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Talks on Constipation.

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(Continuing from page 81)

I will further mention that Nux symptom, "better after sufficient sleep" which you must carefully differentiate from the morning aggravation in the *Lycopodium* symptom, "the child is intolerably irritable and obstinate after sleep" which is opposite to Nux.

In conclusion, remember that Nux belongs with those remedies with which we prefer to begin treatment, especially when it is a patient who has been much drugged. *Lycopodium* on the other hand belongs to our class of deep-acting, slow-working remedies, and it has been said that we should not begin a chronic case with it. But you must not forget that above all other things the "law of similars" must be observed.

A. Now we will consider CARBO VEG. It, like Nux, has constipation with ineffectual urging, the difficult hard stools, painful hæmorrhoids, and like it the weakened digestion from abuse of alcohol, the fulness about the waist and dysuria; but as in the *Lycopodium* dyspepsia, the symptom "acid" rules, while in the *Carbo veg.* dyspepsia, foulness and putridity. The *Carbo veg.* eructations are rancid, offensive, flatus very stinking, as also are the stools, particularly, when as with Sulphur, "hard stools alternate with diarrhoea." These loose stools show in a special way a second peculiarity of *Carbo veg.* in which it resembles Sulphur and differs

from Nux, I mean the "acridity." The stools burn and corrode, particularly the sensitive hæmorrhoidal knots, which often secrete an acrid burning moisture, and further, these piles are larger than of the four remedies just mentioned. They project as large blue knots and are more distressing after every "drinking bout," when they appear to burn and bear down.

The accumulation of flatulenee with *Carbo veg.* is far greater than with Nux, and is also more abundant than with *Lycopodium*. It is so great that it affects the respiration producing what is sometimes called "flatulent asthma." The *Carbo veg.* patient above all can endure no fat food, especially if it be roasted. His gastric pains are of a burning character, and this burning may extend far into the chest and abdomen. There is also a heavy feeling in the stomach and abdomen, which however is more diffused than with Nux, which has circumscribed pressure as from a "stone in the stomach." This feeling of weight shows tolerably prominent in the *Carbo veg.* picture, extending to the entire body and even to the mental sphere where it appears as that "heaviness" or "torpidity" which places it in such decided contrast to the three others, Nux, Sulphur and *Lycopodium*.

B. This heaviness, this drawing down in the abdomen reminds me of Aloe.

A. Very good! Certainly this feeling brings these remedies close together. They resemble each other in the form of their hæmorrhoids, for no other piles look so similar to those of *Carbo veg.* as the piles of Aloe, which are blue and project like bunches of grapes, with an intolerable pressing and burning. But one thing separates these two drugs widely; with *Carbo veg.* the action on the rectum is entirely absent, while the action of Aloe on

the rectum is characteristic and wonderful, placing it far above other remedies in this field. The Aloe stool is attended by that extremely characteristic feeling of "uncertainty of the anal sphincter," so that the patient is always fearful of passing feces involuntarily. With *Carbo veg.*, the abdomen may be distended with flatulence and yet during stool no flatus may pass, while with Aloe a great volume of flatus bursts out. Finally Aloe has mucus stools resembling jelly or albumen.

B. I am surprised that you compare *Carbo veg.* with Aloe, when it is usually considered that Aloe stands near to Sulphur.

A. That prevails more in their deeper relations. But locally *Carbo veg.* and Aloe have very close resemblances to which I must call your attention. For example: both have a heaviness in the head; but with Aloe this is more on the vertex and above the eyes, resembling Phosphoric ac., while with *Carbo veg.* it is in the occiput as a feeling of weight similar to that of Muriatic ac.

B. But Nux also has a pain in the occiput.

A. Certainly! And here we must differentiate, particularly, because both have on this point morning aggravation. But *Carbo veg.* has the dull heaviness, while Nux has the intense pain only. *Carbo veg.* as we before remarked, forms varices like *Lycopodium*. Both remedies have intolerance of warmth. Do you know wherein they differ?

