

FIFTY YEARS EXPERIENCE WITH NATRUM MURIATICUM

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Natrum muriaticum is one of the remedies introduced by Hahnemann and his five provers. Hahnemann says in regard to salt: "If it be true that substances which are capable of curing diseases are, on the other hand, capable of producing similar diseases in the healthy organism, it is difficult to comprehend how all nations, even savages and barbarians, should have used salt in large quantities without experiencing any deleterious effects from that mineral, considering that salt, when ordinarily used, has no pernicious effect upon the organism, we ought not to expect any curative influence from that substance. Nevertheless, salt contains the most marvellous curative powers in a latent state.

"The transmutation by means of the peculiar mode of preparation adopted in Homoeopathy, of a substance like salt, which is apparently inert in its crude state, into a heroic medicine, the use of which requires the greatest discrimination, is one of the most convincing proofs, even to the most prejudiced, of the fact that the peculiar processes of trituration and potentization resorted to in Homoeopathy bring to light a new world of powers which nature keeps latent in crude substances. The processes operate, so to say, a new creation."

Therefore, I have selected Natrum muriaticum because it is a monument to the memory of Hahnemann, and, second, because the first real homoeopathic cure I had the privilege of observing was made with highly potentized salt. Since then I have confirmed many symptoms in the pathogenesis in some of the more serious types of disease.

One of my early confirmations of the symptoms with Natrum muriaticum was that of a girl nine years of age who suffered with persistent headaches about two years; she was pale, anaemic, thin, no appetite, marked aversion to bread but very thirsty. Bowels constipated, stools hard, often crumbling, and would at times fissure the anus with soreness and bleeding. The head symptoms were of daily occurrence. She would awaken every morning with a throbbing headache which became worse from reading or talking, so she lost much time from school on account of this pounding and hammering in her forehead as she described it. Mentally she was joyless and became easily angered at trifles. A repertory analysis of her case brought out Natrum muriaticum which promptly cured her headaches and restored her to normal health.

The most dramatic and outstanding cures that I have witnessed with Natrum muriaticum have been in the role of the deficiency diseases of infants and children, such as high grades of malnutrition and lack of development of the speech centre. The newer research work done in water balance shows

the importance of maintaining an equilibrium of sodium chloride between body cell and intercellular fluid; this is so well known as to require no comment, but I would like to remind you of the importance attached to the quantitative estimate of the chlorides in the cerebrospinal fluid in cerebral disease. May this disturbed sodium chloride metabolism not also apply in the *Natrum muriaticum pathogenesis*? Apropos the 'brain storms' and I will give the indications in a clinical sense to prove the confirmation of the symptomatology in accordance with modern research. I do not think the severe type of mental symptoms that I have permanently removed are well emphasized in the materia medica—such as violent outbursts of temper, 'brain storms' occurring in children often traced to a birth injury. I will now give a short summary of the real curative symptoms which I have confirmed in the treatment of the mentally and physically deficient infant and child.

Emaciation, nervous, irritability.

Children with voracious appetites but constantly lose flesh while living and eating well (Iod., Sulph., Tub., Abrot.). Skin is shiny, pale, waxy as if greased, or skin is dry, withered, shrunken; nutrition generally impaired. Emaciation particularly about the neck. The clavicles become prominent and neck scrawny but the hips and lower limbs remain plump and round (opposite of Abrotanum). The infant may look like a little old man (compare Iod., Arg. nit., Sanicula, Sarsap., Opium); one of the few 'map tongue' remedies. Gets herpes about lips, craving for salt. Hates bread and fat. Weeps easily—but not amenable to sympathy. Sudden outbursts of temper (Tub.).

Older children get terrible headaches (Tub., Syph.). Children do not learn to walk at the normal age, ankles weak and turn easily.

Again I repeat emaciation goes from *above downward*.

These symptoms are reliable and have been confirmed many times in my work.

