

## THE SYPHILITIC REMEDIES\*

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While psora and sycosis are conceptions particular to Homoeopathy, the allopathic and homoeopathic schools find themselves on common ground regarding the conception of syphilis as a cause for chronic disease. The 'old school' recognizes the fact that syphilis may stay with the individual for a lifetime after it has run its course through several manifest stages which are separated by long intervals of apparent latency. They further recognize the fact that syphilis can be transmitted to the descendants. What the 'old school' does not know is that syphilis as a constitutional disease may form the background for a great number of systemic disturbances apparently completely unrelated to the three known stages of the development of syphilis and that the rich arsenal of the homoeopathic materia medica furnishes the curative remedies for these conditions.

There are a number of remedies which we call 'syphilitic' remedies, meaning that they show the characteristic features of the syphilitic diathesis and therefore prove curative according to the law of similarity. In the following, we will try to point out these features in the remedies and help thereby to make their action better understood.

While psora does not produce any structural degeneration nor lead to anything beyond an impairment of function, syphilis is the only miasm that actually destroys tissue. It has a selective action on the less highly developed tissues, such as the bones and the connective and fibrous tissues. It is therefore not surprising to find the syphilitic remedies among those which are able to destroy living tissue. Among them are the metals with a high atomic weight, such as Mercurius, Aurum, Argentum, Platinā, some plants, such as Mezereum, Asafoetida, an acid and a salt: Nitric acid, Kali bichromicum. As syphilis has also a particular action on glandular tissue, some such remedies offer themselves, as Baryta carb., Fluoric acid, Iodium, Kali iod, Phytolacca, Carbo animalis. And last but not least, the nosode Syphilinum.

When we study now the syphilitic diathesis, we find as the most important general characteristic an aggravation of all the symptoms at night. Be it a pain, a sweat, a diarrhoea, a fever or a cough, it will always be much worse at night, in bed, from sunset to sunrise. We meet this symptom in practically every syphilitic remedy. The patient has a terrible dread of the night as in Syphilinum where he is afraid to go to sleep because of the terrible exhaustion which awaits him when he wakes up.

Syphilis causes a great mental depression and despair, so much so that the patient develops an irresistible inclination to suicide, as we find it most

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marked in Aurum. The Argentum nit. patient is melancholic and has impulses of suicide, such as to jump from a window or from a bridge.

The intelligence is weakened and there is a loss of memory. The patient is forgetful, cannot remember faces, names, dates or places as in Syphilinum and might go to a state of imbecility which we also find in Mercurius. The mental weakness makes the Baryta carb. child a problem child in the school, as it is slow of comprehension, dull, unable to keep a line of thought. Senile dementia also belongs to this remedy.

Restlessness is a marked feature in the syphilitic patient. We find it in Merc., more so even in Aurum where he is impatient, would like to do two things at the same time, and in Argentum nit. where he is always in a hurry and must walk fast. The Fluoric acid patient cannot keep still, and the Iodium patient gets very restless when he is hungry.

An interesting symptom is that the patient looks prematurely aged. It seems to be caused by a shrivelling and wrinkling of the skin. In Argentum nit. children look old and shrivelled, and adults look prematurely aged. In Baryta carb. we find a premature senility. Also Syphilinum has the symptom that the face is wrinkled and old looking.

As mentioned above, syphilis has a destructive tendency and so we find ulceration in most of the remedies. This is most marked in Merc. cor. which causes ulceration with great burning. We find here ulcers of the cornea with a tendency to perforation, ulcers in the pharynx, and dysenteric ulcers in the rectum with violent tenesmus. Argentum nit. has ulcers in the pharynx and in the stomach in its symptom picture. Fluoric acid is a great remedy for varicose ulcers, besides its tendency to ulcerate the pharynx. In Nitric acid we find ulcers in the pharynx with stitching pains like a splinter. The pharynx is apparently a much favoured spot for the action of the syphilitic miasm. Nitric acid also has ulcers which bleed easily and which occur on those places where mucous membranes and skin meet. Kali bi. produces ulcers with punched out edges.

Where there is light there is shadow, where there is ulceration there is induration. This is especially marked in Aurum where we find a hypertrophy and induration of the uterus so that it tends to prolapse. The liver also gets enlarged and harder. The induration of the arteries leads to an arterial hypertension. In Baryta carb. the induration of the arteries produces a very marked hypertension.

As mentioned before, the lymphatic tissue has a great affinity for the syphilitic toxin. The lymphatic tissue is in the centre of the action of Mercurius which affects thereby more or less all the organs, according to the development of lymphatic tissue in them. Baryta carb. has also an affinity for the lymphatic tissue of the whole body. It causes hypertrophy and induration of the lymph glands in the neck, the axillae, the groins, in the abdomen, everywhere. Children have always swollen tonsils and a tendency to quinsy. Phytolacca is also an important lymphatic remedy. We find a

follicular tonsillitis with pains radiating into the ear on swallowing. It also causes the formation of lumps in the breasts. Iodium and Kali iod. have a profound action on the lymphatic tissue and glands, especially the sexual glands. We find an induration of all the lymphatic glands, breasts, testicles and parotid glands in Carbo an. where there is also a tendency to ulceration.

The bones experience a most destructive action in the syphilitic diathesis. Periosteal pain, exostoses and caries are the main features. Merc. causes a caries of the nose. In Aurum we find a caries of the nose, hard palate, and mastoid with severe pains. Fluoric acid has more a tendency to attack the long bones where it causes necrosis with a periosteal abscess and an acrid discharge though it sometimes affects also the nose and mastoid. Syphilinum has also a caries of the mastoid. Asafoetida produces a caries in the bones with an extreme sensitiveness.

There are some very characteristic neuralgic pains in the form of a facial neuralgia which possibly are caused by a periostitis. In Cinnabaris (which is Merc. sulph. ruber) the pains start from the inner canthus, encircle the eye, and come back to the starting point; or there are shooting pains in the bones of the orbit from the inner to the outer canthus. In Mezereum a violent pain starts in the cheekbone and goes from there towards the eye, the temple, or the ear. Most distressing pains which went under the diagnosis of a neuralgia of the trigeminal nerve have been cured by this remedy.

The syphilitic headache is very characteristic. It has the sensation of a band around the head, or as if the head were in a vise. This is probably due to a slight effusion from the meningeal surfaces. We find this sensation in Merc., Cinnabaris, and Nitric acid. In Argentum nit. we find the opposite sensation, a sensation of expansion, as if the head were enormously enlarged, but also this symptom is better on tight bandaging and pressure. The syphilitic and psoric headaches have opposite modalities. The psoric headache is better by rest, by lying down, by hot applications, and worse during the day. The syphilitic headache is worse by rest or lying down (see restlessness mentioned before), better by cold applications, and worse by night.

The study of the homoeopathic remedies in the light of Hahnemann's chronic diseases helps to understand them better and makes the study of the materia medica more interesting, more fruitful and more enjoyable.

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