B. *Carbo veg.* has the burning pains.

A. That is one point. Besides *Carbo veg.* has amelioration of its complaints by elevating the legs.

B. I wish to ask something else about Aloe. I had thought that this remedy was useful only in diarrhoeas.

A. Not necessarily. Certainly the *Aloe* case is most usually presented under the picture of diarrhoea. But that peculiar remarkable "urging to stool," that feeling of "insecurity" which depends on a weakness of the anal sphincter, is the most prominent. And the flatulence bursting out with the stool as next in prominence, are the factors of the *Aloe* case.

To a group of remedies more intimately related to Nux by having this "ineffectual urging to stool" and "cramp-like constriction" as guiding symptoms, there may be added also *Anacardium*, *Ignatia*, *Lachesis*, *Conium*, *Platina*, and *Plumbum*. While we are not giving a monograph, yet we will characterize these remedies in a few words.

ANACARDIUM: Sensation of a plug in the anus. Frequent ineffectual urging, but on account of the inactivity of the rectum the stool cannot be expelled even when it is soft. We will later return to this part of the *Anacardium* picture. The hæmorrhoids discharge large quantities of blood. (*Lycopodium*, *Nitric ac.*, *Millefolium*, *Hamamelis*). The general symptoms of this remedy are that sensation of a plug in other parts, and the highly characteristic sensation of a band around some part of the body (*Alumina*). In the mental sphere there is violence, increasing to cursing, and extreme forgetfulness, weakness of all the senses also belong to this remedy. Perhaps the most characteristic, however, is the amelioration from eating. The patient feels well as long as he is eating and for some hours after.

B. Has not Nux the symptom, "pain in the stomach ameliorated by warm drinks?"

A. Very true! with *Anacardium*, the taking of

nourishment suffices to ameliorate for some time, regardless of the kind of food taken. Nux is ameliorated by warm drinks in which it agrees with *Lycopodium* which has a like symptom. Around *Anacardium* are grouped Phosphorus, Iodine, Chelidonium, Ignatia, Graphites and Petroleum. But on account of want of time we cannot differentiate them.

CONIUM : Extreme general weakness, especially of the mind after stool (*Phosphorus*), general want of power of resistance. Sudden failure of strength (*Phosphorus*). Induration of the glands, intermittent micturition, hypochondriacal disposition, aversion to company. It is indicated especially in old and debilitated people. The morbid symptoms develop very slowly (*Lycopodium*, *Fluoric ac.*). In one point, *Conium* and Nux are closely related. I refer to the results of sexual excesses and unnatural sexual excitement. The resemblance is however only apparent. As you perceive from what I have mentioned, the *Conium* picture is radically different from Nux. It resembles much more closely Phosphoric-ac. and Staphisagria.

IGNATIA : After stools there are stitches up the rectum, inclination to prolapsus ani, weak empty feeling in the pit of the stomach (*Hydrastis*, *Sepia*, *Staphisagria*, *Stannum*, *Cocculus*). Pain in the stomach ameliorated by eating, spasmodic yawning, grinding of the teeth at night; changeable, sad, sensitive, introspective frame of mind. More suitable to children and hysterical women, who have a great tendency to convulsions; results of grief, disappointments in love, and effects of fright.

