

UNCOMMON REMEDIES IN COMMON AFFECTIONS OF THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM*

DR. ROGER SCHMIDT, M.D.

"It is easier to fight for one's principles than to live up to them."

—A. ALLEN

When our distinguished chairman asked me to present a paper on "Homoeopathy and the Diseases of the Digestive System," I felt rather embarrassed as to how to treat so vast a subject—the more so when I read that the paper had not to exceed fifteen minutes. As practitioners, we are not so interested in general theoretical or philosophical considerations, therefore I will try to tackle the problem in a purely practical way by merely quoting some clinical experiences from my practice and from notes taken at the Monday night meetings of the lamented Dr. J. W. Ward.

Ulcus labialis vulgaris: Commonly called cracked corners of mouth, which are seen in adults and mostly old people affected with chronic dyspepsia, often respond to the curative action of Condurango. This deep acting anti-sycotic remedy affects especially the right corner of the mouth and is also prescribed successfully in cancerous tumours originating in epithelial structures: lips, tongue, stomach, anus, breasts. Vitamin B₂ (G) or Riboflavin is considered as a specific for oral ulcerations of all kinds associated with secondary anaemia, pale gums and symptoms of pellagra. Others prescribe the Vitamin B Complex.

Arum t., Graph., Hydr., Merc., Nat. m., Nit. ac., Sep., Sil., Zinc, etc., have also proved to be curative for cracked lips.

Herpes Labialis: Cold sores—so frequent, but not always easy to cure. If persistently recurrent I have found Tuberculinum to be very helpful when the patient presents a tuberculinic constitution. Rhus tox is very effective—if the symptoms agree. When accompanied with backache, or following vaccination, Variolinum will do the work. If fever is present or any acute febrile condition, Staphylococin works like a charm. Nat. m., Sep., and other medicines might also be indicated.

Locally, the tincture of Capsicum has proved beneficial to alleviate the pains.

Aphthae: Canker sores—are sometimes very distressing. When the ulcerations are surrounded by a zone of inflammation, Hydrastis is an excellent remedy. Its antidote Kali chloricum (Potassium chlorate) has been used for a long time by both medical schools for ulcerations of the oral

* Read before the Bureau of Clinical Homoeopathy, California State Homoeopathic Medical Society, May 17, 1940.

mucous membranes. A good additional indication for it is the presence of pimples between lip and chin, also if the ground is syphilitic—and it is an adequate mouthwash in mercurial stomatitis.

Borax, however, is one of the most frequently prescribed remedies for aphthae bleeding easily, located on the tongue, so common in children. Of course, scores of other remedies might be indicated. Dr. J. W. Ward recommended the local application of *Aethusa cynapium* (the tincture) when the mouth is dry and milk not tolerated; and the tincture of *Sempervivum tectorum* if there is much soreness, stabbing pains and bleeding.

Chronic glossitis: A parasymphilitic manifestation well-known to be very resistant to treatment—I have obtained great relief in one case, and a cure in another with Kali bichromicum.

Denuded spots on the tongue: When with much rawness, burning and soreness, *Ranunculus scleratus* has been very satisfactory.

Gastro-Diaphragmatic Hernia: So fashionable lately—Dr. J. W. Ward reported *Ptelea trifoliata* as one of the best remedies. A keynote symptom of this drug is, pressure as of a stone at the pit of the stomach and a headache with hunger, especially on waking.

Globus Hystericus: A frequent and disagreeable complaint, better labeled 'lump in the throat' because it does not exist in hysterics only—when resisting the usually prescribed remedies: *Asaf.*, *Ign.*, *Lach.*, *Nat. m.*, *Psor.*; might disappear rapidly with *Strychninum*. In the case I have in mind, it was associated with general stiffness and a great sensitiveness to touch. The lump might be so marked as to inhibit swallowing (*Stram.*).

Another remedy, not quoted in the repertory, which has the globus symptom as marked as any other drug is *Raphanus*. It has been used for centuries by the old school for gallstones and whooping cough. Its specific sphere of action is the intestines, creating a tremendous amount of gas, a state of tympanitis; its characteristic is that flatus seems incarcerated and cannot be passed either up or down.

Finally, a remedy seldom prescribed but very helpful in the globus condition is *Cajuputum* which has a symptom picture resembling *Raphanus*, but it has a good differential peculiarity, a sensation as if the parts were greatly enlarged. It is a good remedy for hiccough after operation.

Dyspepsia of smokers: It does not clear up with *Nux vomica*; *Ignatia* or *Caladium* will respond to *Sepia*, in both sexes, if the symptoms agree.

Dyspepsia: I have had a case with the peculiar symptom of nausea aggravated by lying down, which cleared up nicely with *Ptelea trifoliata* (cp. *Raph.*).

