

Some Observations from the Clinic: *Palladium*

by Ernest Roberts

Palladium is usually thought of as a female remedy dominated by ovarian and uterine symptoms especially with a swelling and induration of the right ovary with soreness and stitching pains from the umbilicus to the breast. Also neuralgia of the right ovary drawing downwards during and after menses. These keynotes need not, however be present in cases requiring *Palladium* where the mental symptoms are characteristic.

I have used *Palladium* successfully with adults and children, boys and girls, where the need to please and receive praise provides a strong motivation to excel either at occupation, school-work or in social situations.

These notes are taken from three patients, all female, who benefited significantly from the remedy *Palladium* prescribed in a single dose and repeated only when there were certain signs of relapse.

The prescriptions were made on the essence and keynotes of the remedy. The totality of symptoms give several possible remedies in each case, notably *Medorrhinum*, *Pulsatilla*, *Staphysagria*, *Argentum nitricum*, *Platina* and *Lachesis*. One case in particular showed many symptoms of *Medorrhinum*. There was a strong tubercular inheritance and also *Argentum nitricum* and *Pulsatilla* seemed well indicated but could not be fully confirmed.

The essential nature of *Palladium* is a strong need for approval and praise. In Kent's *Repertory* on page 63: 'Longing a good opinion of others for', only one remedy, and on page 48: 'Flattery desires' – one remedy. Also 'Delusions, appreciated that she is not', *Palladium* italics and the only other remedy in low type is *Platina*. On page 30: 'Delusions neglected that he is', *Palladium* is the only black type remedy. 'Delusions insulted that he is' – italics and 'Mortifications – ailments from', black type.

The basis of this need for praise is insecurity. The basic insecurity may come from an insecure childhood but the response to the insecurity is always the need to somehow make things right. In Transactional Analysis there are several 'drivers' which are seen to motivate people. One of these 'drivers' is a 'Must Please' driver which is suited to the *Palladium* stance.

The '*Palladium*' is the music hall where the artiste performs to the applause of the delighted audience and then collapses exhausted in her dressing room. In a group therapy session one patient expressed herself so forcefully that she dominated the session, some people left the group and she was accused of 'performing'. After 'shining' in company the *Palladium* person collapses and this can be so deep as to be a psychic collapse, not just a physical collapse. They also avoid company because they know that because of their illness they will not be able to 'shine' and win the praise and approval they need.

Palladiums are eccentric, their dress, hair styles and general activity is designed to attract notice, admiration and praise. Of course

Palladium is very much worse for criticism and admonition and will withdraw from people and situations which present any hint of criticism. They have a fear of losing control because they then do not have the security they need to obtain approval. They have a need for special treatment. Disraeli said "women love praise but when it comes to royalty you have to lay it on with a trowel". A *Palladium* is a princess, sensitive in the extreme, needing praise and approval and abhorring any kind of, not only criticism and disapproval, but any course or unrefined expression. Acutely sensitive to discomfort (one is reminded of the story of the Princess and the Pea) and aesthetic in the extreme.

The *Palladium* is vivacious and idealistic, they tend to have clear views and are reluctant to compromise but they are capable of strong emotions including jealousy and malice against those who do not support their need for approval; they have strong and early sexuality. This is a powerful, vivacious and demanding person. There is a strong intuition with a keen sensitiveness to atmosphere.

In these patients the lack of stability and security is reflected in a concern over their feet, one patient often denied she had any contact with the earth at all. The feet tend to be small and the contact unstable. They may have fantasies of being persecuted. One patient said that she believed there was a 'right' way of doing things and she had a strong fear of failing to do it the right way and therefore had a fear of rejection. As a child she always had to please her parents. She was loquacious in order to please, she could not bear a silence since it may harbour disapproval. In a bad family situation she was the peacemaker. From an early age she had to make things right. If the situation went beyond repair she left home and stayed with a school friend. Often anger is suppressed because she needs to be seen in a good light, to please and be approved of and to be thought highly of. Children strive to be the best at school and adults to be the best in their job, they do this for recognition and praise. They are self-critical and adapt to the wishes of others. They find it hard to take sides between differing views for fear of upsetting one side and attracting disapproval.

It is easy to see elements here of *Pulsatilla*, *Staphysagria* and *Medorrhinum* and also *Ignatia*. The *Palladium* picture is clear when we discover why there are mood swings, indignation, jealousy, suppressed anger, loquacity, ailments from mortification and the yielding disposition. "I used to see myself as different, not quite good enough, so I was always asking myself of others are they better than me or worse than me? I don't do this any more, I accept myself more as I am. This was said two years after a *Palladium* prescription.

When you take a case you will pick up clues about *Palladium*. I asked "Do you care if your boss likes your work?" and the reply was "I'll say, after every job I ask him what are the five best things you liked about that work".

In one patient with a tubercular background and a history of NSU only *Palladium* after three years of other remedies caused a steady and permanent improvement, and this case of post viral syndrome is now virtually cured. Previously *Pulsatilla*, *Tuberculinum* and *Medorrhinum* had produced good reactions which eventually relapsed.

