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Apis mellifica, a study

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PHARMACOGNOSY

The honey bee is the source of this remedy, the whole insect being used in the preparation of the mother tincture. It is interesting that in connection with suggested prophylactic desensitization for bee-keepers it is recommended that "whole insect extracts be used rather than venom-sac contents, since the antigen causing reactions is present throughout the insect's body".

An enormous amount of brilliant observational research has been carried out in relation to the behaviour and life story of this fascinating insect and provider of natural food for man and animal, not to mention the African honey bird.

Many of the features brought to light have most interesting correspondences with the mentality and the reactions of the *Apis* person and the *Apis* patient.

The honey bee is a highly sensitive creature, as witness its unerring sense of direction from and back to the hive in quest of nectar. It is also violently reactive, as witness the phenomenon of swarming and also the fury of onslaught "en masse" if interfered with or annoyed. It well behoves the honey-bear of Ceylon to protect itself with its long-haired thick fur. Moreover marauding wasps or robber bees from other hives, if they dare to intrude at the hive entrance, are summarily seized and executed on the spot by the worker bees who are on guard duty.

The bee is a restless being; it flits from place to place never staying too long with one flower. The dreams of provers are said to be "full of flying activities, of travelling from place to place, of taking great leaps, and also of business affairs, of care and toil".

Again the bee takes great care not to be overheated, using an ingenious system of bringing droplets of water to the top of the hive, where a group of worker bees are fanning ceaselessly with their wings to evaporate the water, thus cooling the air when it becomes too warm. Sensitivity to heat in any form is a most prominent feature of the *Apis* picture.

It has been shown that "each individual in the hive goes through a number of functions in invariable sequence during its life, the functions going parallel to the phases of bodily development. The first day to the third is passed cleaning comb cells; the third to the fifth days feeding the riper larvae with pollen and honey brought in by the other bees; the sixth until the tenth days providing younger larvae with the 'milk' poured out from the salivary glands (which in the worker bee develop amazingly just at this time); the tenth to the eighteenth days taking over the pollen brought in by collectors, stamping it into the honeycomb, building up the comb and cleaning the hive. Then follow the carrying away of waste material and, from the eighteenth to the twentieth days, patrol service performed near the entrance. Finally from the twentieth day the collection of pollen and nectar begins, necessitating long journeys to visit flowers, an activity which continues until the last day of life."

The above has been quoted at some length because of the significance of the fact that all this amazing, necessary and efficiently performed activity is not the result of teaching, instruction, suggestion or compulsion by order and command. It is spontaneous and unquestioning and not under any kind of voluntary control.

Such activities provide a most interesting analogy with allergic phenomena, reactions arising from inherent or acquired sensitivities, which are spontaneous and by no means under voluntary control.

PHARMACOLOGY

The chemical composition of bee venom remains obscure, although various fractions, such as histamine, hyaluronidase, and a bradykinin, have been identified. Bee venom is known to have hæmolytic, hæmorrhagic and neurotoxic effects in addition to its profound histamine activity.

In addition to hæmolysis, coagulation of fibrinogen and increased permeability of capillaries there is also a lowering of surface tension and membrane potential, which results in reduction of osmotic pressure and facilitates diffusion of fluids. All this adds up to œdema and effusion, the central effect of *Apis*, the key to the understanding of most of the symptoms and modalities associated with the drug.

The symptoms produced by bee venom are both local and systemic. The local reaction is the triple response of redness, flare and weal. In addition there is stinging and burning, great sensitivity to touch, and the part feels enlarged, as if it would burst. Alternatively the sensation may be described as one of constriction and a bruised soreness is noticed.

The systemic reactions are of varied intensity and consists, in the lesser grades, of urticaria, œdema, constriction of the chest, wheezing and gastrointestinal upsets. In a third grade there is also dyspnœa, dysphagia, hoarseness, confusion and a feeling of impending disaster. The most severe grade of reaction is evidenced by collapse, cyanosis, hypotension, incontinence and unconsciousness.

It has been pointed out that the field of action of *Apis* as a drug is related to the great cavity system of the body, including also pathological cavities such as cysts, and particularly the enormous network of cavities, the interstitial or intracellular spaces spread throughout the body. Indeed a slide of œdematous tissue, viewed through the microscope, reveals a network of cellules filled with fluid, having a marked resemblance to the honeycomb of the bee.

