

VISCUM ALBUM

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The Mistletoe in General Practise

Up to Hufeland's time, the indications were epilepsy, cancer, gout, dysentery, sterility, heart disease, asthma, hysteria and nervous diseases. At present the parenteral mistletoe preparations, Iscador and Plenisol, are used in cancer, arthritis deformans, Sudeck's atrophy and peripheral disturbances of the circulation. Intracutaneous injections cause a powerful and prolonged hyperemia.

Involuntary Provings

Injections of overdoses of the parenteral preparations cause sleeplessness, depression, fatigue, headaches, gynecological haemorrhages, asthma and stenocardial attacks. In favourable doses, however, the side effects are increased vitality, excellent mood, good sleep, increased ability; disappearance of headaches, asthma, dysmenorrhea and improvement of stenocardia.

Homœopathic Provings Data

The provings were made with the first, second, third, fourteenth, fifteenth and thirtieth [decimal?] potencies. The provers were all physicians. Compared with the provings of the last century, people today apparently react to more subtle stimuli. In those days, no prover showed any symptoms with the second decimal potency. The most important symptoms came with the tincture and the first decimal potency. In the present provings, all material doses gave definite symptoms. Five experiments with the thirtieth dilution gave usable results in only one case. For safety's sake, these are omitted here because they would not change the proving picture in any event. Seventeen proving protocols were included.

Emotional Symptoms

There is a preponderance of depressive symptoms: tiredness, depression, aversion to consolation, apathy, discouragement.

ment, lack of initiative, anxious irritability, hastiness, restlessness, aversion to noises, fear of people and aversion to the telephone. One prover cries about trifles, and tortures herself with concern for others. It is a perfect picture of irritable weakness. After-effects are passing high moods, a feeling of energy, a desire to communicate, lofty plans, obvious vigour, time moves too rapidly, and peace of mind. There are marked feelings of disgust on seeing the medicine bottle and a constant awareness of unpleasant past events.

Nervous System

These symptoms are very impressive, particularly in regard to frequent vertigo. General nervousness, inner jitteriness, a tendency to stumbling, motor restlessness, a feeling of weakness, tiredness, uncertainty and stiffness of the feet or legs are common. There are errors of speaking and writing; forgetfulness, poor memory, marked sensation in the sciatic nerve, pains in the ulnar nerves, a feeling of itching—like flea bites—on the skin, a crawling sensation in the feet, and tinnitus. Very obvious sensations are a lightness, as if floating, and a sensation as if one is under the influence of alcohol: when putting down an object, one puts it down with more force than intended; for example, one pushes over a glass with the back of the hand, on reaching for it. In other words, there is a disturbance of the co-ordination of motion.

Sleep and Dreams

There are various disturbances of the rhythm of sleep: late falling asleep, early waking, sleep of insufficient depth, poor sleep in spite of exhaustion—where one feels as if “on the rack.” In addition, figures are seen while falling, and there are vivid, restless dreams of far, aerial attacks and strained bicycling. There is an early waking in the morning, after having finally fallen asleep; then difficulty getting up—the after-effects of deep sleep; sleep from such tiredness that one falls asleep in one’s clothes, or falls asleep at once; or deep sleep, in spite of several cups of coffee; or remaining awake and fresh, despite sleeplessness.

Skin

In addition to some itching sensations and tinglings, with a preference for the right side, and increased perspiration, no sure symptoms were elicited. In one prover an eczema of the scrotum disappeared, but we do not know if it was related to the medicine or not. In contradistinction to earlier provings, no symptoms in the bones and joints were found. Perhaps higher doses of the tincture may be necessary. The fact that intracutaneous injections of a *Viscum* preparation are connected with joint symptoms would indicate that it is an arthritic remedy. We cannot, however, carry out experiments on the healthy with stronger doses, because of the possibility of damage.

Head

A great number of symptoms relate to the head. Fifteen of the seventeen provers had headaches, at times very heavy. The pains were predominantly in the forehead, in the temples and in the vertex. Occasionally, the whole head was affected. The pain was dull, pressing, congestive, pulsating, hammering and stupefying. It was aggravated by bending forward, by warmth, by mental exertion; it was improved by pressure, lying quietly in the open air. Some provers had the feeling as if the head would burst. At times it felt empty and hollow, and at times it felt full, associated with cold extremities. No preference for one side or another was noted, nor any particular aggravation. In one case there was an improvement of a headache which usually came at the time of menstruation, and once, a sensation of a particularly clear head. The strange and peculiar symptoms were the feeling that the brain was loose in the skull, a headache with nausea, perspiration and a feeling of falling backward; and a headache with stiffness of the neck.

Eyes

There was an increase of intraocular pressure. Everything appeared clearer than usual; then later, slightly hazy.

On waking in the morning, the eyelids were closed, but not from tiredness. Lachrymation from tiredness and photophobia

on rising were, however, noted. Two provers had disturbance of accommodation.

Ears

Increased sensitivity to aural impressions was noted, such as increased sensitivity to noise. At certain times, tinnitus, a roaring; also pulsations. This shows the congestive nature of *Viscum*.

Nose

Watery purulent catarrh with epistaxis, itching and patchy erythema of the face was noted. One prover, after the D1 potency, noted an overwhelming bluish coloring.

Mouth

There was dryness, cracking of the lips, with the first decimal dilution, as if the skin of the mouth were tanned—strange and peculiar symptoms—a desire for whiskey and a change in the taste for cigarettes.

