

A STUDY OF *ÆSCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM*

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For years the writer has used *Æsculus* very successfully in certain cases of hæmorrhoids, but has not paid much attention to its action on other parts of the body. This was a mistake, for it is well worth more careful study.

The horse chestnut was brought to this country from the East and has been extensively cultivated as an ornamental tree. The part used medicinally is the fruit. Hering says that both the fruit and the capsule should be used. Timothy Field Allen says that the tincture is prepared from the fresh, ripe, hulled nut.

Hering gives a list of eleven provers, beginning with Helbig in 1844, including H. M. Paine and W. H. Burt and ending with Neville in 1864-5.

The general action of the drug is most marked on the lower bowel when the hæmorrhoidal veins become engorged. There are severe pains in back and hips and irritation of the mucous membranes of the throat. The chief generalities are: tearing pain in the back, right side, and shoulder; pain on walking, worse walking erect; soreness on motion and on waking in back, worse small of back, arms, thighs, legs, calves, and chest; sense of fullness of dependent parts; heart, lungs, stomach and brain feel as if too full of blood.

The mental symptoms are marked. Although at times there is cheerfulness and clearness of mind, the chief characteristics are depression and confusion, inability to fix the attention, loss of memory, gloomy forebodings, great irritability, loses temper easily and regains it slowly. Dr. H.C. Allen says the patient is "miserably cross" and remarks the likeness to *Chamomilla*.

In the head we find sensations of fullness and pressure rather than extreme pain, confusion and vertigo. The symptoms are more right-sided and occipital, although we

do get a frontal headache with the coryza. We find occipital pains with flushes of heat in the scalp and skin of neck and shoulders. The eyes are hot and heavy with soreness of the balls and lachrymation. The sensation of fullness and pressure extends to the ears, especially the right one, and there is some burning.

The remedy should be most helpful in cases of coryza which begin with sneezing and dryness of the posterior nares and throat. This is followed by a profuse watery discharge with burning and rawness of the mucous membranes and a dull frontal headache, stinging and burning of nose and soft palate. A peculiar symptom is that the nostrils are sensitive to inspired air which feels unpleasantly cold.

The face flushes easily from washing or rubbing, but characteristically it looks pale and miserable.

In the mouth there is a scalded feeling with constriction of the fauces. Tip of the tongue is sore. Salivation with oily, metallic or bitter taste.

The throat has symptoms of marked congestion, sensation of constriction, dryness and burning with frequent inclination to swallow, although swallowing is difficult. All these symptoms remind one of *Belladonna*. The mouth and soft palate are dry and irritated. There is congestion of the posterior wall of the pharynx with follicular inflammation, veins distended and tortuous. This should be compared with *Phytolacca*.

Weight as of a stone at the pit of the stomach, with aching worse about three hours after a meal. Distress and burning and pain extending to the right lobe of the liver.

The action of this drug on the liver is very marked. We find a stitching pain, soreness like *Bryonia* and fullness like *Podophyllum*.

The rectum gives us the most outstanding symptoms of *Æsculus*, but they should be compared with several other remedies. Burning after the stool (compare *Aloe*, *Nit. ac.*,

Sulph.) Dryness with heat (*Aloe*). Burning in anus with chills up and down the back, feeling as if full of small sticks (*Nit. ac.*) Fullness after walking with itching (*Sulph.*) Prolapsus: feeling of prolapse after stool with backache. Hæmorrhoids protrude, often large and purple, with pains shooting up the back. The characteristic stools are large and hard followed by pain and feeling as if anus protruded.

In the female genital organs we have a constant throbbing behind the symphysis pubis; leucorrhœa, yellow, sticky, and corroding, with lameness of back across sacroiliac articulation. Troublesome hæmorrhoids during pregnancy—compare *Collinsonia*.

The dryness and stiffness of *Æsculus* extend to the larynx and trachea where they cause tickling and cough, worse for inspiration and swallowing. The right lung has pain on inspiration and there is soreness and tightness in the chest. There may be pain around the heart in hæmorrhoidal subjects, darting pain with full feeling and palpitation.