LACHESIS : Prolapsed and strangulated hæmorrhoids that are sensitive to the slightest touch and extremely sensitive to the slightest jar. Beating in the anus as

from little hammers (*Apis*, *Capsicum*, *Cauticum*). All the stools are horribly offensive. Warm applications aggravate the complaints (reverse in piles, *Apis*) hæmorrhages always give relief. Sensitiveness about the waist without distension, depending on hyperæsthesia of the cutaneous nerves. Likewise the neck cannot tolerate even an ordinary easy fitting collar. Ebullitions of blood (*Sepia*), head hot with cold feet (*Sulphur*). Face red with the shining of the capillaries through the yellow skin (*Nux*). All complaints are worse on the left side, from warmth, and after sleep. Better when the secretions are active. Is particularly suitable to the complaints of the climacteric and the ailments of drunkards. *Lachesis* is our chief remedy in redness of the nose in drunkards, and is generally suitable to the ailments of "old toppers." As you remember we have already mentioned for these alcoholic complaints, *Nux*, *Sulphur*, *Carbo veg.*, and we may now add *Lachesis*, *Arsenicum*, *Kali bich*, *Sulphuric ac.*, *Opium* and especially *Ran. bulb.*; so you now have all the remedies together which have the greatest reputation in these troubles.

PLATINA: Frequent ineffectual attempts to stool; fæces adhere to the anus like putty. Colic-like pains ameliorated by pressure. Suitable to hysterical women suffering from abdominal complaints, and liable to metrorrhagias (dark clotted), disposed to convulsion (*Ignatia*), and to neuralgias with sensation of coldness and numbness. Genitals extremely sensitive. Persistent sleeplessness. *Platina* has with other remedies a reputation for the colic and constipation of lead poisoning.

B. Does not *Platina* act specifically on the constipation of travellers?

A. Yes! so it is said in the books. But what must

we really understand from this! If the *Platina* picture is present, then the remedy is indicated whether at home or abroad. But if its true picture is not there, then you cannot expect benefit either at home or on a journey. The indications arising from the ætiology often violently contradict those arising from "similia." We must always endeavor to reconcile the two.

Now we have had the group of the Nux-like remedies, that is, those in which the "ineffectual urging to stool and spasmodic action of the sphincter ani" are the essential points. We now turn to that group which we may call the "hæmorrhoidal" drugs; that is, the drugs in which the spasmodic action of the sphincter takes a secondary place to the complaints produced by the piles themselves.

To this group in the widest sense belong naturally all the remedies of which we have already spoken so far as they are indicated in hæmorrhoids, but particularly *Aloe*. It seems to me that *Calcarea* stands between these groups as it is a decidedly hæmorrhoidal remedy, and also excites much irritation in the anus. In a closer relation are *Æsculus*, *Capsicum*, *Collinsonia*, *Pulsatilla*, *Rhus.*, *Sepia*, *Kali carb.*, *Ammonium carb.*, *Ferrum*, *Fluoric acid* and the other acids, but above all *Sulphuric* and *Nitric*. *Hypericum* so warmly recommended by Dr. Rœhrig I have had no experience within my own practice.

B. Is *Millefolium* not an important hæmorrhoidal remedy?

A. *Millefolium* has really no effect on hæmorrhoids. It acts only on the hæmorrhages and influences the piles only so far as it effects the bleeding. These two actions must be differentiated. *Hamamelis* has even a greater action in this regard. We will briefly characterize a few of these remedies.

ÆSCULUS : Dryness, heat and burning in the anus, and above all a sensation as if a splinter was sticking in the mucus membrane (*Nitric acid*). The hæmorrhoids protrude and are dark red. Pulsating deep in the abdomen and constant dull pain in the back. In piles with this pain in the back, *Æsculus* is one of our chief remedies and rivals *Nux*, *Sulphur* and *Hamamelis*.

COLLINSONIA : Sensation of weight (*Sepia*) and of sharp grains of sand in the rectum. The stools are hard, knotty, and light colored (*Æsculus*). Displacements of the uterus and pueritis vulvæ complicate the case (*Sepia*, *Hydrastis*).

Pulsatilla as well as *Rhus* has few characteristic local symptoms and must be selected from the general ones. The pains which shoot down the legs during stool, indicate *Rhus*.

SEPIA : That above mentioned sensation of heaviness or of a ball in the rectum. Inactivity of the rectum with a soft stool. Otherwise the local symptoms have nothing characteristic. The general ones must decide.

