

Pneumonia—Treatment of—

(Continued from page 318)

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There are various forms of Pneumonia viz : croupous or lobar, or catarrhal or lobular etc., for diagnostic purposes but it is not at all necessary from the therapeutic point of view. The most important thing which is required for a homœopath is to prescribe upon the symptoms that are peculiar and characteristic in each individual patient and to choose the similar remedy that most nearly corresponds, in its pathogenesis, with those peculiarities. Our only path to success is the "Similia Similibus", no matter in what form or stage of the disease. But for convenience' sake we append below the symptomatology of certain important remedies that may come in the course of treatment in the stages as hereunder mentioned but we appeal most humbly that any and every remedy of the Materia Medica from "A to Z" has the power of curing the patient as "we treat the patient not the disease".

The remedies most apt to be indicated in the first or the stage of engorgement, of Pneumonia, are Aconite, Belladonna, Ferrum Phos, Sulphur and Veratrum Viride.

ACONITE.—There is a positive history of chill in cold dry air which is promptly followed by high grade inflammatory fever, as manifested by great heat, dry skin, intense thirst, restlessness, fear of death—even he foretells the hour and minute of death. The sputum is thin, frothy and tinged with blood. Percussion sound is still clear and crepitating rales distinctly audible.

Now writes Dr. Nash "If Aconite is exhibited in potency from 6th to the 30th oft repeated, there will generally follow profuse perspiration and amelioration of all the other symptoms. But if such is not the case after twenty-four hours—

SULPHUR 50th once in 2 hours will complement and often conquer the disease in its first stage. These two remedies

will abort many cases, if we are called to a case of this character in time, as I can affirm from experience”.

BELLADONNA.—In Belladonna the fever and heat is as great as in Aconite with delirium, red eyes and throbbing of carotids, The patient often jerks and twitches in sleep. There is sweat on covered parts and the rest of body is dry and hot which imparts a burning sensation to examining hand. Dry short tickling cough with aggravation after midnight; the patient suddenly awakes with suffocation; he cannot lie and wants to sit erect; sleepy but cannot sleep.

Some one confounds Aconite with Belladonna and some other alternates them—It is just to draw a line of demarcation between the two we differentiate:

ACONITE.

There is inflammation but no localisation.

Has restlessness and fear of death.

Does not like covering.

Wants to lie down.

Aconite is dry.

Red face while lying.

Pupil contracted.

BELLADONNA.

Localisation commences.

Has drowsiness with inability to sleep because he startles as soon as sleep comes in.

Wants covering.

Wants to sit down.

Belladonna has sweat on the covered parts.

Face is always red.

Pupil dilated.

FERRUM PHOS.—It is generally adapted to pale and anæmic subjects and stands midway between Aconite and Belladonna, for while it does not present the excitement and fear of Aconite, on the otherhand it does not produce so strong brain symptoms as Belladonna. It is indicated as long as no exudation has taken place. The thirst is very little.

VERATRUM VIRIDE.—This is the most important remedy in the first stage of engorgement, to which its use must be limited. “In my own experience and in that of others it has

apparently cut short oncoming attacks of Pneumonia. It must be given early, immediately following chill. It is of no avail after hepatization has begun. Again if it produces nausea reduce the dose. Watch the action to avoid cardiac depression" (Gatchell). The well defined red streak running right through the middle of the tongue is very characteristic of this medicine.

The remedies that are generally indicated in the second stage of Pneumonia (hepatization) are :

Ant. Tart., Arsenic, Bryonia, Carbo Veg, Chelidonium, Iodine, Kali Carb, Lach., Lyco., Merc., Opium, Rhustox., Sanguinaria and Sulphur.

ANT TART.—Is of great service when "loosening up" stage comes in. The chest seems full of mucus with coarse rattling and it seems as if much would be expectorated but nothing comes up. The face is cold, blue, pale and covered with cold sweat. Drowsiness and coma is very marked of Ant. Tart. It is suitable especially to infants and old or cachectic people with impending paralysis of lungs.

ARSENIC.—Restlessness, burning, prostration and midnight aggravation are the keynote of Arsenic. It usually comes in after Rhus Tox. if the restlessness continues and weakness and prostration is marked. The characteristics of Ars. viz., thirst for small quantities of water at short intervals, fear of death, mental restlessness with physical weakness may be associated.

BRYONIA.—It is indicated in the beginning of the disease but comes after Aconite when the patient is more calm and quiet. Owing to the inflammation of the pleura there is stitching pain in the chest which is relieved by pressing so that the patient lies on the affected side. Excessive thirst at long intervals with corresponding dryness of mouth and lips. Constipation, tongue first dry and then coated. Stitching pain with aggravation by movements and so the patient lies motionless. In delirium the patient wants to "go home". The patient complains of heavy pressure just over the sternum.

