

can rightly claim itself to be a distinct school of medical thought (if not a complete system of medicine from one point of view) fit to be practised independently and worthy of being recognised by the State of any country for the good of the suffering humanity.

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THE HOMŒOPATHIC THERAPEUTICS OF SOME CARDIAC DISEASES

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Let it be at once stated and also emphasized that homœopathic remedies relate primarily to patients and not to diseases, for homœopathy teaches that any remedy in its vast materia medica may be indicated in any disease, provided that its symptomatology corresponds with that of the patient himself. This categorical statement does not, however, necessarily imply that such symptom similarity insures a cure, for even in incurable diseases homœopathy may be of great service in providing comfort and in prolonging life by means of potentized medicine whose effects resemble the symptoms from which the sick individual is suffering. With this introduction supplementing the title of this address, let us proceed to a consideration of certain useful remedies in diseases of the heart.

Reference to our amazingly voluminous materia medica discloses many drugs which become helpful, frequently curative, remedies in cardiac difficulties. To mention them all is obviously impossible in a thesis such as this, but the more important and more frequently employed ones can with profit be spoken of. Thus, in valvular disease which accompanies or quickly follows

acute rheumatic fever, *aconite* may first be mentioned. Its selection is demanded when the patient, usually one of younger years, quickly develops a high fever, with marked thirst and great restlessness due to fear. Fear is of the active kind and is one of impending death which the sufferer apprehends and dreads. The skin is hot and dry; severe pains in the cardiac area are complained of and the case takes on a very turbulent aspect. Exposure to cold or to a cold draft may have been an exciting cause.

Bryonia alba may be indicated by rheumatic manifestations and then we find sharp pains which are made worse by every motion and by breathing, where the pleura or the pericardium is involved. Rest and quiet are imperative; the patient is very thirsty and drinks much at a time, for his mouth is dry and, to assuage his pains, he lies upon the painful part or side, as by doing so he immobilizes these. The bowels are inactive, with little or no inclination for stool and the fæcal evacuations are hard and dry.

Cactus grandiflorus in its relation to cardiac conditions is marked by constrictive pains, as though the heart were grasped or violently squeezed; lying on the left side aggravates the pains and in general this remedy is to be thought of in angina pectoris when these indications are present.

Nervous people of the *calcareæ carbonica* type sometimes are troubled by palpitation of the heart, the result of any emotional disturbance; in such persons arsenate of lime or *calcareæ arsenica* is often useful. The patient is likely to perspire easily and to possess flabby tissues.

Cereus bonplandii, which is another member of the cactaceæ or cactus family, is to be thought of in neurotic cases with pains in the cardiac area of the spasmodic type. Clarke, in his Dictionary of the Materia Medica gives an excellent account of its sphere of action and states that, as is the case with its near relative, cactus, its pains are worse lying on the left side. Boericke's Materia Medica also gives an excellent picture of its pathogenesis.

Arnica montana is to be considered in heart diseases when over-exertion, prolonged physical and mental strain have been causative factors; soreness and lameness are spoken of, fatigue; signs of myocardial degeneration, arteriosclerosis; history of falls or other similarly caused injuries.

Arsenicum album naturally plays an important part among the remedies for cardiac troubles and the general symptoms characteristic of this great polychrest must always be in evidence. These, briefly, are anxiety and fear, sensitiveness to cold, burning pains, an aggravation of all symptoms in the very early hours, shortly after midnight; cardiac weakness and evident degeneration of the heart muscle, hypertrophy followed by dilatation, oedema of the extremities, anasarca. Dyspnoea on any exertion. Weak, rapid pulse. Lowered blood pressure. In advanced cases, when cure is impossible, this remedy will give grateful palliation.

The iodide of arsenic, *arsenicum iodatum*, is at times to be preferred to the white arsenic when emaciation is more in evidence and arterial degeneration is pronounced. Præcordial anxiety and difficult breathing may be present, also glandular swellings; warm applications relieve many of its symptoms, but some of them, such as nasal, are relieved in the open air. Here the iodine element of this drug shows its influence. The remedy has never been thoroughly proved, but should be considered in all cardiac cases; it was originally brought to notice by Dr. Nankivell of England.

Aurum metallicum and its related salts, *aurum muraticum* and the double chloride of gold and sodium, *aurum muriaticum natronatum*, are of great value and should be thought of when profound tissue degeneration is in evidence; arteriosclerosis with cardiac weakness. The great general symptoms must always be present, such as sensitiveness to winter cold, mental exertion and more especially, mental depression, discouragement and thoughts

of suicide. A history of syphilis will strengthen the choice of this deeply acting remedy.