KALI CARB. : Large stool of great diameter discharged with difficulty on account of the inactivity of the rectum. Large hæmorrhoidal knots also protrude from pressing to urinate, and they burn like fire. After the stool, the anus burns and pains as if torn. Even for hours before stool the patient feels anxious and uncomfortable. The general picture of the drug is tolerably well known to you. I will only remind you of the symptom "thin fluid food aggravates the most."

MURIATIC AC. : Decidedly first in rank, not only among the acids but in the entire group. The hæmorrhoids are prominent, bluish red, burn and pain intensely and do not bear the slightest touch. The patient is in constant pain whether standing, sitting or walking. All the symptoms

are naturally much worse after discharge of a difficult, dry, hard stool. When you have a case of constipation with intense suffering caused by swollen and protruding piles, where you cannot find another remedy you may confidently give Muriatic ac.

B. In what form do you give this remedy ?

A. I must confess that I have fallen into a sort of routinism, in always giving the low dilutions, the third or fourth decimal ; but without doubt the high potencies act quite as well.

SULPHURIC AC. Has perhaps still larger knots than Muriatic. They are also very painful and very sensitive to touch, and secrete an acrid, burning moisture. This differentiates it from *Muriatic ac.* Further you must remember that the patient's nervous system is in a very much depressed condition. This is best represented by what we may call an "irritable weakness." A feeling of coldness as well as a relaxed, heavy, hanging down sensation of the stomach. The constipation alternates with a watery, stinking diarrhoea. Frequently the patient is a drunkard in an advanced stage, whose stomach repels everything taken. You will thereby perceive that *Sulphuric ac.* in its character is more nearly related to such remedies as *Lachesis*, *Carbo veg.* and *Arsenicum* than to Muriatic ac.

We now pass to the small but well defined group of the SODIUM COMPOUNDS : *Amonium mur.*, *Magnesium mur.*, and *Natrum mur.* All three are characterized by the hard, dry stool, which crumbles as it passes the anus, and leaves a torn burning sensation there for hours. This burning is caused mechanically by the specific condition of the fœces, and not by hæmorrhoids ; at least this is the rule. Of these three remedies, *Natrum mur.* has the greatest spasmodic contraction of the anus. These three drugs are

indicated in the complaints of the abdominal or female sexual organs. The specific relation of *Magnesia mur.* to the liver and of all three to the abdomen are well known to you.

From this group we will now go to the real "pain remedies;" that is to say, those in which neither the hæmorrhoids nor the hard tearing stools, explains the violence of the pains. They are the drugs in which the constipation is complicated with fissure of the anus. The most important of these are *Agnus c.*, *Berberis*, *Causticum*, *Graphites*, *Nitric acid*, *Petroleum*, *Ratanhia*, *Silicea* and *Thuja*. Indeed in all these remedies hæmorrhoids may occur in a very severe form. In some of them there is also the spasmodic action of the sphincter, particularly *Causticum* and *Nitric ac.* But the most definite cause of pain in these remedies is the fissures or rhagades.

NITRIC AC.: Much ineffectual urging to stool, sharp cutting pains continuing for hours after stool; piles protrude; much bright red blood, or mucus; stinking urine; fissures. Pains as from splinters in the anus. Nervous, emaciated, debilitated persons of violent temper (*Æsculus*). Frequently indicated after the abuse of *Mercury*.

CAUSTICUM: Stools hard, dry, covered with slime; much ineffectual urging to stool. Large protruberent, very sensitive (*Lachesis*, *Muriatic ac.*) hæmorrhoids which burn, sting and hinder the discharge of stool. Inactivity of the rectum. Stool passes better when standing. Fissures; anus painful long after the stool. Disposition to local paralysis (vocal chords, bladder, extremities); emaciated, sallow persons.

