

801

IGNATIA, A STUDY  
AND  
NUX VOMICA, A STUDY

BY

D. M. GIBSON

M.B., B.S.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Edin.), M.F.Hom.

*Reprinted from*

THE BRITISH HOMŒOPATHIC JOURNAL

Vol. LII, No. 1. January 1963







# Ignatia, a study

D. M. GIBSON, M.B., B.S. (LOND.), F.R.C.S. (EDIN.), M.F. HOM.

## PHARMACOGNOSY

This remedy is prepared from the St. Ignatius bean, so-called, fruit of the *Strychnos ignatia* plant, a member of the Loganiaceae group.

The plant is a tall, woody, climbing shrub found in the Philippine Islands. The ovate glabrous leaves are in opposite pairs; white tubular flowers give rise to a large pyriform berry, about 10 cm. in diameter, which contains up to 24 pebble-like seeds, embedded in a bitter pulp.

The seeds are heavy, hard, somewhat pyramidal in shape with flattish sides and roughly 20 mm. by 15 mm. in size. The colour is greyish or reddish black, the surface smooth with few or no hairs, and if fractured the endosperm is seen to be translucent and to enclose an irregular hollow cavity in which is an oblong embryo. The seeds are inodorous but are intensely bitter in taste. One characteristic of the *Ignatia* subject is intense bitterness of spirit.

The seeds, which are used for preparation of the mother tincture, contain proportionately more strychnine than those of *Nux vomica*. The powdered seeds contain 2.5 to 3 per cent. of strychnine and brucine.

## PHARMACOLOGY

Owing to the high strychnine content—up to two-thirds of the total alkaloids of *Ignatia* represent strychnine—the symptoms of poisoning are similar to those of *Nux vomica*. The affinity for the central nervous system induces a state of hypersensitivity which leads to muscular irritability and emotional unreliability. Severe dyspnoea and an unbearable feeling of anxiety precede tetanic spasms, which are followed by extreme nervous exhaustion and paralysis.

Despite the similarity of alkaloidal content the two remedies *Nux vomica* and *Ignatia* are quite distinct from the point of view of total symptom picture and constitutional type. This demonstrates the importance therapeutically of employing potencies of whole natural products rather than using isolated alkaloids.

## PHYSIOGNOMY

Whereas irritability is a chief characteristic of *Nux vomica*, instability is a prominent feature of *Ignatia*. This is shown physically in various ways. Frequent changes of colour are noticed in the face, deadly pallor contrasting with easy flushing at the least emotion. Facial grimacing is common or actual spasmodic affecting different muscle groups. Involuntary laughter alternates with much sighing and yawning.

Movements tend to be hurried and awkward, and tremulousness may be evident. There is a tendency to let the head hang forward, to clench the teeth and bite the side of the tongue or the inside of the cheek. May become aphonic and speak in a whisper.

Cracked bleeding lips, hot knees, and cold nose are also mentioned.

## PSYCHOLOGY

It is in the emotional sphere that *Ignatia* presents a most typical picture

differing from that of *Nux vomica*. Unlike the explosive irascible *Nux* type, always ready for a scrap or an argument, the *Ignatia* subject avoids controversy, doesn't stick up for herself, and retires into her shell to nurse her injured feelings in silence.

The tension is there, but, whereas with *Nux* it is obvious and uninhibited leading to rows, rampagings and ruthlessness, with *Ignatia* it is inward, pent up and occult giving rise to sighs, sobbing and self-pity. *Nux* blows up. *Ignatia* bottles up.

With *Ignatia*, moods are changeable and contradictory; laughter and tears alternate or mingle; desire for solitude gives place to a longing for company and affection. The child is at first rude and rebellious, then relents and becomes docile.

The *Ignatia* subject broods on injuries, real or imagined, but does not break out into violence, hates sympathy and feels misunderstood; is very sensitive to blame and strongly resents contradiction, is hyperconscientious; liable to causeless fears.