The regulation of disturbed distribution of fluid, from the ventricles of the brain to the intercellular space appears to be the basis of the therapeutic function of the life-force pent up in *Apis mellifica*.

PHYSIOGNOMY

The face is red, of a rosy or livid hue, different from the blazing bright red visage of *Belladonna*.

Irregular raised patches appear in the skin, weals which come and go, and are either erythematous or show a definite pallor owing to compression of the local blood vessels by the œdema.

A puffy œdema may be observed, especially affecting the face, ears, lips, tongue, throat, scrotum and anus. The œdema is of the soft type, pitting on pressure.

Restlessness is usually very obvious, with constant fidgets; also the gait is

awkward and there is a tendency to clumsiness and to drop the plates and dishes.

Tremulousness may be present, or muscular twitching and jerking, especially affecting the right side. Stiffness of movement of the lower jaw and difficulty in protruding the tongue may be noticed, as also snapping of the teeth, perhaps in protest at the tight feeling in the jaws.

With intracranial involvement there is likely to be rolling of the head from side to side in sleep, whining and whimpering or a sudden loud cry or scream, either when asleep or on waking.

Other signs which may be present are squint, dorsiflexion of big toe, stiffening of the whole body if touched and a pulse which intermits.

PSYCHOLOGY

The *Apis* sufferer is tearful, fearful, fidgety, suspicious, jealous, joyless; desires company but not affection; when disturbed becomes full of obdurate rage.

There is emotional instability and unpredictability, a tendency to flit from one idea to another, a liability to causeless tears or ill-timed laughter (breaks the crockery and thinks it a great joke).

Fear is prominent—fear of “having a stroke”, fear that “something will burst” when coughing or straining. There may be a feeling of imminent dissolution, which is distinct from an actual fear of death, such as is associated with *Aconitum* or *Arsenicum album*.

There is hypersensitivity to the least contact and aversion from any kind of constriction. The whole body or single parts may feel “swollen” or “bruised”, or a sensation of internal trembling may be experienced.

Complaints calling for *Apis* may be induced by emotional upset or stress.

PHYSIOLOGY

In fevers the *Apis* chill is prominent at 3 p.m.; this is contrast with the *Natrum muriaticum* chill which occurs at 10 a.m. The *Apis* chill seems to start in belly, hands, chest or knees, but even during the chill there is a desire for cool air.

There may be a desire for milk. Thirst is surprisingly absent in the hot stage of fevers but is present during the cold stage. Thirst is absent also in the presence of dropsy; the œdematous patient being internally drowned in his own fluids has his reflex thirst stimulus inhibited.

Drowsiness, progressing to stupor or semicoma may occur. The patient may utter cries during sleep and push off the bedcovers in search of coolth. Insomnia may occur from worrying thoughts or from cerebral excitement.

Sweats affect chiefly the head region. The sweats may have a musk-like odour.

The most important *modality* is the relation to heat. Heat in any form, heat of fire, heat of hot stuffy room, hot bath, local application, causes severe aggravation. This is an important difference from *Rhus toxicodendron* with its definite amelioration from warmth.

Aggravation is also caused by getting wet, by touch or pressure, when lying down, and symptoms are worse about 5 p.m., during the night and after sleep.

Relief is obtained from contact with cool air, in the open air, by cool applications, and to some extent by uncovering, by change of position, by sitting up or walking about. Movement, of course, improves the circulation and aids the resorption of fluids.

PATHOLOGY

Complaints tend to start on the right side and spread to the left, as is also the case with *Lycopodium*. The illness is violent in onset and gets rapidly worse. Pains are stinging, burning, shooting and tend to shift and wander from one site to another. They may be described as if "pierced by red hot needles", a symptom shared by *Arsenicum album*.

Widespread swellings may occur, inflammatory and rosy or cedematous with a pale waxy look or a transparent appearance of the skin, possibly with a slight icteric tinge. The swelling is associated with a feeling of tension and stiffness.

Sudden serous effusions may occur into joint or serous cavities, accompanying, for instance, meningitis, pleuritis, pericarditis or peritonitis. This remedy lacks the immobility and aggravation by movement associated with *Bryonia*, another remedy often called for in serous effusions.

Apis may be indicated in severe adynamic illness such as malignant scarlet fever, diphtheria and typhoid.