BERBERIS: Hard stool, violent urging and burning in the anus; sharp, stinging, burning pains, radiating from the region of the kidneys to the loins and pelvis. Urine

cloudy with mucus, mealy, or red sediment. Liver involved. General weakness. Pale, suffering countenance.

GRAPHITES: Without doubt the chief remedy of this group. In fissures of the anus, there is no remedy so frequently indicated. Particularly in children in which there are no other complaints it works almost specifically. They withhold the stool from fear of the extraordinarily violent pains. There may be spasm of the anus after stool or not. Graphites in this field is a many-sided remedy. It has a well defined hæmorrhoidal condition; large protruding, violently painful piles. In this hæmorrhoidal condition, more rarely with the fissures, there appears the very characteristic stool of this drug, large, hard, knotty stool, covered with slime and connected by shreds of mucus. *Graphites* is our chief remedy when constipation and secretion of this slime go together. That you may not be thereby misled I mention other remedies having the same symptom. We have already spoken of Causticum and Nitric acid and now we must mention Hydrastis, which in its place is an important drug, and like Nux is frequently indicated after the abuse of cathartics. But in contradistinction to Nux it has an empty miserable feeling in the stomach and abdomen. It also has the hard lumpy slime-covered stool. Furthermore in stools covered with mucus we have *Borax*, *Capsicum*, *Carbo veg.*, *Kali carb.*, *Nux* and *Sepia*. Now *Magnesia mur.* and *Ammonium mur.* often have a transparent albuminous mucus on the feces. *Graphites* has a third constipated condition and I may almost assert that in practice this is the most important. You will frequently have women to treat who have in the most general sense a sluggishness of the bowels.

B. Excuse me! Do you lay stress on the patient being a woman?

A. Decidedly ! *Graphites* acts in general and especially in this field much more frequently on women than on men. Some one has called *Graphites*, the Sulphur for women, and he said something decidedly good.

But further ! Such women have suffered for many years, often from childhood, from constipation ; urging to stool and also hæmorrhoids may be present or absent, but neither is sharply enough defined to stamp a peculiar character on the picture. Of the form of the stools nothing can be said because they occur only after cathartics. Briefly, such cases occur very frequently in practice. In such cases, *Graphites* offers us the most powerful aid. There is perhaps no remedy in our materia medica in which the general idea of sluggishness of the intestines is so intimately associated as with *Graphites*. I may assert that in constipation this remedy is our most important agent. As I have said above we refer more particularly to women. A *Graphites* patient usually looks pale, is inclined to corpulence, and the complexion, has an unclean tinge. She is disposed to itching eruptions in the bends of the limbs and behind the ears. If these eruptions have a secretion, it is watery and sticky (like honey). The skin is predisposed to the formation of rhagades ; the fingers, palms, canthi, corners of the nose and mouth, behind the ears, and the nipples, crack open, often to bleeding and are very painful. These skin symptoms are more specific in the *Graphites* child. The woman has an anxious, sad frame of mind. She is constantly cold and chilly. A patient whom I cured with *Graphites* said to me, "formerly I must put on ever so much clothing and still I was cold. Now I go about in a light blouse and am comfortable." This chilliness exists not only physically but also in the disposition. There is an absence of the usual liveliness of the sex. A profuse leucorrhœa, often coming in gushes,

weakens her very much, and stomach complaints of different kinds give the patient no comfort. They are either burning, cramping pains relieved by eating, or a sudden distention which oppresses the respiration, driving the blood of the anxious patient into her face.

B. Is not this tympanites similar to that of Carbo veg. and Lycopodium?

A. Yes similar, but Lycopodium has sour eructations, while in *Graphites* they are rancid. From Carbo veg. on the other hand it is differentiated by the ebullitions. The *Graphites* and Carbo veg. patients look plump and coarse, but the *Graphites* patient is in fact an irritable, nervous creature who has much in common with the *Ferrum* and *Ignatia* women.

