

18. *Veratrum*

a. In nymphomania following suppression of lochia, *Veratrum* was valuable. (Gross.)

b. Mrs. D., married six years, childless, has suffered from severe congestion of head on the day before her regular but scanty menstruation, pain lasted for three days. *Aconitum* 30c, *Crocus* 12c and *Secale cornutum* 12c produced normal menstruation and cured her congestion, which was followed by pregnancy. (Fragm.)

c. Impotence in a man of about 30 was cured by a course of treatment with *Sulphur*, *Conium*, *Lycopodium*, then *Agnus* 3c and *Selenium* 3c in alternation. (Gross.)

d. A very complicated condition followed onanism, was cured by *Nux vomica*, *Sulphur*, *Lycopodium*, *Calcarea carbonica* and *Phosphorus*. (Glaser.)

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## PAIN AND ITS HOMŒOPATHIC APPLICATIONS

By H. F. W.

The definition of pain, given in a standard English dictionary, is "Suffering of either body or mind," also, (what was rather unexpected) "Suffering coming as the result of evil-doing."

It looks as though, if we spend too long considering what pain is, we shall get entangled in the thorny thicket of Metaphysics.

One cannot resist the remark, however, that as pain is an abnormal condition, anything that causes it must be wrong or evil. But here we are, upon the path of the thicket; let us branch off.

As pain was defined as suffering, it struck us to look up "suffering" in the dictionary, and we found "distress, loss, or injury," while to suffer was "to feel pain or punish-

ment." So we arrive back more or less where we started.

The fact is that the definition of pain is a purely individual matter. We all differ from one another in our sensitiveness to impressions, physical or mental, and what would be mild discomfort to one, can be severe pain to another.

For this reason, in dealing with anyone suffering from pain, it is an advantage to know your patient.

The majority of women patients never suffer, for instance, from headache. It is always a "terrible headache," an "appalling headache," or a "fiendish headache." Such descriptions, of course, not sufficient for making a prescription, although many patients seem to think that an adjective like that should at once tell one the right remedy.

The difficulty in deciding the presence of pain is still greater in animals, many of which show few or no signs of pain, even when obviously suffering considerably.

The general attitude towards pain has changed much in recent years. It is not so long ago that it was deemed an act of God, to be borne without complaining. When anaesthetics were first introduced, leaders of the Church and others pronounced it to be blasphemous to use these, and stop pain in childbirth, which was meant to be patiently endured.

Nowadays we seem unable, or unwilling to bear the slightest pain, and most people fly at once to aspirin or some of the many pain killers.

We are probably more sensitive to pain than our ancestors, who, after all, had not to endure the mental and physical strain that has been our lot for a generation.

All the same, it must be admitted that the mass of the people to-day take far too many drugs to get rid of pain, sleeplessness and other symptoms.

These drugs remove a symptom without touching the cause, and it is an axiom that you cannot get rid of symptom in this way, except at the expense of the system as a whole.

It is true that there are occasions when the drug is the lesser evil, preventing further strain upon an already depleted nervous system, but when this drug-taking is frequently repeated, it makes it more and more difficult to find the true cause of the symptom attacked, and treat with a view to real cure.

The approach to treatment is further complicated by the possibility of the pain being 'referred'. This means that the actual cause of the pain is in a different place from that where the pain is felt. For instance, pain in the bladder may be due to trouble in the kidney; hip joint disease may cause more pain in the knee than in the hip.

Fortunately, as far as Homœopathic prescribing is concerned, the place where the pain is actually felt is primarily considered, and the right remedy so prescribed will help in treating the cause, provided that this does not need surgical intervention.

In the treatment of acute pain, due to a passing cause, it is usually easy to select a remedy to relieve, based largely upon that cause.

Pain from a severe blow is generally met at once with *Arnica*; that from a penetrating wound with *Ledum*; stomach pain from over-eating calls to mind *Nux vomica*, and so on.

When, however, the pain is long-standing, and perhaps increasing, then the patient's totality of symptoms must be taken into account, as well as, of course, every effort being made to diagnose the condition causing the pain.

Supposing no need be found for surgical treatment, the symptoms of the patient must first be systematically sought—mentals, generals, peculiar symptoms, desires and aversions, etc.

After that, coming to the pain itself, which is probably the patient's main concern, the first thing is to discover the exact site of it. It is not enough for the patient to say, for example, that the pain is in the leg. The exact position in

the lower limb must be ascertained, noting also the side, right or left. A further question is as to whether the pain radiates or extends to another part, and if so, which part.

Then, the character of the pain must be determined. Here, if one be using a repertory or other book of reference one must be prepared for synonyms and the use of one's imagination.