May be morose and so absorbed in her dismal thoughts that it is impossible to get her to talk or to cheer up. On the other hand she may be so "hurried" that she makes mistakes in speech, in writing, in doing things, and finds herself constantly obliged to make reparation for these silly mistakes. She may be constantly pursued by some fixed idea which obtrudes itself in conversation.

There is inability to stand pain or noise and a tendency to be easily upset by trifles, and also by the smell of tobacco smoke.

#### PHYSIOLOGY

The *Ignatia* appetite is paradoxical, with aversion from ordinary diet, warm food and meat, but a craving for indigestible or exotic comestibles. Sometimes there is an insatiable hunger for bread or for sour things.

There may be a surprising absence of thirst with fever, but thirst ensues during the period of chilliness.

Sleep is so light that it may be disturbed even by the striking of a clock at a distance. Jerking of the limbs when falling off to sleep is a symptom shared with *Belladonna*, *Hypericum* and *Lycopodium*. Excessive dreaming is common; may dream all night on one theme. The child may whimper in his sleep.

Sweating may occur on the face while eating, a symptom noted also under *Chamomilla*, *Natrum muriaticum* and *Sulphuricum acidum*.

Modalities are worthy of note. There is aggravation from cold, from eating sweets, from taking coffee or alcohol, and to a marked degree from contact with tobacco smoke, or any strong odour. Other sources of aggravation are yawning, pressure on non-painful areas, and any emotional upset.

Conversely, relief is obtained by warmth, while eating, by change of position, by pressure on the painful part; in other words by activity which affords distraction from preoccupation with herself.

#### PATHOLOGY

As regards *ætiology*, the *Ignatia* syndrome may be induced by various kinds of emotional stress—shock, grief, resentment, and especially the "injured feeling".

Chilliness may occur, even to the point of actual "gooseflesh", but is relieved at once by warmth. Flushes of heat are accompanied by a feeling of imminent perspiration.

Pains appear and disappear with equal abruptness. Pain is often felt in quite small circumscribed areas. Symptoms tend to be curiously unpredictable and contradictory.

For instance, although there is hypersensitivity to pain yet there is relief from

firm pressure on the painful part; an empty feeling in the stomach is not relieved by taking food, although in general the act of eating ameliorates; with a severe sore throat relief is felt by swallowing solids; although hot with fever, desires to be well covered; the face is red despite chill; a tickle in the throat is made worse, not relieved, by coughing.

*Head.* In this region a great variety of symptoms are recorded. The head is apt to feel hot and heavy, and is held in a forward-hanging position. It may feel hollow, or muzzy and confused, possibly accompanied by actual vertigo causing swaying or staggering.

Headache may extend to the eyes or the root of the nose and be associated with fiery zigzags in front of the eyes and blurring of vision. This type of headache is relieved by vomiting, but it is aggravated by movement.

Headache may also be induced by strong odours or by contact with tobacco smoke. In general the *Ignatia* headache is made worse by talking and by any extra effort or excessive emotion, and is ameliorated by stooping forward, by lying on the same side as the pain, and after passing a large quantity of pale limpid urine.

*Eyes.* Among the eye symptoms mentioned under the remedy are quivering of lid muscles, ocular neuralgia, agglutination of lids after sleep, and patchy scotoma.

*Ears.* The only ear symptoms of note are itching in the external auditory meatus, and tinnitus increased by mental worry.

*Respiratory System.* *Ignatia* is associated with severe and distressing throat symptoms. These are probably secondary to tension in the muscles of the region. There is a most unpleasant and persistent choky plugged sensation, sometimes described as "a ball rising up in the throat".

A constant soreness in the throat may be present, made worse by dry swallow or by drinking fluids, but oddly enough relieved when swallowing solids and also by belching.

The remedy may be called for with ulcerative tonsillitis. Hysterical aphonia, and laryngismus stridulus are also mentioned.

The irritable tickly cough of *Ignatia* is associated with a sensation as if there was some dust or were some fumes in the trachea. Moreover coughing merely aggravates the cough.

