

characteristic symptom of Rhus Tox. is that, with few exceptions, the pains come on and are aggravated during repose, and are ameliorated by motion. The most agonising symptoms and sufferings are produced when the body or the limb is at rest and kept as much as possible without movement.

Dose—3x, 6, 30.

• (*To be continued.*)

The Evaluation of Symptoms.*

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1. Disease is a condition and not an entity and its manifestations are those of abnormal function and pathology called symptoms. The production of symptoms is always in accord with natural physical laws and every sign and symptom is expressive of some internal deviation from normal physiology. They are Nature's warnings of trouble within and may be studied, classified and interpreted in the same way as are the processes of normal physiology. They constitute a language which the trained homœopathic observer may read and understand in terms of homœopathic remedies. He makes his diagnosis in the usual way but gives it its proper place in the process of selecting his remedy.

2. Although fully cognizant of the signs and symptoms which are known as pathognomonic, he also takes into account the symptoms arising from the constitutional peculiarities of the patient. Instead of confining his study to the general phenomena which give the

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condition & name and seeking some medicine which has acted favorably in cases similar to the one he is about to treat, he includes in his record, every detail, whether toxic, pathological, mental or physical, and arrives at a comprehensive totality of symptoms. In other words, he carefully individualizes each case and selects a remedy which corresponds to the patient as well as to the disease.

3. All symptoms and conditions are not of equal importance in homeopathic prescribing. Indeed the majority of cases present symptoms which are irrelevant and of no special value or importance in finding the similimum, which is to be determined with accuracy only by those symptoms which are called "characteristic."

There are in general two classes of symptoms: Characteristic and Common.

a. A common symptom is one which is found in many patients and is produced in the provings of many remedies. For example: pain, fever, chill, sweat, cough, flatulence, lameness, congestion, swelling.

b. A characteristic symptom is one which is peculiar, unusual and therefore distinctive and found in the provings of only a few remedies. For example: Bloody mucus and painful tenesmus are common symptoms of dysentery. However, when we find in addition, the peculiar characteristic symptoms, "every drink of cold water causes chill and is followed by hurried stool," *Capsicum* is the indicated remedy in this individual case. Again, if the patient with dysentery "is routed out of bed at 5:00 a. m. and the stool is preceded by rectal fullness, heaviness and colic; and every attempt to pass flatus is accompanied by a spurt of liquid feces," *Aloe* is the indicated remedy. Spasmodic asthma is commonly

worse on lying down. If, however, the asthmatic is "relieved by lying down and his head is exceedingly sensitive to cold, even in mild weather," *Psorinum* is indicated. If the asthmatic patient "finds relief only in the knee-chest position," the remedy is *Medorrhinum*.

4. The common symptoms of measles are dry cough, coryza, sore eyes, fever and a miliary rash. These symptoms being common to all cases of this disease are of little value in choosing a remedy for an individual case. But when a patient exhibits the characteristic group of "violent throbbing headache, flushed face, shining eyes, high fever, dry mouth and throat, twitching of muscles, harsh, dry, barking cough and great sensitiveness to light, noise and jar," *Belladonna* is clearly indicated because the group just enumerated is composed of the characteristics of *Belladonna* provings. If, however, the "rash is slow in appearing and there are thirst, hard, dry, painful cough, frontal headache, hard dry, constipated stool and aggravation of all symptoms from the slightest motion," *Bryonia* is indicated.

5. Both characteristic and common symptoms are divided again into (a) general, and (b) particular. A general symptom is one that affects the patient as a whole. A particular symptom is one that affects a single part or organ.

6. Fever, chill, emaciation, malaise are common generals. Aggravation from music, during a thunder storm, bluish discharge from mucous membranes and amelioration in wet weather, are examples of general characteristics because they are strange, out of the ordinary and lead to one remedy or a small group of remedies.

7. All sensations or symptoms that the patient

predicates of himself or in relation to which he uses the first personal pronoun, are general. As "I am weak," "I am thirsty," "I am sleepy."

8. Mental symptoms are classed as generals because they reflect the subtle, inner character of the patient himself. Hahnemann in his earliest writings points out the importance of mental symptoms and insists that they be given precedence over all others in remedy selection. Here again we have common and characteristic.

9. Irritability, sadness, fear, are common to many diseases, many patients, also many remedies. But "aversion to company," (a marked mental symptom of *natrum muriaticum*, *Nux vomica* and *Anacardium*); "loss of affection for wife or children" (well known characteristic of *Sepia*), "restlessness only while at work," (*Graphites*), "weeps when relating symptoms" (*Pulsatilla*), are typical examples of mental characteristics.