Patients frequently describe their pains in terms not found in the books (quite apart from any unparliamentary epithets they may use!) "Pricking pain" will not be found in the repertory; instead, we must look under "stitching". "Smarting", too, will not be discovered; in its place use "burning". Another expression often used by patients is "pins and needles"; this must be sought under tingling.

Having settled the precise nature of the pain, then come the modalities (circumstances affecting the pain for better or for worse). These include the time factor, which is highly important in prescribing, if the pain recur or get worse regularly at a particular time.

The chief of these time aggravations are—  
 Mid-day, and also 4 or 5 a.m.—*Sulphur*,  
 4—8 p.m.—*Lycopodium*,  
 9 p.m.—*Bryonia*,  
 Midnight to 1 a.m.—*Arsenic alb.*  
 2—3 a.m.—the *Kali's*,  
 3—4 a.m.—*Nux vomica*.

There is also the *Pulsatilla* time, which is twilight, which varies of course with the time of year. These aggravations, it must be noted, are fortunately not influenced by 'summer time'.

The other circumstances which may affect the pain are many and various. The patient may volunteer some, and these must be given first place in importance. Such are—cold, heat (applied or general), wet, touch, pressure, movement, position, and in the case of headache particularly, bright light, noise, use of eyes, stooping.

With regard to the effects of heat, it must be remembered that occasionally a patient who welcomes heat applied to the painful part, may be worse from the heat of the fire. Such discrepancies in modalities are very valuable.

A note, also, may be made about a remedy which has a modality unlike any other. This is *China*, which may have such severe pain that the patient involuntarily presses his hand on the part, only to find that firm pressure becomes unbearable, and the hand has to be withdrawn, to be pressed again on the spot, and again withdrawn. *China* will probably gain most relief from hot applications.

When a modality is the reverse of what one would expect, it becomes thereby of much greater value for prescribing. Such is the *improvement* of rheumatic pain in wet weather, which is occasionally met with. There are very few remedies having this symptom—better in wet weather, worse in dry; the chief ones are, *Aconite*, *Causticum*, *Hepar*, *Nux Vom.*, and *Sepia*.

In treating a case of pain, or indeed of any kind of disease, the original cause of the trouble should always be enquired into. If this be obvious, it may suggest at once a choice of possible remedies. For instance, a complaint coming on after exposure to a wetting, or to damp living conditions, will inevitably, in the absence of definite indications for another remedy, claim attention for *Rhus tox.* or *Dulcamara*. Again, complaints arising from prolonged physical strain will suggest *Arnica* or *Rhus tox.*, and from mental strain, say, *Phos.*, *Phos. acid.*, *Lycopodium*, *Silica*.

Should a pain or other disorder remain as a sequel of a definite attack of some acute disease, the nosode of that disease may be thought of, e.g. *Influenzinum*, *Diphtherinum*, etc.

Never rest content with merely curing pain. Pain is a symptom, not a disease, and our first duty is to discover the cause, such as a misplacement of a vertebra, or other bone, or impacted faeces. It is common sense to remove such

cause by manipulation, colon lavage, or other appropriate expedients, before prescribing a medicine.

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## HOMŒOPATHIC THERAPY OF NEURASTHENIA

DR. A. ZWEIG, M.D., GERMANY

*Acidum fluoricum* 10x—Severe and rapid exhaustion, hence morbidly sleepy. The action on vessels is seen in congestive, pressing headache. Also bulimia indicates weakness here. Flatulence and sexual irritation are present.

*Acidum oxalicum* 10x—Aside from cerebral tiredness and backache radiating into lower extremities, brooding about complaints is characteristic.

*Acidum phosphoricum* 3x—Physical and mental weakness to apathy are most prominent, as are also insomnia and weakness of the back. This may be due to loss of body fluids, lack of sleep, or mental over-exertion, chronic sorrow. The result of exhaustion are frequent night sweats. Appetite disturbed.

*Acidum picronitricum* 10x—Here also mental over-exertion causes pronounced brain fatigue expressed by headache, vertigo and overpowering sensation of mental exhaustion. Often these patients complain of burning along spine. There is sexual irritability or weakness.

*Aconitum* 10x—Recommended for agoraphobia (dread of being in or crossing open spaces). The general symptoms of this remedy must however be observed.

*Agaricus muscarius* 6x to 30x—Has diverse conditions of irritation with tremors and jerking, palpitation and paresthesia (itching and formication). Important also is its aggravation from mental exertion, sexual intercourse and alcoholic beverages; in addition patient's brain is tired, and he complains of general head pressure.