Shooting pains may occur in the chest with a tight oppressed feeling which provokes a constant desire to take a deep breath.

*Alimentary System.* There may be complaints of shooting pains in the lips or of the inner surface of the lower lip feeling raw and sore.

A bitter taste is often noticed in the mouth, a physical symptom perhaps associated with bitterness of spirit. Salivation is apt to be excessive. Stitches occur in the palate and extend to the ear. The *Ignatia* toothache is worse when not eating.

Gastric complaints are pyrosis, regurgitation of food, hiccough, which is aggravated by taking food and by tobacco smoke. A meal may be interrupted by vomiting and continued forthwith.

A sinking feeling is experienced in the epigastrium associated with a desire to take a deep breath for relief. Cutting pains occur in the belly and borborygmi cause embarrassment.

As with *Nux vomica* there is a tendency to much ineffectual urging to stool.

When constipated the passage of a soft stool is more painful than of a hard stool. Piles are less painful when walking about than when sitting still. Rectal symptoms include proctalgia, anal spasm, prolapsus recti, and a sensation as if a packet of needles was present in the rectum.

Painless urgent diarrhoea may occur as the result of emotional upset.

*Cardio-vascular System.* In this sphere the variability of *Ignatia* is manifested in attacks of palpitation with a very variable, rapidly altering pulse. Also the blood pressure levels tend to show much variation at different times.

*Urinary System.* An irresistible urge to pass water may be accompanied by inability to do so, owing to spasm of the sphincter muscle, as with retention of urine after labour. Often large quantities of pale lemon coloured urine are passed.

*Genital System.* As would be expected *Ignatia* is associated with psychogenic disturbance of hormonal balance evidenced by menstrual irregularities. The menses tend to be very dark, offensive and containing clots. Colicky dysmenorrhoea occurs, relieved by pressure, by lying down and also by change of position.

*Nervous System.* In this sphere the remedy is related to epileptic attacks precipitated by fright or by punishment, especially in children. It is also to be considered in connection with muscular twitchings and "tics", with chorea in children, and manifestations of hysteria.

*Locomotor System.* Among the symptoms mentioned in this sphere may be noted—stiff neck; quivering in deltoid muscle; sharp cutting pains in lower back extending to the thighs; sacral pain, worse on lying down; cramps in lower limbs associated with numbness and tingling. Also a form of sciatic pain of intermittent character, the attacks being preceded by coldness and shivering; it is worse in cold weather and at night, and during the paroxysm the sufferer is driven from bed to walk the floor in search of relief.

*Skin.* Disturbances of sensation occur, such as formication and numbness, but especially pruritus. This latter is aggravated by becoming heated, also in the open air; scratching affords relief but the itching then starts up in some other site.

#### POSODOGY

*Ignatia* is not considered to be a deeply acting remedy. It is certainly of great value in many psychosomatic disorders. It is complementary to *Natrum muriaticum* and *Sepia*, and can be antidoted, if necessary, by *Chamomilla* or *Pulsatilla*.

In "Typologie" by Leon Vannier there is a pertinent passage on the therapeutic value of the remedy, which can be roughly translated as follows:

"*Ignatia* diminishes the sensitiveness of the individual, gets rid of the tendency to air-swallowing and the paradoxical and contradictory manifestations which baffle the doctor.

"The patient is submitted to endless examinations; the blood is analysed, also the urine; the basal metabolism is estimated, the stools examined, X-ray examinations are carried out.