The barium salts are always to be kept in mind, especially in patients of advanced years in whom the signs of arterial and cardiac breakdown are plain. *Baryta carbonica* is the remedy of premature old age, often evidenced by childish behaviour and intellectual weakness. *Baryta iodata* should be considered also, for the iodine element, upon purely pathological grounds, commends itself. Glandular swellings are sometimes in evidence and the symptom of greater comfort when in the cold, open air, may be present.

Calcarea carbonica in flabby, fat individuals, with easy perspiration, irregular, weak and accelerated pulse; palpitation after eating, with pressure. Women who during menstrual life were subject to early and too copious menses; sweaty feet and perspiration on the nape of the neck during sleep at night, are occasional indications. General aggravation during wet weather.

Carbo vegetabilis, especially in older, feeble people whose gastric functions are slow, with much flatulence, asthmatic breathing, relieved by eructations of gas; feeble pulse, in emergencies scarcely to be felt, cyanosis; venous stasis as shown by the presence of varicosities. Cold skin, though internal burning. Threatened or actual collapse, must have air, the windows open and wishes to be fanned.

Convallaria or lily of the valley has usually been employed in the tincture for impending heart failure and then in appreciable doses; however, such beneficial action as may occur is undoubtedly physiologic in nature, not homœopathic and under these circumstances, it would seem that *digitalis* itself, in some form, would be preferable. Boericke's *Materia Medica* mentions its use in women, where soreness in the uterine region is complained of, together with sympathetic palpitation of the heart. The "Formulary & Handbook" of Johns Hopkins Hospital does

not mention the remedy at all. Potter in his "Therapeutics, Materia Medica & Pharmacy" states that "Convallaria is a heart tonic like digitalis, although less certain in its action" and also that, "it has no cumulative action." Stauffer in his "Klinische Homöopathische Arzneimittellehre" states that the remedy is useful in cardiac disturbances of a nervous type, but likewise emphasizes its value in acute and chronic endocarditis; he speaks of dyspnoea caused by the slightest effort, also scanty urine and dropsical effusions; sensation as though the heart would stop, which is of course, closely similar to this symptom of digitalis. He speaks of this remedy as not being too reliable, but that he has had some good results from it in continuous cardiac weakness, the result of myocarditis, also in stenocardia due to aortitis of syphilitic origin. Apparently, he used medium potencies as well as the tincture of the remedy.

Digitalis, it would seem, is rather seldom used by homœopathic physicians on its well known, homœopathic indications, among which is the objective one of slow pulse and one which intermits. Rather is this very useful and highly important drug used in a non-homœopathic capacity, for its physiological action in stimulating and regulating the heart when fibrillation occurs. Such use is definitely without the realm of the law of similars, but is and must be taken advantage of by all physicians. It is scarcely necessary here to portray the indications for such usage except to remark that, he who refuses to avail himself of this invaluable medicine is not carrying out the mandates of his high calling. It is true that digitalis cannot be said to cure, in the real sense of the word, heart disease, but its beneficent effect in the restoration of a failing heart and prolongation of life and comfort, cannot be gainsaid. It is also true that the remedy can be and frequently is, abused, but such abuse denotes ignorance of the action of the drug on the part of the physician who uses it recklessly. Let it then, be always remembered

that, when we resort to digitalis we do so for a legitimate reason and one which is not based upon the law of symptom similarity. However, in a state of heart block where there is a very slow pulse, this remedy in potency can be of great value and help; it is then acting in accord with the homœopathic law. Here, incidentally, it must and should be compared with the mountain laurel, *kalmia latifolia*.

Gelsemium, unlike digitalis, has the symptom of fear that the heart will stop beating, unless its alarmed possessor moves about. Such a symptom is likely to be found in a sluggish, nervous, tired individual and this is true, especially in one who is sensitive to emotional disturbances, such as fright or abject fear; such persons are definitely neurasthenic, weak and subject to trembling of the body and limbs; they wish to lie down and not to be disturbed. The eyes are heavy, particularly the upper eyelids, which are inclined to close. Generally, there is a lack of coordination and headaches, beginning in the cervical region are complained of. In acute conditions there are chills which run up and down the back, presaging an oncoming influenza or other advancing illness.