Head Region. There may be sudden onset of stupor or coma as the result of acute mental shock or in relation to a suppressed eruption in connection with measles or other exanthem.

Vertigo is worse when lying down and closing the eyes, and is better when walking about.

With headache, the head feels on fire, swollen and throbbing, and the least jolt or jar is resented. It is worse in a warm room and there is a desire to have the head uncovered. A muzzy dull type of headache is noted also, relieved somewhat by pressure of the hands.

Acute hydrocephalus is an indication for *Apis*, and here it vies with *Helleborus*. The latter remedy exhibits a more stuporous picture, however.

There may be a complaint of shooting pains in orbits, cheeks and chin.

Eyes. Acute swelling of the lids is apt to be accompanied by intense chemosis, much photophobia and scalding lachrymation. The lids smart and burn. Puffy swellings like "bags of water" form below the eyes. Bathing the eyes in cold water affords some relief.

The remedy has been used also in chronic eye troubles, such as trachoma, ectropion, kerato-iritis.

Eye symptoms are aggravated when looking at a fire or at white surfaces, such as snow. The remedy might well be of service in snow-blindness with its picture of intense pain, lachrymation, photophobia and œdema of the lids. A similar condition, of course, may arise from exposure of the eyes to ultra violet light in arc-welders and electricians.

Respiratory System. Violent sneezing is associated with acute blockage of air passages and only scanty discharge. The nose feels numb or stinging and the tip of the nose is cold.

Throat symptoms are important. The pharynx acquires a mottled, glossy or varnished look and swallowing causes pain in the ears.

Acute œdema of the throat may occur, the uvula looking like a bag of jelly, and œdema may extend to the glottis; this produces a choking feeling and makes swallowing even a sip of water almost impossible. The sufferer cannot stand anything tight around the neck.

Ulceration may ensue, perhaps with a dirty grey or "wash-leather" type of exudation on the fauces, such as may be present in diphtheria or scarlet fever.

A chest symptom is a sense of oppression or constriction, as if "would suffocate", and this is much worse in a warm room.

Respiration may be panting in type with a feeling as if every breath would be the last, and the distress is made worse by leaning either forwards or backwards.

Voice tends to be hoarse, rough, husky. Sputum is scanty and must be swallowed.

Alimentary System. There is a burning and stinging sensation in the mouth which feels "scalded". Clusters of blisters may be formed on the back of the tongue.

Acute glossitis may occur with sudden, rapid and alarming swelling of the tongue. Or a similar process may involve one or both lips.

Acute inflammatory conditions in the abdomen may be present; the belly is tense, swollen, sensitive to touch and sore with burning pains: it hurts to sneeze.

Diarrhoea accompanies low debilitated states, such as occur with fevers, and a stool is passed with every movement owing to a patulous anus, which becomes sore and raw.

Watery, yellow or green stools may be passed which smell like carrion, worse in the morning.

Painful prolapsed piles are relieved by bathing in cold water.

Cardiovascular System. Sudden pain is described below the heart and extending to the right. Palpitations occur with great irregularity of pulse and, possibly, dropped beats.

The remedy may be called for in pericarditis with effusion, possibly associated also with hydrothorax. The sufferer cannot lie down, the chest feels constricted, there is dry cough, suffocative dyspnoea and a feeling of imminent death.

Lymphatic and Glandular Systems. Thyroid dysfunction may occur associated with ovarian trouble.

Acute mastitis presents a picture of erysipeloid inflammation with burning and stinging pains.

Genital System. Ovarian lesions occur, mostly on the right side, associated with much soreness in the right groin. The remedy has been found of service in relation to cystic ovarian disease accompanied by burning and stinging pains, numbness down the thigh and over the right side of the trunk, and a feeling of constriction in the chest with a reflex type of cough, deriving from pelvic irritation.

Urinary System. Urination is scalding and urgent—can scarcely retain the urine for a single moment. This is very similar to the *Cantharis* picture, but in the latter the symptoms and burning are even more violent. Urinary incontinence in old men may also call for *Apis*.

The remedy may be indicated in nephritis with scanty urine, albuminuria, tubular casts and, possibly, anasarca with puffy eyelids, general soreness, burning pains and probably marked absence of thirst. Oedema of scrotum is

probably also present. The absence of thirst helps to distinguish the picture from that of *Arsenicum album*, another valuable remedy in nephritis.

