

EXPERIENCE—THE CRUCIAL TEST

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One of the greatest ways of learning the application of homœopathic remedies is to read the experience of others. Along that line the Journal has at times brought out some very interesting articles of other men's experiences. Quite often they have been too general, or, in other words, drugs that every one of us uses every week of our practice; drugs that are exhibited for cases where no doubt they shortened the sickness, but very likely the patient would have gotten well without treatment. On those cases we cannot convince nonbelievers in homœopathy that we have a superior treatment. But on the other hand, if we or one of our confreres finds a case of long standing, that has visited various physicians and hospitals of high standing, perhaps without receiving any definite diagnosis, or at least none which holds out any hope for the patient, and if that case finally comes to a man who knows his homœopathy, and at once gets well (and I don't mean is just relieved), then we have reason to know and to show the world that we have in homœopathy a wonderful means of cure.

I am writing at this time of two drugs seldom exhibited, or at least seldom written about. The first is silica, and I shall bring out two outstanding cases where it not only cured the immediate or acute condition, but put the patients in better health than they had ever been in their lives.

First Case.—Mrs. S., forty years old; married; two children; light complexioned; high forehead, very intelligent; nervous; active type; has never had a severe sickness; but after work is tired out; sweats very easily; has a lot of severe headaches; skin has great tendency to chap and crack; has to lie down often and rest; always has a good appetite, but food doesn't nourish her properly.

Present Sickness.—For some time has been chilly; sweating .

a lot at night ; very weak and languid ; noticed a swelling under armpit. It grew larger and larger, and more baggy ; some aching. After two weeks I was called in, and found a swelling from armpit down about eight inches, and about six inches across ; no doubt some fluid. T 102 ; P 100. Aspiration drew out a creamy pus. I then gave ether and opened at lowest point, a very large opening. I got a quart of colon bacillus infected pus. I put in a drain, and for one month the dressing had to be changed TID. I then opened at another point, washed out and put drain from one opening to another. In the meantime I had given some remedies. Still oozes of colon bacillus pus ; the patient growing thinner, sweats and chills. At the sixth week there was no change for the better. All at once I saw the similia in silica 6x. In three days there was no discharge, and the general condition of the patient was better in every way. But here is the best part of it all : from a semi-invalid of years' standing, she became a healthy, robust, able-to-work woman. And two years later she told me that I had made a new woman of her.

Second Case.—Mrs. M., forty-three years old ; married ; no children. Past history : Never been able to stand much excitement or work ; at about twenty-five had pleural pneumonia with effusion ; and heart badly affected ; was sick about a year, and heart rapid always afterward. She was a school teacher, rapid in action ; keen, nervous type ; light thin skin ; big appetite, but weighing about 115, although five feet four inches tall.

Present History.—About a year ago her heart began to bother her, very rapid on exertion ; at night very tired ; had to lie down often ; seemed to get colds in head, with cracking and scabs in nose ; canker in mouth ; bad odor to breath, especially in morning ; began to have abdominal pains ; mostly constipated, but at times loose stools ; some soreness in rectum, with blood ; bladder, which had been inflamed at times for a number of years, was quite acute, with pus ;

uterus badly swollen, and neck felt hard as if sclerosed ; had never had leucorrhœa, but now profuse and scalding ; all parts tender ; no desire for coitus, even if parts had not been inflamed ; called my attention to her finger nails breaking off ; and although she had a wonderfully fair skin, her fingers had deep cracks and hang-nails ; both nipples were as hard as a crust of bread ; she was chilly a great deal, but would wake in the night and find herself covered with sweat ; although having a big appetite, she continually lost flesh, and went to 108 pounds.

For three months various remedies were tried for what seemed to be the prevailing symptoms, but no real headway was made. The patient was getting discouraged, and I was afraid of T.B., from which her sister had died a few years before. On further study I found silica a perfect similia, and within a few days there was great improvement. At first I gave her 6x, then 12x, and after about two months, she had a dose of thirtieth about once in five days. It is now about nine months since silica was given. She is now in almost perfect health, which she has not been able to say for the past twenty years. But some of the outstanding points are these : viz., her nipples have become very soft ; her uterus has regained its normal tone ; the catarrhal cystitis hasn't bothered for six months ; her bowels are normal (although she always had taken cathartics) ; her nails are normal.

If time and space would permit, I could give you many other chronic cases, and also acute cases where this remedy has brought about a complete cure.

There are a few leading symptoms which will probably give you an inkling when silica is indicated, especially if a case has become chronic, viz., a good appetite, but loses flesh ; sweating all over at night ; cold, clammy feeling, chilly most of the time ; finger and toe nails brittle and break ; cracks and ulcers in skin that will not heal ; no pep, and exhausted from the least work ; suppurative processes that will not clear up.

