

PORTRAITS OF HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINES

Volume II

Psychophysical
Analysis of Selected
Constitutional Types

CATHERINE R. COULTER

Portraits of Homoeopathic Medicines

Volume II

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Preface

The doctrine of homoeopathy —born of the revolutionary ferment which convulsed the end of the eighteenth century, reworking and restructuring the sciences, arts, and all of thought— was based on a radical critique of the medical concepts of the epoch within a few years it had spread throughout Europe, to North; and South America, and even planted vigorous roots in India and two centuries of labor by many widely dispersed practitioner of homoeopathy has brought into being a sizable literature.

The past several years have witnessed a revival of homoeopathic activity in the United States capable of restoring the doctrine of its former eminence. For history is a cyclical phenomenon which continually reproduces the same situations in remarkably analogous sequences. In our day the wheel of history appears to be completing one of these revolutions, confronting us with events analogous to those which occurred two centuries ago.

Catherine R. Coulter's *Portraits of Homoeopathic Medicines*, whose first volume appeared in 1986, revives the tradition of the great homoeopathic innovators. Her writings spring from a profound knowledge of the masters of homoeopathy whom she constantly cites in the text: not only Samuel Hahnemann, the founder, but also such prominent American pioneers as Kent, Hering, Allen, Boger and others. In a style of rare elegance she integrates a sizable body of traditional learning with her own clinical experience as a homoeopathic consultant.

Adhering with admirable fidelity to the constituent principles of homoeopathy, her *Portraits* bring such a fresh and original perspective to the study of *materia medica* as to make it an agreeable journey of discovery through the types of human behavior encountered in everyday life.

Like the Enchanted Princess of the fairy tale, American homoeopathy is awakening from its long sleep in the castle where all the wealth accumulated by its pioneers has been amassed. Let us hope it will find persons to help it through these first steps, protect it from the perils even today lurking by the roadside, and restore its former grandeur.

Jacques Baur, M.D.
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Introduction

The homoeopathic polychrests serve as archetypes: that is, each embodies a wide range of symptoms and personality traits of which the individual patient is but a partial copy. These archetypal patterns, originally established using accounts of poisonings as well as symptoms developed in the homoeopathic provings, have been enriched and enhanced over the decades by physicians' experience with cured cases.*

The resulting information may at times be contradictory and inconsistent. For instance, the *Natrum muriaticum* constitutional type needs both to be with people and to escape from them. He is pulled both ways and is never entirely happy in either situation. Thus the drug picture presents amelioration and aggravation from company, amelioration and aggravation from being alone.

Such contradictions create tensions within a constitutional picture. Yet, if a remedy's description is to make an emotional impact essential if only for mnemonic purposes— it must be able to absorb the tensions among its competing elements. To capture, preserve, and ultimately to reconcile these "tensions" is one of the objectives of these portraits,

A homoeopathic portrait, then, is not only the picture of an explicit, finite, unchanging reality— for instance, the prominent leftsidedness of *Lachesis*, the bright and shining eyes of *Phosphorus*, *Pulsatilla's* thirstlessness, *Arsenicum album's* chilliness, and other "keynotes" of homoeopathic prescribing. A portrait must also carry symbolic force— metaphoric impact— suggesting the connotative (as against the explicit or demonstrative), inexhaustible (as against the finite), fluid (as against the unchanging) nature of a given remedy.

Capturing the unique, amorphous, idiosyncratic essence of the homoeopathic remedy means expressing the unity of its diverse actions—crystallizing in a characteristic unitary form the varied phenomena of the provings and clinical cures. Thus the wealth and diversity of the ideas and emotions associated with *Natrum muriaticum* are captured by the image of the absorbing, retaining, condensing, and preserving salt, which brings out the taste of other foods but also corrodes.

Once a remedy has acquired this sort of image, once it has become capable of containing and reconciling all its inherent oppositions, contradictions, and deviations, and of evoking a host of meanings, like a magnet it begins to attract to itself still further associations, and a dual self-perpetuating process is set in operation. The physician's understanding is fed by the picture of the archetypal burdened, saddened, introverted, undemonstrative "salt of the earth" individual who has passed through a sorrow he cannot relinquish while trying to sublimate it by helping others; but this image, in turn, is nourished by him, since every practitioner endows the remedy with some new dimension from his own personal experience with it. Hence the symbolism is continually expanding and deepening.

In taking on a symbolic dimension, the remedy's key traits serve as guideposts to its multitudinous lesser symptoms; they are the hooks from which the practitioner may suspend his own observations. For this reason the polychrests inevitably grow and expand at the expense of the minor remedies. However inequitable this may seem, *Myristica sebifera*, *Ranunculus bulbosus*, *Kali iodatum*, *Cocculus*, and

*The terms, "polychrest," "constitutional remedy," or "pictures," "homoeopathic constitutional type," "proving," and others are discussed and clarified in C. R. Coulter, *Portraits of Homoeopathic Remedies*, Volume 1, Introduction.

Bellis perennis, although powerfully effective in their own spheres of action, cannot evoke the emotional impact or carry the symbolic weight of the polychrests. Just as certain exceptional persons stand out from the crowd, so certain remedies are indisputably "leaders" (Nash's term). We do not yet know if this can be changed. Perhaps this is how it must be. The "minor remedies" will have to be proved more thoroughly before a final judgment can be reached.

To remain vital and meaningful the homoeopathic materia medica, like any aspect of our cultural heritage, must be repeatedly scrutinized, analyzed, and interpreted by each generation in the light of its new knowledge and understanding. These *Psychophysical Portraits* are a modest attempt to discharge this task. Yet, while offering an expanded view of the homoeopathic patient, in health as well as sickness, in normalcy as well as pathology, and in the finer shadings of the psyche, they adhere strictly to the classic Hahnemannian tradition.

Let us review the major contributions to this tradition made by the earlier (and some recent) homoeopathic masters.

First of all, the tried and true building blocks of the materia medica are the symptoms derived from provings, accounts of poisonings, and clinical cures listed in Hahnemann's *Materia Medica Pura* and *The Chronic Diseases*. These were followed by Hering's ten volume *Guiding Symptoms of our Materia Medica* and, at the same time, Allen's eleven-volume *Encyclopedia of Pure Materia Medica*. More recently, Clarke condensed the symptoms into his three-volume *Dictionary of Materia Medica*.

To these monumental works every practitioner turns repeatedly for learning and guidance.

Upon this eminently solid foundation a variety of structures have been erected. For instance, Hering's two students, E.A. Farrington and H. Gross, each wrote a comparative materia medica. That of Gross, in 1887, compares and contrasts in list form the symptoms of most of the major remedies (for instance, *Hepar sulphuris* is compared with 10 other remedies; *Sulphur* with forty; *Pulsatilla* with a record 63), etc. Farrington's *Comparative Materia Medica* follows the same format as Gross, but his *Clinical Materia Medica* presents the remedies in the form of individual essays, with numerous cross references to other medicines. These are all excellent and important works, but far too cumbersome for practical use; the information is simply too difficult to commit to memory, and the nineteenth century homoeopathic journals are filled with letters from students crying out for help.

To facilitate the arduous task of absorbing this vast body of shapeless symptomatic detail, every writer has elaborated his own approach, and a variety of different ones have emerged.

Boenninghausen's early repertories and therapeutic manuals, written between the 1830's and the 1860's (later compiled, augmented, and rearranged by Boger into the one-volume *Characteristics and Repertory*) were among the first attempts to present the material in a more assimilable form. They were followed by Lilienthal's *Homoeopathic Therapeutics* (1878), a "clinical repertory" that describes the idiosyncracies of different remedies for a particular symptom, Lippe's *Repertory to the More Characteristic Symptoms of the Materia Medica* (1879), Knerr's *Repertory* (1896), based on Hering's *Guiding Symptoms*, and others—all of which doubtless inspired and paved the way for Kent's larger and more comprehensive *Repertory of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica* (1897). This latter, with its eminently practical classification of the idiosyncratic symptoms those minute details so essential for effective homoeopathic prescribing, has supplanted the earlier repertories and is now the standard. Additions and changes have been made and will be made (see Barthel's

new *Synthetic Repertory*, for example), but it still remains the supreme and unassailable practical instrument for prescribing.

Simultaneously, in response to the despairing cries of students and practitioners, as ever-newer remedies were added to the existing corpus of knowledge, authors sought to meet the need by more selective guides: Nash's 1898 *Leaders in Homoeopathic Therapeutics*, H.C. Allen's 1898 *Keynotes of the Materia Medica*, W. Boericke's invaluable 1920 *Materia Medica and Repertory* and Boger's handy little gem published in 1930, the *Synoptic Key with Repertory* (based on Boenninghausen's *Repertory* and thus differing slightly from, and complementing, Kent's way of organizing the material). At this same time authors started to expand Nash's vignettes, describing the remedies in the form of pictures, following Farrington's initial format but without his cumbersome comparisons. The prototype of this genre is Kent's *Lectures on the Materia Medica*, published in 1904 and describing over 200 remedies. Following him (in the English language alone) were the drug pictures of Borland in the 1930's, Tyler and Wheeler in the 1940's, Shepherd in the 1950's, Blackie in the 1970's, and others.

Furthermore, several attempts have been made to discuss the remedies in terms of their miasmatic lineage (see the Introduction to the Nosodes, Part II), but these, on the whole, have tended to complicate and confuse the pictures rather than clarify them.

In the 1950's Whitmont infused fresh life into our understanding of the homoeopathic materia medica by bringing to bear a Jungian psychoanalytical perspective.

A living portrait must be three-dimensional. The first dimension is the listing of symptoms from the poisonings and provings, the second, which gives the picture some depth, consists of data from clinical cases; while the third represents the remedy's emotional impact.* The constitutional portrait is an interplay of all these features, the interweaving and analysis of symptoms and characteristics, with images and associations from literature, history, politics, and other cultural areas all enriching the final product. Only thus can Hahnemann's "totality" take on its full meaning.

But the fullest and most cohesive three-dimensional portrait of a homoeopathic remedy can do no more than suggest the subject's depth and scope. The reality of a remedy is inexhaustible—an open forum to which every practitioner brings the richness and variety of his own clinical observations and associations, his own background and understanding, thereby contributing yet further to the remedy's archetypal image.**

This method of viewing the remedy as a portrait also challenges the homoeopath to organize the material of his own experience in his own way and, while adhering to Hahnemann's three rules, ***, to develop his own style and method

*To revert once again to *Natrum muriaticum*, Lot's Wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt, evokes the *Natrum muriaticum* pathology from "looking back." Miss Havisham, in *Great Expectations*, portrays how implacable brooding crystallizes into an obsessive grievance. Don Quixote acts on others like a dash of salt—either spicing up their lives with adventure or (since a little salt goes a long way) having a detrimental effect when allowed too much free rein. And Chekhov's *Natrum muriaticum* manner of rubbing salt into existential wounds reminds others of all the unhappiness in the world and corrodes their serenity and peace of mind.

**Thus some future homoeopathic commentator will inevitably come along and write two of three hundred pages on *Natrum muriaticum* (a chilling thought!!).

*** These are: 1) prescription according to the Law of Similars, 2) the single remedy, and 3) the minimum dose.

of practice, Whatever he may have read or been taught, his own empirical observation of the patient's response to the remedy should always remain the significant factor for him and his best guide to the simillimum. For instance, the apprehensiveness, insecurity, or cowardice of the *Lycopodium* male were noted in that portrait, but not particularly stressed, because every type suffers from these to some extent, and the author has found the type's overt self-esteem, presence, and viability to be more prominent and unique features of patients cured by the potentized club-moss. In the same way, *Calcarea carbonica* indolence is a more reliable guiding symptom than its immoderate or exaggerated industriousness and determination to succeed,

In a word, every practitioner should adopt Hering's credo, "Not to accept anything without proving it, still less to reject anything without trying it." and then weave his own patterns on the warp and woof of the classic texts and his own experience. The fact that his observations will almost always confirm the data in the classic literature is what makes homoeopathy scientific and eternal

Certain salient points stated in the introduction to the earlier volume remain valid for this one. For stylistic reasons the masculine gender is still employed to refer to both sexes except when symptoms relate more particularly to the female (as in section." of *Ignatia* chapter). The practitioner is still cautioned against prescribing on the mental symptoms alone, without substantiating the prescription by the physical symptoms. He is still urged to be mindful of the complexity and fluidity of human nature and thus to avoid undue rigidity in his observation of the patient's responses. These portraits, composed of many hundreds of cases from the author's personal experience, attempt to capture and convey the archetypal dimension of the homoeopathic medicines. They aim to guide, suggest, and inspire, never to dictate.

Part I

Nux Vomica

THIS homoeopathic remedy, made from the seed of the *Strychnos nux vomica* (poison nut) and thus the potentization of strychnine, resembles *Arsenicum album*, the snake venom *Lachesis*, *Phosphorus*, *Belladonna* and other poisonous substances in illustrating the old adage that the strongest poisons make the best medicines.* *Nux vomica's* curative action is so wide-ranging that it suggested to Hahnemann the concept of the polychrest, and in his introductory essay to the proving of this remedy he wrote:

There are a few medicines, the majority of whose symptoms correspond in similarity with the symptoms of the commonest and most frequent of human diseases, and hence very often find an efficacious homoeopathic employment. They may be termed polychrests. To these belong particularly the *nux vomica* seed (Materia Medica Pura, Vol. II).

Because this remedy is so often required for the physical state of excitation and overstimulation, homoeopaths have tended to stress the mental parallels of loss of composure, irritability, and a quarrelsome, easily provoked, explosive disposition. In fact, the expressions, "temper medicine" (Tyler) and "nasty *Nux*," have become bywords. The tone was doubtless set by Hahnemann, who wrote: "*Nux* is chiefly successful with persons of an ardent character, of an irritable, impatient temperament, disposed to anger, spite, or deception. "

Without minimizing these characteristics, which are, indeed, commonly encountered, the following portrait will broaden the picture, giving equal weight to the individual who is well-balanced and emotionally self-contained, even if still tense and high-strung. Hahnemann bestowed his papal benediction on endeavors to exonerate this often unjustly maligned constitutional type by listing, at the very end of his *Nux vomica* chapter and almost as an afterthought: "clear consciousness of his existence; delicate, strong, proper feeling of right and wrong."

Since relationships with previously discussed remedies are essential for a thorough appreciation of *Nux vomica*, in the following pages it will be liberally compared with, and differentiated from *Sulphur*, *Arsenicum*, *Lycopodium*, and other constitutional medicines.

The Cleanser:

Like *Sulphur*, *Nux vomica* is often employed as the opening remedy in cases where the patient must be cleansed of the ill-effects of previously used medicinal drugs: "it is frequently indicated [where there has been] much dosing, establishing a sort of equilibrium of forces and counteracting chronic effects" (Boericke). In this role, as in many others, the two remedies are often interchangeable ("*Nux* is closely related to *Sulphur*": Kent; "*Sulphur* is complementary in nearly all diseases": H.C. Allen). *Sulphur*, however, is most often of service for the side-effects of some specific allopathic medication, such as steroids or repeated courses of antibiotics prescribed for a relapsing condition, while *Nux* is indicated in the patient who has been overdosed with many different nostrums; it will benefit persons who have been "drugged by mixtures, bitters, herbs, pills [and all kinds of] quack medicines" (H. C. Allen) and are "oversensitive to medicines" (Kent). It also plays a virtually unique role in cases of homoeopathic overmedication-where the patient has taken too many different remedies and has become sensitized to his own constitutional remedy,

*In "Was sind Gifte? Was sind Arzneien?" ["What Are Poisons, What Are Medicines?"] (Journal der practischen Heilkunde XXIV (1806), st. III, 40-57) Hahnemann discussed this concept in the light of the law of similars.

or where any remedy above the low dilutions causes severe aggravations ("cannot bear even the least similar medicines": Hering).^{*} *Nux* stabilizes the over responsive physique, enabling the patient to tolerate his own constitutional or other well selected potentized medicines (e.g., "antidotes the overreactions to *Sulphur*": Kent).

One illustration was a man with severe stomach and abdominal pains after eating, mainly in the early or late afternoon. The remedies which seemingly fitted his picture— *Lycopodium*, *Carbo vegetabilis*, or *Natrum sulphuricum* only brought on tachycardia, dizziness, and shortness of breath whatever the potency administered. But after a dose of *Nux vomica* 30X he was able to tolerate, and be helped by, his simillimum (*Natrum sulphuricum*) in medium-high potency.

Another case was a female patient whose much-needed constitutional, *Natrum muriaticum*, for migraine headaches inevitably brought on a heavy and protracted menstrual period; she was able to tolerate it only after an intervening course of *Nux vomica*.

Both *Sulphur* and *Nux vomica* are important cleansers of the effects of "mind-altering" or hallucinogenic drugs. The former is suited primarily to those who have broken the drug habit, or are in the processing of breaking it, but are still burdened with its detrimental mental and psychic effects. It helps to "ground" the disembodied spirit which, so to speak, is still floating in the ethereal clouds and unable to return to earth; it restores to the mental faculties their former sharpness and focus, bringing back the lost ability to assemble, organize, and present thoughts lucidly and systematically, in speaking or writing. Thus it counteracts *Sulphur's* already strong tendency to disjointed or fleeting ideas (even without drug involvement). *Nux*, on the other hand, is indicated particularly in the patient who is attempting unsuccessfully to abandon his drug habit. It tempers the craving, lessens his dependence, and eases the withdrawal symptoms. In a word, it is preferred in the individual who is still struggling with drug dependence, while *Sulphur* cleanses whatever residue remains once the habit has been overcome.

Nux vomica is further invaluable in alcoholism. In first-aid prescribing it is absolutely specific for hangovers and the "morning after" syndrome. In chronic or constitutional use the remedy is prescribed for delirium tremens (Hering describes the picture in detail) and for the inveterate drinker who is steadily (yet imperceptibly to himself) increasing his consumption, but suffers few acute episodes; also for the individual who periodically abstains and then relapses into episodes of blind drunkenness. Turning to the bottle in times of stress or depression, this type can become abusive and even violent; he is the alcoholic wife-beater or child-abuser. But *Nux vomica* can also be the mild inebriate who is habitually in a semi alcoholic condition, yet never actually ill, seemingly preserved forever in his pickled state.

Both *Sulphur* and *Nux vomica* are valuable aids for those who frequent temperance groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous. But the latter has been particularly effective in those who are uncooperative in abstaining. The *Natrum muriaticum* wives or eldest daughters of such alcoholics, who are in the habit of picking up the pieces, tell of surreptitiously slipping doses of the remedy into their husband's or father's food or beverage and, after a greater or lesser number of doses, noticing a decreased consumption of strong drink without any conscious decision on the individual's part. The physician can perform this same guardian-angel role by prescribing for the patient's alcoholism under the guise of treating a physical complaint.

^{*}Nash's wording is clearer: "cannot bear the least, even suitable, medicines."

A case in point was the man who in cold weather suffered painful incapacitating sinus attacks. The physician had learned from the family that he would drink steadily from the time he returned from work until bedtime-starting with cocktails, going on to generous portions of wine at dinner, brandy after dinner, and finally consuming a couple of highballs as a nightcap. He was gradually losing control of his temper, and his formerly attractive character was deteriorating (*Nux vomica* is classic for character changes from drugs or over, indulgence in alcohol). The patient was given a vial of the remedy in the 30X potency to be taken at first daily and then-after the acute condition was resolved-twice weekly "to build up the sinuses." Within a few months he had halved his alcohol intake. The *Nux* was discontinued, but the patient curtailed his consumption even further-down to about a third of the former level where it remained. In the process the remedy lessened the sensitivity of his sinuses to cold, and his disposition improved markedly.

In certain cases *Nux* bears repetition well, and this may be necessary in deeply ingrained chronic states or to cleanse an individual of his addictions (sometimes, however, only two or three doses of the 10M potency will have the same effect). For *Nux* in general is an addiction-prone personality, with a tendency to overindulgence ("high living": Boger)-in other words, the individual who works hard and plays hard. To counter the burden of his heavy work day he seeks relaxation in rich food, drink, tobacco, coffee, and other stimulants-and the edgier he is, the greater his need. Even when not strongly addicted, without his favorite stimulant his day feels incomplete. Yet many an inveterate coffee-drinker, for instance, has been weaned from his habit by this medicine: it moderates the craving and thus helps the individual abide by his decision and "desire to break the habit" (Kent).

"I am caught up in a vicious circle." the typical *Nux* patient suffering from abuse of various stimulants will complain. "It all started in college when I was too tired to study for exams. Coffee and No-Doz stopped working, and I had to take stronger medicines. But, boy, did these mood elevators make me feel good! I could absorb information as fast as I swallowed the pills. But then I became dependent on them to keep me awake during the day, so that I could work and concentrate properly, and needed ever-stronger sleeping pills at night ... "

"These conditions," writes Boericke, "produce an irritable nervous system, hypersensitive, over impressionable, which *Nux vomica* will do much to soothe and calm."

The *Nux* constitution which has been insulted and injured by any of these medicinal or stimulant abuses may not only suffer a physical or nervous breakdown but may even actually become too toxic to perform its eliminative functions properly ("reversed action of functions": Kent). The patient displays such symptoms as nausea with inability to vomit despite desire to do so, or only after much gagging and retching. Or the "food goes down the esophagus, then becomes uncomfortable and returns" (Blackie); there is inability to urinate, despite the call, so that he has to strain ("tenesmus": Kent); or there is rectal tenesmus with difficult evacuation, and insufficient, incomplete, or unsatisfactory stool-described variously as "a frequent and ineffectual desire for stool ... passes little at a time" (Hahnemann), "anti-peristalsis, the more he strains, the harder it is to get a stool" (Kent), "irregular peristalsis, driving the intestinal content at once forward and back ... feeling bowels are going to act for a long time before action takes place" (Borland).

One patient, a small corgi dog whose favorite pastime was to raid the neighborhood's garbage cans, acquired an intestinal disorder which consisted of recurring inflammation of the bowel, with anal bleeding and inability to pass feces or

passing a very scanty movement with much painful straining and severe abdominal tenderness. He was relieved, and eventually cured of his "dietary indiscretions" by several doses of *Nux vomica* 10M.

Nervous Irritability and Oversensitivity:

On the physical level this remedy's well-attested nervous irritability takes the form of "frayed nerves," various twitchings, trembling, and quiverings, either of the entire body or of a single part, affections of the spine (where many nerves are centered), and reactions to a host of sensitivities ("oversensitive to impressions of the senses": Hahnemann).

Odors irritate him or make him acutely ill. Together with *Phosphorus*, *Ignatia*, and *Arsenicum*, *Nux vomica* ranks highest in sensitivity to tobacco, perfumes, and vegetable or animal smells; consequently, it is a primary remedy for allergies to trees, grasses, flowers, molds, and animal fur or dander. The patient cannot tolerate bright light, suffers from photophobia or optic neuritis, and has to wear sunglasses against the glare. One of his major sensitivities is to sounds: "He cannot bear any noise or speaking; music and singing affect him strongly" (Hahnemann).^{*} Living in an apartment, he can become hysterical at noise from upstairs or next door, even if it is just the sound of talking or someone treading on the floor ("The slightest step, and the smallest shaking of the floor, is felt by her painfully, intolerably": Hahnemann). He then bangs on the walls or ceiling in uncontrollable fury, shouting out his distress. He is unable to work if there is the slightest noise within earshot. Unlike *Sulphur*, who enjoys ambient noise, or *Lycopodium*, who also likes it when not too close by, *Nux* requires absolute quiet for concentration.

He is hypersensitive to cold. "Repugnance to cold or to cold air; chilly on least movement; from being uncovered; must be covered in every stage of fever," is H. C. Allen's summary of the numerous, "chill" symptoms. Sometimes he is so penetrated by it that neither external heat nor any amount of clothes or coverings suffice to warm him up (*Arsenicum*, *Silica*, *Psorinum*). When a patient, after a chill, comes down with paroxysms of violent sneezing, the remedy to abort the incipient cold is often *Nux vomica*.

He is well-known as the "bilious" type for his sensitive or nervous stomach, with its susceptibility to ulcers, both peptic and duodenal, colicky pains with intestinal irritability, burning sensations, hiccups, eructations, inflammations with abdominal tenderness, pressure after eating, as from a stone, and other symptoms of liver dysfunction and faulty digestion (Hahnemann lists some fifty gastric disorders, and Hering has six full pages). Much rich, spicy, or highly seasoned food have made him dyspeptic or may have given him an "asocial stomach," as some patients call it. This permits him to eat practically nothing. "My enjoyment of food has been woefully curtailed!" lamented one sufferer. He had been a gourmand as well as a gourmet and was a passionate imbibor and connoisseur of good wines, but now had to subsist on the blandest possible fare.

Nux craves hot and spicy foods because they supply, in another form, the stimulation and warmth that he is always seeking. However, even without overindulging in inappropriate foods, the *Nux* digestion still cannot tolerate many spices or seasonings, and certainly no alcohol, coffee, or other stimulants-as seen in cases of children and abstemious adults. His delicate digestion makes him finicky,

^{*} The familiar cartoon character, the whisky-loving Captain Haddock from the French-language comic strip *Tintin*, who is blustering and short-tempered but withal loyal, good-hearted, and ultimately endearing, caricatures this type. He is driven to distraction by the singing of Bianca Castafiore, "the Milanese nightingale", although she does not seem to have the same unnerving effect on others.

highly particular about his food, and sensitive to how it is served. He approaches it as gingerly as a cat. *Sulphur*; in contrast, is more like a pet dog, gobbling up indiscriminately whatever is placed before him and caring little about its presentation.