Locomotor System. Stiffness and stitching pains affect the nape of the neck and are felt also deep to the shoulder-blades.

The whole dorsum may feel tired and bruised with a tendency to hot flushes alternating with shuddering.

Acute synovitis may occur in joints, which become swollen with a wax-like appearance and feel as if "stretched tight".

Pains occur in the limbs with much pricking and burning. Hands and feet feel swollen, numb, woolly and tremulous. Toes are red and burning, despite the fact that the feet are cold.

Apis is indicated in paronychia when the pains are stinging and burning and relief is obtained from cold water.

Skin. Fulminating urticaria is associated with intolerable itching and burning and great sensitivity to touch. Even the hair is hypersensitive.

Necrotic lesions may occur, boils, carbuncles, phlegmonous cellulitis, erysipelas with gangrene in spots. Erysipelas on the face is apt to start below the right eye and spread to the left, the affected part rapidly becoming œdematous. There are burning, stinging pains, high fever, and the initial pink colour changes to purple.

POSODOGY

Apis is a remedy for acute exacerbations of chronic toxic conditions. It will clear up the acute outbreak but not prevent recurrences. For this the exhibition of a more deeply acting remedy will be necessary, such as *Natrum muriaticum*, *Pulsatilla* or *Tuberculinum*. Incidentally the preparation of *Tuberculinum* (*Marmorek* or *Tuberculum Koch*) should not be given too early after the acute episode and should usually be preceded by *Natrum muriaticum* or *Pulsatilla*.

Experience has shown that *Apis* is contraindicated in direct sequence to *Rhus toxicodendron*.

A special indication will be sickness resulting from the suppression, or delay in appearance, of the rash in one or other of the exanthemata.

Apis may be called for in severe adynamic conditions associated with such illnesses as scarlet fever, diphtheria and typhoid fever.

It is said to follow well after *Arsenicum album*.

Warning is given that *Apis* in low potency or in frequent doses should be avoided in the early months of pregnancy, on account of a risk of abortion.

In acute conditions response to the drug may be expected within an hour or two. Otherwise *Apis* is somewhat slow in action, and a switch to another remedy must not be made too hurriedly. The favourable action of the remedy is first shown by a greatly increased flow of pale urine.

Bryonia, a study

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PHARMACOGNOSY

There are some 22 varieties of *Bryonia* found in different parts of the world, but only two of these find a niche, albeit a very prominent one, in the homœopathic materia medica. These are *Bryonia dioica*, found in Britain and also on the continent, and *Bryonia alba*, found only on the continent of Europe. Both are known as white bryony; it was the latter that Hahnemann used to make his provings.

However, careful and extensive provings were made by the Austrian school using both species and "no difference in their actions could be established". It therefore appears justifiable to use the root-stock of either species for preparation of the mother tincture.

Bryonia belongs to the Cucurbitaceae, the gourd family, of which *Colocynthis* is also a member.

Bryonia dioica is a climbing hedgerow plant, creeping quietly and slowly and somewhat unobtrusively on its way, often hidden by the foliage of the hedge shrubs. In this respect it is very different from the furiously growing *Belladonna*, and it is suggestive of the *Bryonia* type of illness which is slow and insidious in onset and the *Bryonia* patient who manifests inertia and desires to left be in peace and quiet.

The stems are annual and grow to a great length. The whole plant is covered with minute hairs. It contains an acrid milky juice which has an unpleasant odour and is particularly nauseous when dried and also irritant if coming in contact with the skin.

The leaves have a short curved stalk, shorter than the blade, which is divided into five finger-like lobes, all rather angular in shape, the middle one being by far the largest.

The flowers, which bloom in May, are small, greenish-yellow in colour and not at all showy. Those of *Bryonia alba* are paler. Stamens and pistils are never found in the same flower, the pollen flowers and ovary flowers being in separate sets. In the *dioica* variety they are on separate stems—hence *dioica* = "two dwellings".

A unique feature of the plant is its method of climbing, which depends on the possession of long tendrils or feelers. These extend from the stem in search of some support and, having become attached thereto, contract into a coiled spring, one half of which is curled in a clockwise direction and the other half anti-clockwise. This provides fixation and stability for the parent plant of no mean order.

The berries, often found hanging about the bushes after the stems and leaves have withered, are about the size of a garden pea. They occur in little clusters, changing from green to a striking yellow and finally crimson; they are covered with a dry delicate bloom. The berries of the *alba* variety are black when ripe.

