

INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE & HOMOEOPATHY

RAYMOND SHETTEL, M.D. MT. WOLF, PA.

"Industry is the bulwark of our nation," and so demands our constant medical attention. The advances in industrial health since the building of the Egyptian temples and obelisks, and since the early industrial medical works of Aristotle, Plato, Pliny, Hippocrates, Galen, Nicander, etc. have been nothing short of spectacular, but apparently have at times lagged behind other scientific advancements. It is not the purpose here to review the excellent ultra scientific information, the unexcelled plastic surgery, the complete administrative programs, the very beneficial uses of antiseptics, sulfa drugs and penicillin but to point out to those acquainted with the homoeopathic materia medica that this is an additional armamentarium which is of value in reducing the labour hours lost from accidents, as well as aiding the worker to return to a state of complete recovery, in place of developing into a psychosomatic problem, dating his complaints from the time of this or that accident. Every accident does produce an effect on the entire organism, to a greater or less extent, and if greater, then every extreme effort is put forth to combat profound shock, but if less then we are inclined to let nature repair, or a selected few may prescribe the indicated remedy. Let us revert to Hahnemann's "Organon of Medicine" and quote what he has to say about industrial medicine, since I believe we must agree, an injured person is a "sick" individual.

"The physician's high and only mission is to restore the sick to health, to cure, as it is termed."

"He is likewise a preserver of health if he knows the things that derange health and cause disease, and how to remove them from persons in health."

"The unprejudiced observer—well aware of the futility of transcendental speculations which can receive no confirmation from experience—be his powers of penetration ever so great, takes note of nothing in every individual disease, except the changes in the health of the body and of the mind (morbid phenomena, accidents, symptoms) which can be perceived externally by means of the senses; that is to say, he notices only the deviations from the former healthy state of the now diseased individual, which are felt by the patient himself, remarked by those around him and observed by the physician. All these perceptible signs represent the disease in its whole extent, that is, together they form the true and only conceivable portrait of the disease."

"It is not necessary to say that every intelligent physician would first remove this (cause) where it exists. The indisposition thereupon generally ceases spontaneously. He will—extract from the cornea the foreign body that excites inflammation of the eye—lay bare and put a ligature on the wounded artery that produces fainting—."

"When a person falls ill, it is only this spiritual self-acting (automatic) vital force, everywhere present in his organism, that is primarily deranged by the dynamic influence upon it of a morbid agent inimical

to life ; it is only the vital principle, deranged to such an abnormal state, that can furnish the organism with the disagreeable sensations, and incline it to the irregular processes which we call disease ; for, as a power invisible in itself, and only cognizable by its effects on the organism, its morbid derangement only makes itself known by the manifestation of disease in the sensations and functions of those parts of the organism exposed to the senses of the observer and physician, that is, by morbid symptoms, and in no other way can it make itself known."

"Our vital force, as a spirit-like dynamis, cannot be attacked and affected by injurious influences on the healthy organism caused by the external inimical forces that disturb the harmonious play of life, otherwise than in a spirit-like (dynamic) way, and in like manner, all such morbid derangements (diseases) cannot be removed from it by the physician in any other way than by the spirit-like (dynamic virtual) alternative powers of the serviceable medicines acting upon our spirit-like vital force, which perceives them through the medium of the sentient faculty of the nerves everywhere present in the organism, so that it is only by their dynamic action on the vital force that remedies are able to re-establish and do actually re-establish health and vital harmony, after the changes in the health of the patient cognizable by our senses (the totality of the symptoms) have revealed the disease to the carefully observing and investigating physician as fully as was requisite in order to enable him to cure it."

"Now, as in the cure effected by the removal of the whole of the perceptible signs and symptoms of the disease the internal alteration of the vital principle to which the disease is due—consequently the whole of the disease—is at the same time removed, it follows that the physician has only to remove the whole of the symptoms in order, at the same time, to abrogate and annihilate the internal change, that is to say, the morbid derangement of the vital force—consequently the totality of the disease, the disease itself. But when the disease is annihilated, health is restored, and this is the highest, the sole aim of the physician who knows the true object of his mission, which consists not in learned-sounding prating, but in giving aid to the sick."

In industrial medicine it is well to keep **FATIGUE** in mind because a tired mechanism is not functioning at optimum efficiency, hence the fatigue may be the primary condition with the workman, or more likely, it may be the condition which will precipitate an injury. So in the homœopathic prescription this factor, fatigue, must be considered, and special drugs have been included with the hope that their use may assist the worker in maintaining his normal physiological state.

