whose milks might become available to us, monkey as *Lac macaca*, bear as *Lac ursinum*, and describes some cases of sheep’s milk as *Lac ovinum*². Other recent books on milks are of great interest, with a clinical emphasis, such as those by *Master*³ and *Bailey*⁴.

There are even more milks not discussed here, such as *Lac ovis* (sheep) which may never have been proved. Perhaps it should be proved, but is described from a so-called group analysis in the *Links* book on *Milks*⁵. Also mentioned in this book is *Lac owleum*. Yes, you read correctly. An owl is a bird. This brings me to another criticism, of a com-

mon phenomenon in our homeopathic world, which some consider to be free of rules, and that is the corruption of our data: some of the remedies in *Hatherly’s* book have had imaginary provings only.

Roger van Zandvoort has written a most positive and complementary introduction to this book. I look forward to seeing this priceless work incorporated into his *Complete Repertory* in due course, and the rubrics and chapters back in their new “right place”. Meanwhile this is an indispensable volume.

² *Mangialavori M. Dentity and Individualism – Main Focus on differential Diagnosis in Families, Milks. Modena: Matrix Editrice; 2005*

³ *Master FJ. Lacs in Homeopathy. Eindhoven: Lutra; 2002*

⁴ *Bailey P. Lac Remedies in Practice. Haarlem: Emryss; 2010*

⁵ *Hiwat C, van der Zee H. Materia Medica of Milk. Collected Articles. Haren: Homeolinks Publishers; 2001*