The berries, when ripe, are filled with a juice of a foetid unpleasant odour; they contain three to six large seeds, greyish yellow in colour and mottled with black. The berries are described as emetic and unwholesome to eat. It has been estimated that 40 berries would cause the death of an adult and 15 would prove fatal for a child.

It is important to distinguish the plant from another with a similar name, black bryony. This latter is *Tamus communis*, also a hedgerow climber but not using tendrils for its excursions. The plant climbs by twining its stem round any available support as it reaches higher and higher. Its leaves are very distinctive, being large, long, glossy and smooth; they are broad at the base and taper to a point at the tip. They turn to bronze or almost black before withering. The berries are bright red when ripe, much larger than those of white bryony and distinctly shiny, lacking any bloom on the surface. The root is black.

To return to white bryony, the root is white and large, possessing an unpleasant odour and a nauseous taste. It is thick and fleshy and may attain an enormous size, growing to a length of two feet and becoming "as thick as a man's arm", weighing perhaps several pounds. Gerarde wrote, "The Queen's chief surgeon, Mr William Godorus, a very curious and learned gentleman, shewed me a root hereof that waied half an hundredweight, and of the bigness of a child of a year old".

The milky juice of the root possesses violent purgative and cathartic properties, shared in some measure by all parts of the plant. Many fatal cases of poisoning have been recorded. In France especially many accidents have occurred among women at the time of weaning their infants because of the popular belief that a decoction of the plant will diminish milk secretion. The French name for the plant is "Navet du diable"—Devil's turnip—which is suggestive.

The old herbalists recognized that the use of the plant was not unattended by danger. Culpepper speaks of it as "a furious martial herb" which "purges the belly with great violence, troubling the stomach, burning the liver, and therefore not rashly to be taken".

Nevertheless it was used extensively by many notable physicians of former times. Dioscorides employed it in epilepsy, vertigo and melancholia. Galen in gout, hysteria and hypochondriasis. Caelius Aurelianus in jaundice. Sydenham in disorders of the mind, delirium, mania, insanity and imbecility. Alexander Trallian in deafness, diarrhœa, dropsy, pleuritis, stitches in the side, sciatica, white tumour of the knee. Hartman in diseases of the womb and tardy delivery. Loniger in asthma, pain in the neck, hæmorrhage and spitting of blood.

This rather remarkable list of ailments is of pertinent interest in that the various conditions for which the drug was prescribed are all simulated by the type of symptoms *Bryonia* is capable of producing in healthy provers. In other words these several uses of the drug were in effect examples of inadvertent Homœopathy.

PHARMACOLOGY

The active principle of the plant is a glycoside, bryonin, which is a drastic purgative. Present also are an amorphous alkaloid and a resin, both of which are purgative, a volatile oil and an alcohol.

The chief affinity of the drug is with epithelial tissues, mucous, serous and synovial, tending to inflammatory change with the production of either fibrinous or serous exudation.

This tends to extreme dryness of mucous surfaces in air passages and alimentary tract, and in other locations to the formation of adhesions, which incidentally will limit or prevent movement of the affected part. Effusions in joints or serous cavities will also tend to limit movement by exerting fluid pressure.

The drying up tendency is further manifested by interference with the free secretion and free flow of fluids, resulting for example in biliary stasis and damage to the tissues of the liver.

There is also affinity with fibrous tissues in muscles and ligaments around joints, inducing inflammatory reactions which provoke spasm with resulting limitation of movement and avoidance of pain.

PHYSIOGNOMY

The *Bryonia* patient will usually be found lying perfectly still, afraid to move a muscle because movement increases pain.

In fevers the face is swollen, puffy, purplish and drunken-looking. Pupils are dilated but lack the glint and stare of *Belladonna*.

Lips are dry, cracked and bleeding. The child constantly picks at his lips. Although scared to move there may be some fidgeting of the arms and legs, and constant side to side chewing movements of the lower jaw may be observed.

If up and about the gait is staggering, especially when going up or down stairs.

PSYCHOLOGY

The *Bryonia* type of individual has been described as "persistent, pigheaded, choleric, bursting with plans and activity but afraid of poverty and fearful about the future".