"All are reported normal. 'There's nothing the matter with you', the patient is told. 'You can stop worrying'. 'All your symptoms are just "nerves".'—meagre consolation for the sufferer! *Ignatia rapidly deals with the situation.*"

# Nux vomica, a study

D. M. GIBSON, M.B., B.S.(LOND.), F.R.C.S.(EDIN.), M.F.HOM.

## PHARMACOGNOSY

This remedy is obtained from the well-known *Strychnos nux vomica* or poison nut plant. It is a tree, of the Loganiaceae family, found growing in the East Indies, the Malay archipelago and northern Australia. It has a crooked trunk and irregular somewhat ataxic looking branches, with a smooth ash-coloured bark. The leaves are large, 4 inches long and 3 inches broad, ovate, short-stalked, shiny and smooth on both aspects. The flowers are small, funnel-shaped, greeny white, in small terminal cymes. They bloom in the cold season and have a disagreeable odour. The fruit is an orange yellow globular berry, about the size of a large apple, having a hard rind, and filled with a soft, white, jelly-like pulp containing five seeds. These are disc-shaped, up to three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and covered with a soft woolly substance. They have been dubbed Quaker's buttons, though anything less Quaker-like than the typical *Nux vomica* subject would be difficult to imagine.

The dried seeds are used in preparing the mother tincture. They are exceedingly bitter and contain, among other alkaloids, brucine and strychnine. Other constituents are a glucoside loganin, caffeotannic acid, fatty matter and a trace of copper.

## PHARMACOLOGY

The tissue affinities of the drug are largely associated with the action of the alkaloid strychnine which has a marked effect on the nervous system. Its poisonous symptoms are only too well known as the result of its use as a homicidal poison and in connection with destruction of animal pests. They are vividly described by Schenk—"Strychnine can lead to an atrocious death. Doses of 10 to 20 milligrammes lead to dyspnoea and unbearable feelings of anxiety (this is a marked symptom in the early stage of tetanus). Twitching and spasms gradually develop and lead to violent tetanic seizures in which the head is often bent right back to the buttocks, so that the spine may be broken, as in insulin shock.

"Breathing may cease for intervals of one to two minutes at a time; in this event the seizures may also stop, only to recommence at the least excitation—a loud noise or a gentle touch—until death from exhaustion finally supervenes. No death could be worse than this and no man is likely to endure greater agonies.

"Despite the virulence of the poison, strychnine habituation may develop. Preparations of the drug may be taken medicinally for many years, until one day the patient is suddenly struck dead by convulsions."

Strychnine is poisonous to almost all common animals and birds, but cats are remarkably tolerant to the poison and snails are unaffected by it.

The action of the poison on the motor elements of the pons and spinal cord results in exaggerated motor responses to sensory stimuli, probably by lowering the threshold for impulse transmission through inhibition of the activity of choline-esterase, the enzyme which normally controls the flow of acetyl-choline. The latter is responsible for the transmission of nerve impulses at synapses and myoneural junctions.

A further effect involving the sensory elements of the nervous system induces enhanced sensitivity to all stimuli with abnormal acuteness of all senses, especially that of touch.

The excessive excitability of the nervous system, while resulting initially in muscle spasm, leads at a later stage to exhaustion and paralysis. An instance of the phenomenon of dual effect, two opposite reactions being brought about by one and the same drug which at different stages or meeting varying degrees of tissue susceptibility can swing the balance of function in either of two opposite directions—towards hyper-activity or towards hypo-activity.

Pharmacologically, therefore, the drug suggests tension, increased tone of muscles, increased response to irritation. It is noteworthy that mental tension is accompanied by and associated with muscle tension. Indeed the one can scarcely be present without the other. Moreover the increased muscle tonus affects not only the skeletal muscles, leading to clenched jaws and jerky limbs, but also involves the plain muscle in the walls of blood-vessels and gut. This is of great import as the consequent disturbance of steady adequate blood-flow to every cell in the body, with resulting impairment of oxygen supply and inadequate removal of waste products, can be responsible for a wide range of physical disorder and distress.

#### PHYSIOGNOMY

In general the *Nux vomica* patient is spare, lean, active, "on his mark", appearing hearty and full of life. The complexion is usually sallow, possibly with a red flush superimposed, a dusky flush, not bright red.

The visage is lined and there may be a dark shadow under the eyes. Movements are brisk and jerky. Talks, eats, walks, in fact does everything, rapidly.