CARBO. VEG.—“It has been found very efficacious in desperate cases of Pneumonia and comes in quite naturally after Ant. Tart. has failed to assist the patient to clear his lungs of the great quantities of loose mucus when cyanosis and paralysis threaten from weakness. Its sputum then is apt to be foetid with cold sweat and breath and the characteristic “wanted to be fanned” condition is there.”

CHELIDONIUM.—Chelidonium has pain under the lower inner angle of the right shoulder blade and in the liver. Loss of appetite with only relief from warm and hot drinks will give the picture of Chelidonium. Flapping of the alæ nasi is there but in a lesser degree. It touches Lycopodium in having afternoon aggravation, flapping of alæ nasi and relief from warm drinks. The only difference is the constipation and tympanitic condition of Lycopodium is absent in Chelidonium. Further there is no sense of fullness in Chelidonium.

IODIUM.—Iodium is adapted to spare, dark complexioned (brunette) with dark eyes, subject to scrofulous affections of the glands, especially goitre. There is tendency to bronchial and pulmonary congestion and the fever will not abate but continue great thirst, cough, with great dyspnoea as if the chest could not be expanded; sensation of weakness in the chest with anxiety and oppression which is more ameliorated in open air than in a warm room. Absorption does not take place, and the patient emaciates greatly, though he may want to eat and feels better while doing so.

Kali Carb.—Stitching pain, especially in lower third of right lung, going through the chest to the back irrespective of movement (Bry. is aggr. from movement, Rhus. is amel. from movement, but the pain of Kali Carb is felt all along whether the patient moves or not). Although there is a great deal of mucus, it is raised with difficulty and the cough is worse towards 3 to 5 a. m. The breathing is wheezing, whistling, oppressed so that he can neither sleep nor drink. There may be cyanotic symptoms with bag like swelling between the

upper lids and eye-brow. It often finishes the case when Bryonia has only partially relieved the stitching pain.

LACHESIS.—Left sided Pneumonia oftenest calls for this remedy. When Rhus. and Hyos. have failed and the stupor increases with the weakness and muttering delirium and hallucinations, it comes into play. The tongue when trying to protrude trembles and catches behind the lower jaw, showing great weakness. There is general aggr. of the whole case after sleep. Great oppression of breathing with aversion to having anything touching on the chest or throat and the pulse is weak and intermittent.

LYCOPodium.—Begins in the right and may extend to the left; 4 to 8 p.m. aggravation is very characteristic. Flapping of the alæ nasi. Children are specially irritated after sleep. Lyco. always wants warm food (hot food Chelidonium). It wants cold in the head but warmth in the lower portion and a small quantity of food fills him to the full especially in the afternoon.

N.B.—An old case of mal-treated Pneumonia has not been thriving well, has got downward inclination, and the old lung spot sensitive required Lycopodium to save him from consumption.—(Dr. Ghatak.)

MERCURIUS.—Shortness of breath is characteristic. Favourite spot in Pneumonia is right lower; stitches in right chest through from scapula. Mouth and tongue moist, but tongue large, flabby, showing imprint of the teeth, great thirst and *profuse sweat without relief*, worse at night and the patient can lie only to the left and not to the right. Quantum of sputum is profuse and thick, with tenderness in the region of liver.

OPIUM.—It is of great use in cases of old topors. The whole body bathed in a hot sweat and the patient complains of the bed feeling too hot. Anxious sleep with starts. The face is red.

RHUS TOX.—If the case assumes a typhoid tendency, as shown by the tongue with its dryness and triangular red tip,

and excessive restlessness which keeps the patient tossing about and the sensorium is blunted with low delirium. If this remedy does not within a reasonable time, modify the symptoms and the delirium increases also the stupor,—until the case is unconscious, no remedy surpasses Hyoscyamus.

SANGUINARIA.—Right sided Pneumonia. Preferably used in two conditions e.g., first, when the lung is hepatised, intense dyspnoea and pain at a particular spot between the sternum and the right nipple. Secondly, when the trail continues and the case goes on rather protracted and the foetid sputum is coughed out.

SULPHUR.—“When the well indicated remedy fails to act” this remedy as usual comes to establish re-action. Pneumonia assumes a torpid character, with slow solidification of the lungs. Passing through its first stage normally it then remains stationary, such a deficiency of re-action points to Sulph. as the remedy, when it accomplishes the absorption of the infiltration and prevents suppuration of the lung-tissue.

(to be continued).

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