Gutman gives a most apt description, thus: "The typical *Bryonia* personality is not the artist or scientist or philosopher, the explorer of beauty or the unknown. It is the business man, the insurance man, the stock-broker, the man without much imagination but with much 'calculation': a dry fellow, sober, reliable, methodical, tenacious, weighing his steps, concerned in everything he does with safety, stability, security. Lacking a safe basis for his economic existence he becomes irritable, angry, anxious, depressed, always on the look out for something which promises a hold to provide stability and security. . . . Worried about his security, he holds on to his back, he holds on to his belly, he holds on to his pocket-book."

In illness the individual characteristics are often exaggerated, so it is not surprising that the *Bryonia* patient is anxious both about his condition and about current affairs. He becomes irritable, morose, angry if crossed, his poise and sense of stability being upset.

There is aversion from making any effort, even that of conversation—inertia of mind as well as immobility of body.

There is a desire to lie still in a quiet room and not be disturbed or interfered with. But at the same time he is ill at ease, discontented—doesn't really know just what he does want. Often expresses a wish to "go home" when he is actually in his own bed at home.

PHYSIOLOGY

Although the symptoms may be brought on by exposure to dry cold, especially cold east winds, the *Bryonia* patient prefers to be in a cool atmosphere and dislikes a warm room or being over-warmly wrapped up.

There is a tendency to overeat but sometimes this is replaced by an aversion from all food or, perhaps, a craving for something that is unobtainable.

Thirst tends to be excessive, for large drinks at fairly long intervals, not constant sips, as for instance with *Arsenicum album*.

Sweats are profuse, especially during the night at about 2 a.m., and the sweat has a sour smell.

Drowsiness is marked during the day, but sleep is often delayed at night and unrefreshing. There is a tendency to start awake in fright when dropping off to sleep or during sleep. Somnambulism may occur, also nightmare.

Modalities show aggravation from heat and relief when cold and from cool drinks or cold applications.

Any muscular effort causes aggravation, even that required for standing or sitting erect, so much so that the legs seem hardly able to support the body. This is especially noticeable on first rising from sitting or after a period of rest.

Aggravation occurs at 3 a.m. and 9 p.m. A profuse urination may occur at 6 to 7 p.m.

Relief is obtained by lying motionless, also by firm pressure. The sufferer lies on the affected side as this helps to restrain movement and diminish pain. Free perspiration also affords relief.

PATHOLOGY

Illness calling for *Bryonia* may be induced not only by exposure to cold east winds but also by weather changes from cold to warm; or causal factors such as fright, anger or resentment may be responsible.

The onset of symptoms is gradual and insidious rather than sudden and abrupt, and may be delayed till a day or two after exposure. Moreover the illness progresses slowly rather than with violence and rapidity.

Pains are plentiful and typically sticking or stitching in character; twinges of pain may cause actual wincing. The pains are notably aggravated by the slightest movement and are accompanied by soreness of the affected part and sensitivity to touch. Firm pressure, however, is tolerated and gives relief.

Acute effusions occur into serous or synovial cavities.

Symptoms tend to be right-sided.

Head Region. The *Bryonia* vertigo is noticed particularly on rising from sitting; it is worse in a warm room and better when lying flat.

Headache is noticed on first opening the eyes in the morning and is of bursting or dull throbbing type, frontal or occipital in site, with a tendency to spread to the nape. Again the ache may start above the right eye, spread backwards to the occiput and further involve the whole body in discomfort.

The headache tends to be aggravated by stooping, after meals, from any exertion and on going to stool. It is better in cool air, by cool applications, by firm pressure and when lying down. On occasion more relief is obtained by local warmth than by cold. The scalp is also sore and sensitive.

Eyes. Pain and soreness in the eyeballs is greatly aggravated by moving the eyes. Letters tend to run together when attempting to read. The eyes feel hot and full of dust.

Respiratory System. A dry coryza may cause nasal blockage or a fluent coryza may occur associated with shooting pains in the forehead. The nose is apt to

become swollen and sore. Epistaxis may be frequent and is especially likely to occur just before the menstrual period or during pregnancy at the time when the period would normally be due. It may also occur in association with amenorrhœa from other causes.

Dryness of the air-passages may result in laryngitis or tracheitis with a tiresome tickle felt low down behind the sternum. There is tenacious mucus only shifted with difficulty.

Downward spread may lead to a dry cough with much gagging and vomiting, and the cough is aggravated on entering a warm room. Involvement of lungs or pleura may lead to pneumonia or pleurisy with or without effusion.