As we have said before, the back comes in for a lot of suffering. There is almost constant dull backache in lumbar and sacral regions extending to the hips. This is worse for walking and stooping, especially worse on rising from sitting. The back feels weak. *Phytolacca* and *Berberis* are to be compared here. Timothy Allen says, "These pronounced symptoms of the back are usually associated with hæmorrhoids, but the drug has been used for lumbago not associated with any hepatic or hæmorrhoidal disease; even dysmenorrhœa with the peculiar sacroiliac pains has been relieved."

Aching and weakness are found in the limbs. The feet swell after walking and there are sore corns.

The patient is sleepy and yawns constantly. Dreams are distressing.

The modalities are: worse in the morning on waking and from motion as walking; worse after an evacuation,

after eating, in the afternoon, standing; better, cool open air, but also sensitive to cold air. The hæmorrhoids as a rule are better in summer and worse in winter.

Personally I do not remember finding the symptom: "The rectum feels full of small sticks" in any of my cases, but it is emphasized by all the writers I have consulted.

The action of the remedy in bleeding or non-bleeding cases has been prompt and satisfactory.

A CASE

While I was working on this paper, my attention was called to a man, the father of one of my patients, who made his daughter very unhappy by his extreme irritability. He is 73 years old, a case of arrested T.B. I found that he was not regularly under the care of any physician so I got his symptoms and asked permission to prescribe. He had sore bleeding hæmorrhoids for which he used a kind of "salve," much pain in the back, frequent urination with distress for which he took uratropin. His sleep was broken, he was very cross, and had very little strength. I gave him 1 dose of *Æsculus* 1M. and *calendula* cerate. Two weeks later the report was: hæmorrhoids not troublesome, no bleeding, does not need to use a salve, back much better, sleep better, does not have to take uratropin, temper much better, more strength and ambition.

DISCUSSION

DR. SUTHERLAND: One symptom which I did not hear—and perhaps the doctor gave it—which belongs to *Æsculus* in the rectal sphere; is that the stool appears to be obstructed by a fold of mucous membrane or a plug or something. I have confirmed that personally.

DR. STEVENS: I didn't give that.

DR. SUTHERLAND: It is quite useful and it could be a symptom that could be a keynote.

DR. HUBBARD: They feel it is a fold of mucous membrane?

DR. SUTHERLAND: There is something in there as if the mucous membrane will hold it back and prevent its expulsion. I think you will find it if you look up Clarke and Hering.

DR. GRIMMER: This is a good remedy; Madame President, to study along with *Aloe* and *Muriatic acid*. I don't think the doctor stressed very much the blueness of the mucous membranes.

DR. STEVENS: I spoke of it but I didn't stress it.

DR. GRIMMER: It extends into the rectum but also into the throat.

DR. WHITMONT: I have had a very rewarding case of *Æsculus* prescribed on a symptom I do not exactly recall now. It was either worse or better from cold or warm application. Do you recall which?

DR. GRIMMER: Better by warm application.

DR. WHITMONT: That is right—in contradistinction to *Aloe*. For several weeks after the remedy was given, this patient developed a violent though painless intertrigo filling out the whole space between the anal folds. I have never found it anywhere listed as a symptom.

DR. GRIMMER: I don't recall it.

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HOW TO CURE AT SIGHT

A STUDY OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF PATIENTS

By J. ELLIS BARKER

Occasionally one finds in homœopathic literature statements such as the following: "At the moment when I was leaving my consulting rooms a patient came in who started a long description of his troubles. I had no time to listen to him, but as he looked *Nux vomica* through and through I stopped his talking, gave him a box of *Nux vomica* 3x and told him that I had no time to attend to him and concluded: Take a dose three times a day and come and see me in a week. After a week he came back, full of gratitude, for he had completely recovered and he could not understand how I had cured him without his telling me his story and without a physical examination." Every competent homœopath has performed many "at sight" cures. In fact, any one who has studied the *Materia Medica* can