And yet, paradoxically, *Nux vomica* may like fats and even crave them, digesting them with no difficulty. The patient will claim, "No meal is complete for me without some form of fat. I continue to feel hungry and unsatisfied unless there has been fat on my meat, butter on my bread, or oil on my vegetables. I also like oily nuts and rich or creamy desserts" (this last is to be distinguished from the more common "sweet tooth"). Also no day is complete without some form of animal protein. He may dislike the idea of consuming "animal flesh" (as some patients say with disgust), or be vegetarian out of religious or other principles, but still admit that only animal protein gives him real energy ("must have meat Kent).

The homoeopathic literature is rich in symptoms of *Nux vomica* tastes and appetites. The remedy is highest in bitter, metallic, putrid, salty, sour, sweetish, or other tastes in the mouth (*Mercurius*, *Pulsatilla*). It is equally prominent under "loss of appetite" and "repugnance for food" —a picture which extends to "continued anorexia" (Hahnemann). This last symptom may have a variety of causes: emotional trauma (*Ignatia*), disordered esthetic considerations and the need to feel in complete control of one's own physique (*Arsenicum*), a principled ideological stand (*Natrum muriaticum*), exhaustion from overwork (*Calcarea*), or the reaction to an overweight mother or other family member.

His highly strung nature makes *Nux vomica* subject to insomnia. He cannot fall asleep from the ideas churning around in his head or nervous irritability ("he becomes more mentally active, more sensitive to his surroundings in the late evenings and cannot sleep": Borland). Or anger, distressing thoughts, the man's problems on his mind, and excitement keep him awake. Or he falls asleep easily enough but either "sleeps by fits and starts" (Kent), or awakens around 3:00 in the morning (a key symptom) and falls asleep only toward daybreak ("he wakes up about 3:00 A.M. and must lie awake for several hours with intrusion of irrepressible ideas, and..... falls into a sleep full of oppressive dreams when the morning is far advanced, from which he wakes more fatigued than when he lay down at night": Hahnemann).* *Lachesis*, we recall, has plenty of energy despite a sleepless night. At this time, too (during the early morning hours), *Nux vomica* may suffer aggravation of his dyspepsia, asthma, back, or joint pains. He can be incensed at his insomnia (*Arsenicum*), seeing eight uninterrupted hours of sleep as an "inalienable right" and complaining of gross cosmic injustice when deprived of them ("I thought all God's creatures could at least sleep!" was one patient's indignant cry).

Since any noise disturbs him and wakes him up, this individual may find it difficult to sleep with anyone in the same room. When siblings, boarding-school and college roommates, or married couples, despite mutual affection, display this trouble, one of the first remedies to consider is *Nux vomica*.

*Hahnemann lists the type's numerous oppressive dreams, ranging from the ordinary, "dreams of disagreeable things that have happened or been talked of the previous day" to the more unusual "dreams that excite horror: diseased or maimed human beings . lice and vermin ... wild beasts ... that all his teeth fall out of mouth ... " and so on.

Both *Nux vomica* and *Natrum muriaticum* tend to wake up after a few hours' sleep, but the former falls asleep again, even if only toward morning, while the latter cannot ("sleeplessness all once awakening": Boger). *Sulphur* is also beneficial in "absolute sleeplessness" as well as "waking at 3, 4, or 5 a.m. and cannot fall asleep again" (Hering). In treating severe insomnia it is usually better to prescribe frequent (daily, for a week or two) doses in low or medium potencies, rather than a single one in high potency.

Furthermore, the type's pain threshold is extremely low. Even moderate pain can throw him into an uncontrolled and angry impatience or unnerve him completely ("sensitive to the most trifling ailments": Kent; "pains are not borne without moaning and lamenting": Hahnemann), and when it is more severe, she "deems the pains she suffers intolerable and would rather take her own life" (Hahnemann).

His various sensitivities can affect this type so strongly that he faints (all the repertories list the remedy in the highest degree under this rubric). *Nux vomica* faints in a crowded room, from emotion, hysteria, or weakness, during menses, pregnancy, or labor, or from heat ("dizzy and faint in a crowd or when many gaslights are burning": Hering), or the opposite-when walking in the open air. Notable is the idiosyncratic "fainting from the sight of blood" (Gibson Miller; also *Ignatia*). One patient with a rather humdrum allergic condition was recognized as needing this medicine after telling the physician of being exempted from military service because of a tendency to faint at the sight of blood in any living creature, or even from the sight of a piece of very rare meat.

Nux vomica is markedly sensitive to disharmony in his environment, perhaps because it threatens his own precarious emotional and psychic balance. Neatness, efficiency, and order are essential to his peace of mind. With his "fussy, precise" (Hering) nature, he is "never contented or satisfied and is [constantly] disturbed by his surroundings" (Kent). A typical complaint is "my house/ office/ back yard is a source of *constant irritation*. Wherever I look, something is not right there" (*Arsenicum*). His irritability and criticisms often arise when others disturb, or do not abide by, his own particular idea of order. "Everything in my house/office has its appointed place, and if someone moves it, I move it back!" is a common observation, for he likes things to be accomplished meticulously and in specific (the "correct") ways. For instance, he cannot enjoy a half grapefruit unless it is properly sectioned first, he might refuse to eat cornbread baked in a deep (instead of a shallow) dish ("It just doesn't look right!"), or be upset at someone making his bed the wrong way or painting the garden fence with too small a brush: "A most inefficient way of doing it ...," he will grumble.*

He might be able to tolerate, although barely, an unstraightened picture on the wall (which *Arsenicum* cannot) but cannot stand open drawers or gaping closet doors. And the colleagues and students of one *Nux vomica* professor of English literature claimed they could find any book on his shelves blindfolded, so meticulously were they arranged by subject-matter and century (and, of course, in alphabetical order).

A number of constitutional types can be fastidious in some particular field—*Sulphur*, *Natrum muriaticum*, and *Silica* coming first to mind— but *Nux* resembles *Arsenicum* in his capacity to devote infinite care to all undertakings in his life, to everything he does. ("Any job worth doing is worth doing well," is his professed creed; and he ranks a mere notch below *Arsenicum*'s "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing"). If he prepares a special meal, for instance, he picks up after himself as he goes along, while someone else must clean up after *Sulphur* or *Natrum muriaticum*. Perhaps that is why *Nux* and *Arsenicum* are the only two remedies listed under "fastidious" in the Kent *Repertory*.

A cleaning-woman with an unhappy family situation of long standing and well-known for her conscientiousness and thorough work, was suffering from internal trembling and quivering ("jitteriness" as she called it) as well as from spasmodic lower back pains prior to and during menses. All symptoms were better from strong

*The type's "constipation when travelling" (Kent) could be interpreted as an upset due to disruption of his usual routine.

firm pressure and while sitting or lying completely still with the bad: pressed against some firm support ("worse upon least movement ... wants to sit still": Boericke). The physician was in a quandary, unable to choose between the equally indicated *Nux vomica* and *Natrum muriaticum*, until he asked whether her own house was equally neat and clean. "Good Lord, no!" she exclaimed. "It's a shambles! Do you think I want to clean up my own house after spending all day doing it for other people?" This reply entirely indicated *Natrum muriaticum*— who will dutifully do for others what she will not do [or herself. A *Nux vomica*'s house would have been immaculate.

Sometimes the fastidiousness of *Nux*, like that of *Arsenicum*, can be "too much of a good thing," an obsession instead of a virtue. In this imperfect world, the individual is never at peace with himself and becomes a nuisance to others, who heartily wish for some liberating dirt and disorder.*

Nux vomica's hypersensitivity and nervous irritability may be further manifested in touchiness. He is quick to take offense ("takes everything amiss": Hahnemann) and blame others ("Who's irritable? I'm not irritable. You're the one who is irritable!"), or, prickly as a porcupine, bristles into instant defense. A teasing remark or word spoken in jest may elicit a nasty or sarcastic rejoinder, and if a friend asks "What's been happening in your life! You look very well today," he may reply defensively. "Do You mean that I usually don't?" When he is on edge, a piece of under- or over-cooked meat served at home or in a restaurant is taken a personal affront and leads to a scene. *Nux*, in fact is an expert at making scenes, both public and private ("angry peevishness". Hahnemann). He is quick to feel misunderstood and escalates any misunderstanding into a grievance. When others fail to react in tune with his desires, he becomes enraged: "No one ever listens to me! I am fast becoming; a mere cipher in my own office/ home!" He is easily angered by criticism and, in his fury, is ready to kill his critics— or himself. He is "sensitive to rudeness" (Kent: also *Staphysagria*, *Calcarea carbonica* and *Natrum muriaticum*], but this does not prevent him from being frequently rude or "insolent" (Boenninghausen) himself

Not only is he "fiery and hot-tempered" (Hahnemann)— "I am a human powder-keg that is set off by the least spark," one patient commented— he can also be *tight*, *testy*, and *agitated* in manner. These are the outward signs of a psychic restlessness and inability to let events move along at their own natural pace, if things are going too smoothly at home or work, he proceeds to stir them up. He constantly raises contentious issues or voices contradictory opinions.** He creates his own excitement, but then complains of being harassed and overwhelmed by people and circumstances and talks of "longing for tranquility and repose" (Kent). In contrast, *Lachesis* and *Sulphur*- more frankly enjoy the emotional excitement or disharmony they create and complain of it less.

The key word here is spasmodic. "In strychnine poisoning the most marked feature is-spasms and convulsions," writes Clarke, and the *Nux vomica* physical picture includes spasms of the colon limbs,

*But, paradoxically, these fastidious types seem attracted to ugly dogs. As if, satiated with elegance, neatness, and visual harmony, they seek the opposite in a pug or slobbering bulldog. When asked to articulate the reasons for this surprising preference, they say, "There is something soothing about the breed. The dogs are so ugly they seem actually beautiful!" If *Natrum muriaticum* owns an ugly dog, it is out of compassion or because he relates to its being a..... misfit."

***Nux vomica*'s contradictory and abrasive personality finds a curious parallel in the remedy's antidoting powers. It is listed as an antidote to other medicines more frequently than any other remedy.

and spine, spasmodic labor pains in the woman, spasms of coughing or sneezing, and spasms provoked by the slightest touch or movement. On the emotional level there are correspondingly short-lived but unbridled outbursts of irritability and "ill-humor" (Boenninghausen), a tendency to fly off the handle when things do not go as desired, "hysterical outbursts" (Kent), and the like. Even his "immoderate laughter" (Kent) has a "spasmodic" quality, since, as with *Natrum muriaticum*, it is often an outlet for underlying tensions.

One of the more familiar examples of spasticity is the husband who takes out his displeasure on wife and family when he returns from work in the evening. "Why isn't my dinner ready yet? What do you mean you had to feed the children first? Are they more important than I am? And why is the house always such a mess? If you don't pick up, why can't the children? You're setting a bad example and encouraging them to be lazy and slovenly."

Another familiar picture is the irascible *Nux vomica* motorist. Cars, driving, and trips bring out all that is aggressive, belligerent, and sarcastic in this otherwise perfectly pleasant personality. He is notorious for fretting in traffic, fuming at a car cutting in ahead of him, and abusing other drivers. He is incensed at the suggestion that he may have taken the wrong turn, while getting lost is the ultimate insult. *Nux vomica* is the dominant note in the tense, irritable father of the family in Ring Lardner's short story, *The Young Immigrants*, who travel by automobile across the Midwest (written from the view- point of the young child):

....."Heavens said my mother Ypsilanti must be a abnormal school to have such a large football field.

My father wore a queer look. This is not Ypsilanti this is Ann Arbor he cried.

But I thought you said we would go south of Ann Arbor and direct to Ypsilanti said my mother with a smirk.

I did say that but I thought I would surprise you by coming into Ann Arbor replied my father ... with a ghastly smile.

Personally I think the surprise was unanimous.

..... That is Canada over there is it not said my mother.

What did you think it was the Austrian Tyrol replied my father explodeing a cough.

..... Well you would better stick to the main roads said my mother tacklessly.

Well you would better stick to your own business replied my father with a pungent glance.

Soon my father had payed the check and gave the waiter a lordly bribe and once more we sprang into the machine and was on our way. The lease said about the results of my father's [shortcuts] the soonest mended- in a word it turned out to be a holy cost of the first water as after we had covered miles and miles of ribald roads we suddenly came to an abrupt conclusion by the side of a stagnant freight train that was stone deaf to honks. May father sat there for nearly 1/2 hour reciteing the 4 horses of the Apoplex in a under tone but finely my mother mustard up her courage and said affectedly why don't we turn around and go back somewheres. I can't spell what my father replied.

.....Are you lost daddy I asked tenderly. Shut up he explained ... " (etc.)

Characteristic is the type's refusal to even try curbing his temper. The leopard has no desire to change his spots, or even disguise them. *Nux vomica* is like a child in this respect, devoid of self-restraint or self-consciousness and indulging himself in outrageous behavior for the release or sense of power it gives.* Even the shrewd and successful businessman can forget himself completely in a petty temper outburst, defying all civilized rules of behavior and acting heedless or unaware of the impression he may be making on others. The employer who cannot engage in a conversation without shouting, or even talk on the telephone without slamming down the receiver in irritation before the other has finished his reply, who bullies his subordinates, "quarrels with, reproaches, scolds, and insults" (Hering) his associates, reacts to every situation with intemperateness and excess may well require *Nux vomica*. Yet, like a child, the next moment he is just fine and acts as if nothing untoward had happened: "I don't get ulcers, I give them," was one such type's pithy self assessment.

To be sure, this blustering manner under pressure and the fits of temper may resemble *Sulphur* in a position of authority or in the home-who can become equally churlish, aggressive, and choleric, with the same tendency to shout down an interlocutor who is saying something unwelcome (*Lycopodium* turns a deaf ear, while *Natrum muriaticum* argues interminably). But *Sulphur's* tone is usually less nasty than *Nux vomica's*. To do the latter justice, however, at times his naturally rasping or grating tone of voice exacerbates the picture of irascibility.

When irate at not getting his own way *Nux vomica* may resort to "invective mixed with indelicate expressions" (Hahnemann), or "profanity" (Boenninghausen). If he feels in the wrong to any degree, he is quick to place others on the defensive, to avoid being admonished himself. For instance, when a credit-card company threatens to close down his account for delinquency in payment, he reacts with a tirade of threats and insults: "You're damn right I haven't paid! But so what! Don't you know me by now? I've always paid up eventually. What the Hell! Isn't that the whole point of a credit card that you can delay payment? Let me talk to the manager. Oh! you are? Well, then, let me talk to your boss. You may be out of a job soon ... " and so on, in the same vein.

This "quarrelsome" (Boenninghausen), "abusive" (Hahnemann), and "arrogant" (Hering) behavior when crossed can make even the best of *Nux vomica* colleagues feared or disliked at work, even when respected. His uncontrolled irascibility and accusatory disposition can also destroy a friendship or jeopardize a potentially happy family. By the time he collects himself and endeavors to disperse his ill humor, the evil has already been done: his scolding outbursts have ruined the atmosphere in the home and upset the peace and enjoyment of others.

A banker sought homoeopathic aid for his ulcer pain. When asked about his memory and powers of concentration, he replied, "No problem there. It's my disposition that needs repairing not my mind. I am blessed with the longest memory but the shortest temper known to man. In fact people tell me I'm the most disagreeable person they've ever dealt with. I would be grateful if you could make me just the second most disagreeable one."

*An extreme illustration of this childish and uncivilized mentality occurred during a deer hunt. At the end of a long day without a kill, a doe appeared in a distant clearing. Since it was understood that does were protected, no one fired. But the *Nux vomica* member of the party, frustrated and irritated by his day's failure, raised his rifle and shot it dead.

Thus *Nux vomica* should always be considered for the patient whose moods are unstable and whose classic "short-fuse syndrome" or explosive anger is affecting his relationships and his life.* Especially in the male, it can take the edge off those hair-trigger reactions and permit a few seconds to elapse before he responds. Then he may cool down sufficiently for reflection and opt for a measured response, realizing that restraint is sometimes better than fearless outspokenness. He may become more equable and in command of himself, may learn to curb those "vehement" (Boenninghausen) reactions which in hindsight so often turn out to be unwise (*Lachesis* in women).

Alternately, the male *Nux vomica* is adept at giving the silent treatment to anyone who has displeased him—retiring into wounded, disagreeable, moping isolation ("sullen, morose disposition"; Hering) or replying to civil questions in surly monosyllables ("aversion to answering"; Kent), and reacting to the upset of his idea of how things ought to be with curt or tight-lipped sarcasm.

At times, then, *Nux vomica's* over reactivity and unpredictable behavior, uncertain temper, and *erratically contrasting moods* are his most predictable characteristics. Every day his colleagues at work wonder what mood he will be in, and his wife asks herself the same question when he is on his way home, so as to adjust her behavior accordingly. Whether good or bad, prickly or benign, his mood must always be taken into consideration by those around him, and he requires constant humoring or placating. On a more serious level, this overall tenuous emotional balance renders the individual susceptible to various mental disturbances and manias: puerperal, from disappointed ambition or wounded honor, from brooding over a lawsuit or failed business venture, and so on. "He will sit for hours staring with dull sunken eyes or, on the contrary, raving incoherently, groaning ... " (Hering).

He may go beyond verbal abuse and become physically violent ("scolding humor can develop into acts": Hahnemann; "striking"; Kent), near-violent ("it seems as if he would like to strike anyone in the face who speaks a word to him, so irritable and unconstrained is his disposition"; Hahnemann), and gratuitously destructive breaking objects and hurling them about. He can even be of a "cruel" (Kent) or "wicked" (Hahnemann) disposition.

Under "vengeful, malicious" Kent lists only *Nux vomica* and *Stramonium* in bold type; under the same rubric Boenninghausen lists only *Nux vomica* and *Anacardium* in the highest (fourth) degree.

His destructiveness can also be self-directed, and this is one of the most frequent remedies for suicidal thoughts ("when looking at a knife he is inclined to stab himself, when at water to drown himself": Boenninghausen)—particularly if the patient "wishes to commit suicide but is afraid to die" (Hering). A case in point was the man in his early fifties whose abrasive personality had caused him to be fired from his job of twenty years. In his anger and self pity, and with nowhere to direct his emotions and energies, he threatened to take his own life. The impulse was arrested only by his physical fear of death, not by consideration for the feelings of others, nor

*The following description, by the shan-story writer H. H. Munro ("Saki"), of an aggrieved Master of the Hounds during a poor bunting season portrays the uncontrolled type to perfection. "Major Pallaby was a victim of circumstances over which he had no control [everything goes wrong with him': Hahnemann] and of his temper over which he had very little." When he (erroneously) concludes that someone has inadvertently shot the fox that was to be hunted the next day, the major "reviled and railed at fate and the general scheme of things (and) condemned everyone—with whom he had ever come in contact to endless and abnormal punishment." And when he departs, his sympathetic hostess's "shrill monotone had the field to itself. But after the majors display, her best efforts at vocal violence missed their full effect: it was as though one had come straight out from ;, Wagner opera into a rather tame thunderstorm" ("The Bag").

by Hamlet's "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all." *Nux vomica* in high potency was first prescribed for his "melancholy in consequence of losing his position" (Hering)-with no effect; then *Aurum metallicum* for his black suicidal depression and threats to fling himself from a window in despair; also for his "self-condemnation and feeling of utter worthlessness" (Boericke) again without effect. As his weeping and lamentations increased, and the suicide threats grew more frequent (he confided in anyone who would listen), *Pulsatilla* 10M was administered daily for a week. The weeping decreased, and his behavior became more reserved, with fewer threats, but the impulse to kill himself persisted. *Nux vomica* 50M was again administered, this time with success, and over the course of a year one or the other of the two remedies was prescribed at any sign of relapse.

Nux vomica and *Pulsatilla* might appear to be strange bed fellows, but in this case the two together could accomplish what neither could achieve separately.

Just as quadratic equations have both positive and negative roots, so also do the constitutional remedies have a twofold aspect. The "positive root" of *Nux vomica*'s sensitivity is "delicacy" (Hahnemann) and a caring disposition.

As already noted, the type has a highly reactive temperament ("easily affected": Allen). The emotions are close to the surface, the sensibilities acute, and, when on an even keel, he has more natural "sweetness" than the average male (a strange word to apply to *Nux vomica*, but appropriate). He can be intensely "sympathetic" (Kent), even weeping at affecting incidents with a *Pulsatilla*-like: sentimentality and visibly affected by suffering in others. Thus, not only is 'he sensitive about himself, with a tender *amour propre*, but, suffering acutely himself from "wounded honor" (Hering), he is extra-considerate of others' pride and careful not to pass on humiliation to them (*Natrum muriaticum* ... *Staphysagria*). In general, it is *Sulphur* and *Lycopodium* males who can be ox-like in their emotional sensitivities— seldom *Nux vomica*, who is all responsiveness and who, emotionally as well as physically, "feels everything too strongly" (Hahnemann). It is precisely the type's heightened responsiveness and sensitive "excitable nature" (Boenninghausen) that cause his passions, when thwarted, to run amok, leading him into the uncontrolled behavior for which the type is renowned.

The nature, then, is often blended—the sweetness alternating with outbursts of irascibility. A patient whose true kindness is spelled by erratic or violent impulses will often be found to respond to *Nux vomica*. The man who is a tyrant with his subordinates may be extra sensitive with his family and gentle with animals, becoming incensed at any maltreatment of them (the other side of the coin of the better-known cruelty to animals: kicking dogs, beating horses, etc.). Or conversely, the one who is harsh toward his family may be exceptionally caring in his professional relations; he easily elicits the willing sacrifice of his devoted and respectful (by virtue of being well-respected) colleagues, and beneath the caustic manner lies a more than dutiful concern for his client's interests.

Nux vomica's juxtaposition of virtues and defects differs from that of the dualistic *Lachesis* in lacking the latter's dimension of moral struggle. He is more accepting of his own blended nature, or less aware of it, consequently less at war with himself and projecting a less conflicted image.

Thus, while he can be more abrasive than most other constitutional types, with a rougher and more jagged surface, and is certainly less gracious to strangers than, for example, *Lycopodium*, he may be more truly supportive than the tarter where his immediate family is concerned— at least, if one is to judge by the degree of content evinced by the spouses of the two types. Aside from the occasional alcoholic or

exceedingly bad-tempered *Nux vomica*. the wives of these types sense a genuine concern and usually claim to feel loved and supported in private, even when in public the husband may be overwrought, unpredictable unreasonable, and occasional embarrass them by uncouth behavior.* The wife of the *Lycopodium* husband, on the other hand, while seemingly having little to complain of (the husband behaving impeccably in public), may lament of some intangible deficiency in private—an impenetrable aloofness? lack of true interest?

The reason may simply be that *Lycopodium* has less ardor, less emotional support to give, than *Nux vomica* with his strong feelings and high masculine energy. The latter's romantic nature is more highly developed than *Lycopodium*'s— and to the wife this may offset a number of other deficiencies.

Consequently, while the dissatisfied wife of a *Lycopodium* will complain to the physician, "Yes, my husband is considerate and kind enough, I suppose— but what is consideration without warmth?" the discontented wife of the *Nux vomica* will say, "Yes, my husband has strong emotions, and there is much beat— but what is the value of warmth without consideration)"

In the happy family situation the attached *Nux vomica* husband will speak of his wife with generosity, volunteering touchingly and somewhat sentimentally, "She does not know how much she means to me, and how much she helps me! I simply cannot imagine life without her!" or "I consider every moment lost when I am not in her society." *Sulphur*; *Lycopodium*, and *Arsenicum* would seldom express themselves in this manner no matter what they felt.

One patient with a childless and hypochondriacal *Arsenicum* wife, whose intellect and emotions were concentrated largely on her own health, would receive periodic doses of *Nux vomica* for his agitation and sympathetic concern. Whenever she became, or imagined herself, ill, he raged against the world, her parents, and every doctor she had ever patronized for their inability to relieve her distress. At the same time he unconsciously interfered with any sustained attempt to alleviate her ailments, championing them against would-be assailants. The physician could do little more than palliate this devoted couple's anxieties and treat their acute illnesses. Neither was prepared to relinquish a situation which offered so many secondary rewards. The wife's well-being, or lack of it, was the best occasion for expressing the strong personal bond between them, an ideal outlet for all their anxieties, feelings of relief, hopes, fears, and mutual devotion.

Such a situation, with variations, is not unusual. From the homoeopathic point of view, what is interesting and surprising is how often the primarily *Nux vomica* type (male or female) is willing to cater to a spouse's health neuroses. *Sulphur*; *Lycopodium*, and *Sepia* lack the tolerance to remain sympathetic year in and year out, while the not-to-be-left-behind *Arsenicum* or empathizing *Pulsatilla* and *Phosphorus* would begin to compete for their share of ailments and attention. The latter, in fact, might develop in sympathy a similar pain or affliction. However, *Natrum muriaticum* and *Lachesis* also bear patiently with chronically ailing spouses but are less prone to panic or rage against this injustice. *Natrum muriaticum* is only too aware that illness is merely another aspect of man's inescapably burdened lot, while the selfless devotion of a *Lachesis* leads him or her to treat the situation as a "mission" entrusted from above and about which there is no choice.

*John Knightley, in Jane Austen's *Emma*, who is quick to turn irascible and sarcastic with his wife and in-laws despite fundamentally "strong domestic habits and the all-sufficiency of home to himself," and who is with difficulty kept tolerably content and agreeable by the constant soothing administration of his *Pulsatilla* wife (who is perfectly happy to do so), as well as by the ever-alert attentions of other family members, is highly *Nux vomica* .

