

A case of chronic Neuralgia.

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A lady aged 52 applied for relief of her severe neuralgic pain of right shoulder joint which she had suffered for the preceding 3 years.

She told me that she had consulted several Physicians of the old school and had taken a number of drugs. She had been to a Naturopathist for Electric and Massage treatment. Had had her heart, lungs, urine and blood examined,—in short expressed herself as having come to the end of hope and medical resources.

If I am to lay before you the whole truth without any reservation I should say that she had been to the so called Homœopaths also and from the last physician in charge had received Rhus Tox. for a long time in different potencies to no effect inspite of the fact that her pain was relieved by motion as you will subsequently see when you read her whole case.

'Worse from motion' as infallibly calls up Bryonia as "better from motion" does Rhus Tox., because we have grooves in our mind that make these phrases lead us to the remedies named. The many other remedies that are better from motion should have been given a chance to prove their appropriateness, and it is only by the use of a Repertory that they can be given due weight and proper consideration. My readers should realise that time has come when we should not prescribe on key notes, for key notes and failures go hand in hand. It is the curse of memorised key notes that they strongly converge the mind toward ruts and routinism, causing a few of the Polychrests to occupy an unduly prominent place in our armamentarium. A true Physician's duty is not to display his wonderful memory but to exercise his ability in selecting

the suitable Homœopathic remedies to cure his patient. A good Repertory is always a better and a safer key to the Materia Medica than any man's treacherous memory. One of the chief merits of the Repertory consists in its not being too positive, but revealing more than one possible remedy for a case ; always inviting reference to the Materia Medica and in giving opportunity for the exercise of good judgment which must always be the dominant factor in making a difficult prescription. An exact science demands an exact art in its application, the physician must follow the exact rule of similitude in selecting the curative remedies covering the totality of the case in hand. This totality is not the aggregate of symptoms but the complete individual symptom as to its sensation, location, modality and concomitant. Pardon me my readers while describing an interesting chronic case to you, I got off on a tangent being very much annoyed at the off hand prescription of a brother colleague of mine, but I suppose there is seed for thought here.

I elicited the following facts from the patient. Here I exactly reproduce the notes I made in my case record in June 1931, omitting the minor details of dates etc.

Present symptoms :—

1. Shooting, stinging pain in the right shoulder joint.
Duration 3 years.
2. The pain is relieved by
 - (a) Tight bandage.
 - (b) Walking or movement of the hand.
3. Pain is aggravated
 - : (a) During the night at rest.
 - (b) After meals.
4. Menstruation stopped 3 years back.
5. Burning of soles and palms. Heat in the vertex.
6. Putrid odour from mouth. Indigestion in the

afternoon ; severe constipation. Loves sour, fatty and bitter things. Desires cold drink.

7. Dreams of the dead, and falling from height. Irritable and Nervous temperament.

Past history.

1. Dysentery at the age of 15 and 20.
2. Whitlow of right hand finger cured by operation.
3. 12 years ago had Rheumatic pain in the same joint (*i. e.*, Rt. shoulder joint) which passed off completely under allopathic medication.
4. No history of injury or fall."

According to my custom of treating a chronic case, no haste was made. I at first tried to determine if possible the cause of the trouble. This latter need was imperative, since the symptomatology had been so badly confused by in-consequent medication for the last 3 years. I reasoned out as follows. "Patient has got Neuralgic pain on the right shoulder joint suffering from it for a long time. Neither the course of the disease nor the report shows any immediate trouble or cause to which the present trouble may be attributed. We find the pain is of neuralgic character and it is somewhat connected with digestion, for it has been said that pain aggravates after eating. Considering the period for which she has been suffering we can infer that it may be associated with climacteric period.

These few facts bring to our mind that *Xanthoxylum* may be the suitable remedy.

Before proceeding further with my note book, I should make a suggestion here that in the hands of scientific Physicians, I mean those who are governed by the law of similars, *Xanthoxylum* has made many brilliant cures. It is one of our greatest remedies in the treatment of Neurasthenia and Neuralgia, but the curse of the compend and the combination tablet are upon us and with many this

great remedy is an unknown quantity relegated to the dust-heap of rejected relics or submerged in the scramble for the so-called scientific medicine which is neither sensible nor successful. I should also emphasise in this connection that to be of any use it must be selected for the patient not the disease. Coming to my note book again I find the reasons for its selection.

- (i) Xanthoxylum has got pain in the Rt. shoulder.
- (ii) It has got severe pain in the Rt. arm.
- (iii) According to Boericke—It has a specific action on Nervous system and it is suited to Neurasthenic patient and poor assimilation.
- (iv) From Boger we find that the remedy is related to Ars. and Lach. (Lach. being the left sided remedy we like to try Cal. ars. after Xanthoxylum for both Calcarea and Arsenic have action on the right side).

Patient reports that pain is relieved by tight bandage—
By referring to the medicine to pressure amelioration we get—Ars., Cal., Nat. c., Sep., Sil., Thuja.

Aggravation after eating gives—Ars., Cal., Nat. c., Nat. M., Sep., Sil., Thuja.

Amelioration after walking gives—Ars., Cal., Rhus tox., Sep., Sil., Thuja.

Stomach symptoms such as desire for cold drink, fat food, sour things etc. point towards Ars. and Cal. to a great extent.

Indigestion in the afternoon may well be covered by Arsenic which also covers putrid odour from mouth.

Heat in vertex, dreams of the dead, dreams of falling from height etc. point towards Ars. and Cal.

So we like to begin treatment with Xanthoxylum and follow it up with Cal. ars.

Indication of Sepia makes us think of the following cycle of Benninghausen—*e. g.*

Sep.—Lyco.—Cal.—Sul. for we find all these remedies are shown in the Rubric as shoulder remedies.

For pain in the right shoulder we have—Apis., Cheli., Lac. Can., Xanth.

So we propose to follow the remedies in the following order :—Xanth. 30—Cal. ars. 30—Sepia 30—Lyco.—Cal. s.

For your information I should state that there was considerable comfort for me in the disclosure that the patient was 75% better after the first prescription of Xanthoxylum which was prescribed as follows :—

Xanthoxylum 30 $\frac{1. 5. 9. 12}{15}$ 1 dose a day.

After the second prescription of Cal. ars 30 $\frac{1. 5. 9. 12}{15}$

the condition of the patient was so good and so promising that both patient and physician were content to discontinue the medicine ; but after sometime a third prescription was

given thus Xanthoxylum 200 $\frac{1. 15}{30}$. The patient has not

complained of any pain since Augt. 1931. In conclusion I would ask my readers to realise that correct case taking includes the science and art of Homœopathy. Such practice is not an easy work but when acquired it discloses an easy power for cure. It all comes to this, that it is just as easy and just as difficult to get the Homœopathy as it is to get the cure.