Holy Moly: Hermes’ Anticholinesterase Antidote

Above the double-flowering sweet violets (ca.1870, right), W. H. Prestele depicted Snowdrops from the genus *Galanthus* of winter/spring blooming plants with dark roots and down-facing white flowers. Snowdrops were linked (1722) by British poet Thomas Tickell to the herb Moly that wing-helmeted Hermes (left, A. Carracci’s ca.1590 *Mercury Protecting Ulysses from the Charms of Circe*) gave Odysseus (Ulysses) to counteract the potion of the witch-goddess Circe. Platiakis and Duvoisin (1983) have suggested that the Snowdrop’s anticholinesterase inhibitor, galanthamine, could be apotropaic (warding off evil) against the tropane alkaloidal effects of Circe’s anticholinergic potion. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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