Lachesis can even derive stimulus or exhilaration from such a burden, whereas *Natrum muriaticum* takes his duties, like his pleasures, seriously and sadly.

As the male counterpart of the isomorphic *Ignatia*, and with a highly developed romantic and "passionate" (Boenninghausen) side,* *Nux vomica* should naturally be of service in "unfortunate love" (Kent). Indeed, the type's harshness, bitterness, alcoholism, and other nervous disabilities are often rooted in disappointment or disillusionment in love.

A romanticized literary portrait of the blended *Nux vomica* love nature is seen in Rhett Butler-the hero of *Gone with the Wind*. The thwarting of his true and ardent feelings for Scarlett O'Hara intensifies his inherent cynicism, and brings to the surface his latent harshness and alcoholism-while simultaneously he exhibits unexpected gentleness in his dealings with children and a sensitive, delicate appreciation of the fine qualities of Melanie Wilkes.

Nux can exhibit high spirits and bonhomie but seldom possesses the true heartiness and universal benevolence of *Sulphur*. And certainly, generosity toward his offenders is not this type's strong suit. *Sulphur* (thanks to a selective "upbeat" memory) and *Lycopodium* (thanks to a "convenient" or "designing" one) are more willing to discard bitterness and relinquish the instinct for reprisal. Then, too, like *Arsenicum*, *Nux vomica* can become angry and resentful when overwhelmed by demands and pressured to give more than he has chosen to do: "I am giving so much already-How can you ask more of me?" Yet he does have generous impulses and emotions, even while rationing them out with discrimination.

An example that comes to mind was the journalist who telephoned the physician the morning he was to depart on a business trip complaining of debilitating hiccups which had started a few days earlier and had now become almost constant.

Prior to coming in for homoeopathic treatment he had been an inveterate coffee drinker, consuming eight cups a day and increasing the dose substantially to counteract fatigue or ill-health, or to stimulate his cerebral functions when girding himself to write about controversial issues. Thus his digestion had been undermined, and constitutional treatment brought about the periodic surfacing of bizarre symptoms.

The patient testily complained that he had expected better of homoeopathy: "I kept giving my body a chance to right itself with the constitutional remedy, and I've tried everything for the hiccups from drinking water in large quantities to holding my breath and even standing on my head-but to no purpose. After a few minutes they start up again. I have to fly off today and can't wait any longer. If you are as good a doctor as they say you are, find something that works fast, as I want to be cured before I leave." This critical attitude fitted *Arsenicum* equally well, but the strong hiccup was more indicative of the spasmodic *Nux*,** and he was prescribed it in the 30X dilution from his domestic kit-to be taken hourly until improvement set in.

He called back that afternoon in a state of ecstasy: "It was a miracle ... there's no other word for it! I took the remedy just once-while talking to you on the phone, and the hiccups started decreasing while I was still putting the kit back on the shelf.

* "Sexual desire on slightest provocation" (Hering), "greatly intensified sexual desire" (Boenninghausen), "on slight excitation, amorous transport" (Hahnemann) are among the phrases used to describe *Nux's* sexual ardor.

** One infant, whose colic and faulty digestion during the early months of life called for *Nux vomica*, was hiccupping while still in the uterus (according to the mother).

Now they come rarely and last only a moment or two. Can you believe it? or do homoeopathic physicians become blasé at these miracles?" (In fact, even veteran homoeopaths find it difficult to be blasé at the results of a therapeutic method that is so safe, so consistently kind to the patients, and so deeply gratifying to the prescriber.)

If the patient had been *Arsenicum* .. he would have been more measured in his praise: "I'm not yet completely cured, but I'm better. Of course, I would like to get rid of the hiccups entirely, but it was certainly the correct remedy no doubt of it. I really should learn to stop doubting and accept homoeopathy for the phenomenon it is," and so forth-becoming more gracious as he warms lip. The sceptical *Lycopodium* would probably claim that, since improvement had set in so rapidly, he must have already been getting well on his own

Last but not least, *Nux vomica* may present the polar opposite of the traditional picture of excitability and loss of composure: the patient is calm, restrained, self-contained— whether or *not* seething inside with anger and frustration-and understated in every action and gesture. Such a patient sought homoeopathic assistance for restless and disturbed sleep at night combined with overpowering drowsiness during the day, especially after meals. Although prominent in his field, he was not in the least boastful or ostentatious and made no parade of his achievements. Of course, such remedies as *Arsenicum* and *Lycopodium* were also considered, but these usually exude a sense of their own worth, while *Nux* acts as if unaware of his exceptional qualities. Furthermore, the patient had a sallow jaundiced look together with the cutting or drawing pain before or during bowel movements which pointed to the poison nut.

This attractive kind of self-containment and delicacy is often found in the individual from an excitable, vocal, and tightly-knit family. But *Nux vomica* has decided 'to be different; despite his inherently tenuous stability, he is in complete command of his emotions, seldom raises his voice (which may be soft, but not caressing like that of *Phosphorus*), and is deliberate in his replies, taking time before answering.* He does not *allow* himself to betray emotions or to harbor strong feelings about minor matters— to such an extent that in his restraint he may appear supine or spineless, easy to push around. "Do you want this or that," he is asked. "I don't care," he replies. "Well, say what you want!" "I really don't care." And he really doesn't. One such patient said of himself, "In my youth I was so soft-spoken and diplomatic as to lose all credibility."

The distinctive feature of such an individual is maturity-in direct contrast to the childishness which often typifies *Nux vomica*. It seems to proceed from a moral awareness that is neither judgmental nor self-serving, tries neither to prove a point nor to enforce a particular moral code. This genuine disinterestedness colors the individual's motives and actions, endowing them with intellectual integrity and moral reliability. Thus, he is able to sublimate his hypercritical instincts and is often cast in the role of social arbiter. This is undoubtedly what Hahnemann meant by "clear consciousness of his existence; strong, proper feeling of right and wrong."

Mentality and Intellect: Modern Man and Renaissance Man:

The classic picture of *Nux vomica* as the tense, driving, and overstressed businessman or professional, caught up in the fast pace of modern life, has been immortalized by Kent:

He has been at his desk until he is tired out, he receives many letters and has a great many irons in the fire; he is troubled with a thousand little things. His mind is constantly hurried from one thing to another until he is tortured. It is not so much the heavy affairs as the little things He goes home and thinks about them (*Lectures on Materia Medica*).

*A loud voice in a man frequently indicates *Sulphur* and in a woman *Lachesis* or *Natrum muriaticum*.

This picture was taken up by others. Wheeler writes, "*Nux vomica* is a drug for the highly civilized races, town dwellers, and those who under the stress of modern life develop both physical and mental symptoms." More recently, Whitmont described him as "our well-known contemporary, the over civilized city-dweller, mentally overwrought, an overworked lawyer or bookkeeper, a tyrannical clerk ... overbearing, jumpy." In short, the stresses, tensions, and high living of business or professional life appear to encourage development of the *Nux* pathology (even his dreams consist of "business matters that require the greatest attention": Hahnemann), so that this remedy plays the same "episodic" role in the male professional that *Sepia* does in the housewife— i.e., the *Nux* picture emerges temporarily in another constitutional type.

Highly career- and work-oriented, *Nux vomica* deals with stress or anxiety by taking on more work ("occupation ameliorates": Kent). Indeed, he is often more successful there than in his personal life, having sacrificed his emotional development for his career and devoted the bulk of his energies to the hard work of building up a business or profession. Thus his "moodiness and ennui" (Boenninghausen) arise mainly from inability to work, with a consequent feeling of uselessness ("I have become nothing but a drone!").

In the *driven* quality of his work habits he resembles *Arsenicum*, but where the latter is the woodpecker who drills away compulsively all day long (see *Arsenicum* chapter), *Nux vomica* is the "eager beaver" who knows no mode of life other than work. This trait is found even in quiet self-contained mathematicians, computer analysts, and scholars who display little of the frenzy of the businessman, factory manager, or high-powered attorney juggling too many cases at once, but are equally addicted to their work. Both types tend to take on too much and have difficulty setting limits. *Sulphur* does too but, relying on his indefatigable energy, or overestimating it, worries less about not getting things done. These two "immoderate workers" (Kent) can sometimes be distinguished homeopathically only by their physical symptoms and modalities. Time, especially, may be decisive, as *Arsenicum* is in every way a "morning person" (with concomitant nighttime aggravations), while *Nux vomica* manifests a number of physical and mental aggravations in the morning and feels better in the evening. Like *Lachesis* and *Natrum muriaticum* he is "sad" (Kent) upon awakening, while his spirits lift in the evening or at night.* Yet this does not preclude prescribing the remedy where there is nighttime aggravation (especially between 3:00 and 5:00 A.M., which is, technically speaking, early morning), and even sometimes around 6:00 P.M. (Boger). A remedy should never be dismissed on the basis of a single symptom or modality, however important (yes, there are thirsty *Pulsatillas*!).

Traditionally, then, *Nux vomica* resembles *Lachesis* in having a rush of ideas and performing his best mental work at night—also exhibiting Hering's "disinclination to work and great lassitude in the morning." But he can also be intellectually productive and inspired ("excessive flow of ideas": Allen) in the morning, perhaps because his "occupation ameliorates" modality leads him to work harder at this time in order to overcome his depressed spirits (*Natrum muriaticum*).

Aversion to mental exertion, inability to concentrate on work, no patience for work, and mental exhaustion are also common: "indisposition to intellectual occupations ... he can with difficulty collect his thoughts; he often makes mistakes in speaking, seeks the words with an effort and makes use of inappropriate expressions...

**Natrum muriaticum* should be added in bold type to the rubrics, "sadness, morning" and "on waking" in the Kent Repertory where it has incomprehensibly been omitted altogether.

leaves out syllables and whole words in speaking and writing" (Hahnemann). The similarly burnt-out *Sulphur* is different. Hahnemann states, about *Nux vomica*, "dread of those literary occupations in which he must think for himself and unfold ideas from his own mind in order either to commit them to writing or to express them orally; but reading and learning by heart are not distasteful to him." With *Sulphur*— it is the reverse: the memory or more passive intellectual pursuits, fail long before his "unfolding ideas from his own mind."

Nux vomica is full of "extraordinary anxiety" (Hahnemann). It is high on the list both for the younger person who cannot find a sense of purpose in life—who wants to be productive but does not know how, and for the midlife crisis of the hard worker who is dissatisfied with life despite professional accomplishments—who suspects he has "missed out" on something and feels regret for lost opportunities (*Lachesis* in women). The remedy also has its share of sexual insecurities and anxieties, and is important for a variety of male sexual disorders, particularly in the person 'who h_10 overindulged in alcohol and sexual activities ("night revellers": Boenninghausen, for "bad effects of sexual excesses" Boericke ; from "debauchery": Boger).

Many of *Nux vomica*'s apprehensions— about work, the future, physical safety, financial security— resemble those of *Arsenicum* while being subliminal rather than all-pervasive. But the former may have idiosyncrasies of his own like the Wall Street broker whose stresses were manifested in the remedy's typical lumbar pains with the key symptom, "must sit up to turn in bed" (Hering). When asked about peculiar fears, he admitted to always sitting in the middle car of his commuter train in case of a front-end or rear— end collision

His health preoccupations, too, are usually less acute than *Arsenicum*'s. When the patient who has long ago quit smoking says, "I never was much of a smoker, but to this day I regret *every one* of those puffs I took fifty years ago, and worry about the smoke still lurking somewhere in my lungs!" the homoeopath rightly suspects he is dealing with *Arsenicum* and not *Nux vomica*.

One does not get the impression that visiting doctors is one of *Nux*'s foremost pleasures; nor is he as susceptible to suggestion— feeling obligated to come down with every illness he reads about in the papers. Finally, he is not the frustrated would-be physician that *Arsenicum* so often appears to be and does not try to know more than the physician. Not infrequently he responds to the latter's routine "explanation" of the healing action of a micro dilution with an exasperated "Just do your job, and don't try to explain things' I don't want to know and it is quite incomprehensible anyway I'm prepared to accept that in homoeopathy less is more, aggravations are good, and let's leave it at that!" (*Lycopodium*). If the physician asks him toward the end of the interview, "Have you told me all your symptoms?" the patient may reply, "I'm sure I haven't, but I'm equally sure you don't want to hear any more, so I will just stop here." *Arsenicum* would be compelled to arrive at the end of the list.

But *Nux vomica* is more heedful of his health than, for instance, *Sulphur* or *Lycopodium*. If he abuses his body, he is aware of it and merely indifferent to the outcome. The latter two take their strong constitutions for granted and are not even conscious of maltreating it.

Nevertheless, *Nux vomica* must not be overlooked in the "hypochondriac" (Tyler) who thinks and talks obsessively about his ailments and who in illness suffers that complete loss of perspective that others experience mainly in romantic love'. Moderately severe back pains or episodic insomnia may convince him that life is devoid of all meaning.

Even the loss of a tooth can have this effect, as in the remarkable case of an intelligent young man who had one knocked out playing hockey. The psychic trauma, combined with some legitimate pain, led to an obsession with the lost tooth (even though it had been replaced by a temporary bridge) and ultimately to suicidal despair which persisted for several months and abated only when *Nux vomica* had been prescribed in the 50M potency ("melancholia after extraction of tooth; speaks of nothing but his tooth ... sits idly about whole day, crying and complaining of his anxiety about his tooth" Hering [stress added]). . .

Here the *Nux vomica* man, with an insatiable "desire to talk about his conditions, with anxious reflections about it" (Hering), Like the *Natrum muriaticum* woman who is preoccupied with her health, often overlaps with *Arsenicum*.

In one of O. Henry's short stories, "Makes the Whole World Kin," a likeable *Nux vomica* burglar who has broken into a stately private home finds himself face-to-face with the *Arsenicum* owner in bed crippled by rheumatism. The burglar is plagued with the same ailment, and the two enter into a lively discussion of their symptoms and attempts at treatment. The author's genius penetrates into the stylistic and attitudinal differences between the two types. The *Arsenicum* homeowner conducts a physician-like inquiry into the details of the other's malady: "How long have you had it? is it worse in the morning or at night? Does it come in paroxysms, or is it a steady pain? Do your joints swell any?" while the animated *Nux vomica* burglar responds in picturesque fashion: ".It jumps [and] strikes me when I ain't looking for it. I had to give up second-storey work, because I got stuck sometimes half-way up." The story ends with the fellow-sufferers repairing in friendship to a neighborhood bar to ease their common affliction.

Impatience is a pronounced feature of the constitutional picture. *Nux vomica* is "always in a hurry" (Kent),* at times displaying a panicky preoccupation with punctuality and the scarcity of time ("I am pathologically prompt!"). Napoleon's reply to a subordinate general requesting a favor is typical: "Ask of me anything you want, sir, except time!" (also *Arsenicum*). For this reason, and because he requires complete quiet and large blocks of uninterrupted time to be intellectually productive, he can be exceedingly cross at interruptions when working ("quarrelsome if disturbed": Hering; "looks malignantly on anyone who asks him anything, just as if he must control himself to avoid becoming coarse": Hahnemann).

Here he differs from *Sulphur*, who functions well despite Interruptions and, when working, is actually inspired by a variety of stimuli.

At times his impatience has a physiological basis. The time sense is deranged and distorted (as with mind-altering drugs or alcohol). The rubric, "time passes too slowly" (Kent) not only refers to the type's accelerated tempo and impatience to "get things moving" but may be a guiding symptom in a patient with a neurological disorder. He may lie in bed, drifting in and out of sleep, for what seems an interminable time but finds, when consulting his clock, that only five or ten minutes have gone by.

Nux vomica can be unduly impatient with himself if things don't go right the first time. The child stamps his foot and screams when he cannot achieve some result at once. The adult angrily throws down his work, or wrestles irascibly with the physical obstacles that deter him in his task: "If while undressing, a part of his clothing should catch on a button, he pulls it off because he is so mad ... If a chair is in his way, he kicks it over" (Kent). He is also impatient at delays and opposition to his plans and desires, feeling that he must do something at once instead of allowing

*Often his dreams will be "full of bustle and hurry" (Boericke).

events to take their course ("wants to force things his own way": Kent), and, like *Arsenicum*, trying to "dance faster than the music." Certainly he is impatient and "fault-finding" (Hering) with those who are less competent than himself, lashing out at them in harsh terms, is easily aroused or exasperated by others' slowness to learn or to understand, and drives them as hard as he does himself. He actively enjoys finding and correcting others' mistakes and for this reason, like *Arsenicum*, makes a good editor. Also, because both think fast under pressure, these types are highly represented among journalists and lawyers specializing in litigation.

A telling distinction between the impatience with others of a *Sulphur* and a *Nux vomica* is the following: while the former has dual standards and criticizes others for faults that actually mirror his own (e.g., leaves his own room messy but is angry when others do not pick up after themselves; blames another for keeping sloppy accounts when he does the same; accuses others of the same competitiveness and aggressiveness that he himself manifests), *Nux vomica* is more likely to criticize from virtue (he is everything he accuses others not being—organized, efficient, clear-thinking) and to be "reproachful" (Hahnemann) of faults or defects that differ from his own, while being reasonably tolerant of those that are similar to his. *Arsenicum* outdistances them both and is indiscriminately censorious of both kinds of defects.

Finally, the *Nux* patient's "hurry and haste" (Boenninghausen) becomes evident to the physician in his wish to be cured quickly, without too many questions. Before the remedy has exerted its moderating influence, his replies can be testy, crusty, snappish, ungracious, and challenging. The patient often does not enjoy being in the physician's office and will announce defiantly, "You might as well know at once that you do not have my confidence and trust. So your medicines might not work on me.*"

An amateur golfer of high rank, who sought homoeopathic assistance for arthritic stiffness and pain, was an extreme example of crustiness. A wiry intense person, quick to quarrel, he had a reputation for gratuitous rudeness (perhaps explained by his constant aching). There are many remedies for arthritis, and *Nux* is up there with the best of them. It can be distinguished, in particular, by *its worse cold dry weather; better from dampness and during rainy weather*—surely a "strange, rare, and peculiar" symptom for this particular affliction (also *Causticum*).** For this, as well as other *Nux vomica* modalities (e.g., better from hot applications, worse ill the morning) the patient received this remedy in the 1M potency, with a second dose to hold in case of need. He returned three weeks later with the pain and stiffness about 75 percent better but required the final 25 percent improvement to compete in an upcoming tournament. When the physician stated encouragingly that possibly this, too, could be accomplished, the patient retorted derisively: "Well, even if I am cured in time, is homoeopathy going to get me the money to pay the costs of travelling the competition circuits?"

*The physician, of course, remains unperturbed. Just as the sun shines on the good and evil alike, so homoeopathic remedies work equally well on believers and sceptics. Here Kent's aphorism is apposite: "We cannot educate a patient until after he is cured. We have to let him think about it in his own way. But steal in and cure him. Do him good. That is the all-important thing."

** *Rhus toxicodendron* has a "rusty hinge" modality (the pain is worse on first motion and better as the joint limbers up); together with *Kali bichroanicum*, it is worse in cold clamp weather and when the patient senses in his joints that it is going to rain; *Bryonia* has aggravation from the least movement and is better from firm pressure, this being one way to keep the affected part absolutely still. *Pulsatilla* has wandering, shifting, fleeting pains that are better from cool air and gentle motion, worse from heat,.... and so forth.

Nux had accomplished much, but it obviously still had a way to go!

But, here again, however curt his temper may be and caustic his remarks, however unbridled his passions and uncurbed his impatience, *Nux vomica's* eruptive or ungracious surface often goes with a soft heart, and this particular patient was enduring an exceptionally difficult family situation with great fortitude.

Mr. Jagers, the lawyer in Dickens' *Great Expectations*, whose abrupt and testy manner conceals an undemonstrative rectitude and kindness toward convicted prisoners, could easily be a *Nux* (also *Natrum muriaticum* and *Bryonia*— all three of whom can be "rough diamonds"). As one outwardly arrogant, and at times insolent, *Nux vomica* patient succinctly assessed his feistiness, "I don't know why anyone is afraid of me. Don't they see that I am actually only a toothless old lion that roars ferociously but would never bite anyone?"

The type is generally, and rightly, considered *clever*. He is resourceful, mentally adroit, capable of change, and competent at whatever he undertakes. He will often exhibit the perfectionism and efficiency of an *Arsenicum* and, in contrast with the heavy-handed tinkerer *Sulphur*, the same delicate touch and attention to detail: "suits very particular, careful, zealous persons" (Hering).

Even when a "sedentary man of studies" who sits too long at his desk involved in "prolonged mental labor" (Hahnemann), *Nux* has a practical turn of mind and a pragmatic approach to ideas. Not a dreamer or idealist who becomes lost in abstractions and empty theorizing, he sees situations clearly and judges them realistically. His mind is logical and systematic, capable of abstracting lessons from past experience and projecting them into the future— a faculty which is not at all that common in life.

An eighteen— year old boy was being treated with *Nux* for (possibly stress-induced) burning pains in the esophagus and the pit of the stomach. While full-blooded and with strong feelings, he was no slave to his emotions-as is characteristic of the best in *Nux vomica*. When pressed for mental symptoms, he recounted how his girlfriend of several years was losing interest in him and on the verge of breaking up their relationship ... She has been acting very selfishly, using me when she has nothing better on hand, then getting tired of me." "But then," he added dispassionately, "a couple of years back I did the same to Danny who had been my best friend for two years. When a better friend came along, I just dropped him and wanted to have as little to do with him as possible. Phyllis is treating me just like I treated Danny, and [with a rueful smile] now that I know how it feels to suffer wounded pride and rejection, I will never treat anyone that way again!" It was simply stated, without blame or anger, and manifested that special *Nux vomica* probity ("scrupulousness": Boenninghausen).

Nux vomica's mental cast differs from that of the intellectual *Sulphur* in that he lacks the latter's passion for abstract ideas per se. He does not understand and assimilate (or, as the case may be, misunderstand) them as profoundly as *Sulphur*. While quick to grasp theories and ideologies and sensitive to the power of ideas, he does not usually possess *Sulphur's* scholarly depth. He may lack the latter's prophetic or visionary dimension, and this is probably why, although capable of strong convictions, he does not have *Sulphur's* (also *Arsenicum 's*) powers of persuasion that spark the great changes and revolutions of the world; *Nux vomica* is more an *implementer*-. Again in contrast to *Sulphur*, who can be "all talk and no action," he accomplishes what he sets out to do.

The scholarly *Nux* can also be distinguished from *Lycopodium* in that his intellectual activities do not distance him from his own emotions and those of others.

The intellectual *Nux vomica* aspires to be a Renaissance Man— well-rounded, with pride of intellect, and believing in an aristocracy of culture. Patients often describe a diversified and impressive range of interests. Goethe, the "last Renaissance man," had a *Nux vomica* side. In contrast to the predominantly *Sulphur* mentalities of his distinguished compatriots, Hahnemann, Marx, and Jung— whose output can be traced back to a single, all— embracing, all-inclusive vision the multi-faceted Goethe engaged in many different activities, being a poet, dramatist, novelist, physiologist, botanist, physicist, economist, and political figure, approaching each discipline on its own terms.

Even when striving to broaden his knowledge *Nux vomica* is discriminating (*Sulphur* accumulates culture more haphazardly, devouring everything within his reach and crowding ideas together promiscuously) In his sensitivity to beauty—a form of the harmony and order he prizes so much—he responds to the minutiae of nature and art as well as to the grandeurs.* He can be profoundly stirred by the poise or tint of a wayside flower or the carved foliation on a piece of furniture. For, like, *Arsenicum*, he often exhibits an excited appreciation of and a compulsive not to say obsessive, attentiveness to detail. But while every performing artist, in his drive for perfection, probably has an *Arsenicum* side, *Nux vomica* is less prominent here.

He is sensitive to language and manipulates it well ("words well chosen": Hering), and every chord of his being responds to a pithy or felicitous expression. If a foreigner, he at once picks up an interesting turn of phrase and uses it at the first opportunity; the native is equally alert to new ways of expressing himself in his own language. His intellectual and verbal agility often make him a good conversationalist: stimulating, quick at repartee, seldom boring. His critical and aggressive side may come out in wit, which tends to be acerbic ("mocking": Boenninghausen), and sarcastic ("mania for ridicule": Kent). He has little of *Sulphur's* pedantry and inveterate tendency to monologue, and in this respect the two cannot possibly be confused. Where *Sulphur's* conversation degenerates into a spewing forth of information, a relentlessly earnest inquiry into facts, or a disquisition on himself and his opinions, *Nux vomica's* particular weakness is to be sharp-tongued. Either nothing passes without some snide or scoffing remark, or his conversation degenerates into lively but insignificant anecdote.

A young *Pulsatilla* woman was telling the physician about her two suitors, lamenting the deficiencies of each. While she felt physically compatible with both, she had equal— although different— reservations about their characters. "The more I see of each the more he worries me. At first I could deal with him, but now all I see is an extremely self-centered individual. I've kept track, of his conversations, and easily 90 percent is about himself: *his* sports, *his* work, his possessions, and *especially*, his opinions, Gracious me, does he have opinions! Hundreds of them, and about everything under the sun. Larry is different, but I don't know. Maybe I've lost my sense of humor, but it just seems that all his jokes and kidding around are so cruel sometimes. He always tries to elevate himself by demeaning the other person [often typical of the critical *Nux* or *Arsenicum*). And no one can make me feel so insignificant as Larry when he is in a bad mood or feeling ill-disposed toward me— but then. By the same token, few people can make me feel as good when he is in a gracious mood."

*These last, incidentally, he appreciates without necessarily coveting. Unlike *Sulphur*, he can admire beautiful lakes, mountains, forests, or plains without wishing to own any particular one for himself.