In a second patient, the tendency to have energetic and creative periods characterized by a constant request for praise followed by bouts of serious inflammatory illness, in a tubercular diathesis gave the clue to *Palladium*. And in the first patient an extreme eccentricity of dress and aesthetic refinement with a cult of beauty and a rejection of

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Ernest Roberts RSHom practices in Manchester and is Principal of the NW College of Homœopathy.

all coarse, earthly things set the hallmark for this prescription. There is also a *Phosphorus* element in the enthusiasm and sparkling nature, followed by collapse but *Phosphorus* is giving and sympathetic while *Palladium* is demanding and self-centred. *Palladium* is close to *Platina* but the haughtiness of *Palladium* stems from the need to be best so that praise is forthcoming. *Platina* has no such need, being convinced of their superiority without reference to what others think.

Palladium occasionally is well indicated in cases where other remedies have worked well but there is a change which is characterized by the strong *Palladium* mentals. The following additional case is an example.

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

A lady of twenty-three first came to me in August 1985. She was diagnosed as having endometriosis and was told she would be unable to have children. She had recently married an older man with two children from his previous marriage. Her family history showed many instances of cancer and the symptoms gave a lot of modalities of *Pulsatilla* except she liked fat and salt; her emotional response reminded one of *Natrum muriaticum* but with fear of being alone. She liked to have consolation but found it difficult to express grief and other feelings. Other conflicting symptoms and the general feel of the person led me to prescribe *Carcinosinum uterus* 30c, one dose.

The patient benefited greatly from this prescription and many of her pains and symptoms receded. Over a period of four years she went on to have *Sepia*, *Staphysagria*, and *Pulsatilla* and she progressed well. She now has a baby daughter of two. In October 1990 she came to the clinic complaining of a return of the endometriosis. Her last prescription had been *Sepia* 200 in October 1989.

The present symptoms were similar to the ones she had at the first consultation in 1985; they were pains on intercourse, severe pain in the ovaries worse on the left, constrictive pains which circled the abdomen, and pain in the rectum. These pains were better for a hot water bottle and by lying down relaxing. She had a vaginal discharge pre-menstrually which was offensive, with a sour or musty smell and orangy/brown in colour. For four to five days after the menses there was still bleeding. There was pain both during and after the menses, and the pains were greater as the flow increased. Also pressure eased the abdominal pains. She had a sensation of bearing down in the pelvic area and a post nasal catarrh which when she can expel it is stringy and shiny. She had a sour taste in the mouth. She was averse to sex (3). She wanted to have another baby but her husband insists not. She had also had a 'morning after' pill which aggravated her.

She said of herself she was confident (3) and for the last three months very aggressive. She had been promoted at work. She has a short temper (2) is intolerant (2) very tidy and likes to insist on things being done correctly (2). She has fears in anticipation (1) and needs reassurance (2). She is intolerant of criticism (3) and seeks praise (3). She wants to please people and tends to see other people as inferior. She actually manipulates situations so as to elicit praise (2). She loves company and likes to shine but collapses afterwards (1). She is suspicious (1) and jealous (1). She has no energy in the mornings and sometimes even stumbles. Her worst time is in the mornings, best at 3pm. The sun she likes but also needs air to avoid being too hot. She welcomes consolation and feels better for it (2).

She sighs during the interview (1). She has a fear of cancer (3). She craves tea, and fatty food. The characteristic *Palladium* mentals seems strong, so the prescription was *Palladium* 30, one a day for several days.

FOLLOW UP AFTER ONE MONTH

The patient returned and reported that all the pains had disappeared completely and on intercourse there remained only slight tenderness. The catarrh had also disappeared.

She has a fear of the dark and of cancer. She can be alone but prefers company. One day she had a headache with nausea and vertigo which all went when her menses began. Best time 11am. Worst time 3-4 pm. Tired by 10pm. She is slow in the mornings.


However since the remedy she has become very violent, and full of bad temper over small things, for three weeks she has been violently angry at her husband and daughter, she has thrown and damaged several household items aiming them at her husband. At work, she is told that she is too abrupt and impatient and trainees fear her. We discussed what angers her and she feels a lot of suppressed anger against her father on two counts, one because he left her mother when the patient was a young girl and two because he gives a lot of attention and fuss to her daughter and ignores her. She never mentions those feelings to her father. She talks to herself about being neglected - often in the mirror as she puts on her make-up.

There is a temptation to say the *Palladium* has worked against Hering's law of the direction of cure but the anger may be a desirable expression of suppressed emotions not recognized fully by the patient herself.

It may be tempting to say *Staphysagria* or *Sepia* could be needed. However I believed that the strong characteristic mentals of *Palladium* justified waiting. The prescription was *Sac lac* OD.

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The patient telephoned to say she was feeling less angry and was generally calming down and feeling much better in every way. In January 1991 reported that the patient continues to make good progress on all levels. Prescription: *Sac lac*.



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