Another type is mentioned—a slow, studious, weary-looking individual, who looks as if he sat up all night reading; slouching gait, prominent belly and appears thoroughly miserable.

With fever the sufferer appears to be boiling hot with a very red countenance, but nevertheless feels extremely chilly and desires plenty of covering.

When exhausted, the limbs may show tremors.

#### PSYCHOLOGY

A tense, over-anxious individual; full of zeal but often irresolute and jittery. Is very apt to feel frustrated by his limitations with resulting discontentedness.

He may be scheming, even malicious. Is disposed to pick a quarrel, highly irritable and must have an outlet. Liable, therefore, to sudden outbursts of peevish rage, and takes it out on the furniture, or his family or his associates. He feels better after a good blow up.

The *Nux vomica* patient is over-sensitive to touch, pain, noise, odours, music, food, even medicines; he finds things or people intolerable and gets very sorry for himself, but curiously is not usually very worried over his health.

He is fussy over order and accuracy, quite tidy, tends to overdo things and gets unduly exasperated over trifles. If startled may turn round and curse the offender. He resents consolation and can't stand contradiction. Gets impatient with others, but shows a lack of perseverance in himself.

There is a peculiar fear of knives, the sight of a handy weapon begetting an impulse to kill. Is liable to a sudden unaccountable urge to do some violent act.

As one author puts it—"Nux vomica is a drug for the highly civilized races, for town dwellers and those who under the stress of life develop both physical and mental symptoms. They are often sedentary brain workers, more inclined to the waste of nervous tissue than of muscular; persons who get through their work largely on stimulants."

## PHYSIOLOGY

The *Nux vomica* subject feels the cold terribly, is permanently chilly, hugs the fire, cannot get warm even in bed. Is averse from the least draught or exposure; even if the body is burning hot, still cannot make any movement or uncover the smallest area without feeling chilly. Nevertheless he does object to being in a stuffy airless atmosphere.

He feels extra tense before a thunderstorm and simply hates the wind, even the sound thereof.

Appetite is most unreliable; tends to be that of the gourmet rather than the gourmand. There may be complete anorexia with a loathing towards all food, or a ravenous hunger, especially just before a nervous "crise".

There is a desire for fat, tasty foods, alcohol, beer, condiments. Meat and milk tend to disagree, also coffee which causes a sleepless night. Cold food is not appreciated; even talking about cold food may cause a pain in the belly.

Feels better by taking food, but only in a small amount. If eats more gets a feeling of fulness and weight in the stomach, accompanied by the inclination to yawn.

Owing to the hypersensitivity of all senses sleep tends to be light and catnappy, much disturbed by frightful or horrific dreams, from which the subject wakes feeling anxious and apprehensive. There is a tendency to awake in the small hours feeling pretty good, then, after lying awake for a spell, to drop off again and wake later feeling tired and headachy.

Drowsiness is common after lunch and also in the evening, with a heavy feeling in the eyes. May sleep on the back with one or other arm placed under the head. Often sleeps with the mouth open and is apt to dribble saliva. Seems to require a lot of sleep.

Perspiration is not a marked feature. Profuse sweats may occur in the morning, but not involving the face.

*General modalities* are important. There is aggravation in cold dry weather, in windy weather, also before rain, but relief when the rain starts. Stimulants, spices, narcotics all aggravate, and there is a liability to feel worse immediately after a meal. Touch causes irritation. Disturbed or insufficient sleep aggravates, as also mental over-exertion. The worst time is about 3 to 4 a.m. or after waking in the morning.

The *Nux vomica* subject feels better in wet weather, gets relief by lying down and when at rest, and after adequate unbroken sleep. Firm pressure ameliorates, and the close of the day is a better time than the morning.

## PATHOLOGY

In general, complaints calling for *Nux vomica* may be induced by prolonged mental or emotional strain or, on the other hand, by over-indulgence in food or drink, especially if associated with lack of sufficient exercise.