B. How do you give *Graphites*?

A. The most brilliant cures, I have made with a single dose of a high dilution, I have also gone down to the 6th and even the 3rd trituration. But in my experience, one thing is indisputable; you must not give the doses in rapid succession, once, twice or three times daily spoils the result. If you cannot bring yourself to rely on a single dose, do not give oftener than once a week, whether it be the 30th or the 3rd.

We have mentioned above that *Anacardium*, *Kali carb.* and *Causticum* are useful in activity of the intestines. Thereby we come to a new group in which this "inactivity" is the central point. This consists principally of *Bryonia*, *Opium* and *Veratrum alb.* These are the remedies that have constipation without urging.

BRYONIA; Large, hard, dry stools looking as if burnt. Tongue dry and coated. Much thirst. Sensation of a load in the stomach, which is sensitive to pressure. Stitching pain in the region of the liver. Irritable disposition. Red

face. Headaches as if it would burst. All complaints are worse from motion. Generally worse in summer.

We might make a number of comparisons here, before all with Nux and Kali carb. Then also with *Chelidonium* and *Lachesis*, but time fails us.

OPIMUM: Stools consist of hard dark balls like bullets. The intestinal activity is entirely dormant. The gases which develop, produce tympanites. Often after abuse of cathartics or suppressed diarrhœas and after effects of emotion. Among the remedies which have these stools like marbles are *Berberis*, *Chelidonium*, *Collinsonia* (light colored), *Plumbum*, *Sepia* and *Veratrum alb.*

B. Do not the sodium combination of which you speak belong here?

A. In my opinion, No! The remedies which I have here mentioned have the sheep-dung stools, the small rounded balls; while *Asnmonium mur.*, *Magnesia mur.*, *Natrum mur.* have the crumbling and to a certain extent broken stools. I do not agree with Bœnninghausen that these three remedies should be in the largest type in the rubric "stools like sheep-dung."

VERATRUM ALB: Very large, hard or lumpy stools; after the stool he is miserable (*Phosphorus*, *Conium*) with cold sweat on the forehead. Is particularly indicated in nursing babies (*Causticum*, *Alumina*, *Silicica*. *Veratrum alb.* is that remedy having the largest fœces, often of surprising diameter. *Bryonia*, *Graphites* and *Kali carb.* resemble it in this.

The seldom administered *Selenium* has the same sort of constipation as *Bryonia*, *Opium* and *veratrum alb.* We must also mention *Plumbum* here. It has paralysis of the intestines like *Opium*, but also a violent constricting pain in the anus which is spasmodic, but not a real urging.

Besides to differentiate it from Opium it has the retracted abdomen and frightful colic pains relieved by pressure.

Now we have a modification to mention. That is the *Alumina* constipation. There is an urging, but the rectum is so relaxed that even a soft stool can be expelled only with great effort. *Alumina* with its disposition to local paralysis stands nearest to Causticum. The symptom "even soft stools expelled only with great effort," occurs also with *Anacardium*, *China*, *Hepar*, *Natrum sulph.*, *Nux mos.*, *Sepia* and *Stannum*. *Phosphorus* has the peculiarity, "the long slender stools are expelled only with difficulty." With *Silicea*, the half expelled stool slips back, because the muscular power of the rectum is too soon exhausted.

Now, we will stop for the evening.

B. This is a great field !

A. It is one of the greatest, and we have been able to review it only superficially. As you have seen, we have analyzed it from the subjective standpoint ; from the sensations of the patient, felt in the anus and rectum. This plan appears to me the most thoroughly homœopathic. You may also treat the subject from the objective side. That is from the condition of the stool, according to color, odor, and substances mixed with it. Briefly, according to what you may learn by your five senses. This also is proper and thereby homœopathic.

If you treated the subject so that you might say "with this remedy the constipation arises in the small intestines and that in the large bowel in another from the retroflexed uterus," you would thereby offer something very scientific but also very unhomœopathic.

—*Hahnemannian Advocate*.