

which they tied to the plant, after very cautiously and gently loosening the earth about its root, and then retreated to a safe distance until his tuggings should have uprooted it. So the poor canine had to hear its death cries and bear the curse. They might have had the decency to use a cat, which would still have had eight lives left.

Iron, now regarded as a blood food, was originally introduced into medicine as a new magic metal peculiarly obnoxious to evil spirits, which idea still survives in the familiar potency of the horseshoe as a charm against witches and all sorts of ill-luck. Later, by an even more familiar process of savage logic, it was believed to impart to the body of the man who took it something of its own hardness and cutting keenness, just as the Indian ate the heart of the bear to give him courage. This impression was powerfully aided by its highly astringent, puckery taste. To this day, in England, they talk of a "steel" tonic and "steel" pills. This is not the only claim that iron has to be regarded as a tonic, but it was the original one.

In the same way, nitrate of silver, *lunar caustic*, came to be used as a remedy in insanity and nervous disturbances, because silver was the color of the moon, and the moon, the goddess Luna, as every schoolboy knows, is principally concerned in the production of "lunacy." When a man is crazy he is still "moon-struck," or "looney."

As Oliver Wendell Holmes records, in his early days nitrate of silver was a standard remedy for epilepsy, because this was originally believed to be caused by