*Nux vomica* pains are variously described as shooting, tearing, jerking, stitching, but are characteristically insupportable, driving the sufferer frantic, as is the case with the pain of *Chamomilla* and *Coffea*.

Limbs and joints feel bruised, constricted, numb, heavy, even paralysed. These symptoms are worse when lying still in bed and are relieved to some extent by getting up.

The sudden onset of extreme weakness or exhaustion may force the sufferer to sit or lie down. A somewhat similar type of exhaustion is met with under *Arsenicum album* and *Phosphorus*.

As regards laterality, abdominal symptoms tend to be right-sided and chest symptoms left-sided.

In the *Head Region* a plethora of symptoms are described. One type of vertigo comes on while in bed and persists in the open air. Momentary black-outs may occur, especially when standing or walking. Malaise is brought on by exposure of the head to cold air or cold draughts.

The "hang-over" type of headache is described under this remedy, occipital in site or over one or other eye; it is accompanied by nausea and a loathing of food, tobacco, coffee; it is aggravated on attempting to get up in the morning and from any exertion; some relief is obtained by warmth, quiet, holding the head in a firm grip or pressing it against something hard. The head feels muzzy and confused.

The remedy is also related to a facial neuralgia associated with watery discharge from the eye and the nostril on the affected side.

*Eye symptoms* which may call for the remedy are various—severe photophobia in the morning; gushing of water from the eye when the lids are forced apart; burning, smarting and itching, especially at the inner canthus, with some relief by rubbing; much lachrymation: discharge of purulent secretion, especially from the canthi; complaints of sparks or greyish spots before the eyes.

Toxic amaurosis from abuse of tobacco or alcohol may call for *Nux vomica*.

*Ears.* Itching in the middle ear and in the pharyngo-tympanic canal causes frequent swallowing in search of relief. Pains as of sharp blows may be felt in the ear, worse in bed and first thing in the morning. Noises seem exaggerated, even the speaker's own voice sounds too loud.

*Respiratory System.* The remedy is of great use in coryzal troubles, which are worse indoors and better in the open air. The nose is alternately dry and blocked or pouring profusely with a watery discharge from one or both nostrils. Fluid coryza by day gives place to complete obstruction at night, especially on the side next to the pillow. There is much distressing sneezing, with hot face and raw throat.

The sense of smell is very acute, so much so that a very strong odour may cause fainting. Odd smells may be detected without adequate source.

Sore throat is accompanied by shootings and stitches which are worse when not swallowing, and the throat feels raw and scarified.

Complaint is made of a sensation of tightness across the chest, which is aggravated by walking or going uphill.

Under the remedy is described a dry cough due to a tiresome tickle; it is worse from midnight to dawn, and is accompanied by a bursting headache; a drink of warm fluid gives some relief to the cough, but the act of drinking induces fresh chilliness.

*Alimentary System.* A tension symptom sometimes met with is a form of dysphagia, when the food seems to stick some way down the œsophagus, causing discomfort, and then regurgitates without any actual pain.

In the mouth the gums become swollen and sore, with loosening of the teeth. Actual toothache may be brought on by a chill, and is aggravated by cold air, cold fluids, and worse immediately after a meal; warmth gives relief.

The tongue is apt to be coated in the posterior half, and there is an unpleasant, even putrid, taste in the mouth.

There is a tendency in *Nux vomica* subjects to sudden flushing during a meal, especially if partaking of favourite dishes; the sufferer becomes hot and sweaty, and after the meal is unconscionably heavy and drowsy.

Again, if taking a meal accompanied by plenty of alcohol and in a hot

atmosphere, there may be a sudden onset of acute gastric distension, faintness, dusky colour in face, and the necessity to loosen the clothes round the waist. In this condition a dose of *Nux vomica* gives very rapid relief.

If worried or chivied, indigestion is apt to ensue, atonic in type, but accompanied by pyloric spasm with resultant sensation of weight or stone in epigastrium, queasiness after food or in the morning, nausea with much ineffectual retching and gagging, and vomiting of food as soon as swallowed. The vomiting is difficult and distressing but does afford relief.