I will now give a case illustrating this precious remedy.

Master M. S., in June, 1939, when I was first asked to see this child, he was 4½ years old, and even then could not sit up without support. Was fat with florid complexion and apathetic look; no mental development had taken place since 14 months. The limbs were spastic and subject to sudden violent jerkings, which ceased during the sleep but seemed to be worse or aggravated before emptying of the bladder. If the spasmodic jerkings were very severe this child at this early age would immediately go into a temper tantrum, a regular storm. At times he had sudden outbursts of temper and vindictive rage, but could not utter a single understandable word. There was to my mind a lack of development of the speech centre. After the spell was over there was a spasmodic tonic contraction of the body and limbs. Relaxation was followed by deep sleep with enuresis and the urine was scanty, highly coloured, the urine also scalded the buttocks and the child seemed to act as though great tenesmus was present; at times the urine was so acrid that the anus was fiery red which extended to the buttocks, the stools were

constipated, dry and hard and very painful when passed. The sleep was restless and the child would lie with its face in the pillow, sometimes in the kneeling position.

This child had at times a ravenous hunger or absolute loss of appetite, frequently an unquenchable thirst. The nurse would quiet him by giving him two or three glasses of water at a time. I might say this poor, helpless piece of humanity had been under the constant care of competent physicians and has had all types of therapy with practically no improvement. The family history gave both parents living. Mother was always delicate. The father was a large, well-developed man, but admitted having had gonorrhoea ten years before the birth of this child. Every other medical attendant advised putting the child in an institution, which they refused to do, and were finally recommended to try Homoeopathy. After taking a lengthy history of the case and receiving reports from two other physicians who had treated the case, I gave the parents the same unfavourable prognosis. But, as usual, I told them they would lose absolutely nothing by giving homoeopathic treatment a *just* trial, to which they consented. After a careful analysis of the case, taking the father's previous illness into consideration, I prescribed *Medorrhinum* in a high potency, which has continued for at least six months. This remedy did improve the case and changed the child's physical aspect.

Many symptoms disappeared but the obstinate symptoms remained, such as: No effort or ability to talk. Attacks of hysterical crying. Violent outbursts of temper and vindictive rage any coddling aggravated. Unable to walk but all spasticity has disappeared. Enuresis has stopped, urine is normal. The spasmodic muscular contractions have ceased. The pain and tantrums on passing urine have ceased and the buttocks completely healed and were normal. But the patient has lost flesh continually, particularly in the face, neck and shoulders, the clavicles are very prominent but his thighs and legs still plump and in spite of his emaciation this child was eating everything in good quantities except *bread*; the skin on his face and chest has become pale, waxy, shiny. The constipation still persists occasionally with a hard stool which is painful and fissures the anus at times with a spot of blood, and he cannot walk alone as yet, being five years of age.

With this new picture I felt confident of my remedy and probably might have used it sooner. Here I began with *Natrum muriaticum* and in six more months this child lost his outbursts of temper and crying. With the grace of perseverance of the parents and their living in hopes, this child began talking simple words and finally sentences, and to make a short story of this patient, who is 9½ years old and has been under my care constantly for four years under one remedy, *Natrum muriaticum*, he has come from almost a helpless invalid to a healthy boy who can run and play any game for his age, and is talking correctly and going to a special school doing third grade work. He has a well-developed body and weighs 45 lbs. I have had the same result with two similar cases where violent outbursts of temper and hysterical

crying were practically the guiding symptoms. I believe *Natrum muriaticum* is one of the most precious remedies in malnutrition and I believe even our impulses and affections may be modified by definite metabolic errors.