Glonoïn or nitroglycerin is employed as a vasodilator, acting directly upon the smooth musculature of the arterioles, causing relaxation. It is used in angina pectoris and hypertension. Its depressor response is ephemeral. The dosage is 1/150 to 1/100 grain, given sublingually or orally. This statement is a quotation and admirably sums up practically all the physician needs to know. The 1/200 of a grain has been said by cardiologists to be adequate and safer; however, in speaking of this drug, there is no suggestion of homœopathy in its use. It has, however, an application in accord with the law of similars and is capable of beneficial action when given in potentized form. The indications are then definite and well known to most homœopathic physicians. Briefly, they revolve around the central symptom of intense, throbbing, pulsating congestion, explosive in character and found in insolation due

to exposure to the sun. The drug in potency is very likely to be of benefit in individuals of the apoplectic type, who are plainly arteriosclerotic and subject to attacks of angina. Throbbing headache with red or pale face, pains aggravated by motion, heat and indulgence in alcoholic liquors, especially wine. Anxiety and fear are characteristic and pulsations are felt throughout the entire body. Hypertension in cases of contracted kidney suggests an opportunity for its employment. However, its action is purely palliative, never curative.

Iodine is to be thought of in heart diseases when contractive pains are present, palpitation and the presence of a goitre or other thyroidal manifestations. The typical iodine patient must be kept in mind, for, unless the dark complexioned, dark haired, thin, inordinately hungry yet gradually emaciating patient is involved, the remedy is not likely to be of aid. Such an individual always feels better on a full stomach.

As with *digitalis*, previously mentioned, so with *kalmia latifolia*, we find a slow pulse and, although this objective symptom is characteristic of a number of other remedies such as *berberis vulgaris*, *cannabis indica* (hashish), opium and stramonium in particular, differentiation is easily possible. *Kalmia* should be thought of when heart disease has followed upon acute rheumatic fever and valvular lesions have been left as an unpleasant reminder. Its pains are sticking, shooting and neuralgic in character and the pains take a downward direction, just the opposite of *ledum palustre* in which pains shoot upwards. In *kalmia* pains shift about, numbness and stiffness are complained of. Clinically, it is related to *spigelia*, which it follows well.

Lachesis has the symptoms of cramplike pain in the præcordial region, causing palpitation with anxiety, and also the heart feels as if too large for its containing cavity. Obviously, these rather striking symptoms, caused by the deadly serpent poison, are spasmodic and congestive in

character. If found in nervous women during the climacteric years, together with the usual hot flashes, perspirations and aggravation of all symptoms on waking from sleep, the remedy, which is largely left sided in its manifestations, will be found useful.

Lilium tigrinum, the colourful tiger lily, is to be thought of in functional cardiac disturbances in neurotic women, where uterine symptoms such as bearing down sensations as though everything would issue from the pelvic cavity and an annoying, irritable bladder, are present. Even in organic heart disease with valvular lesions and rapid heart action, accelerated pulse and grasping, constrictive sensations about the heart, this remedy will give great comfort by its palliative effects. The high potencies, such as the 200th are most suitable under such circumstances. Mental depression, gloomy thoughts, tendency to cry, are added indications. The remedy should be compared with sepia and murex.

Phosphorus is a great remedy and where the right side of the heart is especially involved, should always be considered. The phosphorus type of individual will usually be concerned; he will complain of weakness, gone sensations at the epigastrium, worse about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, inability to lie upon the left side with any degree of comfort; burning sensations or pains; oppression of the chest as though caused by a weight lying upon it; aggravations of his condition before a thunder storm and much fear during it. Great fondness for salt and a tendency to eat too much of it; sensitiveness to cold, especially where the chest symptoms are concerned; cough which is worse when going into the cold, open air; fondness for cold food and desire for cold water; in acute ailments, where the stomach is involved, cold drinks are often vomited when they have become warm in the stomach. In fevers, absence of thirst is frequently present, reminiscent of apis, gelsemium and pulsatilla under similar circumstances. Phosphorus is said to act upon the right heart more especially

and therefore causative of venous stasis. Palpitation is easily aroused, not only by physical effort, but also by nervous excitement. Cardiac asthenia with pulmonary congestion and rales. Difficult breathing, tightness and oppression of the chest; myocarditis, usually chronic, with general weakness and œdema. Disturbances of compensation; fatty heart. Provided the patient is of the characteristic phosphorus type, the remedy will accomplish much, regardless of the particular kind of heart lesion.