When coughing the sufferer is apt to hold on to the chest with one hand and on to the head with the other. Eating, drinking, laughing, talking, smoking are all apt to aggravate the cough.

With involvement of lung or pleura the patient prefers to lie on the affected side.

There may be a sensation of pressure on the chest with difficulty in breathing and a frequent desire to take a deep breath in search of relief. Stitches are felt in the chest when breathing in or when coughing.

Alimentary System. Lips, tongue and pharynx are excessively dry. Soapy, frothy saliva accumulates in the mouth. The tongue is loaded with a white or yellow coating. There is an unpleasant bitter taste in the mouth. Burning blisters may occur on the edge of the tongue.

The *Bryonia* toothache tends to shoot from one tooth to another or extend to head and cheeks. It is worse at 3 a.m. and aggravated by smoking. Firm pressure on the affected side affords some relief.

With indigestion there is a distressing sensation as if the food taken lies like a stone in the stomach. Gastric secretion is in abeyance and this is the result. The patient often has a craving for ice-cold water but it is nevertheless a drink of something warm which gives relief. Eating makes things worse.

With liver involvement there is much biliousness, nausea and vomiting associated with yawning and a feeling of faintness. Recumbency affords relief but on lifting the head from the pillow the dreadful sickness returns and the attempt to sit up has to be abandoned. Jaundice may be evident and tenderness noticed on palpating the liver.

A feature may be hiccough associated with much belching; the eructations taste of food. They afford some relief for a time. The epigastrium is often sore and tender to the touch.

Burning, shooting, sticking pains may be felt in the belly associated with extreme tenderness, aggravated by both touch and pressure, compelling the sufferer to lie motionless with the legs drawn up—the picture of acute peritonitis.

The *Bryonia* diarrhœa drives from bed in the morning or comes on soon after rising from bed. There is profuse purging accompanied by great exhaustion. The stools may be dysenteric in type associated with griping pains in the belly and severe rectal tenesmus. The exhaustion compels the sufferer to lie down but if, while lying, he makes the least movement he must hurry to stool again. An attack of diarrhœa may be brought on by eating sour fruit or drinking cold water when over-heated. Stools are apt to smell like old cheese and may have a yellow mushy appearance.

The *Bryonia* constipation is characterized by large, bulky, dry, hard crumbly

stools, brown to black in colour as if burnt. The stool is passed only with great difficulty.

Cardiovascular System. The remedy may be called for in pericarditis with effusion.

Lymphatic and Glandular Systems. With mastitis the breast is heavy, pale, hot, painful, stony hard. Local heat gives relief, as does also firm bandaging.

The remedy is useful when the breasts become painful before and during menstruation. It is of value also in the lying-in period in relation to milk fever—breasts tense, headache, tearing pains in limbs, great fatigue and desire to lie still.

Urinary System. Urgent micturition is described with cutting pains, and the urine feels hot as passed. It may be dark brown in colour.

Genital System. Pain is felt in the groins before the onset of the menstrual periods which, when the period starts, involves the hypogastrium and burning pain is felt in the uterus.

Suppression of menses is apt to result from overexertion either shortly before or at the time of the period.

Locomotor System. Sticking, stitching, tearing pains occur in the muscles of nape, back and limbs. The pains are so violent that the sufferer cannot keep still, yet when he makes the least movement he cries out with worse pain—a most unenviable state of affairs. Heat gives relief.

Arthritis or peri-arthritis is accompanied by swelling, possibly effusion, and severe pain. The joint affected is pale red and tense. The least movement causes intense pain.

Walking may be interfered with by severe weakness of the muscles of the thighs, also possibly by soreness in soles and heels.

POSIOLOGY

In acute pulmonary affections *Bryonia* will follow *Aconitum* with advantage, and in turn may give way to *Kali carb.*, *Pulsatilla* or *Phosphorus* as the symptoms develop.

In fibrositic or arthritic conditions the remedy will often be followed by *Rhus tox.* as the symptoms change to the picture of that remedy, that is, pains worse on first movement but relieved by continued movement.

Bryonia is the acute remedy in relation to *Natrum mur.* and its complementary remedies in chronic conditions are *Alumina* and *Lycopodium*, and in acute illness *Sulphur* and *Sulphur iod.*





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