Jack could have benefited from *Sulphur*, Larry from *Nux vomica*! *Sulphur*'s long-windedness and philosophizing have been described elsewhere, with his tendency to fly off in a dozen different directions, expounding eloquently on the ponderable and the imponderable and generating one extraordinary theory after another (one patient had a plan for feeding cottage cheese to race-horses for higher protein value and better performance). or recounting his own successes in "quantitative" style.* In conversation *Nux vomica* is quite different— crisp, terse, nervous, spirited, able to make his point pithily, and with a tendency to play with words and ideas. Rather than listening to himself discourse and loving the sound of his own voice ("I am the most fascinating person I know!" smacks more of *Sulphur*), he tries to elicit a response from his interlocutor, and this, in turn, stimulates his own conversational talents. Thus he does not talk at people but seeks a verbal give and take. Nor does he always need to be directing the conversation, and, in contrast to *Arsenicum*, he does not walk into a room already talking, so as to set the tone or establish the subject-matter.

The physician's interview with a *Nux* patient is often lively, with memorable expressions and flashes of humor. One sprightly seventy year-old patient, describing his shortness of breath, remarked: "Running after busses is not as good as it used to be. The busses today are faster." Another patient, whose seasonal allergies were resolving with periodic doses of *Nux vomica* in high potency, described her earlier experience with a European homoeopath who prescribed multiple doses of different medicines in low potency.

"Well, did the polypharmacy method prove of any help?" "I'm not certain. I was so busy taking small grains every hour on the half hour, alternating with drops of tincture in water every hour on the hour, and certain larger pellets three or four times a day at regular intervals-not forgetting to take weekly doses of a particular nosode—that I never even had time to sneeze!"

Yet a third patient, treated for a recently commenced series of headaches whose crowning *Nux vomica* symptom was "sensation as if a nail [or spike] were being driven through the temple or side of the head" (Hering);** illustrates this type's spirited pugnacity.

"I am putting myself in your hands, do with me as you please," he instructed the physician.

"Not as / please," the physician corrected him. "You cannot abrogate all responsibility. The medicines merely help you tap into the inner resources which enable you to heal yourself."

"I'm not sure about that, Offhand, I wouldn't have said that I have any inner resources. I live for my work, and that is going badly. How do you know there is anything there to tap?"

*How many miles he flew during his last business trip; how many pages he had read or written that day; hen,' man)' students he had in his class this semester compared to last; bow much money be will earn this year, etc. He also peppers his conversation with trivial facts, such as how many hamburgers are sold each day in the town's busiest fast-food restaurant, but gives little of emotional substance. While not every *Sulphur* expresses himself in this impersonal or "enumerating" way, when this manner is encountered, *Sulphur* is the first remedy to be considered.

**Borland offers one of the most useful compact descriptions of the remedy's various types of headaches, to wit (in adapted form):

"The *Nux vomica* headache [typically] occurs from overeating as well as overdrinking and is aggravated by taking any stimulant, such as wine or coffee. Patients complain of a general fullness in the head with a feeling of congestion and pressure, usually on the upper part of the head, often in the higher frontal region. The head-

"Merely an intuition."

The patient gave a dubious shrug of the shoulders, as if suggesting that he didn't think much of the doctor's intuitions, but let it pass. "Well, anyway, you're the boss here. Let's get on with it!"

This attitude contrasts directly with *Arsenicums* "I simply cannot understand people who unquestioningly place their bodies in the hands of a doctor, as if to say, 'Here I am. I give myself over to you. Now take care of me'"

Not only is *Nux vomica's* manner direct and straightforward (sometimes refreshingly, at other times disturbingly, so), he is notorious for "impulsiveness" (Kent) springing from ardor, impatience, and irritability. But this does not necessarily make him tactless, nor preclude him from being as shrewd and crafty as the next man when he chooses. Macchiavelli's cleverly conniving Prince suggests a *Nux vomica*/*Lycopodium* personality; while another literary representation of this type is Julien Sorel in Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, combining *Nux vomica* impulsiveness with a curious manipulateness in his dealings with women and his ascent to power.

American homoeopaths have traditionally associated *Nux vomica* with the Latin and other Mediterranean races. Hering may have initiated this tradition when he wrote, in the Guiding Symptoms, "there are more *Ignatia* persons in North America than *Nux vomica* ones." Later Kent reinforced it in stating: "Europeans develop symptoms more often calling for *Nux vomica* in their hysterical manifestations, while Americans oftener need *Ignatia*." Perhaps the high consumption of wine in France, Spain, and Italy has contributed to the *Nux* picture. But in the experience of many contemporary homoeopaths the distinction between the two remedies is less one of nationality than of sex-in its emotional manifestations *Nux* is predominantly male, while *Ignatia* is female.

Be that as it may, the reality is that *Nux vomica* does often appear suited to dark or swarthy males ("male brunettes": Boger) who are "thin, spare, quick, active, nervous, irritable" (Boericke), who overtly enjoy wine, women, and words, and whose emotional intensity and jaunty bearing exude that particularly Latin charm and sex appeal.*

The average Mediterranean Intellectual, to be sure, displays many *Nux* features, and the sidewalk cafes of the Latin countries are filled with them animatedly discussing political, philosophic, artistic, and religious issues or simply exercising their wit and engaging in verbal dynamics. The *Nux* mind is receptive to ideas and absorbs them readily-sometimes too readily since the intensity of belief, the passionate embracing of some particular view of the world, may not be supported by a corresponding depth of understanding.

ache is associated with constipation, but not necessarily accompanied by vomiting [despite a feeling of nausea]. The *Nux vomica* headache is present on waking in the morning, whereas the *Bryonia* headache does not come on until the patient begins moving about.

Nux vomica patients are [usually] chilly during their headaches and bad-tempered. They do not like to be spoken to or disturbed, they hate to move and are better from lying down ... The headache is aggravated by any mental concentration [or] any noise ... They usually have a feeling of nausea, and if they force themselves to take food, it aggravates them. This is a useful distinguishing point from *Lycopodium*, when the headache is eased by taking a little food [also *Arsenicum*] ... The cold air immediately increases the frontal headache [versus *Arsenicum*] etc.

These observations, however, merely scratch the surface. Hahnemann lists close to 100 headache symptoms, Allen over 100, and Hering has three full pages with helpful "causes" of this affliction, such as : brain fag (particularly in the early stages), constipation, hemorrhoids, etc.

*Interestingly, if a male's hair and complexion are much darker than those of other family members, it sometimes indicates *Nux vomica*. Even tawny or chestnut-haired children may darken in adolescence and become brunettes.

When Mark, Twain wrote, upon returning from a foreign tour, "Man is a little lower than the angels and a little higher than the French," he was addressing the negative side of the *Nux* personality. This type is well-known for not presenting its best side to strangers. As often with *Sepia* or *Natrum muriaticum*, the solid virtues emerge with acquaintance, and may even have to be unearthed. This contrasts with *Lycopodium*, *Phosphorus* or *Pulsatilla*, who project well to outsiders. But once trust has been established with a *Nux vomica*, the picture changes; it is then that his generosity emerges, and he can make handsome gestures, be expansively hospitable or enormously compassionate in caring for some relative or friend, and, in general, display the typical flair (*panache*) of the Latin and other Mediterranean peoples.

Authority and Power:

A discussion of power relationships is central to any analysis of *Nux vomica*. He can assert his authoritarian impulse, first of all, because of his indisputable competence. He is farseeing, with focused energies, and even when governed by self-interest, remains realistic and does not exaggerate his accomplishments to himself or to others. Thus he succeeds where *Sulphur*, *Phosphorus* or *Lycopodium* may only talk of succeeding. His entrepreneurial mentality may be less developed than *Sulphur*'s, with all the latter's grandiose ideas, but whatever he initiates or promotes is carried through systematically. He is painstaking first and confident afterwards (*Natrum muriaticum*, *Arsenicum*), assuming that most problems can be solved by effort and application and that hard work always leads to success.

His authoritarian nature manifests itself variously. In the home he insists that others live according to his principles, respect his wishes, and defer to his opinions. For, once having laid down the law, he requires unquestioning obedience and does not, like *Natrum muriaticum*, enjoy the endless negotiation of differences.

The *Nux vomica*'s wife is not quite the "indentured servant" of the *Arsenicum* spouse, who must, through work and obedience, earn the right to live in her own house. Her status is more that of trusted retainer. One such woman told the physician that what irritated most was the husband's way of consulting her about various domestic arrangements—whom to invite for dinner, whether the trees in the yard should be pruned, what armchair to buy for that space in the living room—only after the decision had been carried out. "I was taken in by this play at joint household decisions until I realized there was no use in my saying 'No,' since the question was purely rhetorical. The guest had already been invited, the tree pruned, the armchair selected," and he had no intention of backing down or changing his mind" (this constitutional type is amongst the most stubborn of mortals).

Nux vomica enjoys making decisions and loves to assume responsibility. His eyes light up with a special disciplinary gleam when he assumes control of a situation, leaving others little choice but to acquiesce. An extreme example from practice was the patient with hemorrhoids (to which *Nux* is particularly susceptible; when these flare up, so do his temper and irritability) who, when taking his family out to dine in a restaurant, insisted on dictating their choice of dishes. "You shouldn't order sole," he would protest to his wife. "You know this restaurant has poor fish. Order the veal instead!" Or to his son, "How can you order a hamburger with french fries again! You chose that last time, and anyway I don't bring you to restaurants to eat anything as primitive as a hamburger with french fries." He would then proceed to order something else for them both.

In this respect he resembles *Arsenicum*, although one observable difference between these otherwise kindred souls is that *Arsenicum* seeks to dictate to others in

all spheres of life, while *Nux's* "take charge" nature operates primarily within some well-delineated sphere. It may be large (rulership) or small (a clerkship, his house), but his authoritarianism will usually confine itself to some particular field (or two).

However, *Nux vomica* is willing to submit to higher authority. One patient appraised himself as follows: "At work I am most cooperative. In fact, like a good soldier, I am stupid and obedient and do what I'm told. But at home I am a dictator-despotic, tyrannical, and intolerant of any opposition. I can't seem to find a middle ground between these extremes." Indeed, he can be exceptionally cooperative in a subservient position but immediately becomes a bully when attaining power. It is sometimes hard for him to maintain a relationship of equality.

Finally, *Nux vomica's* sensitive pride does not welcome contrasting viewpoints and is, predictably, "unable to bear the least contradiction" (Hahnemann). He cannot abide being corrected, even when obviously in the wrong ("I said this is how it is, and that's the way I want it to be— even if I'm mistaken!"), and "does not suffer the most reasonable representations to induce him to alter his conduct" (Hahnemann), although feeling quite at liberty to induce others to alter theirs.

However, this remedy can alter the personality, as illustrated by the following Jewish Hassidic tale whose symbolic value lends itself nicely to a homoeopathic interpretation:

A grown son decided to leave his [pre-*Nux vomica*] authoritarian father and go far away. The father sent a messenger after him, ordering him to return, but the son replied: "I cannot." After a further period of time [post-*Nux vomica*] the father sent another messenger to tell him, "Some day turn around and come back as far as you can, and I will go the rest of the way to meet you."

Nux vomica's liking of power, and need for it, are clearly exhibited in business and professional life. Usually this type is oriented toward work and career as well as undisguisedly competitive. His factory produces more-or better-nails, nuts, or bolts than any other, his business is more profitable and successful. Often he defines himself through his work and in this, way proves his worth to the outside world, a sense of professional purpose being essential to his self-esteem (*Lycopodium*). The self-made man who has worked hard for what he has, and expects the same commitment from others but finds it difficult to delegate responsibility (being convinced, often rightly, that he can do things better himself), is frequently a *Nux vomica*.

The type may too eagerly embrace the Nietzschean premise that the *will to power* underlies all human instincts, even that of survival.* In this, to be sure, he is not alone, since *Lycopodium*, *Arsenicum*, *Sulphur*, and *Lachesis* often manifest the same impulses, as do other types in a more covert manner. But when *Nux* is too ambitiously pursuing his interests and trying to reach the top, he not only "uses" others to raise himself up but, to gain his ends, is occasionally willing to trample underfoot those of unlike mind, or who are merely in his way.

A highly ambitious middle-aged man, who had managed to become the head of his own company and was now expanding by relentlessly taking over competing enterprises, came to homoeopathy for repeated bouts of an intractable spasmodic cough that characteristically commenced with a scraping in the throat; this then

*Nietzsche held that the strongest and highest will to life lies not in the puny struggle for existence but in the Will to Power. Carried to a logical conclusion this places man beyond good and evil and elevates him to the status of a superman (Uebermensch) who is permitted: "if necessary, ruthlessly to trample underfoot the servile herd of the weak, degenerate, and poor in spirit ... "

became raw, provoking paroxysms of coughing which subsided only with expectoration of a mucopurulent sputum. During a winter's treatment with *Nux vomica* the moderating effects of the remedy became' astonishingly apparent. Not only did his chest condition improve, but changes occurred in him at a deeper level. After some months the patient volunteered that he no longer felt the same compulsion to do in his competitors and achieve his ends at and all cost "I am beginning to relax about my work and learn what many others have understood at an earlier age, that the purpose of life is not the instant gratification that arises from succeeding in gaining ones ends every time, nor is it an unending struggle to prove oneself better than others, but an honorable and self-respecting adaptation to life's lessons and realities."

It seemed almost as if the patient could not overcome his cough until his outlook and understanding had matured, In any case no physician could have wished for a better example of the way this remedy can temper undue competitiveness or the frenzied orientation toward success, and instill a proper sense of values.

Although the *Nux vomica* individual may often change his occupation, profession, or specialty, it is not out of restlessness (*Tuberculinum*) or because of failure, but to expand his range of accomplishments; thus he moves from strength to strength. However, the type can also rise and fall with meteoric speed, making money and then losing it again, as if incapable of handling success.

Success may go to his head but seldom lulls him into security. Perhaps because of his own aggressiveness, competitiveness, and "ensoriousness" (Kent), *Nux vomica* shares with *Arsenicum* a fear of the manifold perils of this world, a "suspiciousness" (Kent) of others, and a tendency to be constantly on guard lest he be betrayed or deceived. In fact, this type evinces an almost primitively tribal outlook that instinctively views the surrounding world as hostile and dangerous, and all strangers as seeking to take advantage (*Natrum muriaticum* is more paranoid about family and former close friends while more trusting of outsiders). This, of course, justifies the attempt to take advantage of them first. And when things do not go as he wants, *Nux vomica* can adopt an insufferable tone of self-pity (*Pulsatilla*): "Why does bad luck always happen to me?" This "whiny" (Boenninghausen) tone contrasts with *Natrum muriaticum*'s "I must have deserved it!"

Nux vomica is a good strategist, skilled at subtle and indirect, as well as open, manipulation of power relationships in both personal and professional life. He employs such techniques as attacking in pretended or imagined self-defense and is adept at guerilla warfare-engaging in forays or sorties into the opponent's territory and then scurrying back to safety to await the next opportune occasion. *Sulphur*, we recall, is also a good strategist and overall organizer but has difficulty sorting out his ideas or attending to detail and is thus weak in systematic implementation. The *Nux* mentality is skilled in both strategy and tactics.

For all these reasons, and also because he represents its "blended nature," General, later President, Ulysses S. Grant will serve to exemplify the authoritarian *Nux vomica* personality.

To begin with, he was a notorious alcoholic, struggling his whole adult life with this affliction (he had earlier been forced to resign from the army because of it). As Union general he could abstain for periods of time, but then succumbed again, especially in the absence of his much-loved wife with her stabilizing influence, and become blindly and ignominiously drunk, even to the point of unconsciousness and inability to assume command for days at a time.

His character was a mixture of harshness and extreme delicacy. The former was seen in his willingness to employ new tactic trench warfare-and a new weapon-

the machine (Gatling) gun which caused unprecedented loss of life. Ultimately, his "butcher" mentality, as Mrs. Lincoln called it, caused the loss of virtually a whole generation of northerners in the drive for victory over the South. Yet, despite his legendary courage on the battlefield that made him appear not only impervious to danger but indifferent to it, he could not bear the sight of blood— to the point of refusing to eat meat except, on occasion, very well cooked beef (he never ate chicken because, as he said, "I could never eat anything that walks on two legs"); nor could he endure the sight of the suffering wounded in camp hospitals. Maltreatment of an animal incited him to extreme anger and to a severe reprimand of the offender.

The best evidence of his great personal delicacy was his consistently considerate treatment of subordinates, his wife, and especially his sensitive comportment during the Surrender at Appomattox which terminated the Civil War. Without parade or swagger, dressed in a simple blue Union shirt and without a sword, he quietly and unostentatiously accepted surrender from the more dignified (*Lycopodium*) Robert E. Lee, who was equally noble in defeat. His reluctance to witness another's humiliation, as he later wrote, made him "sad and depressed. I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly and suffered so much for a cause." These are not ordinary sentiments for a victorious general.

Grant was also the author of a work of enduring American prose—his Personal Memoirs which are considered by historians as the most remarkable military account since Caesar's Commentaries. The economy and limpid clarity of his unadorned English, entirely without imagery or ornamentation, the concise but striking phrasing, indicates the lucid, tidy, and well-organized *Nux vomica* mind (see, also, Appendix).

The Female:

The female *Nux vomica*, like the male, overlaps with several other polychrests and may be especially difficult to distinguish from *Arsenicum*. Physically she exhibits the same extreme chilliness and craving for heat, the same liking of fatty foods (for caloric warmth?), and the same intensity of manner. In both, moreover, there is an underlying restraint, despite a desire to let the words pour out, which contrasts with the unarrestable outpourings of a *Lachesis*. Finally, both manifest anxious concern about their health, except that *Arsenicums* fears are more overt, and she worships more devoutly at the shrine of good health. The *Nux* woman does not pursue physical fitness with *Arsenicum's* aggressive élan. If a jogger, she will call a halt during the cold wet months. while the latter delights in forcing herself to run despite the harshest weather conditions .* Neither does she subject herself to the same extreme dietary regimes; if an adherent of "health food," she might occasionally indulge in a daring hot dog or two, while *Arsenicum* will not consider betraying her principles.

On a more serious level, if the menses become heavier or more prolonged in middle age, the *Nux* woman will be concerned by this malfunction as she would by a piece of machinery functioning below par, and decide to investigate the condition, while *Arsenicum*, even before taking such appropriate action immediately suspects a malignancy. Other differences are also encountered. Motherhood, with its enormous potential for apprehension, its frustrated perfectionism, and its limitless aspirations on behalf of the offspring, brings out the *Arsenicum*, far more than the *Nux vomica*, side

*In women athletes *Sepia* and *Arsenicum*, predominate, the first because of the craving for vigorous exercise and amelioration from it, the second for the nature's competitive streak and perfectionism.

of a woman. Certainly any homoeopath worth his salt can immediately recognize "the *Arsenicum* mother." while the *Nux vomica* one is more difficult to discern.

In middle age, however, *Nux vomica*, like *Lachesis*, may be needed by "women who had not required it earlier, possibly because of a lifetime's accumulation of stimulants, medications, or some particular addiction.

A typical case was the menopausal patient who had suffered for weeks from whole-body pulsations, with heavy and prolonged bleeding. In her highly excitable mental state, she developed severe insomnia and seemed on the verge of losing her mental balance. Several doses of *Lachesis* in varying potencies were prescribed, which improved her sleeplessness and lessened her trembling, but the hemorrhage continued unabated. Because of the picture of "one menstrual flow prolonged into another" (Kent), "prolonged menstrual flow [recurring] every fourteen days" (Boericke: also *Phosphorus*; and *Sepia*), or "menses too early and profuse: occur too soon, and last too long" (Hering). *Nux vomica* 30x was prescribed, to be taken in water, twice a day for two weeks or until the condition improved.* Alter a week the flow began to decrease, and in ten days it had almost ceased. She discontinued the medicine and had normal periods for the next several months. Thereafter, whenever bleeding threatened to be excessive, she took another short course or the potentized strychnine with the same gratifying results. The menses ceased in due course, with no further complications.

On the whole, the *Nux vomica* woman is less hot tempered, less unpredictable in her behavior, less easily stirred to anger, less prone to overt manipulation, and less emotionally unstable than the male. But the potential for loss of control or hysteria is there, also an intolerance of criticism ("so mad, she cries": Boger). Moreover, she can be subtly provocative, sharing with the male an ability to put in the wrong those who disagree with her, while if they prove in the right, they are made to feel petty and opinionated. There is also a tendency to a *porcupine-like prickliness*; her defenses are up at all times, and under stress she is inclined to nag: "scolding, crossness, and reproaches" (Hahnemann). Or, like *Sepia*, she spreads around her a black cloud which depresses the whole household ("gloomy": Boenninghausen). When in a particularly negative mood, she dampens others enthusiasms and demeans their accomplishments. For instance, to a family member's enthusiastic report on how his sight has been improved by certain eye exercises, *Nux vomica* might remark: "You're just imagining it. You've put so much effort into the exercises that you can't admit they're a waste of time. Your eyes are probably just the same as they were." Or, like *Lachesis*, she may break out into vulgar abuse when angered, even employing "unchaste" (Hering) expressions. She may resemble the latter also in inability to "get over the smallest evil" (Hahnemann)-whether relating to her own improper behavior ("anxiety of conscience": Kent) or the moral transgressions of others. Either perturbation, indeed, can become an obsession.

Otherwise, the female, like the male, has an attractive vitality, often a high sexual energy ("great excitement of sexual organs, with sexual dreams and orgasms," writes Hering, and adds, "in irritable and headstrong women"), can be winy and

*Known as "plussing" this method of administration in acute condition calling for frequent repetition of the remedy is useful when the patient's body ceases to respond to repetition of the same potency. It involves dissolving the remedy in a small bottle or medium-sized glass of water and shaking it or beating it vigorously with a spoon a hundred times or so before each successive dose. The repeated succession seems to raise the potency ever so slightly, and this slight alteration seems to perpetuate the therapeutic action of the remedy. It also lessens the likelihood of aggravation (i.e. ... a "proving") from repetition of the remedy (see Hahnemann's discussions of this procedure in the Organon. Sections :247, 248, 272)

imaginative, and displays a flashy brilliance together with a vibrant and inquiring mind. In artistic or intellectual pursuits she shares with *Arsenicum* and *Sepia* a tendency to be driven by her creative impulses. She cannot relax or be content, and is miserable at home unless able to devote some time every day to solitary intellectual pursuits in a completely quiet environment. But her "occupation ameliorates" (Kent) is an *Arsenicum*-like sheer love of work, rather than *Sepia's* seeking work and career outside her home, primarily to escape from her family or conceal her indifference to them.

Further, unlike the *Sulphur* woman who flourishes in an atmosphere of "disorderly order" or "creative disorder" (as *Sulphur* herself likes to call it) and who can simultaneously feed her children, bake bread, carry on a business conversation by telephone, follow a television program, and in between attend to her knitting, the *Nux vomica* woman does only one or two things at a time, but does them carefully and systematically.*

The "overtender and soft" disposition mentioned by Hahnemann suggests, and indeed reflects, a ready sympathy and extreme sensitivity to others' tragedies and grief. When the news media are full of natural and man-made disasters, floods, earthquakes, starvation, nuclear fallout, bombings, acts of terrorism, and the like, the homoeopath may anticipate a marked increase in female patients needing *Nux vomica*. Such events cause them to fall apart emotionally, suffer from insomnia, cry easily, and so forth.**

Natrum muriaticum, to be sure, also takes on the sorrows of others but in a different way. In her the effects of vicarious suffering are not as immediate. She absorbs, holds in, and mulls over her silent grief, causing it to fester and developing pathology slowly, while *Nux vomica's* reactions are instantaneous, uncontrolled, and overtly upsetting ("she sobs aloud ... groans and sighs in a lamentable manner": Hahnemann), displaying a higher degree of emotional spasticity. The immediate responsiveness and empathy of *Nux vomica* differ from these qualities in *Ignatia* or *Phosphorus* in that the latter are affected primarily by the grief of persons close to them while *Nux vomica*, in addition, vibrates in response to misfortune anywhere in the world.

Yet, despite her many attributes, the female's self-esteem can be exceedingly shaky, so that she becomes "beside herself from contradiction" (Hahnemann) and "frantic" (Boenninghausen) when opposed, plunging into the depths of despair, with feelings of worthlessness-of being "significantly less than a flea," as one patient said of herself. Or she becomes "taciturn" (Boenninghausen) and "averse to company" (Kent), or presents a *Natrum muriaticum*, *Sepia*, or *Staphysagria* type of melancholy and despondency with a "Nobody wants me!" syndrome ("I don't belong anywhere," "What am I doing here in the world anyway?"). She might then strive to please others and make them feel positive about themselves in the hope or expectation that they, in turn, will then appreciate and support her more fully. The ingratiating *Nux vomica* lies midway between the spontaneity of *Phosphorus* and the labored efforts along these lines of *Natrum muriaticum*.

*It is thus ironic that the well organized and motivated *Nux* is one of only two remedies listed in Kent in the rubric "Time; fritters away his" (*Cocculus* is the other). Surely *Calcareo carbonica* be longs there also.

**The individual who cries over obituaries is *Causticum* ("intensely sympathetic": Hahnemann), while *Calcareo carbonica* is "oversensitive when hearing of cruelties": Kent).