Keeping this hasty review and the homœopathic philosophy in mind, let us consider some of the drugs most likely to be used in industrial medicine and their special applications, which must be on the principle of totality of symptoms and not the empirical basis.

Aconite—Sudden acute conditions, rapid, but

short action, pulsations and throbbings, restless, anxious, fear. Acute effects of fright, shock, chill, embtium.

Concussion of chest, especially where fainting, severe constitutional disturbances, after puncture wounds, after operations, pain and inflammation after dislocations (may be alternated with Arnica), effects of exposure to excessive heat, insect stings.

Arnica—Contusions, effect of falls, excessive physical fatigue, stiffness after long riding, overstrain, mental and physical. In spite of desperate illness, declare they are quite well.

Concussion of brain, concussion or contusion of chest, sprains, hæmorrhage from mouth and diseased surfaces, punctured wounds, dislocations (may be alternated with Aconite), fractures, superficial burns, stings of insects, excessive fatigue.

Arsenicum—Shooting pains aggravated from wound towards the heart, wound bluish, swollen and attended with vomiting, vertigo, fainting. Poisoned wounds, human bites, rabid animal bites, or if animal substance has been introduced in wound in a state of putrefaction.

Belladonna—Suppurating puncture wounds, after Arsenic in "poisoned" wounds, over exposure to heat with violent headache, congestion, fever, vomiting, anguish. Sting of insects, hydrophobia, mental emotions.

Bellis Perennis—For remote effects of traumatism. Injuries to nerves with intense soreness remaining. Injuries to deeper tissues, following major surgical

procedures. Ill effects of overheating. Sprains and bruises. "It is a princely remedy for old labourers, especially gardeners" (Burnett). Railway spine.

Bryonia—Ill humour, apprehension of some future misfortune, exposure to sun and heat.

China—Relief of fatigue when there has been profuse perspiration.

Cicuta—Spasmodic affections. Spasms and cramps of muscles. Convulsions from concussion of brain.

Cocculus—Fatigue of mind or body from most trivial exertion.

Coffea—Exhaustion and fatigue combined with abstinence from food. Intolerance of pain, driving to despair. Severe pain of burns causing great restlessness.

Hypericum—Nerve injury from traumatism. Puncture wounds, traumatic neuritis, traumatic myelitis, coccygodynia following injury.

Mercurius—Sting of insects. A human "thermometer". After exposure to glare of fire; foundrymen.

Nux Vomica—Chest injury with sweetish taste to expectoration. Pre-eminently the remedy for many of the conditions incident to modern life. Quick, active, nervous, mental work. Close application to business.

Pulsatilla—In fright and timidity. Sensitive persons. Women in industry. Concussion of chest when sensation of internal wound. Weeps easily.

Rhus-Tox—Pain in the joints from lifting or violent physical exertion. Motion "limbers up." Septicæmia. A tendon remedy. Sprains.

Ruta Graveolens—Effects of muscular strain. Eye strain, synovitis, sciatica, neuritis, strains of tendons.

Sulphur—Standing in an uncomfortable position. Dirty people, prone to skin affections. Aversion to being washed. When carefully selected remedies fail to act in acute conditions.

Symphytum—Bone injuries. Keynote is pricking pain and soreness in the periosteum. Nonunion of fractures, irritable stumps following amputations.

Urtica Urens—Burns and scalds.

Veratrum—Sickness and great pain in the abdomen as a result of strain. Excessive fatigue, especially with tendency to fainting.

These are not offered as a complete materia medica list nor as a complete symptomatology of the drugs, but just as industrial suggestions. These I prefer to administer one drop of the 200x or 1M. under the tongue and not repeated unless the symptom picture calls for repetition or a different prescription, but SIMILIA cures, not potency.

To be well remembered is the knowledge given to the homœopathic materia medica by industrial materials, to wit; phosphorus, petroleum, plumbum, arsenic, silicea, mercury, and many others. The industrial workers who have helped accumulate this information, have paid well, in advance, for all the extra special attention that any traumatized worker deserves, and it is a challenge for us to continue investigating industrial materials which are producing an effect on healthy individuals, so that the ills of future generations may be quickly and completely healed by using these industrial drugs homœopathically.

—*Journal of the American Institute of Homœopathy*,
May, 1946.