10. Experience has shown that emotional symptoms or those arising from the will are more valuable in remedy selection than those distinctly intellectual. Thus "loathing of life; impulse to commit suicide" (*Aurum*); "fear of dogs" (*Belladonna*); "insatiable desire to travel" (*Calcarea phos.*), will mean more in selecting a remedy than "errors in speaking" (*Lycopodium*) or "forgets what he was about to say" (*Baryta carb.*). Delusions, hallucinations, delirium, amnesia, are classed as intellectual symptoms.

11. Symptoms are classed generals when they appear in different types of cases and in different parts of the body and yet are characteristic of one remedy. To illustrate: "stitching pains" (*Arsenicum alb.*, *Carbo veg.*, *Sulphur*) "stiffness relieved by continued motion, (*Rhus tox.*); "coldness of affected parts" (*Ledum*); "sweat on uncovered parts only" (*Thuja*).

Alternation of definite ailments also belong to the general class. Illustration. "Headache in winter, diarrhoea in summer" (*Aloe soc.*).

12. Complaints occurring only on one side of the body are generals, as "right sided sore throat or arthritis of the right shoulder" (*Belladonna, Lycopodium*) "of the left side" (*Lachesis, Sulphur*).

13. Periodicity is general, as in "headache every seven days" (*Sulphur*); "on alternate days" (*Natrum mur.*); "complaints appearing on the same date annually" (*Vipera*); "neuralgia at the same hour every day" (*Cedron*).

14. Modalities (conditions of aggravation and amelioration) may be classed either as generals or particulars, depending upon whether they affect the patient as a whole or only certain parts of his body. Among these are cold, heat, conditions of weather, motion, rest, position, touch, pressure, eating, drinking, and others.

15. Particulars need but little comment. Headache, coated tongue, injected conjunctive, swelling of the left thumb, are illustrative, of common particular symptoms; while "sensation of coldness in the larynx" (*Cistus can.*), "dilated pupils days before an epileptic attack" (*Argentum nitr.*), "sensation of a band about the head" (*Carbo veg., Gelsemium, Sulphur*), are particular characteristics of the highest order.

16. A common symptom may become highly characteristic when it is associated with another or occurs in a group, as "fever with thirstlessness" (*Pulsatilla*); "coldness with numbness of the heels" (*Scpia*); "diarrhoea with over-powering sleepiness" (*Nux mosch.*); "profuse sweat with copious urine" (*Acetic acid*). These are called concomitants and are often of great use in deter-

mining the remedy. A striking example of this relation of symptoms is found in the group "frontal headache, nausea, vomiting and high fever." Singly these symptoms are among the most ordinary and common, but collectively they constitute a group which is highly characteristic and points to but one remedy, namely, *Veratrum viride*.

17. A common symptom may be raised into the characteristic class by reason of its intensity. Thus, burning pains, common to many diseases and many remedies, occur more often and are more violent in cases needing *Arsenicum*, *Sulphur* and *Carbo veg*. That motion aggravates sore and painful parts is quite to be expected. But when it is found in such an aggravated degree that the slightest movement of the foot or hand intensifies the headache or a pain in some distant part, it becomes very characteristic and indicates one remedy, *Bryonia*.

18. Most sick people, especially those of a nervous type, are apt to be affected by noises. Therefore, aggravation from noise is of comparatively little value in choosing the remedy. But when every noise causes vertigo, *Theridion* is the only known remedy; if noise is felt as a shock in the teeth, it is a prime indication for *Calcarea carb*.

19. Dreams mean little unless they assume some peculiar form or the subject dreamed of is in itself peculiar. The patient who constantly dreams of dead relatives is often helped by *Calcarea silicate*; the one whose dreams are of hard labor or some strenuous exertion may need *Rhus tox*; of falling from a height, *Digitalis*, *Sulphur* or *Thuja*.

20. In taking the case, no detail of history, physical examination or laboratory findings should be overlooked,

for these are of great value in determining the general management of the case and may also assist in the differentiation of similar remedies. But the physician should constantly bear in mind that successful homœopathic prescribing depends, primarily upon the ability to elicit characteristic symptoms. Otherwise, he is lost in a maze of symptomatic manifestations and must resort to the use of "key-notes," pathology or the name of the disease which he is endeavoring to cure. Unless he knows how to choose the guiding indications in the case which are the characteristics and is able to ignore those which are irrelevant as far as the selection of the homœopathic remedy is concerned, the repertory will be of little use to him.

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