Nux vomica ranks high in both sexes for "bad effects following indignation" (Kent), with trembling all over, insomnia, headaches, and inability to concentrate (*Staphysagria*). A case in point was the normally sensitive and sparkling woman in her mid-thirties experiencing unusual headaches which at times developed into migraine. The immediate cause was not hard to discern: she had recently separated from her husband, was consumed with indignation at having been exploited and maltreated by him, and was now facing a bitter and unpleasant divorce. When she first sought homoeopathic aid, she was grieving silently and trying to be stoic. So *Ignatia* was prescribed with success: the headaches diminished in frequency and intensity, and she was able to endure the trials confronting her. As the situation continued to drag on, however, the periodic doses of *Ignatia* lost their efficacy, the migraine headaches reemerged, and *Natrum muriaticum* (also *Staphysagrias* helped only marginally. She began to display an unprecedented belligerency and anger— possibly a healthy reaction but still emotionally draining—and was determined to make her ex-husband pay for all the grief he had caused. "I will squeeze every penny out of him I can," she would declare, detailing all his iniquities in the most vituperative language she could muster. The divorce proceedings brought out all that was most pugnacious in her, and *Nux vomica*. 1M was prescribed at infrequent intervals. It not only cured her headache but, by moderating her own hostile and "vengeful" (Kent) emotions, encouraged the ex-husband to behave more reasonably and decently in the final settlement.

When *Ignatia* ceases, or fails, to alleviate the ill-effects of grief or anger, *Natrum muriaticum* is often indicated, but *Nux vomica* can also play this complementary role—in both the hysterical patient and the stoic one. Thus the female *Nux vomica* can resemble either the overwrought *Ignatia* in her loss of emotional control, culminating at times in extravagant actions,* or the overtly or silently indignant *Staphysagria*, or even *Sepia* and *Natrum muriaticum* in her extreme "reserve" (Kent) and inability to weep.

However, when *Nux vomica* dues unburden herself to the understanding counselor or sympathetic listener, her sobs are less racking than those of *Natrum muriaticum*, her tone less heavy and tortured— perhaps because of her greater innate liveliness, perhaps because the emotions were less repressed and contained in the first place.

The Child:

In the traditional analysis, the outstanding features of the young *Nux vomica* patient are, once again, unruliness and bad temper. Either he wakes up crying, irritable, and cross, and remains unhappy throughout the day, or he is hyperactive, over excitable, and constantly "causing reactions" (Blackie). He throws horrendous tantrums at home and in public—yelling wildly, kicking, stamping, throwing himself to the ground, and "striking at" (Kent) or biting those: who try to control him, and in the physician's office he may refuse to allow himself to be examined.

The other prime candidates for difficult and badly behaved young children are *Calcarea carbonica*, *Tuberculinum* (see those, chapters) and *Chamomilla*.

*While these medicines are customarily viewed as "incompatible" (Hering) or "inimical" (Gibson Miller), with *Nux vomica* "antidoting" (Boericke) *ignatia*, they have also been recognized as "comparable" (Hering) and even "allied remedies" (Boenninghausen). In hysteria and anger they are often interchangeable.

The older child is disputatious. "defiant" (Kent), and ;Apt to be "cruising for a bruising" through his tendency continually to test the patience of authorities. Later he develops into that special breed, of contentious and rebellious adolescent whose undirected energies seem to provoke conflict in all situations. The active rebelliousness and urge for confrontation of the *Nux vomica* and *Sulphur* boy could be contrasted with the passive obstinacy of *Silica* and *Calcarea carbonica*.*

Nux vomica's behavior may be antisocial as well as a social. Kent lists the poison nut as the only polychrest in the second degree for kleptomania. However, the homoeopathic practitioner has few opportunities to prescribe for this condition in its mature form (few adult patients come to homoeopathy asking to be treated for kleptomania), and this is difficult to verify. In children and adolescents manifesting this incipient tendency the remedy, in males, is primarily *Sulphur* (cf. the nature's acquisitive and accumulative instincts) and secondarily *Nux vomica* or *Calcarea carbonica*: in females the primary remedy is also *Sulphur*, with *Lachesis* or *Calcarea carbonica* in second place, *Calcarea carbonica* is the only remedy listed by Kent in the rubric, "stealing money," but *Sulphur*, *Nux vomica*, and *Lachesis* could be added.**

Aside from this overtly unruly behavior, few mental traits distinguish the *Nux* child from other normally well-behaved constitutional types, and the remedy is often determined by the physical symptoms. However, certain attractive traits do recur, and they should be accorded consideration. Usually the child is determined and self-reliant, harboring from an early age the conviction that hard work will bring success, and with a fine capacity to "think things through to his own advantage" (Allen). His intellectual acuteness can emerge in the physician's office: "Yes, I have a lot of pride," conceded one teen-aged girl, "and if you want to change that well, I guess I can bring myself to sacrifice a little. After all, there is plenty more where it came from." Another adolescent, acknowledging his surliness at home, justified it by boredom. "This summer will be a true test of homoeopathy. Ideally I would like to do some painting, compose a symphony, write a novel, and maybe run for public office. But I can easily see my summer dissolving into my habitual ineffectualness, lack of direction-and ill humor. The remedies will have to work hard to avoid such a calamity and direct my energies to some useful purpose." Actually, *Nux vomica* children of both sexes usually focus their endeavors well, but often in a lowkey and undemonstrative way which is not easily discerned by others, or even by themselves. And certainly, like the adult, they always want to be even better focussed!

They also resemble the adult *Nux vomica* in their sensitivity to language, using it well and, because of their own easily injured pride, consideration of others feelings. They will suffer from the (real or imagined) insensitivity of others, reprimanding parents, for instance, for failure to treat friends or siblings with due deference:

* Boys who are fascinated by books on warfare and the lives of famous generals and dictators (wielders of power), and who from a tender age begin to devour books on World Wars I and II, are often found to be of the *Nux vomica* or *Sulphur* constitution. *Arsenicum* makes as good a commanding general in everyday life, but in youth he is less interested in actual warfare.

**Any of the destructive tendencies and psychic derangements discussed in this chapter can arise from a variety of causes. For instance, kleptomania in the adolescent may reflect sexual insecurity, the fear of poverty, pleasure in defying social norms, arrogance, or competitiveness in the struggle for survival. But such "psychoanalytical" causes, although of value for other purposes, are of less significance for homoeopathic prescribing. The holism of homoeopathy is mainly concerned with how these deep-seated psychological derangements are manifested on the surface. The totality of the symptoms-as the outer manifestation of an inner psychic process-remains the most accurate guide to the simillimum.

"Yes, you had the right to ask him to help with the dishes, but you didn't ask him in the right way." Often, in fact, their own embarrassment is greater than the offense to the sibling or friend they are trying to protect.

Like *Natrum muriaticum*, the girl especially may be "shy and awkward" (Hering) or "inconsolable" (Hahnemann) once committed to an outburst of emotion. Kent also lists *Pulsatilla* in this rubric, but many homoeopaths experience *Pulsatilla* as eminently consolable. If high-spirited, the *Nux vomica* child is less exuberant than *Sulphur*, but, when sweet-tempered and "good" (Boenninghausen), he or she is more mature than *Phosphorus* and more self-possessed than *Pulsatilla*.

An adolescent boy was being treated for seasonal allergies, hay fever, and a tendency to take cold that invariably commenced with a "crawling sensation in the nose" (Hering), violent sneezing, and a feeling of icy chilliness (this contrasts with the *Phosphorus* or *Ferrum phosphoricum* cold that begins in the throat). His self-possession was such that the physician wondered what was going on underneath. Both parents and teachers stated that he seldom, if ever, lost his temper, scolded, or raised his voice, although he was obviously of an excitable and highly strung disposition. Yet, despite this self-contained manner, he appeared in no way repressed—as might have been the case with a similarly "unnaturally good" *Natrum muriaticum*; and, although inspiring respect (*Arsenicum*, *Lycopodium*), he appeared to be quite unconscious of his uncommon maturity.

Nux vomica substantially relieved his allergies and colds, and the physician at one point, deeming it appropriate to inquire into the reasons for the patient's unusual serenity, asked if he ever felt anger or frustration. He replied that, of course, he did, but that, having once become enraged at a teacher in the fifth grade and been completely beside himself, he was subsequently so ashamed at this loss of dignity (the *Nux* sensitive pride) that he vowed never to let it happen again. "It was frightening to run out of control in this way," he said, "to the point of wanting to kill the person opposing me." Moreover, he had seen too many of his contemporaries "spazz out" for various reasons,* and his sense of taste was so offended by this behavior (the *Nux vomica* "moral fastidiousness") that he resolved in the future to maintain his self-control ("stay mellow ") at all times.

In similar fashion he had started to smoke in his early teens but stopped after a year because as he said, "I don't want to be dependent on anyone or anything—certainly not on my emotions or cravings." *Nux* boys and girls are often great self-improvers and, like *Natrum muriaticum*, adhere staunchly to a moral code.

Sulphur was the other contender for the constitutional remedy, but the boy's symptoms were all better from heal, his nature was more highly strung and his psychic balance more tenuous than in the average *Sulphur*. Also indicating *Nux* was his admission that even the mildest criticism or adversity caused an unreasonable paranoia, and that when things were not going precisely his way he had to exert himself to control a rising hysteria. The *Sulphur* boy of good disposition is usually more sanguine and has a more robust mental balance, being less affected by duress and retaining his cheerfulness, buoyancy, and affability.

*This American colloquial expression, from the word, "spasm" or "spasmodic," seems to have been coined with *Nux vomica* (also *Arsenicum* specifically in mind).

Thus, *Nux vomica* will often start out in life as a responsive, sensitive, and high-minded individual but is not overly supplied with fortitude and equanimity. He exhibits force, but it is an uncertain force. Life's harsh lessons can upset his emotional balance and bring out the choleric side of his disposition. His inability to put up with emotional or environmental disharmony and disappointment may make him irascible, intemperate, or emotionally unstable ("is easily put out of tune": Boericke). In his unhappiness he turns to alcohol or drugs and often reacts aggressively to an unresponsive or hostile environment.

The more fortunate *Nux vomica* individual, however, who has not been over-subjected to hardship and emotional stress or has succeeded in overcoming them, or whose sensitivities have not been unduly challenged, often possesses delicacy, moral scrupulousness, integrity which, combined with the type's subtle mentality, sensitivity, and controlled equilibrium, make for a truly interesting and fine personality.

Appendix:

A quite different type of military leader and ruler of a country, who is also emblematic of *Nux vomica*, is no less a figure than Napoleon Bonaparte. The intensity of his nature, its greatness and glaring weaknesses, present the type's virtues and defects in sharp relief.

First and foremost, he epitomizes the highly practical and pragmatic *Nux* mentality-"God is on the side of the strongest battalions!"-that readily translates concepts into action. He possessed the ability to size up a situation realistically, to recognize the measures that had to be taken, and to take them at the right time-"The same thing cannot be done twice in the same century!"

His discarding of old-fashioned methods of warfare with their cumbersome battle plans and his introduction of the new factor of speed ("Active! Vitesse!" he would repeat to his generals) are in keeping with the accelerated *Nux vomica* metabolism. Through tempo he was able to emerge victorious against overwhelming numerical odds, and this was not confined to the battlefield. He imparted to the whole of Europe a speeding up of social processes through which society was fundamentally transformed. It was Napoleon who ushered in the fast modern pace of life with which *Nux vomica* is so closely identified.

Napoleon was extraordinary for the Renaissance scope of his achievements, although the grandeur of his ideas, the breadth of his vision, and his capacity to forge the destinies of others also suggest an underlying *Sulphur* diathesis. His literary taste and lively curiosity were derived from his intellectual father, and he was knowledgeable in mathematics, geology, history, and law. The mere enumeration of his positive contributions suggests the scope of his talents.

He brought France out of post-Revolutionary chaos with amazing swiftness, ushering in a stage of prosperity through his social, economic, political, and religious reforms; he granted freedom of religion and of trade to the entire population and adopted measures to ease the economic pressures on the poor. He performed a splendid service for administration by centralizing the government and giving it a form which has lasted to the present day. The Code Napoleon, developed by lawyers, and scholars working under his general guidance, remains the fundamental law of France. He extended judicial rights and civil security to all citizens, and he promoted the moral and intellectual progress of France through an extensive state-supported educational program.

His "Renaissance man" attributes encompassed also a profound, if cynical, understanding of human nature and psychology. He thoroughly understood his fellow-countrymen and demonstrated an unerring instinct and sense of what the masses wanted. He even correctly assessed his own mentality when he said: "My greatest talent consists in my clear insight into everything ...] see the essentials of a question from all sides ... Different affairs are all grouped in my head as in a desk. When I want to break off with one, I close its drawer and open another one. They never get mixed up. They don't confuse or tire me by their manifoldness ... "

This is an accurate appraisal of the neatly organized and compartmentalized *Nux* mentality. It contrasts with the turbulent, chaotic, and creative fancy of a *Lachesis* that must somehow "out" in speech or writing, also with the *Sulphur* mind which more resembles a messy, piled-up desk, with papers and other objects falling in a jumble out of every drawer, so that no one-least of all *Sulphur* himself-can ever know what is really there, what priceless (or useless) object will tumble out next. In fact, just as *Sulphur's* disorderly and confused mind finds a physical parallel in his disorderly room or desk and untidy appearance, *Nux vomica's* methodical and orderly

mind is equally reflected in his orderly household, tidy desk, and frequently dapper appearance.

But Napoleon also displayed *Nux vomica's* negative side to an exaggerated degree— its coarseness, sensuality, delight in mean gossip and intrigue ("malicious": Hahnemann; "spiteful": Boenninghausen). And his greed, egotism, and vanity-vices from which *Nux* is by no means exempt— were the causes of his downfall. Success went very much to his head; he had himself crowned Emperor of France, despite his basically democratic and Republican instincts. And, heedless of contrary advice, he pressed on with one war after another when France and the whole of Europe were desperate for peace.

Even Napoleon's physique, manner, and physical symptoms correspond to the *Nux* constitutional picture—the swarthy complexion, sharply chiselled features, and the nervous, masterful, and blustering *Nux vomica* demeanor.* His defeat at the Battle of Waterloo has been partly attributed to a severe attack of hemorrhoids which forced him to remain sealed in his tent during crucial stretches of the four-day battle ("worse from least movement; better sitting": Kent) in lieu of commanding his troops in the field. Unable to observe the fighting first-hand, he made uncharacteristic mistakes. Instead of moving rapidly and decisively on the last morning of the battle, he incomprehensibly delayed attacking for several hours—thereby allowing the Prussian troops to come to the aid of Wellington and the Allies .

**Nux vomica* sometimes resembles a rooster or, especially when small of stature, a bantam cock—easily provoked, strutting to and fro, and puffed up with self-importance.

Silica

THE remedy *Silica* is prepared from silicon dioxide, a colorless or whitish granular mineral distributed abundantly in the earth, both in its pure crystalline form and as quartz, flint, or sand. It has been well proven and thoroughly repertorized, and there have been no lack of attempts to provide it with a distinguished symptomatology. Indeed, its character has many idiosyncratic features. But many symptoms overlap heavily with such dominant polychrests as *Pulsatilla*, *Lycopodium*, *Hepar sulphuris*, *Arsenicum*, and especially *Calcareo carbonica*; thus *Silica's* specific personality may be difficult to recognize.

In these pages we try to trace a cohesive portrait of this important constitutional type by building on images drawn from the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms; the grain of sand, the stalk of wheat, the mouse, and the nickel.

The Grain of Sand:

Think of a grain of quartz sand, how hard and gritty it is, and how long and slow the process which brought it to its present inflexible form. The *Silica* patient embodies these qualities of hardness, granularity, rigidity, and chronicity on the physical and mental planes.

At the physical level, hardness is encountered in the type's tendency to form hard lumps or growths, fibrous nodules ("it has cured recurrent fibroids": Kent), carbuncles, cysts, tumors in the breast and elsewhere, hard swollen glands ("inflammation of glands, cervical, axillary, parotid, mammary, inguinal, sebaceous, malignant, gangrenous": H. C. Allen), keloids, calcareous or arthritic deposits in the joints, indurated lachrymal ducts, and the like.

Silica can also exhibit brittleness, as seen by the bones that readily become carious and break; the hairs that split at the ends; the deformed "crippled, splitting" (Kent) and fragile fingernails; the teeth which are poor in enamel and chip easily, displaying white patches on the surface. Even the skin seems somehow brittle, with *Silica's* tendency to fistulas, particularly of the anus (although the homoeopathic literature also lists fistulas of the lachrymal duct and cornea), cracks or felons at the fingertips, and cracks in the lips, the corners of the mouth, the nose, or between the toes.

Grittiness is manifested by granular styes on the eyelids, rough callouses on the soles of the feet or palms of the hands, "gritty" fingertips which make it unpleasant for the patient to touch anything, and the sandpaper roughness of the cheeks. An extraordinary example of this "grittiness" was the severely arthritic patient exhibiting not only gritty-feeling fingertips but even gritty-colored ones ("gray fingernails": Kent). Largely on the basis of this "strange, rare, and peculiar symptom" *Silica* was correctly selected as the simillimum.

Further encountered is the sensation "as if" something sharp and gritty— a splinter, thorn, grain of sand, or piece of broken glass were lodged in the skin, eye, throat, around the fingernails, or in some other part of the body; also the non-painful, and hardly life threatening, but intensely, annoying "sensation of a hair on the tongue" (Hering).

The remedy has benefitted granular deposits in the lungs of miners and quarry workers ("stonecutters' affections": Kent). In contemporary practice, cases that yield to *Silica* include sculptors, potters, and artists who develop lingering coughs from

working in stone, clay, or plaster (*Calcareo carbonica*), as well as persons exposed to asbestos (a form of silicate).

Finally, this medicine has the unique ability to promote the expulsion of thorns, nettles, needles, pieces of glass, or splinters from the skin, fishbones in the throat, bone splints, and other foreign bodies (bullets from old wounds, according to Boericke!). An unforgettable case was the young girl who, as a class prank, had been dragged across an old wooden gymnasium floor on her buttocks. Her backside, in consequence, was covered with dozens of tiny, deeply-ingrained splinters. Two doses of *Silica* 30X expelled virtually every splinter in the course of a few days, and without any localized infection.

The remedy can also "suppurate out old wens and indurated tumors" (Kent)-one reason why it is known as the "homoeopathic surgeon."

A dramatic example of *Silica's* action was the elderly man seeking homoeopathic help for an incipient abscess at the base of his thumb. He had already been scheduled for surgery to remove a large cyst of many years standing from his back, but, as a precaution against infection and to ensure that he was in optimum shape, the surgeon had postponed the operation until the thumb abscess came to a head. To hasten the ripening process the patient was prescribed three doses of *Silica* 200X, to be taken at 12-hour intervals. He received the first dose in the office, took the second at bedtime, and the next morning, as he leaned over the sink to brush his teeth, he heard an explosive sound behind him and, turning around, saw a large quantity of blood and pus discharged against the bathroom wall. The medicine had ripened the cyst on his back as well as the abscess, and the body ejected it without further ado.

But, as the homoeopathic texts warn, *Silica* can also liberate tubercles, break down and reabsorb scar tissue, and thereby open up old cicatrices, wounds, and abscesses in lung tissue; hence in such cases it should be used cautiously and infrequently in the higher potencies, especially where there has been a history of tuberculosis.

Silica's chronicity is encountered in the picture of complaints that develop slowly and are equally slow to heal-embracing the most intractable headaches, dysmenorrhoeas, arthritis, and chest complaints ("a tendency towards *chronicity* rather than resolution": Farrington). This lack of recuperative or self-healing powers is exemplified most graphically in the remedy's various skin affections; the unending suppuration of minor injuries and infections, old wounds and fissures that have never healed properly, boils and abscesses that refuse to come to a head.

Margaret Tyler portrays this aspect of *Silica* in a mother's lament over her son's physical condition:

"Look at his nails-rough and yellow; and feeling as if he had got a splinter in his finger. Or he gets a red swollen finger that throbs and feels like a felon ... and the bone feels big ... and then his skin won't heal ... every little scratch and hurt festers and ulcerates ... and in every sore he gets sticking or burning pains ... and such a lot of sore places. Boils too! A boil on his skin, then boils on his neck ... pustules or boils anywhere on his body ..." etc.

The remedy shares with *Hepar sulphuris* the capacity to dissolve boils, hasten the ripening and resolution of abscesses, and heal lingering affections of the skin ("has a wonderful control over the suppurative process-soft tissue, periosteum, or bone maturing processes when desired or reducing excessive suppuration": H. C. Allen). Thus, these two medicines, prescribed in medium high potency, can abort impending breast abscesses in nursing mothers or resolve ones that have already formed, and, of all the remedies, possess the greatest capacity to heal abscesses at the roots of teeth.

The principal difference between them is that the glandular suppurations of *Hepar sulphuris* are more sudden and rapid, those of *Silica* slow; *Hepar's* discharges are thick and creamy; *Silica's* thin, watery, and bloody. Farrington suggests that *Hepar sulphuris* is often required at an earlier stage of the infection than *Silica*, so that when in doubt, one could start with the former, and move on to the latter if necessary. As to modalities, *Hepar sulphuris* is better from warmth and humidity, *Silica* from warmth and dryness— hence the former's superior value in croup, where the condition is relieved by hot steam.* *Silica* perspires on the upper part of the body and the head. while *Hepar sulphuris* perspires all over.

Even "the action of *Silica* is [usually] slow (Kent). However, as in the slowly acting *Calcareo carbonica* .. its curative powers can amaze both patient and physician.

The remedy was administered in the 1M potency to a patient with a depleting perspiration from any quick or energetic motion; she also had a "heavy feeling in the chest and occasional violent hammerings of the heart. At the next visit she inquired,

"Could the remedy have started working in thirty seconds?"

"It could," the physician replied.

"Well, in literally half a minute I felt the weight and constriction in my chest disappear and it hasn't come back since. The hammering has also lessened, as well as my depleting perspirations, so I was just wondering."

Such an immediate effect would have been par for the course with *Arnica*. *Belladonna*, *Chamomilla*, or some other acute remedy, but it was somewhat unusual for *Silica* prescribed as "constitutional."

The *inflexibility* of flint is manifested on the mental plane in *Silica's* "obstinacy" (Boenninghausen). This type can be as stubborn as any *Calcareo carbonica*. *Tuberculinum*, or *Nux vomica*. He is not aggressive or argumentative.** will smile, remain pleasant, and appear mild enough— but still proceeds as he deems best. A *Silica* horse or dog has a good disposition and is easy to handle in most circumstances but at times takes on a stolidly obdurate expression at the end of the rein or leash or comically turns his head away unheeding. If let loose, he might simply, walk slowly and calmly away, pretending not to hear any commands to the contrary.

The *Silica* child, normally obedient and well-behaved, for a while puts up patiently with resistance or pressure but at a given moment becomes insistent ("self-willed, obstinate, headstrong": Hering). Thus the *Silica* youngster, begging for a tricycle, football, or ice-cream cone, at first perseveres in an even tone but at some point breaks out into an "impatient and irritable" (Kent), "Mommy, I said I want a football!" (at which point the other gives in). At other times he retains his equanimity through all the reiterated begging-gaining his end by being unrelenting and wearing down the other's resistance (*Calcareo carbonica*).

An instance of this effective persistence is the child who dislikes his boarding-school intensely, yet cannot persuade his parents to bring him home or send him somewhere else. He begins, deliberately or unconsciously, to apply various methods

* *Hepar sulphuris* is routinely prescribed in croup, following *Aconite* and *Spongia*, to complete the cure and prevent a recurrence.

** *Silica* can become angry, but seldom unreasonably so; the emotion is usually justified by the provocation. This is perhaps why it is not listed under the rubric, "quarrelsome," in the Kent Repertory (*Pulsatilla* is the only other polychrest discussed in these two volumes to be so honored). But Hahnemann offers the symptom "angry and quarrelsome in the evenings."

of passive persuasion: not answering his parents' letters and refusing to telephone. Or, if they call him, he talks only about how depressed he is. While the discontented *Sulphur* or *Nux vomica* will start to misbehave (both being troublemakers who "make waves"), *Silica* develops elusive complaints or a malingering attitude, thus forcing his parents to consider his wishes.

A *Silica* picture is also encountered in the adolescent girl or young woman who, like *Pulsatilla*, appears malleable and needing guidance or protection, but in reality knows exactly what she wants in life-or, more precisely, what she does not want. It is impossible to give her advice or even to buy her a present. Nothing is quite right, no clothes are precisely to her taste, and even some relatively neutral object such as a pair of socks or a pillowcase for her bed in college must suit her precisely or it will be put aside unused. This is not from an overall negativeness but from rigidity of views. The girl (or boy) can be just as rigid and selective in her judgment of people and thus has particular difficulty finding friends, and later, an acceptable partner in life. Persons who remain single, not from aversion to the marital state but from being too exacting—no one is ever quite suitable—will often exhibit *Silica* characteristics.

The same rigidity applies to his profession. For instance, once this type makes up his mind how much to charge for his services, nothing will induce him to alter it. Mildly but firmly, he will reiterate, "Maybe I didn't charge enough (or charged too much) for my work, but that's what I said I would charge, and that's the way I want it to stay!" At any age *Silica* remains impervious to outside pressure or influence and can exhibit an obdurate "That's the way I am, and nobody is going to change me!" attitude. He may be diffident and self-effacing, but he does not let himself be imposed on. On matters of principle, too, he displays firmness—a flint-like hardness that may break under pressure but will never bend.

Like *Calcarea*, the individual is often stubborn without being enterprising—obstinacy taking the form of resistance and refusal, in contrast to *Sulphur*, *Lycopodium*, or *Nux vomica* who bullheadedly insist on acting even contrary to all reason. Tenacity and persistence are more *Silica's* style, and the manifestation of his inflexibility. This may be due, in part, to lack of vitality. *Silica* has enough energy to resist pressure and defend his own desires, but not enough to bend others to his will or initiate projects against opposition.