Probably the next laurels go to the malarial fevers. And here I have made some prompt cures during and after the First World War in both children and adults. The symptoms I have repeatedly confirmed in malaria I can summarize briefly. There is probably no remedy in our *materia medica* (Arsenic alone excepted) so often indicated in severe cases of malaria, acute or chronic, even those maltreated by arsenic and quinine as *Natrum muriaticum*. It will cure promptly when indicated; and much quicker and more permanently in the potencies above than below the 30th. The general analysis shows the patient dreads the chill. The chill begins usually 10 to 11 a.m., with thirst. It is long and severe, beginning in the fingers, feet, over small of back, with blue lips and nails, the headache often makes the patient unconscious; nausea and vomiting; bone pains. Heat stage has more thirst; long and severe. Headache with stupefaction; and unconsciousness.

Sweat stage; with continued thirst and sweat is profuse, sour, gradually ameliorating all pains except headache; drinking refreshes the patient. Hydros on the lips. Pulsations shake the body and there is great weakness. There are many valuable symptoms in the *Natrum muriaticum* pathogenesis which are brought out in the individual cases; and we must consult the *materia medica*. The little picture that I have memorized and has never disappointed me is this:

"Hard chill about 11 a.m. (sun time) with great *thirst*, which continues through all stages; the heat is characterized by the most violent headache; relieved by perspiration."

I will now give you a clinical confirmation in malarial fever. Master J. R., age 4½ years, had been under my care during infancy as a difficult feeding case, but promptly responded to treatment and at the age of 16 months was a perfectly normal child in every respect. His father, who was a mining engineer, was obliged to go to West Virginia in pursuit of his profession and took the family with him. Little John lived there but a few months when he was taken ill with a vague attack of fever and was treated by a local doctor who finally made a diagnosis of tertian type malarial fever and was treated, according to his mother and history of his case, with quinine sulphate and various tonics. He became so ill he was hospitalized, and given blood transfusions. Even these did not seem to bring much improvement until finally the mother wrote to me and the only sensible advice I could give her was to bring the child to Philadelphia, which she did.

The first visit and examination of the case revealed that he had continued attacks of chills and fever for 14 months, he was much emaciated and very weak, unable to sit up. I had all the routine laboratory work done. His symptoms were chills, fever, sweat, headache and loss of appetite and profound weakness. I could get no other symptom complex to lead me to

the perfect remedy, so I gave him amorphous sulphur for about 12 days, when much to my surprise, his mother called me and told me John has had a most severe chill this morning almost identical with the kind he had had over a year ago. It began at 10.30 a.m. and he was crying with a severe headache followed by fever and intense thirst and about 4 p.m. he began to sweat and he felt better. I prescribed Sac. lac. The next day he had no paroxysm of any kind, only very weak, but the following day, about 11 a.m., another severe chill came on and a perfect paroxysm developed and did not cease until 5 p.m., during this paroxysm which was not interfered with as I wanted to get a perfect picture of the case, the only logical procedure in making a homœopathic prescription, I observed the hard chill at 11 a.m. with great thirst which continued through all the stages; the heat was characterized by the most violent headache, beating and pounding with general aching. This aching was relieved by the profuse perspiration. After the paroxysm I gave him Natrum muriaticum 500th, every three hours for eight doses then I stopped. He has not had another paroxysm to this day and when he became well, convalescent, at the end of two months his mother took him back to West Virginia, where his father was working and where he developed the original attack. He is still living there under that same environment and is enjoying good health because his disease was annihilated in its entirety and not suppressed. It has been my experience for many years that quinine always ruins a natrum muriaticum case.

Another and much neglected curative sphere of Natrum muriaticum is in eye work. I have cleared up some cases of muscle imbalance with a single prescription that kept the ophthalmologist busy for months without producing any permanent results and the visual field had been greatly distorted with unsteadiness of vision, objects became confused, the eyes gave out in reading or writing with marked weakness of the internal rectus muscles. Many more valuable symptoms are found under this remedy, but what I have offered in this meagre paper I have positively confirmed many times in a long practice and I believe we have in Natrum muriaticum a deep and broad acting curative remedy—one of the many therapeutic blessings given to us by Samuel Hahnemann.

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