In this connection, where a weak heart can be established, *cratægus*, *oxyacantha*, the English hawthorne should be kept in mind. The pulse is accelerated, irregular and weak and dyspnoea is often in evidence. Pain beneath the left clavicle has been said by some, to be an indication; angina pectoris has been relieved. This remedy undoubtedly is of much value and is safely given in small as well as larger doses of the tincture, for undoubtedly it is a heart tonic and has no cumulative action as has digitalis. It seems doubtful whether potencies have been successfully used; Stauffer has always used either the essence or the tincture and William Boericke mentions its employment in fluid extract or in the tincture, in one to fifteen drop doses. At all events, in spite of the fact that the drug has not received a thorough, careful proving, it is highly regarded by many and has relieved many cases of cardiac disease. It would appear that many of these have been of the neurotic type.

Phytolacca decandra, the poke root, possesses the symptoms of an intermittent pulse, weak in character, pain in the heart area which extends to the right arm, whereas with *rhus tox.*, *kalmia latifolia*, *spigelia*, *cimicifuga*, *cactus*, *aconite*, *crotalus horridus*, *digitalis*, *tabacum* and one or two others, the pain extends to the left arm and down to the hand. If the rheumatic nature of this remedy be kept in mind, its important modalities remembered, its choice in cardiac difficulties can be correctly made.

Rhus toxicodendron, as with *phytolacca*, will depend largely for its selection upon its well known modalities which need not be repeated here; however, cardiac hypertrophy the result of excessive, prolonged physical exertion will bring it to mind, together with the modalities and its comparison with *arnica* and *arsenicum album* will serve to differentiate these valuable remedies. Numbness and lameness of the left arm are characteristic.

No account of homœopathic heart remedies would leave *spigelia anthelmintica*, the pinkroot, from West Indies and South America, out of consideration in its application to heart diseases of a rheumatic nature, or caused by acute rheumatic fever, for it is frequently called for and its use is most highly successful when the indications are clear as well as exact. It may be said to be a neuralgic remedy, for it has many such pains and when left-sided, supra-orbital neuralgia is found, its employment must be kept in mind. In such a neuralgia, when the right side is affected, the remedies are likely to be *sanguinaria canadensis* or the deeply acting antipsoric, *silicea*. Sharp, sticking pains are characteristic of *spigelia*, also, in acute endocarditis, violent and even audible, visible palpitation, aggravated by the least motion and compelling the sufferer to lie on the right side with the head high on the pillow. Cold, rainy weather is an important modality.

Strontiana carbonica and *strontiana iodata* are of value in heart conditions where advancing pathological, arterial changes of a degenerative character are suspected. This is especially so in arteriosclerosis where it is presumptive that calcification is in progress, more particularly of the coronary arteries. In coronary disease one cannot be at all sure that cure is within the bounds of possibility, for usually it is not; nevertheless, careful homœopathic prescribing and the use of potentized remedies will bring about highly gratifying results and avoid the appalling increase of sudden deaths from coronary occlusion and thrombosis. The strontium patient is sensitive to cold,

though this modality is modified in *strontiana iodata*, by its iodine element. Warmth is agreeable, so that the patient prefers to be well covered. The blood pressure is high, as might logically be expected.

Tabacum in its provings and, it may with confidence be added, the results of nicotine poisoning in immoderate smokers, is fully capable of causing serious damage to the heart and blood vessels; it likewise is the cause of carcinoma, particularly of the mouth, throat, stomach and lungs. So far as the heart is concerned, the pathologic picture portrays in vivid colours attacks of acute angina pectoris, when severe cardiac pain, which extends to the left arm, prostration, cold sweat, nausea and vomiting, anxiety, pale face, frequent, weak and irregular pulse are present:

No attempt has been made in this dissertation to enumerate or fully describe all the remedies which may find their useful application in heart diseases, when prescribed in accordance with the law of symptom similarity. Homœopathy relates to patients, not to diseases and it is the former who must and should be prescribed for. In these increasingly homœopathically decadent days, far too many homœopathic physicians prescribe for disease entities and in so doing, forget the patient as an individual. Hence the modern analgesic heart remedies are constantly resorted to, often to the great injury of the patient, when carefully selected, homœopathically prescribed medicines would give more comfort, insure longer life and, what is of the greatest importance, do no harm. As an organized profession, we homœopaths have been and continue to be, negligent of our interests and great possibilities. There are many drugs whose potential value has never been revealed by the methods of homœopathic drug proving. Instead, we have permitted ourselves to worship at the shrine of orthodox medicine and to bow before its false gods.