Carried a step further, inflexibility and stubbornness turn into "fixed ideas" (Clarke).

The pretty but timid young girl is convinced that any man making friendly overtures wants to seduce her, and nothing can dispel this conviction (*Pulsatilla*). Conversely, *Silica* can develop positive fixations about anything to do with the person she cares for. If convinced of his brilliance, not only is she herself willing to listen for hours to the same stories and conversations, but insists that others should be equally enthralled. The mild-mannered person can become quite "vexed" (Hahnemann) at others insufficient show of interest in this loved one or their reluctance to be impressed.

The young man is unalterably certain that he cannot handle the hardships of his school's four-day backpacking trip, even though nothing in his previous history justifies this assumption. And the classic example of the *idée fixe* is the woman who thinks only of pins: "believes she has swallowed pins, seeks hours for lost pins; carefully examines her food for fear of pins" (Hering).*

*Anyone who has struggled with a defective computer that keeps repeating the same errors however often it is reprogrammed will have experienced the typical *Silica* "fixed idea." It may be mere coincidence that the computer is based upon the silicon chip.

At times the fixed ideas carry the theme of remorse. The individual is overcome with contrition over some relatively minor error or remissness of behavior ("feels as if he has done a very great wrong": Hahnemann; "compunction of conscience about trifles": Hering). A woman who sought homoeopathic help for painful dryness of the eyes due to clogged lachrymal ducts unceasingly reproached herself for some occasionally inconsiderate behavior toward a much—loved, well-cared for, and now deceased, dog. Another, who suffered from non-specific "stubborn" headaches that yielded to no remedies was finally recognized as needing *Silica* by her reluctance to form new friendships due to remorseful recollections of misunderstandings with former friends brought on by her own behavior. She readily fell into the self-accusatory mode: "Why did I act like that!" "I shouldn't have made that remark!" and so on. She was also obsessive about these failed attachments, digging repeatedly into this terrain to discover the reasons and circumstances of their rupture with the tenacity of a Schliemann looking for the lost city of Troy.

However, *Silica* does not instinctively take on the role of "scapegoat" or willingly bear the sufferings of others. That role is reserved for *Natrum muriaticum* and *Staphysagria* who play it with a willingness and dedication that inspire respect as well as compassionate concern.

In extreme cases fixed ideas become "Monomania." In the Kent Repertory this remedy is, curiously, one of only two listed in hold type under this rubric, the other being *Ignatia* (whose monomania is, however, more hysterical, frantic, or intense). The mild and benignly "touched" Mr. Dick, in Dickens *David Copperfield* whose constant harping on the bead of the executed Charles I, as a surrogate grievance for his own deep family hurt, is a caricature of the *Silica* monomania. A real-life representative might be Earnest Vincent Wright, author of the "e-less" novel, *Gadsby*. To achieve the extraordinary feat of writing a full-length book without once employing the by far most common letter ill the English language (imagine never being able to use "the" or the personal pronouns, "he," "she," "we," "they," "them," or several forms of the verb, "to be") takes a truly monomaniacal state of mind. *

The *Silica* monomania is commonly found in an attenuated form in writers or scholars who devote themselves to their work with unswerving concentration—the student sometimes dedicating himself to accumulating twice as many course credits as are needed for the degree or insisting on taking nearly every course offered by the Department.

This type's inflexibility is further displayed in difficulty adapting to change. Because it has taken him a long time to feel secure in a given situation, he resists anything new. The woman is a creature of habit, and will drive miles out of the way to patronize a store near where she formerly lived (*Calcareo carbonica*); the man is also innately conservative, with no desire to go anywhere new or do anything different (*Lycopodium*).

One patient with a tendency to swollen glands at the slightest infection, or merely from tiredness, described how her teaching job required weekly commuting between Boston and New York. The physician was amazed to hear that this did not

*Actually, the novel reads remarkably smoothly despite its tremendous handicap:

"Gadsby was walking back from a visit in Branton Hills manufacturing district on a Saturday night. A busy day's traffic had its noisy run; and with not many folks in sight His Honor got along without having to grasp a hand or talk: for a mayor out of City Hall is a shining mark for any politician. And so, coming to Broadway, a booming drum and sounds of singing told of a small Salvation Army unit carrying on amidst Broadway night shopping crowds. Gadsby, walking towards that group, saw a young girl, back towards him, just finishing a long soulful oration· and I can say this to you, for I know what I am talking about for I was brought up in a pool of liquor..... (etc.)

appear to drain her. "You really do not mind commuting at all?" he pressed her more closely. "Not anymore," was the reply. "Years ago I was terrified at the thought of even a single trip to Boston, with all of its ensuing complications, but now that I do it regularly, it is no hardship at all." This was a sufficient mental indication for *Silica*.

This resistance to change may be one reason why *Silica* (like *Calcareo carbonica*) is strongly affected by the phases of the moon (a form of change). Sleepwalking ("somnambulism": Hering), enuresis, asthma, skin eruptions, chronic diarrhoea, headaches, and seizures are often aggravated by the full moon (Boger) and especially by the new moon (Boericke).

The pervasive overlap between *Silica* and *Calcareo carbonica*, particularly in the child, calls for a comparative and differential diagnosis of their respective symptomatology.

Both types may possess big heads and protruding abdomens (shaped like inverted saucers) and manifestly lax muscle tone. The younger children are slow to sit up, stand up, or walk, and show little inclination to try. While the *Calcareo carbonica* child is more obviously "floppy," *Silica* is equally flexible and rubbery. The young pianist's or violinist's career is handicapped by too-flexible and collapsing fingers, while the young gymnast's muscular control is inhibited by excessive elasticity. Both types, as children, perspire around the head and neck, particularly during sleep, although *Silica's* sweat is more offensive than *Calcareo's* (Tyler). Also the former perspires more at the base of the head (as an adult, in the armpits and on the upper back), while the latter perspires all over the head (as an adult, in the armpits and on the upper chest).

Both can be intolerant of milk, occasionally even mother's milk causing diarrhoea and vomiting, and, as babies, they like (appropriately enough) to eat sand and other indigestibles. Like *Calcareo carbonica*, *Silica* can be the chronic remedy of *Belladonna*, being given preventively for recurring sore throats that settle in the tonsils or the glands of the neck, and for children with repeated ear infections.*

A case illustrating the similarities between the potentized lime and potentized quartz sand was an eighteen— month old child with epileptic seizures which had commenced after a recent DPT vaccination (for a more extended treatment of the vaccination issue, see the Appendix). Her enlarged glands, milk intolerance, chilliness, and constantly running nose fitted both remedies, but, because the seizures were more severe at the new moon than the full moon, and her behavior was timid rather than placid, *Silica* 10M was prescribed. The remedy helped and was repeated several times in different potencies, but improvement ceased after a few months. *Calcareo carbonica* was then given with success. Thereafter the child was treated with either remedy, according to the concomitant physical symptoms.

This example has important methodological implications; the physician need not agonize unduly when two constitutional remedies, appear equally indicated. Either will serve and while they may act on different parts of the patient's physical and mental being, they will complement one another. If the physician in the above case had commenced with *Calcareo carbonica* and then moved to *Silica*, the outcome would probably have been the same (see the concluding Chapter).

Generally, however, the two types can be distinguished by their weight, build, and physical appearance. The *Calcareo carbonica* child is usually heavy, flabby,

*With respect to acute ear conditions, painful right-sided earaches in children respond most frequently to *Belladonna*, while left-sided ones call for *Ferrum phosphoricum*. But if *Belladonna* proves ineffective in a right-sided acute earache, *Ferrum phosphoricum* in the highest available potency should be tried (Boger). In ear infections without acute pain the remedy is often *Pulsatilla*.

phlegmatic, and with full or rosy cheeks; *Silica* is lighter, even "puny" (Nash), pale, or anemic, with clear, nearly translucent skin and with fine veins showing through, at times with a wizened or troubled expression ("face pinched and old-looking": Nash; also *Lycopodium*). Even the adolescent or older patient might look sickly, stunted in growth, and with signs of malnutrition or poor assimilation of food ("the center of nutrition is affected ... everything seems to have come to a standstill as far as growth and development are concerned": Nash). Chinlessness or a cleft chin immediately suggest *Silica*, since the chin and lower jaw are vulnerable areas for this type (Boger).*

When blonde, *Silica* is more truly blonde than *Calcarea carbonica*, in the sense that the fine, often thin, wispy hair remains fair and silky-textured into adulthood.** The combination of wispy blonde hair, delicate features, pale "waxy" (Kent) skin, ["too good for this world" expression, and refined disposition prompted Elizabeth Hubbard to label this type the "angel child"]

A typically *Silica* specimen was the thin and delicate four-year old boy with a chronic offensive discharge from the ears which was sometimes yellow, sometimes thin and blood-streaked. He had a small, pointed, receding chin and clear complexion. He was serious and intelligent without being assertive and gave an impression of refinement that differed from the *Calcarea* child's stolidity.

The Stalk of Wheat:

Quite another facet of *Silica* is revealed in the morally firm and emotionally stable individual who is withal frail and lacking buoyancy. Here the obvious image is Kent's *stalk of wheat*: "What *silica* is to the stalk of grain in the field, it is to the human mind. Take the glossy, stiff, outer covering of a stalk of grain and examine it, and you will realize with what firmness it supports the head of grain until it ripens; there is a gradual deposit of *silica* in it to give it stamina. So it is with the mind; when the mind needs *Silica*, it is in a state of weakness, embarrassment, dread, a state of yielding.... Later Gutman elaborated on the theme of this remedy's ability to supply *structure* to the individual who is unable to carry on or thrive, in his detailed account of the significance of this mineral for the connective tissues, ligaments, and fascia, also its role in giving shape to the organs and bones, as well as "mental stability" to the intellect, by strengthening the powers of concentration, i.e., "the central organizing impulse" and memory (*The Essences of [Homoeopathic] Remedies*).

Even in physique *Silica* may resemble a stalk of wheat. He can be weedy; with celery-stalk limbs and an endive-tinted complexion— in short, a thin delicate reed. His physical endurance is poor: he lacks vitality and tires easily ("great weariness and debility, wants to lie down": H. C. Allen), suffering from complaints brought on by

*The receding chins of certain inbred European noble families of ancient lineage (sometimes considered a sign of over-refinement, lack of willpower, and weakness of character) could be considered a *Silica* phenomenon.

**The appearance and personality of this remedy have traditionally been associated with Scandinavians.

overexertion and overheating (debilitating sweats).* He may expend so much energy coping with his physical environment that little is left over for enjoyable living.

Furthermore, together with *Calcareo carbonica*, *Kali carbonica*, *Natrum muriaticum*, and *Sepia*, *Silica* feels depleted or worse after coition: "Loss of animal fluids particularly aggravates the symptoms: seminal emission or coitus causes, or is followed by bruised aching all over the body" (Farrington).

He may also lack mental stamina ("mental labor very difficult; reading and writing fatigue": Hering); the very act of thinking is exhausting, while the thought of all he has to do overwhelms him and deters him from making the effort (*Calcareo carbonica*). *Silica* is one of the prime remedies for aggravation from mental exertion, even if the prolonged or strenuous effort occurred many months ago. Hence Kent's "never well since" some mental exertion. The individual gets "muddled from conversation" (Hahnemann), the mind is confused or lacks energy for concentration, or he forgets what he started to say.

Allen offers, as an example of *Silica's* particular type of "forgetfulness" and "abstraction," the woman who puts her watch into the saucepan to boil instead of an egg. A more recent manifestation of this symptom was the patient suffering from chronic insomnia (due to a peculiar "pulsation of the body: particularly in the abdomen": Kent) who threw a letter she had just written into the garbage can and carefully inserted a chicken-bone into the corner mailbox. More typically, the woman will put a fork or spoon into her purse instead of the house key or will stow perishable food in cabinet drawers and kitchen utensils in the refrigerator. The male will file his papers, or put away his tools, in inappropriate places: one such patient habitually found his screw-driver in the "Home Repairs" folder in his filing cabinet ("distracted ... mind in two places at a time": Hahnemann).

Yet the overall "stalk of wheat" *Silica* picture does not suggest intellectual impotence; the individual is just overworked and overwhelmed, suffers from "brain fag" (Kent), or requires more mental structure.

The type is also "faint-hearted" (Hering), and "lacking in courage" (Hahnemann). Because he is convinced of his (often imaginary) incompetence and fears that he will lack nerve, he feels incapable of dealing with the problem at hand. The patient will typically lament, "I can't take the strain any longer ... I have no

*The following cartoon illustrates this type.



"He appears to have lost all of his resilience."

Drawing by Arnie Levine © 1987. The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

energy left ... I'm completely overwhelmed with what I have to do already and can't take on anything new ... Don't ask me to exert myself more than I already am." Or, "I always feel that I'm slipping and won't be able to cope; yet I manage to do well enough, and others think me more capable than I actually am. This makes me even more insecure, so I dread every new day and the renewed efforts it will require."

Thus, the "pusillanimous" (Boenninghausen) *Silica* might underrate himself and refuse to shoulder responsibilities which are well within his capacities. Sometimes his defeatism, is reflected in a *Calcareo* withdrawal, seldom in a *Pulsatilla* self-pity or a *Natrum muriaticum* self-condemnation and self-isolation. The *silica* sheath around the stalk of wheat plays a role like the *Calcareo* oyster's protective shell, but it is not impenetrable and does not block out the world entirely. Carried a step further, however, self-doubt leads him to present a picture of "dejection, melancholy, despondency, or a surfeit of life" (Hahnemann).

If depression is due to the subject's *search for- the lost* [unrealized and unfulfilled] *self*, as some modern psychologists propound, the "lost self" of *Silica* without doubt includes the qualities of daring, enterprise, and spunk.* Hence the remedy's time-honored keynote, "want of *grit*, moral or physical" (Boericke).

The association between courage and "sand" is a commonplace of American culture. It is spiritedly expressed in *Huckleberry Finn* where fourteen-year-old Huck describes, in the most admiring terms he can muster, the spunk and fire of Mary Jane Wilks: "Pray for me! I reckon if she knowed me she'd take a job that was more nearer her size. But I bet she done it, just the same— she was that kind. She had the grit to pray for Judas if she took the notion— there warn't no back down do her, I judge. You may say what you want to, but in my opinion she had more sand in her than any girl I ever see; in my opinion she was just full of sand ... "

Under the rubric "cowardice" Kent lists *Silica* second only to *Lycopodium* and *Gelsemium*. But while this constitutional type may lack self-confidence and gumption, he may yet possess a more subtle and rarefied courage— rectitude and integrity even in the face of temptation or adversity. In direct contrast to the classic "want of moral grit," grit is precisely what *Silica* does occasionally display in unexpected mental endurance or moral resolve: "although exhausted from hard work and close confinement, [he will] overcome his nervous debility by force of will" (Allen)—hence the picture of brain fag or "never well since" mental overexertion. Time and again this individual displays determination and tenacity of principle under extreme duress (recall the flint-like hardness of the kernel of hard or winter wheat).

Silica also eschews challenges that may be psychologically draining. He knows that, once committed, he will not spare himself but will put everything he has into whatever he undertakes ("*Silica* cannot possibly do a thing, but when urged to the doing, goes off into a paroxysm of overdoing": Dunham, quoted in Tyler). Consequently, to survive and function, he must move cautiously, testing out every step before venturing on the next and rationing his energies precisely according to what he deems he can and cannot undertake. Like T. S. Eliot's A. J. Prufrock, he "measures out his life in coffeespoons" and will not commit himself to an ounce more effort than he feels capable of, letting others supply the intensity—and do the work.

One teen-aged *Silica*, deeply attached to an ailing grandmother, eventually came to "shirk " (Kent) her share of the responsibility because, after putting everything into looking after her and caring for her, she would inevitably develop

*Whereas *Natrum muriaticum*'s "lost self" is often linked directly to his inability to express emotion—anger, love, and the like.

an excruciating headache or become unduly irritable.

Also, all too often this type collapses after trying to be the peacemaker in a friction-full family situation. Thereafter, aware of his weak psychological and physical powers of regeneration, he may prefer to move out and live alone. Although dearly loving his home and often fearful of leaving it, he forces himself out of the parental nest rather than become too deeply enmeshed in family dynamics. In this he is more independent than the resigned *Calcareae carbonica* or the support—requiring *Pulsatilla*.

At times, then, *Silica* seems to lack generosity, preferring to remain uncommitted in his relationships; he shies away from closeness or intimacy, is reluctant to give of himself, and may even become "indifferent to friends and former amusements" (Hering). He will tell the physician, "Instead of treasuring my friends as precious 'masterpieces of nature,' I am careless and disregarding of them. I know I am trying to protect myself from hurt and disappointment, but I would like to feel both less fearful and less disengaged from other humans."*

Patients may complain of a feeling of "disconnectedness," of being divided from, and not quite belonging to, the human brotherhood (is this related to the peculiar *Silica* symptom, "feels as if she were divided in two halves, and that the left side did not belong to her" [Hering]?).

If others ask little of him, he is pleasant and friendly, but when their demands seem to threaten his mental or physical well-being, he will claim fatigue. If pressed further, he becomes "irritable and peevish ... [and] with the best intentions, easily put out" (Hahnemann).

While some view this as selfishness ("affections from egotism": Hering), it is also the unaggressive person's way to guard against emotional trauma. He is not the *Natrum muriaticum* moth who keeps burning himself on a candle-from guilt, high-mindedness, or sheer neurosis, repeatedly subjecting himself to exploitation, abuse, or injury; neither does he force intimacy upon others becoming emotionally involved too quickly or intensely and suffering as a result (*Phosphorus* and, once again, *Natrum muriaticum*). Nor is this behavior the outcome of a *Calcareae*-like indolence. It is simply that *Silica* knows his limits, learns how to conserve his emotional energy, and protects himself from undue psychological demands.

In professional life as well, he lacks the entrepreneurial mentality. He lets others seek out opportunities and collar the more interesting (and demanding) jobs, and at times they can even muscle him out of his own rightful position.

Thus he is not obviously aggressive or self-assertive. He will retire rather than confront a situation which is not perfectly attuned to his sensitivities or sensibilities. While "intolerant of criticism [and] contradiction". (Kent), normally he is passively so, possibly as much from insecurity as from lack of aggressiveness.**

*The phrase is that of the nineteenth-century New England sage preacher, thinker, and man of letters—Ralph Waldo Emerson ("a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature") whose intellectual and moral makeup, coincidentally, exhibit a strong *Silica* vein. Although a man of cultivated and impeccable taste, Emerson was perhaps a bit thin-blooded in his natural asceticism and want of animal vitality, seemingly too refined for intimate contact with the world. A relentless exponent of the self-sufficiency and infinitude of the *individual*, he articulated his reclusive *Silica* instincts as follows: "Man is insular and cannot be touched. Every man is an infinitely repellent orb, and holds his individual being on that condition ... Most persons whom I see in my own house, I see across a gulf! I cannot go to them nor they to me." But his aloofness was tempered by a courageous humanitarianism that made him an early and outspoken champion of the anti-slavery cause—when the rest of New England's intellectual class had not yet confronted this issue squarely.

**Surprisingly, Kent cites *Silica* as one of only two remedies under the rubric, "intolerance of contradiction; has to restrain himself from violence," the other being *Aloe*. Many homeopaths would list *nux vomica*, *Aurum metallicum*, *Sepia*, *Tuberculinum*, *Ignatia*, and others, but not *Silica*.

When stress or, perhaps, "assertiveness counseling" make him bolder, and he gathers the strength to assert himself and confront the world he does it quaking and livid with rage (as opposed to *Sulphur* or *Natrum muriaticum*, who turn scarlet), but still resembles "the mouse that roared" and does not represent much of a threat. *Silica* has *Natrum muriaticum*'s and *Staphysagria*'s fear of confrontation. But where the latter two are obsessively incapable of rest until their oppressor has been confronted, their unrelenting brooding on injury depriving them of peace of mind, the former feels no such compulsion— and wants above all to be left alone. Yet he makes his point in a quiet way and (as with the child unhappy in boarding-school) eventually induces others to deal with him on his own terms.

He also stages his anger and opposition better than *Natrum muriaticum* or *Staphysagria*— whose awkward timing of their outbursts renders them less effective. *Silica*'s tenacity, persistence, and reliability are often manifested in conscientiousness, even from an early age. In nursery school no child (not even *Arsenicum*s cleans up his desk more meticulously than a *Silica*, and no older child is more scrupulous, considerate, and dependable in caring for his or her younger siblings. The same is true of the adult. Confronting some new task, *Silica* hesitates, feels overwhelmed, and bemoans his incompetence, but then applies himself conscientiously and competently, where others, seemingly more promising, merely produce justifications and expressions of regret for failing to perform. One patient— whose passionate acquisition of "culture" drove him to plow through the literary classics, visit museums, attend concerts and theaters to an extent one would hardly believe possible—said of himself, "Oh, yes! I am conscientious—if nothing else I am conscientious and will faithfully abide by your counsel. Just instruct me, please, to what end my efforts must be bent!" Another patient proceeded to describe her newly formed habit of lying in bed every morning for half an hour before rising, although she would have preferred to spring into action at once ("worse lying in bed in the morning": Kent) "because I read in some obscure and probably quack journal that it is indispensable for good health."

This woman's feet, incidentally, were less pleasing than her wit, and offensively smelling feet ("intolerably bad, sour, or carrion-like odor": Hering) with excoriating perspiration that eats through socks and shoe leather are guiding symptoms of this remedy. *Thuja* also has strongly smelling feet, but *Silica*'s aroma is even more penetrating, distinctive and lingering. 'When the physician is desperately seeking a physical symptom to confirm the often elusive *Silica* diagnosis, this type's pungent lower extremities will often rescue him. The perspiration is generally "sour smelling" or "offensive" (Kent).

Silica can carry things too far and become "conscientious over trifles" (Kent—in bold type). Where *Arsenicum* can spend several hours packing and repacking a suitcase until everything is "just right." *Silica* can spend a week. An amateur carpenter who suffered from hydrocele (water in, and swelling of, the testicles) was recognized as needing this remedy from the undue time and care he spent on the simplest household repairs. He took days to fix a leaky faucet, while to install a door or hang a pegboard in the kitchen took weeks.

This ultra-conscientiousness over small matters— which doubtless reflects insecurity or reluctance to confront larger issues— is caricatured in the Peanuts cartoon strip depicting the dog, Snoopy, as author. Sitting at his typewriter on the roof of his doghouse writing the opening chapter of his "great American novel," he begins the first sentence with "It." Then he thinks a 'while and changes it, to "When." Then he tears up the page and starts again with "The." In the final panel he tells himself

with beaming satisfaction, "A good writer will sometimes search for hours for just the right word."

Of course, even *Silica* at times becomes weary of minutiae and feels a *Sulphur*—like longing to embrace broad concepts and philosophical systems. But in this he may display a want of "intellectual grit" and resembles a hard-working ant wrestling with a chip of wood too large for it—struggling valiantly but never really getting a firm grip. For the individual in this stage of intellectual or philosophical floundering, the potentized quartz crystal is the first remedy to consider after *Sulphur*.

Ever since Kent wrote that *Silica* is "the natural complement and chronic of *Pulsatilla* ... It is a deeper, more profound remedy," it has been so regarded. There is ample justification for this, as seen in the child's particular kind of shyness, his dispirited manner when ailing, tendency to cry easily 'when scolded or feeling hurt, clinging manner and fear of strangers.* In a group he is seldom the leader, being content to cooperate while others take the initiative.

Silica complements *Pulsatilla* in such childhood ailments as enuresis, allergies, coughs, colds, and especially ear infections, where it will improve on or deepen the latter's action; in general, this medicine is rich in ear symptoms, such as catarrhs, blockages, draining, hearing loss, abnormal noises, rupture of the drum, etc. and often works where *Pulsatilla* is unavailing. While *Pulsatilla* is known as the "vegetable *Sulphur*," it could with equal justice (particularly for women and children) be called the "vegetable *Silica*."

The adult might retain *Pulsatilla*'s nonaggressive disposition, partly out of a natural "gentleness" (Kent), partly out of lack of energy. Conflict, pugnacity, contention, and confrontation all demand effort, which *Silica* would rather avoid. Yet (unlike *Pulsatilla*) while "yielding" (Hering) and at times "irresolute" (Kent), the *Silica* individual of two minds over a choice can reach a decision without involving a dozen others in the process; and then abides by it—in contrast to *Pulsatilla*'s unending fluctuations. Moreover, *Silica* truly suffers from his hesitancy and irresolution, while *Pulsatilla* only imagines she does. And whereas the clinging and dependent *Pulsatilla* caters to others' needs to feel strong, protective, and nurturing, this is not done by the more independent *Silica* (except in the very young).

Sometimes *Silica*'s irresolution merely reflects lack of self-confidence; at other times the individual wavers and hesitates because he really does not know what he wants. This lack of firmness or commitment not only hinders him from doing what he is otherwise qualified to do, it also detracts from his pleasure in accomplishment. Some deep-seated "indifference" (Boenninghausen) deprives him of truly profound satisfaction ("I can take it or leave it!" is his typical non-engage attitude). Thus, what is sometimes seen as cowardice in this person may be merely "apathy" (Hering).