Pain in the region of the stomach may occur 1 to 1½ hours after food, either a dull ache or violent and cramping; it is accompanied by a sense of constriction round the waist, and the clothes have to be loosened; the pain is apt to spread to the chest and also to the back between the shoulder-blades or down the back to the anus.

Heartburn, pyrosis, waterbrash occur, associated with gagging and retching, and ultimately actual vomiting which gives relief.

Flatulent distension accompanied by colic is aggravated by eating or drinking.

Liver complaints, possibly accompanied by jaundice, may be brought on by anger. In febrile states there is a tendency to jaundice with enlargement of the liver and a feeling of distension in the epigastrium.

Cutting or pinching pains occur in the belly resulting from spasticity and irregular peristalsis; these pains are relieved by sitting or lying down.

Biliary duct spasm with its severe pain increased by movement and pressure, but somewhat relieved by heat calls for *Nux vomica*. By contrast the pain of *Colocynthis* is better for pressure.

Rectal symptoms are a constant ineffectual urge to stool, scanty mucoid stools associated with a feeling of incomplete evacuation, spasm of anal sphincters, and proctalgia.

Morning diarrhœa may occur with slimy sanious stools; the passage of the stool is very difficult. Stool may be watery with hard lumps covered by mucus. The passage of the stool affords temporary relief. Diarrhœa may alternate with constipation.

Piles are aggravated by mental exertion and resulting rectal congestion; they cause pressive pain in the rectum after meals, pain too after stool and accompanying constipation. Bleeding piles are associated with hypersecretion of rectal mucus. Pruritus recti vel ani may also be troublesome.

*Cardio-vascular System.* The vaso-spasm or other circulatory irregularities associated with mental tension may give rise to palpitations. This is especially noticed when lying down or in the morning, and is associated with nausea, inclination to vomit and a feeling of weight or blows in the chest. The condition is aggravated after taking a meal, by drinking coffee and from mental stress.

*Urinary System.* Tension here may be manifested in renal colic, especially liable to affect the right side.

Other symptoms are much ineffectual urging to pass water, even to the degree of strangury; burning in bladder at night; itching or burning in urethra when passing urine; nocturia; polyuria.

Retention of urine may occur from spasm of the sphincter, or sometimes from an opposite state of atony of the bladder wall.

*Genital System.* Menstrual irregularities are accompanied by chilliness and tendency to fainting. The remedy may be called for in pregnancy when morning nausea is associated with headache and insomnia.

*Locomotor System.* Muscle spasm is, of course, a prolific source of pains, often dubbed "rheumatic". *Nux vomica* may be called for in relation to various aches, pains, stitches, bruised sensations from nape to sacrum. A feature of the *Nux* low back pain is inability to turn over in bed without sitting up.

Other symptoms mentioned in this sphere are sudden weakness, pseudo-paralysis, in arms or legs, occurring in the morning; also paræsthesia and numbness in the hands which feel cold and clammy, or in feet and toes.

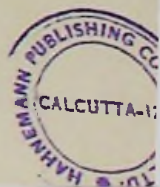
Twitchings and quiverings may be noticed in the thighs. Tottering unsteady gait may result from weakness. Complaints of tensive pain in calves, cramps in bed, heaviness in the limbs, dragging the feet, are mentioned also.

#### POSODOGY

*Nux vomica* is a remedy of wide application with well-marked indications, especially along constitutional lines. Coffee is said to be inimical when taking the remedy, as also are *Aceticum acidum* and *Zincum metallicum* in sequence. Complementary remedies are *Sepia* and *Sulphur*.

The best time to give the remedy is some hours before bedtime, not first thing in the morning or immediately after meals. These are both aggravation periods.

The treatment of a much-medicated patient, so frequent a type nowadays, may well be started with *Nux vomica* in high potency.









HEADLEY BROTHERS LTD  
109 Kingsway, London W.C.2  
and