Throat

There was catarrh with burning, dryness and glassy mucous. Improvement in the burning occurred with the drinking of warm liquid, but these symptoms are uncertain and may have been caused by an intercurrent cold. The only sure symptom was a feeling of constriction in the throat and, in one prover, the disappearance of an habitual globus sensation in the throat.

Stomach

The stomach has strong symptoms. There is nausea, ameliorated by vomiting, heartburn, cutting stomach pains relieved by eating, eructations of air, a feeling of pressure one-half hour after the medicine, as if a stone were in the stomach and also, during the night from 1:00-3:00 A.M.; a waking between 1:00 and 3:00 A.M. with nausea and heartburn; stitching pain; burning pain in the morning, improved by eating, and much

thirst. After-effects were increased appetite with ravenous hunger; habitual heartburn after steamed food disappeared after the fourteenth decimal dilution.

Abdomen and Rectum

Heavy rumbling. Painful distension improved after passing odorless winds, also, by bending backward (also *Mandragora*). Sensitive to pressure of the belt; has to open his clothes. Abdomen feels like a drum; inner burning in the abdomen, localization usually is in upper abdomen, particularly on the right side, and from pressure on liver and gall bladder. The spastic effect is also shown on the large intestine. Nine provers had a feeling of constipation, ineffectual desire for stool and a feeling of incompleteness after the stool. Heavy itching and burning in the anus. One prover had splinter-like pains. Bleeding haemorrhoids, partly bright red. It is hard to tell whether the primary effect is diarrhoea or constipation since both appear with equal frequency. Since the diarrhoea predominates in low potency, and since one prover, who is ordinarily constipated, got a diarrhoea during the proving which was later followed by constipation, we may assume that diarrhoea is primary and constipation secondary. The stools are watery, pappy, stinking, foamy, explosive, squirting, voluminous, driving out of bed at night. The after-effect is a dry stool in little balls.

Urinary and Sex Organs

Three provers had remarkable symptoms, once with the fifteenth dilution. In addition to nausea and headaches and desire for evacuation, also urinary urging so that he must stop working. Once, upon urinating, the feeling of a paralysis of the bladder the urine coming out only slowly, with pressing. One prover had profuse, involuntary urination during an irritative evening cough. Men noted increased and decreased libido, priapism, atonic pollutions and prostatic spasm. In women there was strong effect on the period. The menstruation is bright red, early, stronger than usual and the pains last longer.

Secondary effects on menstruation are that it is weaker than usual, comes at the normal time or not as early as usual, and twice came without the usual cramps. Once, menstruation was prolonged, but scanty.

Respiration

One prover noted a change in respiration and a spastic cough with irritation and dyspnea. Bronchitis is of the dry type. The cough is painful and barking, with burning behind the sternum and tough, gray or yellow sputum. One prover noted an uncommonly fast disappearance of a chronic bronchitis.

Circulatory Organs

The symptoms in the circulatory organs are more profound and safe. The heart is heavily affected with palpitations, irregular beat, restlessness, vibrations in the area of the heart and a sensation of constriction and pressure. Extrasystoles are felt in the eyes. There is also a pulsation in the chest, throat and upper abdomen, and a feeling of circulatory failure. There is threatening fainting with cold perspiration of the forehead and blood pressure increased and later decreased; but in one case, there was an immediate drop in blood pressure to a low of 80/50.

In one prover, during the proving and for one month later, the usual cardiac symptoms of irregularity and fluttering disappeared.

Neck and Back

There are drawing and tearing pains, which become worse from motion. Twice there was torticollis. Both provers said these were never worse in their life (also, *Calcarea fluor*). In one prover, a chronic lumbago improved during the proving. Particularly typical symptoms are sensations like hot coal under the right scapula, in the evening in bed. After relaxation, there is a very painful feeling as though the musculature would be drawn or pulled.

Extremities

There is extreme weakness, a feeling of heaviness, and again a feeling as if one had been beaten up. Cramps occur in the

calves and toes. One prover had a stiffness in the legs which reminded him of a past strychnine poisoning, so that he had difficulty driving an automobile and had to stop the proving. Usually, the feet are cold, although occasionally they are very warm. One prover noted disappearance of a chronic burning sensation in the feet. A peculiar feeling was as though the flexor muscles of the thighs were too short.

These have already been mentioned in part. The most important are the improvement in open air and the desire for motion. With the rheumatic conditions, there is also improvement from rest. Usually, the general condition is worse in the morning and best in the evening. Once, in the third and fourteenth decimal only, there was great vitality in the morning and tiredness in the evening. This is also a secondary symptom. Headaches, palpitations and cough are worse upon lying down. Occasionally, there is improvement of headaches by lying quietly. Otherwise, the headaches are worse through bending, warmth, mental exercise, smoking and excitement. They are improved by cold washing, in the open air, and by pressure. The vertigo never occurs on lying down. Sometimes it is worse on rising, on motion, looking to the side and, particularly, by quick motion of the head. There is a tendency to fall backward. The nervous and cardiac complaints are improved, at least temporarily, by sleep. The cough is worse by lying down or entering a warm room, and better in the open air. The distension is relieved by [passing] odorless flatus and bending backward. Antidotes are *Mentha piperita* and *Belladonna*. The haemorrhages are bright red. The menses are particularly strong at night. There are no particular times of aggravation or improvement. Frequent emptiness in the stomach at 11:00 A.M. was noted with, at the same time, increased motor restlessness and aggravation of the nervous symptoms during the night. There is premature waking between 2-00 and 6-00 A.M.

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