A despondent attorney in his mid-thirties sought homoeopathic help for a number of complaints including an ingrown toenail. *Magnetis Polus Australia*, made by exposing milk sugar to the South pole of the magnet, resolved the latter ailment(!), but when it returned some months later, constitutional treatment seemed clearly indicated to counteract this tendency. *Silica* 10M was prescribed, and during the process of cure the patient, who had wavered for years between teaching law and

* Once again, Margaret Tyler has a vivid description of this side of the constitutional type: "Typical *Silica* crawls nervously in, or is dragged in on his mother's hand, and you can hardly miss him ... 'He doesn't get on, he doesn't (his mother recounts). He doesn't thrive. He doesn't learn; he doesn't even play ... He is always at the bottom of everything,... and his teacher' can't make nothing of him ... Doesn't seem to have no go in him. He doesn't seem to be able to think! He can't fix his mind. He can't read or write. And yet he's always worried to death over little things he's done wrong. That's it: he's so odd, and so unlike the others. And he's all wrong somehow, all over, he is! ... Going into a decline,' that's what she thinks he is"

remaining in practice, was suddenly infused with sufficient power of decision to opt for the former. He later announced that for the first time in years he felt a real sense of commitment to his work and derived genuine pleasure from it. The physician was left to ponder over the extent of homoeopathy's contribution to this mental change.

Silica is sensitive both physically and emotionally ("the senses are morbidly keen": Farrington). In his over-excitability to nervous stimuli he may tremble outwardly as well as inwardly; he startles easily from noises, touch, or in his sleep, and is exceedingly alert to sounds. He has insomnia from a variety of causes, including palpitations or strong pulsations "of the body, after intercourse or waking too early, from heightened activity of the mind, from headache, coldness of feet, rush of blood to the head, or hardness of the bed. The over-refined princess in the fairy tale who could not sleep for the pea under her six mattresses ("I scarcely closed my eyes. Goodness knows what was in my bed! I lay upon something so hard that I am black and blue all over!") must have been a *Silica*.

His "sensitivity to mental impressions" (Boenninghausen) is extreme. The symptoms "the least remark can make him weep" (Hahnemann) or "cries when kindly spoken to" (Hering) suggest a vulnerability to being touched emotionally-even if this means being moved by another's sympathy and kind concern. The consequent shying away from emotional involvement finds a physical parallel in the *Lachesis*-like symptom, "aversion to being touched" (Kent).

But, just as the wheat stalk is inherently resilient, while appearing fragile and yielding, so *Silica* is psychically stable, despite a frail exterior and an unassuming manner. He is even-tempered, reliable, and enduring under trying circumstances ("of sanguine temperament": H. C. Allen); nor does he externalize his negative moods and allow them to affect his behavior. He can be as sensitive and intuitive as *Phosphorus*, and is generally free from presumption, boastfulness, self-importance, or the desire for display. When things go wrong, he does not accuse others and has nothing of the despot or bully in him. He seldom feels compelled to assert his will by overtly dominating others, and is principled without being self-righteous. In addition, he possesses a rare honesty that permits him to confront the truth even when it is unpleasant-in contrast to *Lycopodium* who claims to want the truth but denies the same. He is sensitive and reliable in friendship, does not take advantage of those who love him, and "haughtiness never characterizes the patient" (Borland). Even his self-doubt is not tainted with narcissism but is an unpretentious and honest groping for meaningful achievement.

The young heroine of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* may serve as a fine concluding literary example of the swaying but steadfast, "stalk of wheat" *Silica* personality. Fanny Price appears delicate and wavering (there is, to be sure, much *Pulsatilla* in her "affect"), and she is indeed physically frail and of a malleable disposition; also, in a typically *Silica* way, she lacks confidence in her own fine abilities and *savoir faire*. Yet in the most trying circumstances, involving affairs of the heart and her own dynamic role in the family structure, she proves to possess the utmost moral resilience.

To stress her docility, the author at one point describes her as "creeping" upstairs to bed when told to retire after a dance. None but a *Silica* heroine could "creep" upstairs without incurring the reader's loss of respect-and the verb brings up our next image of this remedy.

The Mouse:

Whitmont, in a talk on this remedy, likened the *Silica* individual to a timid delicate white mouse which still fiercely maintains the integrity of its own small territory. This image captures the type's shy timorousness, self-protectiveness, and anxiously restricted outlook on life.

Silica is often apprehensive of the unknown and of the world at large, and content to lead a self-limiting existence locked into an insignificant and unvarying routine. In "The Mapped Life," a short story by Saki, a character asserts that the "mapped terraces" installed in zoos as more spacious substitutes for cages, and meant to provide the animals with an illusion of freedom, perfectly describe the human condition itself: "We are just as many animals, living on mapped terraces ... trammelled by restriction of income and opportunity, and above all, by lack of initiative. . We get colds in winter and hay-fever in summer, and if a wasp happens to sting one of us, well, that is the wasp's initiative, not ours: all we do is wait for the swelling to go down."

Such a description would hardly apply to a number of constitutional types—one need only think of *Sulphur's* catalyzing energy, *Arsenicum's* irrepressible desire to orchestrate events, *Lycopodium's* aplomb, the passionate impulses of a *Lachesis* or a *Phosphorus*, or *Nux vomica's* need to mold his own destiny and that of others but it is often quite applicable to *Silica* (also *Calcarea carbonica* and *Psorinum*).

This type is also retiring and easily intimidated— children by their younger siblings,* adults by their spouses or parents. The individual is even aggravated by being noticed, is "averse to being spoken to" (Boenninghausen; the only other remedy in this rubric is *Natrum muriaticum*), and exhibits an *apologetic manner* generally. He will go to great lengths to avoid attention but is, at the same time, *anxiously protective of his rights, principles, and privacy*. Although correct and friendly in most circumstances, *Silica* resembles *Natrum muriaticum* in finding it exceedingly difficult to have dealings with persons of whom he does not altogether approve. This contrasts with *Sulphur* or *Arsenicum* who may be overbearing or abrasive with persons they do not like but can still deal with them; or with *Lycopodium*, who treats everyone the same.

The mouse-like fearfulness and reluctance to venture into unfamiliar environments find concrete expression in homesickness ("longing for his relations and home": Hering). The remedy has benefited any number of children who are upset at being away from home for the first time—at boarding school or camp, or merely visiting a friend—helping them through the first unhappy days or weeks.

Even the adult cannot stay long away from home and may not sleep well in a strange place— or in a different room of his own house. If the patient volunteers that one of his most traumatic childhood experiences was leaving home, even for a pleasant alternative, the physician should consider *Silica* (or *Calcarea carbonica*).

Among the more unusual cases was a young woman who left home for the first time in her life to go to college. Her homesickness was so extreme that her menstrual periods ceased, she gained forty pounds over the winter, and eventually fell ill with a severe pneumonia followed by a lingering cough. She barely lasted out the year, and, even when back home for good, the symptoms persisted until *Silica* 50M set her on the road to cure.

* One four— year old *Silica* was in such awe of her six-month-old sister's imperious and commanding grunts for attention that she appealed to her mother for help: "Tell Jennie to stop bossing me around!"

Although strongly attached to his home, this individual does not possess the *Calcareae* or *Sulphur* instinct for hospitality that insists on plying others with food and drink on every possible occasion, or the *Calcareae* desire (and constant attempts) to round up members for a family meal.

Silica's timidity predisposes him to certain phobias. The best known is the "fear of needles, knives, and other sharp objects" (mark the corresponding "sensation of a pin in the throat": Hering). The adult's nervousness about acupuncture or the child's screaming resistance to vaccination prompts thoughts of this remedy. Among other more typical fears is that of driving ("the risks outweigh the advantages," as several patients have disclosed), or of being robbed ("imagining thieves are breaking in": Allen). Like *Natrum muriaticum* and *Arsenicum* he may patrol the house every night before retiring.

A more unusual phobia was the elderly lady susceptible to chest colds and unaffected by *Arsenicum* or *Calcareae carbonica* (her apparent constitutional remedies) but responding well to *Silica*, who admitted that in her younger days, with the sinking of the Titanic at the back of her mind, she would urge her husband to take a wig and skirt in his baggage whenever making a trip by sea, in order to disguise himself as a woman and be first in the lifeboats in the event of a disaster.

But *Silica* can be timorous and cautious about everything. The child cannot bring himself to attempt some feat in gym class or on the playground; while learning to swim, or especially to dive into the water, can be traumatic. Another will only ride his bicycle inside the yard or on the back patio, for fear of falling and being ridiculed. This diffident type must often be drawn out. He is afraid to read aloud in school because his mispronunciations might be laughed at (*Calcareae carbonica*). Although his skills are good, and he knows the material well, he sits quietly at the back, seldom volunteering to answer questions and hoping that the teacher will not call on him. This contrasts with the self-assured *Sulphur* or *Lycopodium* who loves being called on and is always raising his hand, whether or not he knows the right answer, as well as with *Arsenicum*, or *Nux vomica*, who is also eager to answer out in class and is usually right.

The adult dreads meeting people, as he fears he is deficient in social graces and is concerned about producing a poor impression. As mentioned earlier, his manner can be apologetic and visibly lacking in self-confidence; he takes long to consider what he will say and thereby often loses the chance to say it; or, in his diffidence, deciding that his idea is unworthy or insignificant, he reconsiders saying it or stops in mid-sentence. He hesitates over new career ventures and leaves his job with reluctance, even when he dislikes it (*Lycopodium*). Lacking confidence in his sexuality ("no erections, not any trace of them; sexual impulse very weak, and almost extinct": Hahnemann), he dreads the "rites of passage" of marriage. He also dreads parenthood (with its accompanying anxieties) and even separation (however needful for his own protection or self-esteem). One patient lamented, "I have never accomplished anything significant in life because I have expended so much energy working out my fears and timidities that no time remains for anything else."

This shy timorousness finds a physical parallel in one idiosyncratic symptom, the so-called "bashful stool." For lack of peristaltic power the stool is only partially expelled, despite much straining, then recedes into the rectum as if too shy to emerge.

His very dreams reflect his various apprehensions— "dreams of amorous nature.....lewd dreams" (Hahnemann)-and fears: "terrifying dreams..... of robbers with whom he wrestles..... of murderersas if about to be throttledof

snakes..... of being pursued by big dogs..... as if being drowned.... of being accused of murder and betrayal" etc. (Hahnemann).

In the physician's office *Silica's* most frequent apprehensions naturally pertain to health ("anxieties about health": Kent). Although here the type may resemble *Arsenicum*, his fears are less pronounced; he does not possess the latter's all consuming fascination with diet, medicine, and health, and is usually a milder kind of hypochondriac.* However, one health anxiety worthy of any *Arsenicum* was seen in a gentleman of European background subject to colicky diarrhoea especially in the summer. Whenever he undertook to raise a lady's hand to his lips in greeting (Old World style), he made sure to kiss his own thumb instead— thus to avoid contact with any alien bacteria.

Silica may exhibit what Hubbard called "albinism of the spirit" i.e., a lack of protective pigment to shield him from life's bright rays or glare. As one emotionally fearful patient, cured with a course of *Silica* 30x of a small, hard, free— floating cyst on the right knee (it simply disappeared), phrased it: "I have spent most of my life in hiding.**. He may so lack ambition or energy as to permit others to take credit for his own achievements, or he will refuse to defend his position and would rather be considered wrong than take the trouble to prove himself correct. He may even lack the energy for enthusiasm, and a large portion of his life will be devoted to avoiding offense or friction.

Sometimes *Silica* resembles a person at the foot of a steep flight of stairs. If he raises his sights too high and looks up to the top, he becomes frightened by the height ("vertigo from looking up, as if he would fall forward": H.C. Allen) and the effort required to make the ascent; but if he looks only as far as the next step, he can ascend at least part way.

This limitation of aspirations and restriction of outlook was encountered in a patient with numbness of the arms and hands upon awakening, a condition found in several polychrests. But the physician thought immediately of *Silica* upon learning that the patient had for the longest time been belaboring a manuscript on natural history finally turning in a three-page article entitled, "Hunting a Rare Beetle"(!) He then resumed his literary toils and a year later delivered himself of another three-page opus, "Luring the Mediterranean Mullet." Another patient, with the remedy's typical white spots on the nails and patches of lost enamel on the teeth, had a personal filing system that was far too intricate for his needs and spent his evenings rearranging it, thus effectively curtailing his time to accomplish anything with it. A third patient would draw up half a dozen "feasibility plans" for the smallest venture in his daily life but then, overwhelmed by the plethora of choice, could never resolve to carry out any of them. *Arsenicum* also loves plans "feasibility," "prefeasibility," and numerous others— but then chooses one option decisively and carries it out promptly.

On the other hand, gradual organic growth is more suited to *Silica's* style and tempo, and this is how he eventually reaches the top. A case in point was the political scientist who wrote an important book on a particular social issue. It had started as a

*Yet *Silica* is the only remedy in the Kent Repertory under the rubric, "anxiety about health, especially during climacteric period."

** A poignant description of this timid *Silica* type is Akakii Akakievich, the meek and lowly government copying clerk who is the protagonist of Nikolai Gogol's short story, "The Overcoat." After years of pinching and deprivation, he is at length able to afford his only dream in life, a beautiful warm overcoat and for the first time senses his own worth as a person. When he is waylaid on a dark street and robbed of it the first night he wears it, his new found self-respect evaporates, and he dies of chagrin.

five-page article for an academic journal before growing into a sizable volume. "If I had been asked to write a book from the outset," he conceded, "I never would have dared attempt it."

Much has been written in the homoeopathic literature about *Silica* symptoms arising from fear of performing in public (the clergyman delivering his sermon, the professor his lecture, the lawyer addressing the court), of taking tests and examinations ("the particular *Silica* state is to be found in fear of failure: if he has any unusual mental task to perform, he fears he will make a failure of it": Kent), in short, the anticipatory dread that commences long in advance of the event itself and which is to be distinguished from the actual "stage fright" of *Gelsemium* or *Argentum nitricum*. And this is indeed a guiding symptom. The remedy suits both the, "stalk of wheat" who underestimates his capacities but ultimately acquits himself well ("when he forces himself into the harness, he can go on with ease, his usual self-command returns to him ... He does his work with promptness, fullness, and accuracy": Kent) and also the "mouse" whose apprehensions are well-founded. His excessive anticipatory anxiety and exaggerated self-consciousness ("he feels his own selfhood [and] cannot enter into his subject": Kent) affect his performance. Or, with his low vitality, he may just lack the energy to prepare well ("the mind is in a state of weakness, and there comes a time when he cannot perform the work with accuracy": Kent).

But sometimes the *Silica* insecurity and accompanying pathology arise legitimately, as a result of concrete experience. A high-school science teacher with a highly *Sulphur/ Arsenicum* disposition presented with asthma. Neither of the above two remedies was availing, and, exploring the case in greater depth, the physician learned that he had been a talented violinist and had once hoped to perform professionally. However, a series of mishaps forced him to relinquish these ambitions: either a string would snap during a solo, or his accompanist would hit wrong notes and throw him off, or he would fall ill prior to a scheduled appearance. Destiny seemed opposed to him succeeding in this profession. The physician decided to address this stage in the patient's life, prescribing remedies for the traumatic experiences that led to his loss of self-confidence. Here *Silica* (working, as it were, on the patient's medical past) proved highly effective, and several doses over a period of time not only improved his respiratory symptoms but enabled the patient to better respond to the now more suitable *Sulphur and Arsenicum*.

Silica's hesitancy and lack of self-confidence stem in part from his mental refinement. Often well-educated or from a cultivated background, he has high standards, is discriminating, and fully aware of what it takes to deliver a superior address, give a good performance, or produce a worthy piece of art. Thus, he is insecure out of a legitimate recognition of his limitations.

Although he may resemble *Lycopodium* in anticipatory dread, there is no confusing the two. *Silica* is more easily intimidated, displays little of the latter's undeniable presence (which can become arrogance), and does not need to feel, or be considered, superior to others. Ultimately he may perform as competently as *Lycopodium*, but does not expect to.

A graphic differentiation of the two attitudes was seen in two scholars, both of whom had published serious works in their particular fields. Being rather specialized, neither had received much recognition. *Silica* at once decided that his article, although significant, was unpalatable. "It is hardly surprising that it went unnoticed," he remarked. "who wants to read a ponderous work in which every phrase has the specific gravity of lead?" (the other side of his constitution was *Sulphur*). The

Lycopodium scholar, on the contrary, while admitting that his article was suffering the fate of a note in a bottle cast into the Atlantic in the hope that someone would find it (he fell in love with this simile and repeated it on every possible occasion), remained quite unperturbed. "No fear," he said. "This is a first-class piece of scholarship, and if it is above most people's heads—Well, they'll just have to stretch their minds a little. It will be read in due course by those who can appreciate it."

Lycopodium also differs from *Silica* in not shirking challenges and responsibilities (even when they are beyond his capacities). He only shies away from binding emotional commitments. Again, *Lycopodium* is more competitive than *Silica* (as are, for that matter, *Arsenicum*, *Nux vomica*, *Sulphur*, and others). *Silica* wants to perform well, but not necessarily better than the next man.

The potentized flint can actually heighten the modest and unassuming individual's self-esteem and instill faith in himself, encouraging those who lack confidence to "brave it," placing their talents and ambitions, or their innermost thoughts, on the line for all to judge. The capable student overcomes his fear of failure and takes the law-school aptitude test; the fledgling artist exhibits his sketches and water-colors; the unpublished writer finally sends out his work for criticism.

Since the "dread of failure" (Kent) and fear of responsibility, are perhaps greater in *Silica* than in any other constitutional type, these individuals can be terrified into paralysis—literally "petrified" by the idea of going out into the world to seek their fortune. The university or professional-school graduate: with good intellectual capacities who, despite years of strenuous specialized training, is quite unable to take on work commensurate with his abilities and instead decides to "take time off" to run a health food store a bakery or a jam manufactory in upper Vermont, is bound to need *Silica* or *Calcarea carbonica* or both. "He has this dread of undertaking anything.... and for years is unable to enter his profession" (Kent).

Or, once in a profession, he may be unable to decide which specialty to pursue. The *Silica* picture has been repeatedly encountered in physicians, whatever the basic constitutional type who intend to practice homoeopathy but, however much they study, train, attend conferences and in other ways gird for action, cannot quite get up the "grit" to embark on this practice themselves. An overwhelming sense of being *unprepared* prevents them from getting their feet wet (as if anyone ever felt prepared to start homoeopathic practice!). But a dose of the remedy in high potency will often encourage them to plunge in— and stick with it; for (and this is typical of his earlier— mentioned tenacity— the Magellan-like determination to overcome all hardships, setbacks, and obstacles, in order to circumnavigate the globe), once a course of action has been chosen, he will not waver.

Even though Kent remarks that "*Silica* is not suitable for the irritability and nervous exhaustion coming on from business brain fag, but more as belongs to professional men, students, lawyers, clergymen," homoeopathic physicians have found that a certain number of those who abandon high-powered business and administrative positions, who cannot stand up to pressure and responsibility, who swerve out of the "fast lane" and retire to a more humble station in life, can profit from this remedy, as can those who are merely unrealistically over-anxious about their work.

An example of still deeper levels of doubt and insecurity, when the individual moodily questions his very place in the world is the hero of George Bernanos' *Diary of a Country Priest*. Here a largely *Silica* type, leading an isolated, obscure and uneventful life fraught with uncertainty and seeming failure, struggling to find self-worth and a sense of purpose in his calling ("How easy it is to hate oneself ... The

supreme grace would be love oneself in all simplicity”) bears witness to the humble yet-in its questioning self-doubt infinitely rich and luminous human spirit.*

The Cricket:

No discussion of this remedy would be complete without mentioning the lively, cheerful, chirruping cricket.

When *Silica* can overcome his want of self-reliance or need to be in safe and secure surroundings, his particular energy resembles a cricket hopping on a stove. He is "fidgety, restless" (H. C. Allen), and refuses to be tied down, as he chirrups away all day and evening. If asked whether he is a "morning" or a "night" person, or when his "low points" are, he will deny having any ("I am an all day person"). In fact, the new and full phases of the moon are often the only time modality in his picture. **

Furthermore, the cricket's need for warmth (flourishing during the summer and, in winter, staying by the stove or on the hearth) is reflected in the type's extreme chilliness. He has "so little animal warmth that he is chilly even when exercising" (Hering). Often he will sit hunched up and huddled against the cold, ("Sitting near the fire, shivering, a cold starved feeling": Hering), remaining perfectly still because any movement makes him colder ("chill during motion": Boenninghausen). His head, especially the part that is painful, must be well wrapped. He cannot get to sleep if his feet are even slightly cool and may need to wear socks in bed (*Arsenicum*). Exposure of the feet to cold may bring on a headache, and a chill immediately renders him susceptible to chest infections. Other ailments come on after exposure to the merest hint of a draft, while air-conditioning is lethal (*Hepar sulphuris*, *Psorinum*). When he is chilled, the sinuses become infected and fill up without draining, the pressure and pain at times becoming intolerable; this remedy is rightly accorded highest prominence in the Kent Repertory for sinus infection.

Altogether, this type experiences cold not just as a discomfort or an annoyance, but as debilitating and even incapacitating.

But paradoxically, despite being easily chilled, the individual likes the feel of cool air or cold water (*Hepar Sulphuris*, *Tuberculinum*) and is aggravated by heat. *Silica* pathology can often be traced to a chill after being overheated, either from exercise or a bath, and myriad evils result from "suppressed perspiration" (Kent), conceivably due to blockage of the body's attempts to eliminate toxins via perspiration. Hence *Silica* needs to be particularly careful of plunging into cold water after exercise and may suffer just from "suppressed foot sweats" (Hering).

Silica's "sanguine" (H. C. Allen) disposition results in part from imperturbability and a low-key self-sufficiency (mental equanimity being perhaps the most precise expression). The happy and healthy child exhibits a perky and independent demeanor and does not require the constant attention of others. This trait is often combined with a quaint "little old philosopher's" manner of expressing himself. The adult is quite satisfied to pursue his own interests, even if on a small scale, and will eke out a modest existence in straitened circumstances far more happily than others live in wealth and affluence. One example was a long-time widower, childless and with no family nearby, living in a rundown little house in a poor section of town, and yet whose unfailing chirpiness in the physician's office was a constant surprise. He had Meniere's Disease which had been helped, but not

* "The one thing of value in the world is the active soul" wrote that other *Silica* pastor, Emerson.

** Boericke lists 'aggravation in the morning,' while Boger states "worse at night," but some homoeopaths today find neither modality particularly prominent.

completely cured, by *Arsenicum* and *Psorinum*. One day the physician happened to drop by his house and was given a tour of the back yard. There the most extraordinary sight met his eyes: the paved walks were lined with heads of lettuce; carrots, beets, and squashes were planted in beds where their foliage made contrasting flower-like patterns, the grape arbor had cucumbers among the vines, and so on. The patient's chirruping demeanor, as with barely restrained pride he showed off his unusual garden, was so like that of a cricket that the physician prescribed *Silica* as the next constitutional remedy-and with success (Boericke actually lists *Silica* as a remedy for Meniere's Disease).

This type, furthermore, resembles the cricket in being unthreatening and inoffensive. While perhaps as inherently critical and discriminating as *Arsenicum*, *Nux vomica*, or *Natrum muriaticum* (*Sulphur* is critical but not discriminating), he does not betray it. His manner is often unassuming to the point of appearing unsophisticated, artless, or "wet behind the ears," whatever his age or intellectual capacities-like *Calcareo carbonica* in many ways but less unaware. His lack of ostentation stems less from self-deprecation than from a preference for remaining in the background, a reluctance to thrust himself forward. For instance, if he narrates some present accomplishment or past achievement in a self-laudatory way, he will immediately feel self-conscious and uncomfortable and may later apologize for sounding conceited.

This contrasts directly with *Arsenicum's* attitude, as formulated by Sherlock Holmes: "I cannot agree with those who rank modesty among the virtues. To the logician all things should be seen exactly as they are, and to underrate one's self is as much a departure from truth as to exaggerate one's own powers" (The Greek Interpreter).

The endearing and gentle side of the *Silica* disposition reflects his kind, fair, even-tempered, and considerate approach to people. Seldom overly conscious of status, he judges others as individuals, and for their true qualities, not for their position in the world. He is not necessarily kind, but is truthful and honest. He may lack the warmth of *Phosphorus* and the sympathy of *Pulsatilla*, since the type extends compassion rather than sympathy and, rather than becoming emotionally involved in the problems of others tries rationally to help work them out. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, he can protect himself better than *Staphysagria* and *Natrum muriaticum* and is thus less easily imposed upon. He can be as incisive as *Lachesis* in penetrating the deepest recesses of another's mind, and with his heightened intuitiveness and clear understanding is sensitive to others' feelings and thoughts. Infact, the quartz crystal is one of the few remedies listed in Kent's *Repertory* under the rubric, "clairvoyant." Crystal, of course, is traditionally associated with superior mental clarity and ability to perceive the future-as in "thoughts as clear as crystal," tile fortune-teller's crystal ball, etc.

Silica's specifically cricket-like charm has been captured, in Dickens *Great Expectations*, in the naive, cheerfully energetic, and perennially youthful Herbert Pocket-the "pale young gentleman of slight build, with pink eyes and light hair [the *Silica* "albino"] with a figure that looked as if it would always be light and young. [who yet] had a certain languor about him in the midst of his spirits and briskness that did not seem indicative of natural strength." The narrator further describes him as possessing an air of "wonderful hopefulness that at the same time whispered to me that he would never be successful or rich..... [But] in spite of his having already made his fortune in his own mind, he was so unassuming about it that I felt grateful to him for not being puffed up."