The other remedy seldom seen exhibited, but for which I have seen a number of similia and perfect cures, is agaricus muscarius. I can best show the action of this remedy by describing three cases.

First Case.—Miss L., fifteen years old ; very well-developed ; but a nervous, wiry type ; hard at work or play. Past history of no moment, but for the past year had gradually been developing spasms of face and right arm and leg. Diagnosis—chorea. Previous to my seeing her (and this was during the first year of my practice, thirty-one years ago), she had been to the Massachusetts Homœopathic Hospital, to a number of homœopathic and allopathic physicians, and finally to the Boston City Hospital. Instructions from the latter led them to take her home, keep her quiet in bed, giving her strychnine tablets and bromides TID. With that treatment she grew rapidly worse. I saw her in bed. She seemed semiconscious, her facial nerves were twitching and contorting ; her right arm and leg would twitch and fly up with a quick jerk ; there were itching and twitching of all parts of her body. She would not eat, she could not sleep. I watched her for fifteen minutes, then I went home to study the case. I found her symptoms a perfect match for agaricus 6x. I gave it to her every four hours. That night she slept, and from that day on there was rapid improvement to a perfect cure, and NO return.

Second Case.—Mrs. S., fifty years old ; five feet five inches tall ; when in health weighed over 180 pounds. Two years previous to my seeing her she had taken care of a husband sick with nephritis for two years. After he died she began nursing.

She obtained the position of nurse to an old lady patient of mine, but I noticed that she kept out of the way whenever I called on the old lady. One day I said to my patient : "I want to see Mrs. S." She said : "She doesn't like to be seen, as she has an infirmity." But she appeared, and as I stood

talking to her she began to grimace, and her right arm to jerk up, and her right foot to kick out and tap the floor. I did not see her again, and in about three months my patient told me she had had to leave, as that condition was much worse, and her mental condition was bad. Mrs. S.'s son and daughter-in-law were patients of mine. About ten months later the son came to me and said: "Drs. T. and C. have made out papers and committed my mother to Danvers. Do you suppose that you could help her? Dr. T. has given his consent to your seeing her, but says that there is no help for her." I went with him to her home. I found her with two nurses, and the windows barred. She was almost a skeleton (eighty to ninety pounds). She walked the floor continually; would not eat or drink, unless something was left on the table or window-sill, for fear of being poisoned. Her tongue was heavily coated; she did not know the names of her attendants, and paid no attention to her son. Every once in a while she would say: "See that ball I got out of my eye?" and would laugh. Every few minutes she would start the most ludicrous contortions of face; her right arm and leg would jerk, twitch, and go through the most violent motions. (Remember that this had been coming on for two years.) I watched the woman for a long time, and then said to the son: "No doubt this case is hopeless. You had better let her go to Danvers. I don't believe she can live long. But before she goes, I would like to have you give her a remedy." He said: "How will we get her to take it? She won't take a thing from us." I said: "Put three tablets in one-half glass of water, and leave it on her table, and when she has drunk it, put three more in, so that she gets it every three or four hours." In three days the son came to my office and told me what I could hardly believe: his mother was quite normal, eating, sleeping, with very little jerking. In three months she was the cook at the Essex Country Club. Three months later she had a slight return, and came to me for some more agaricus. Six

years later she was in perfect health. I have been in many insane hospitals, but have never seen a more hopeless case than Mrs. S. the day her son called me.

Third Case.—Mr. McC., forty-three years old; Veteran of Foreign Wars in very active-service overseas. Previous to entering the Army was very strong and rugged. Was badly gassed and shell-shocked. When discharged from the Army he was having fits; had been treated at many veterans' hospitals with a prognosis of: "He can't be helped."

Present History.—January, 1938, I was called to a large market garden farm where he was working. I found him on a cement floor, where he had fallen over backwards while standing washing celery. He was going from one fit into another, that is, his heels and head would be on the floor, and his abdomen twelve to eighteen inches in the air. His face was in contortions. He was removed to the Winchester Hospital and put in a strait-jacket. As the opisthotonos persisted, I gave him strychnine 3x, and after a few hours he gradually quieted, but was not really conscious for twenty-four hours. Three days later, while he was still in the hospital, his wife came to me, crying, and said: "Doctor, can't anything be done for my husband? I am living in mortal terror, as I don't know when he will have a fit. I have a harness all made, and tie him up when he has them. They all say there is no cure for him, only dope." I told her I didn't know that anything could be done, but to bring him in a few days. She did, and he sat before me, the muscles of his face, arms and legs twitching, and every few minutes there would be a marked jerk of the facial muscles and right arm and leg. I gave him agaricus. In ten days he was completely free of all twitching and nervousness. For two months he has had complete charge of my farm in Maine, and is a good, steady, hard-working man.

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