Dyspepsia—mostly in women—associated with hypochlorhydria, cramps soon after eating: *Gratiola*. It is a very old remedy, not enough thought of, considered in the Middle Age and later as a specific for ascites, anasarca, liver cirrhosis, tuberculous peritonitis and cardio-renal disease. In substantial dosage, it is a good drastic. It often relieves the gastro-enteritis that appear

as a result of taking large quantities of ice water. It has cured fissures of the anus.

Dyspepsia caused by sugar and fats: *Faecalis alcaligenes*.

Gastralgia: Where *Belladonna* is indicated, *Atropinum* might prove more effective (Dr. Ward).

Gastro-Enteritis: *Colchicum* presents a picture remarkably similar to *Arsenicum album*, but it is ameliorated by lying down very still and has the well-known aggravation by odours.

Vomiting of Pregnancy: Dr. Ward recommended *Cuprum arsenicosum* almost as a specific. *Cupr. ars.* has also a great deal of cramps in the extremities, slimy liquid stools, much burning at the anus—a picture of cholera. Important to remember in *Uraemia*.

Pycosis of hypopeptic patients with heartburn extending to the mouth, sensation of roughness of the mouth; enlarged, erect papillae of the tongue: *Phosphorus*.

Anorexia: Postgrippal or hysterical: *Avena Sativa*. It has an action similar to *Vitamin B₁* on the digestive system and on the heart. The cardiac irregularity (extrasystoles, palpitations) is most apparent during the period of gastric digestion or following convalescence of prolonged fever.

Anorexia associated with goneness, emptiness in the epigastrium: *Nicolum*.

Cholecystitis: With burning gnawing pains in the stomach, sudden nausea and repletion after food, dyspepsia from lifting heavy weights with eructations and headaches, jaundice and liver complaints: *Ruta*. It has cured rheumatism due to an infested gallbladder.

Gallbladder Colic: *Calcarea carbonica* is one of the most dependable remedies.

Appendicitis acuta: With all the classical picture in a boy of 12 showing a blood count of 18,000 leucocytes with 83% polynuclears, cured in 24 hours with *Pulsatilla*. *Puls.* was indicated by the tearfulness, the dry mouth with an aversion for fluids, the thickly coated white tongue, the general aggravation by warmth and in the evening.

Intestinal Obstruction of four days duration, due to an abdominal cancer in a cachectic inoperable old woman, relieved in 12 hours with *Phosphorus* which brought gas, then copious liquid foetid stools. Suction had been applied with a duodenal tube as soon as the ileus symptoms developed, it immediately relieved the exhaustive faecaloid vomiting but had no effect on the ileus. The keynote for *Phosphorus* was: constant desire for ice water and ice chips.

Constipation: Obstinate, chronic—*Phytolacca* might act like magic (Ward); consider also *Lycopodium*.

If the constipation is due to hepatic insufficiency, with pain in the median lobe of the liver, accompanied with aerophagia, tympanitis, and a geographical tongue: *Taraxacum* is the remedy.

If the left lobe of the liver is painful and there is an aggravation from

touch and motion, a white-coated tongue and a bitter taste in the mouth: *Carduus marianus* should be prescribed.

Mineral oil is one of the worst palliatives because of its honest, harmless appearance. Once started, the patient becomes enslaved and has to continue its use ad infinitum. I have noticed that patients using mineral oil are always ailing, never cured. Why? Because it has been discovered recently that the fat-soluble vitamins (A and D) dissolve readily in mineral oil and are therefore gently carried away, depriving the economy of its most essential nutritive elements.

Chronic Colitis: With bad smelling flatus, I routinely prescribe *Saccharum lactis*, one teaspoonful in a half glass of warm water before meals. It never fails to improve the condition—sometimes amazingly.

Prolapsus Ani: A case of ten years duration, accompanied by daily haemorrhages following defaecation: *Ruta* brought considerable improvement and a complete disappearance of the bleeding.

In closing, I would like to emphasize the necessity of checking carefully the patient's diet before prescribing the homoeopathic remedy. It is the physician's task. It is a painstaking job, but it should be done in every case. In practically 100 per cent of the patients the diet is wrong somehow, and one gets already substantial results by simply correcting the most obvious errors, one of which is the sacrosanct glass of milk at mealtime—a bad and harmful habit, especially in the diseases of the digestive system—except peptic ulcer—and in allergic conditions (asthma, eczema, etc.).

Of course we should not forget that the value of keynotes and recipes is quite relative. There is and will be at all times only one infallible criterium for the homoeopathic prescription: the totality of the symptoms, and the knowledge of the *materia medica*.

—*Pacific Coast Journal of Homoeopathy*, July, 1940