For all his outward chirpiness and optimism, however, the cricket *Silica* retains certain fears as well as a definite immaturity. He will often be the eternal student. Despite a good academic performance, despite taking more courses than he needs, he has such fear of pounding the pavement in search of a job or of taking on more responsibility than he can handle, such a cricket-like aversion to settling down from 9 to 5, that he endlessly postpones completing his studies, taking his final examinations, or writing his dissertation; and meanwhile continues to haunt the university libraries and classrooms, year after year.

Silica has helped many a student to complete his studies and has encouraged the graduate with a degree to capitalize on it. For the type's timidity does not preclude ambition, and over the years he may commence any number of novels, plays, songs, or scientific projects, yet be unable to finish them-not from a *Tuberculinum* restlessness or dissatisfaction, nor yet from the *Sulphur* tendency to embark on too many projects at the same time, but rather from a *Calcareo carbonica*-like petering out of energy.

In yet another analogy to the inert and inflexible flint that yields a spark only when struck or abraded, the *Silica* individual may have to be stimulated by the homoeopathic remedy to ignite the spark that provokes accomplishment, enhances performance, or brings a long-dormant project to fruition.

An interesting variant on *Silica's* inability to terminate an intellectual undertaking and go on to something else (i.e., the eternal student) was the large, strapping, assertive patient-a scholar and writer of note-who exuded the supreme self-confidence of a *Sulphur* or *Lycopodium* and had come to homoeopathy for recurrent blood blisters or vesicles in the mouth. He did not manifest any *Silica* mental symptoms until the physician asked about his writing. "It is coming along very well on the whole," he responded. "But I'm having trouble finishing my present work. I have been, writing the concluding chapter for more than six months, but it keeps getting longer and longer. I am on page seventy-five, and there is still no end in sight. I know I shouldn't touch it. It's perfect as it is, and I wish I could stop! But something is preventing me from letting go of it."

This was too loud a cry for help to be ignored, and the physician welcomed the vesicles for providing an opportunity to give the patient a dose of *Silica* 1M. Its influence could be seen in the published book: the final chapter was only eighty pages long (also, the vesicles healed).

In conclusion, *Silica* has its own original and distinctive portrait, despite overlapping with several of the major polychrests and despite the sometimes contradictory features of its divergent aspects the hard and brittle quartz, the yielding yet firmly rooted stalk of wheat, the timorous, restricted mouse, and the cheerful energetic cricket. This is a tribute to the homoeopathic discipline which can incorporate the wealth and diversity of human nature, even within a given constitutional type, and reconcile contradictions to enhance its quintessentially individualizing mode of treatment.

Appendix:

Here we discuss the important and controversial subject of vaccinations in the light of homoeopathic theory and clinical practice,*

To begin with, homoeopathy is not antagonistic to vaccination as such, since both are founded on the concept of treatment with the "similar" substance, Hahnemann was among the first to hail Edward Jenner's discovery of cowpox vaccination as a preventative of smallpox; like vaccination, homoeopathy aims to enhance health by challenging the immune system with the appropriately selected "similar" substance, thus heightening its reactivity,

But vaccination is a crude use of the "similar," and homoeopaths have always urged that it be used cautiously,** The injection of sizable quantities of foreign protein into the body can cause dangerous "side effects" and "adverse reactions," At best, the artificial stimulation of specific immune reactions can jeopardize the body's natural immune balance and impede it from carrying out its protective functions. Empirical evidence based on clinical experience suggests that experiencing a natural disease heightens the organism's overall system of immune defense while vaccinating to strengthen immunity to a specific "disease" could diminish the body's overall capacity to ward off other diseases,

Furthermore, homoeopathy has a particular view of childhood diseases and of their role in forestalling or attenuating the "parasitic nature of chronic disease" (Hahnemann). Homoeopathy from the beginning has seen the major childhood diseases as mechanisms through which the organism sloughs off the congenital weakness, flaw or "stigma" of inherited disease (see the discussion of Nosodes). Excessive vaccination against childhood diseases could block nature from ridding the body of these stigmas, paving the way for future chronic disease.

The body must learn how to be ill, and for this it needs a certain amount of practice, just as the skill of language is learned better when mastered early in life, so the language of illness is more easily learned when we are young. If the body is deprived of these early experiences, it may never succeed in developing the defense mechanisms needed to withstand and overcome more serious illnesses later in life.

The immune system may thus benefit from a certain amount of the stress of disease at a young age, in the same way that character is developed through hardship, disappointment, and grief. Hence the value—maybe even the vital importance—of such childhood illnesses as measles, mumps, rubella, chicken-pox, or even whooping cough which train and toughen the body.***

Of course, the potentized remedies substantially reduce the risks from these childhood illnesses, with access to a homoeopathic practitioner there is no reason for undue concern about their dangers, but how about persons who have already been immunized and are suffering the effects of these vaccinations?

*See, also, the works of Margaret Tyler, Dorothy Shepherd, Richard Moskowitz, and Harris L. Coulter cited in the Bibliography,

**See Compton-Burnett's rejection of Koch's injected tuberculosis vaccine (in Tyler, also Wheeler),

***Tetanus, diphtheria, and polio are much more dangerous: consequently, vaccination against them is generally desirable. Although, to postpone interfering with the body's natural immune balance, some parents will choose to vaccinate their child against these diseases later on—after the immune system is more developed.

Fortunately, the homoeopath has a variety of coots at his disposal to counteract and minimize the untoward effects of vaccination. The best-known is *Thuja occidentalis*, whose leading role in treating the harmful effects of smallpox vaccination was first set forth in *Hering's Guiding Symptoms* (under the rubric, "mind"). Later the British school of homoeopathy elaborated on this subject, citing many cases of eczema, warts, skin eruptions, asthma, headaches, genito-urinary complaints, paresis, marasmus, insomnia, neurological conditions, and delayed development after smallpox and other vaccinations, which were dramatically cured by *Thuja*.

An interesting modern case was the man in his forties, raised in British East Africa who, in his middle years, suddenly and inexplicably developed a terror of flying. Until then he had been quite fearless, flying in all sorts of aircraft large and small. None of the obvious remedies, such as *Gelsemium*, *Argentum nitricum*, *Phosphorus*, or *Arsenicum*, had helped him at all, when the physician suddenly bethought himself of the numerous vaccinations he must have received in his constant commuting between England and Africa. He administered a dose of *Thuja* 1M, and thereafter, armed with a little brandy, the patient was able to fly. While never pleasurable, it was still tolerable.

Up through the 1940's physicians had to deal mainly with the effects of smallpox vaccination as well as the more exotic inoculations given to travelers in Asia and Africa. Starting in the 1950's, with introduction of widespread, even compulsory, vaccination against childhood diseases in the United States and Europe, a more complicated picture emerged, and *Thuja* alone no longer sufficed.

Today the leading culprit is, without doubt, the whooping cough (pertussis) component of the DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) shot which is capable of causing a broad variety of side effects (although evidence is mounting that the "MMR"- "measles-mumps-rubella"— shot, and even the DT shot alone, can have serious deleterious effects).^{*} In these cases the constitutional remedy is always the best one with which to treat the case, and wonders have been achieved by *Pulsatilla*, *Phosphorus*, *Natrum muriaticum*, *Sepia*, and others. But just as *Thuja* stands out as the prime remedy for smallpox vaccination damage, so there are several undisputed leaders in treating pertussis-vaccine damage: *Sulphur*, *Calcarea carbonica*, *Silica* (this latter is also valuable for smallpox vaccine damage), also Pertussin (the pertussis nosode) and the potentized DPT vaccine itself.^{**} When the more obviously indicated constitutional remedies fail to act, these remedies often help the case along.

The justification for the latter two remedies is obvious, in view of the law of similars: the first three are used because their symptoms cover many of the features of DPT-vaccine damage. All have seizures and convulsions as prominent features of the

^{*}See Harris L. Coulter and Barbara L. Fisher, *DPT: A Shot in the Dark* (New York: Warner Books, 1986). Also Harris L. Coulter's forthcoming *Assault on the Brain* While whooping cough is in some ways a more serious illness than measles, mumps, or chickenpox, the existing whole-cell injected vaccine is extremely risky and should be replaced as soon as possible by a different one—preferably the oral pertussis vaccine now being used in Austria and parts of West Germany.

^{**}Some claim better results from Pertussin, others from the potentized triple vaccine. It undoubtedly depends upon which type of DPT vaccine has been administered. With either remedy a single dose in the 30c or higher potency is administered. Sometimes, if not too much time has elapsed, this single dose can reverse a strabismus, resolve an asthmatic condition, arrest the convulsions, or correct a disrupted sleeping pattern caused by the vaccination.

Certain homoeopathic physicians prescribe Pertussin to children whose parents have decided not to immunize them against whooping cough. Clinical experience here shows that this remedy does not prevent contracting the disease as much as, perhaps, attenuate its severity if it does occur.

proving picture. All rank high in the treatment of chronic otitis media (earaches). *Calcarea carbonica* and *Silica* have floppy or flabby muscle tone and delayed intellectual and muscular development, as well as night terrors, while *Sulphur* is one of the preeminent remedies for day/ night reversals and, especially, hyperactive children. They are equally well suited for the long-term sequelae of vaccination, such as dyslexia and other learning disabilities, epilepsy, mental retardation, and other forms of brain damage.

If the parents decide to vaccinate the child against whooping cough, homoeopathic remedies can play a significant preventive role in mitigating the vaccine's ill effects. Several procedures are possible. *Hypericum*, the principal remedy for nerve injuries, can be administered in medium potency prior to the injection, thus minimizing damage to the central nervous system. Shortly after the injection the remedy to give is *Ledum* ("ill effects from punctured wounds": Boericke), also in medium potency, to counter ensuing high fever or inflammatory reaction. *Thuja* can also be administered preventively, to avert or minimize future ill-effects of vaccination; it should be given soon after the shot, before any symptoms have developed.

If the child reacts violently to the vaccine (high fever, high pitched screaming, excessive drowsiness, fainting, convulsions, holding of the breath, etc.), either the *Ledum* should be repeated more often or other remedies should be tried: *Belladonna* for the high fever, *Chamomilla* for "arrested breathing suddenly in children" (Kent), and so forth.

Thereafter the child should be treated constitutionally, at regular monthly or bimonthly intervals, with any of the remedies discussed (or an appropriate nosode) prescribed intercurrently.

Ignatia

The remedy comes from the St. Ignatius Bean, the bitter and poisonous seed of a pear-shaped fruit native to the Philippines known as the *Strychnos Ignatii*. By virtue of its being one of the principal sources of strychnine, the action of *Ignatia* exhibits certain parallels with that of *Nux vomica*; possibly the phrases "irritable sensitivity" and "nervous prostration" best describe the close relationship between the pictures of the two medicines. *Ignatia's* classic role, however, is to counteract "morbid states which are produced by occurrences that cause grief" (Hahnemann).

Since grief can take myriad forms, *Ignatia's* curative action covers a wide range of conditions, from mental or physical exhaustion due to the ordinary vicissitudes of life to such severe traumas as bereavement and the wounds of rejected love. It is invaluable in easing the immediate pain of some major tragedy.

But when the individual has succeeded in finding meaning to his suffering, or has sublimated his sorrow into a generally humanitarian outlook, or, conversely, has become cynical or permanently embittered, *Ignatia* is no longer the simillimum.

Sorrow, Shock, Stress, and Disappointment:

Ignatia is known as the "funeral remedy," being the one most frequently administered to those overwhelmed by the loss of a spouse, parent, child, friend, or even a much-loved pet. The bereaved individual may exhibit the uncontrollable sobbing or loud lamenting of a person simply "torn apart by his grief" (Kent) and, in his overall despair, is visibly devastated by loneliness or the fear of loneliness. Or he may display the opposite, a disposition to "silent grieving" (Hering). On the surface he is serene, but inwardly the pain and emptiness gnaw at him even as he tries to accept his irrevocable loss.

He may make a supreme effort to appear carefree, so as not to burden others with his sorrow. Thus, while *Ignatia* is easily recognized in the grieving individual, it is also indicated for the overtly "cheerful" (Boenninghausen) one, as well as the reserved, noncommunicative one who keeps his troubles to himself but continues to brood: "those in whom the remembrance of an [unhappy] occurrence is wont to dwell in the mind" (Hahnemann). In fact, this sorrowing patient's efforts to avoid imposing his grief on others contribute to the remedy being traditionally regarded as the acute counterpart of *Natrum muriaticum*..... *Ignatia*, if the [trauma] is recent, will balance the patient's mind. If not, *Natrum muriaticum* comes in as a simillimum..... in instances where the grief keeps coming back, where the patient dwells upon the cause....*Natrum muriaticum* will finish the case" (Kent).

Occasionally the *Ignatia* patient is less unwilling than unable to articulate his sorrow. A girl infant had suddenly begun to refuse all food, even milk, and for two months subsisted solely on apple juice. Otherwise she was well-behaved and cheerful, with nothing apparently upsetting her, and the parents were at their wits' end to know what to do: "How does one force an eighteen-month old to eat? You can't reason with her or bribe her, or force food down her throat as if she were a Strasburg goose." Closer inquiry revealed that she had a brother a year younger, and, although she exhibited none of the classic signs of sibling jealousy— nothing but fondness and affection— there was the possibility that she was suffering from the feeling of loss of parental love. *Ignatia* 1M was prescribed, once a day for three days. After the first dose she asked for milk; after the second she could be persuaded to eat some creamed

chicken (her favorite food), and after the third her appetite picked up gradually until she was eating normally a fortnight later.

This case leads to the further observation that *Ignatia* has repeatedly played a helpful role in adult and child anorexia cases, where the problem was rooted in the fear of rejection or some other unarticulated sorrow.

At the same time, the remedy may also be required in the excessively difficult and actively misbehaving child who is overtly jealous or hostile to a sibling—where the older seeks to injure the younger or the younger to provoke the older. Not only can it dispel the present rivalry, it sometimes forestalls its future reemergence. In cases where *Ignatia* has been prescribed with success, parents later aver that these two siblings have displayed remarkably little friction through childhood and adolescence. The strychnine seemingly purges them once and for all of "negative" emotions, allowing them to direct along more constructive lines their need to love and be loved.

Another instance of enforced silent suffering was a gentle, self-effacing, aging dog who developed a case of weeping and excoriating eczema. Otherwise she behaved normally, ate well, and manifested her usual sweet disposition. None of the obvious remedies (*Graphites*, *Rhus toxicodendron*, *Sulphur*) were of avail, and the physician was at a loss until he learned that the neighbors had a new puppy which was deflecting much of the attention of the patient's young masters. Obviously the old dog was grieving. *Ignatia* 200X was summoned to the rescue, and a few doses quickly cleared up the eczema.

Indeed, as Tyler writes, "*Ignatia* will cure many corporeal conditions where the mental symptoms demand the remedy."

Another form of grief commonly helped by this medicine is homesickness. Typical here was the ten-year old boy who would call his parents from summer camp every morning at 6 A.M. and beg to return home ("Worse early morning, immediately upon awakening": Boenninghausen). The family situation made this impossible, so his mother would try to persuade him to "stick it out like a man." The conversations would then run along the following philosophical lines:

"Why should I stick it out? Will I be less of a man if I don't?"

"Well, not exactly— but summer camp is part of your educational experience."

"How can it be an educational experience when I am so unhappy?"

"Even unhappiness is an integral part of being alive, and the earlier you recognize and accept this fact, the easier life will be for you later on."

"But why should unhappiness be a part of being alive?" "That's the way life is. Destiny doles out to each one of us a certain quantum of happiness and unhappiness that we can't escape but must learn from."

"But do you want me to be unhappy when I'm still so young? Can't I learn this lesson later when I'm older? Please, can't you influence destiny just a little bit?"

The physician suggested to the mother that she could, indeed, take destiny into her hands "just a little bit" by sending the boy some *Ignatia* 30X, to be taken first thing in the morning and again in mid-afternoon until he felt better.* After several days there were no more early morning calls, and soon afterward the parents received a bracing letter: "The food here is wonderful, the activities are just great, and my cabin leader is a really neat guy!"

Ignatia's power to counteract homesickness is well-known (it is listed in bold type in the Kent and Boenninghausen repertories). It has proved equally efficacious in a related but less familiar complaint— longing for one's native country (*Heimweh*).

*Morning is considered the best time to give *Ignatia* (the same is true for *Sulphur*). Hahnemann warns against possible aggravation or restlessness at night if it is taken in the evening.

This can be an extraordinarily depleting and illness-inducing emotion. Emigration during the formative years of adolescence, or even later, has led to arrested emotional development. Also such physical symptoms as *urticaria* and other skin eruptions, stomachaches and headaches, hemorrhoids, neuralgias and numerous menstrual disorders (including amenorrhea) can develop in persons who are pining for their native land. Those who have experienced this emotion, or treated others for it, know that it can be almost as intense as lovesickness.

And often it is more lasting! for the lovesick individual, after all, can usually find another good man or woman upon whom to bestow her or his affections. But there is only one England with its distinctive greenery, and 'where "flowers smell like real flowers" (apparently, in America they do not: "I miss the smell of a real lilac or rose" is the common complaint of the depaysed Englishman or woman). Even the long-time political exile will maintain that there is only one Russia with its unique birch forests, its 200 different edible mushrooms, and its people who have "real souls" (developed presumably from much suffering). Californians often seem incapable of adapting to any region outside their native state. And certainly to the Frenchman there exists no city worthy of the name but Paris.... And so it goes. Even when granting intellectual recognition to the good points of the country in which he resides, the person who is "home-land sick" cannot adapt to it emotionally.

The patient's tendency to heave heavy sighs when talking about his native or adopted country is what may first direct the homoeopath to *Ignatia* in these cases. Deep or heavy or frequent sighing from sadness is one of its guiding symptoms, and an interesting cognate is the modality — "relief from taking a deep breath" (Boger)—which is what sighing is.

A cultivated European woman of artistic temperament sought homoeopathic assistance for the frequent migraine headaches that had given her no peace since her arrival in the United States. Her husband worked in a multinational firm and, prior to arriving in this country, the family had lived in several others—in all of which the patient had felt perfectly well "I seem to be allergic only to the United States," she said. She granted America its many advantages and admitted to her family's perfect contentment. Yet she herself could not conform. "There are some things to which I simply will never get accustomed."

Asked for a specific example, she sighed heavily. "It is actually the little things that rub me the wrong way. For instance, when we were posted to Florence, we lived near the Uffizi Palace. In Paris it was the historic fifth arrondissement, in the shadow of the Pantheon. In London we lived not far from Hyde Park Corner and Marble Arch. But in Washington I can only identify our neighborhood by telling people that we live three blocks from the Super Giant Food Store. Oh, well," with another deep sigh, "I guess I must simply learn to tolerate it."

She received *Ignatia* 10M, to be taken weekly. A month later her headaches and her general outlook had improved so substantially that the physician ventured to again raise the subject of the location of her home and its affront to her esthetic sensibilities. "Yes," she laughed, "it is these—shall I say 'subtle'—cultural differences that make America unique. I now actually enjoy telling people that I live within walking distance of one of Washington's largest supermarkets."

The remedy's curative role, then, is to encourage the patient to adapt to undesirable but inescapable necessity. The situation is unavoidable and irreversible,

and there is no alternative to facing it. With sibling jealousy in the young, for instance, the new baby cannot simply be sent "back to Bloomingdale's," as one three-year old imperiously ordered her parents.* The neighbor's puppy is also there to stay and will continue to attract more than his share of attention. Nor can a person always live in his native (or preferred) land. But in many of these cases *Ignatia* can induce a measure of acceptance; while in the more serious tragedies and bereavements it can instil emotional strength in the one who does not possess it, or has temporarily lost it, as well as lighten the burden of the undemonstratively sorrowing individual who has been raised in the school of stoicism. Patients of either persuasion who become completely disoriented from the turmoil of severe grief or overpowering loss, and who describe their emotional state as the feeling of being lost in a wilderness with no familiar landmarks, find that the medicine acts as a compass guiding them back to safety and sanity.

Ignatia is a major remedy for ill effects from *shock or fright* for persons who have had an encounter with danger or a narrow escape from death, for victims of street violence or of sexual assaults, who subsequently develop a quite legitimate "loss of nerve, fearfulness ... and an 'all is lost' [feeling]" (Hahnemann).

Aconite is another important remedy for victims of shock, acute terror, violence, and bad news, and *Arnica* when there is concomitant physical trauma-also, although less commonly employed, *Opium*, especially when the patient is unconscious, and *Veratrum album*, when there is collapse and cold sweat. But *Ignatia* is most suited to the poignant shock of a severe accident or injury to a loved one, anticipatory dread of a loved one's serious operation, or news of his or her terminal illness (the dread of one's own impending operation, or learning of one's own serious illness, call more for *Aconite*), or a parent's almost unbearable shock and disbelief at first confronting a child's severe physical or mental handicap.

On the physical level, the *Ignatia* symptoms occur as shaking, trembling, jerking of the limbs, or other spasmodic affections, queasiness or nausea in the throat or pit of the stomach, constriction in the throat, heart palpitations, insomnia, and vertigo.

Ignatia is also of service for the anxiety and dread that accompany some mistaken or wrongful course of conduct, the mortification following upon some unwise decision or the discovery of some indiscretion (*Staphysagria*), the frightening consequences of some rash act, the pangs of guilt at an immoral one ("anxieties of conscience": Kent), or the emotional strain of a long-term clandestine romantic liaison. In short, "dread, fear, anxiety run through the remedy" (Kent).

The shock or fright can even cause convulsions. Hahnemann writes: "epileptic attacks that come on in young persons after some fright, before they become numerous, may be cured by a few doses of *Ignatia*. But it is improbable that chronic epileptic fits or other kind can be cured or have ever been cured by this medicine." In very sensitive children even such relatively minor episodes as being scolded, spanked, reprimanded, or sent to their room in punishment may bring on a convulsion in their sleep, while the fear of parental disapproval or of a teacher's criticism can bring on various tics and spasms, twitches and grimaces which call for this medicine.

*In a typical *Ignatia* "fixed idea" (Hahnemann) this young child clung to the conviction that the new sister came from a department store, despite her parents' more accurate explanations. To their appeal, "How can we let this weak, helpless, thin little creature, who can't even stand up by herself, be sent back where she came from?" the precocious girl pleaded: "Please, why don't you just try standing her up on her weak, helpless, skinny little legs, and just see if she won't walk back to Bloomingdale's!"

A five-year-old boy was brought to the homoeopath for facial grimaces caused by the residual fright of having accidentally locked himself in a small airless shoe-closet for several hours. Because he had been disobedient lately, he associated the accident with punishment for this misbehavior. He was a typically *Calcarea carbonica* child, pudgy and pale, but *Ignatia* was administered first, since the trauma was recent, and with good effect. *Calcarea* was prescribed later to prevent recurrences.

"Emotional chorea" (Kent) in adults most commonly takes the form of blinking, twitching of the nose or corners of the mouth, clearing of the throat, or jerking of a limb. One patient whom *Ignatia* cured of a disconcerting rabbit-like nose-twitching, together with sniffing, appealed to the homoeopath to deliver her from her "perpetual mortal fear" of her mother-in-law at home and her employer at work. "Sometimes, at the end of the day, I feel as if I had lost a pound of nerves from sheer terror!"

The overwrought [female] *Ignatia* who does not want to impose her troubles on others occasionally expresses herself in an exaggerated anecdotal manner accompanied by much laughter (*Natrum muriaticum* and the male Sulphur).

Often cultivated and "well-educated," of a "gentle, fine-fibered, and sensitive" (Kent) disposition, and with a "delicate consciousness" (Hahnemann), *Ignatia* emanates an aura of artiness, emotionalism, and "exalted impressionability of all the senses" (Nash) rather than strong intellect. The nature is intelligent rather than intellectual. The mind is quick, with good intuition, sensitive evaluation, and accurate assessment of people, although perhaps lacking profundity or solidity. Hubbard once labelled this constitutional type the "spoilt, rich American girl who has everything in life, and who, for lack of true hardships, is unable to bear any difficulties." She is too refined and too highly strung, emotionally unstable, and falls apart at the slightest provocation.*

The patient requiring *Ignatia* has less innate strength than *Natrum muriaticum*, the mental/ emotional balance is more precarious, the psyche more highly strung, and the physique less robust. This individual cannot endure as much physical or mental stress as the salt diathesis.

Indeed, if a single word were to characterize the *Ignatia* state, it would be fragility. The easily-excited emotions are labile, the nerves raw and exposed. The physician senses that this patient's poise and equilibrium could be upset by the slightest augmentation of any stress, the merest gust of an ill wind ("unsteady": Hahnemann).

Hence it is curious to find *Ignatia* listed under the rubric, "courage," in the Kent Repertory, as one of only two remedies there in the second degree (the other being *Opium*). And Boenninghausen lists it in the fourth degree under "boldness." But the repertory categories are generally ones of excess, and this particular entry thus suggests rashness or battlefield "audacity" (Hahnemann), a "rushing in where angels fear to tread" arising from despair, indifference to life, or insensitivity to danger (the more so, in view of the coupling with *Opium*). Certainly *Ignatia* may also possess innate courage but during times of crisis may lack the emotional stability to implement it. Nor does the type possess *Pulsatilla's* reed-like suppleness and resilience

*Even though *Ignatia* is traditionally regarded as a predominantly female remedy, being considered the female counterpart of *Nux vomica* because of the close botanical relationship between the two plants, it should never be overlooked or underestimated in the male patient. Also, see pp. 73-74 for further discussion of *Ignatia* as a constitutional as well as acute remedy.

under adversity, which permit a patient to bend without breaking and adapt to circumstances he can neither change nor control; rather, *Ignatia* tends to snap like a dry twig.

In addition to ailments caused by grief or fright, the medicine is also prescribed for ones due to emotional strain following upon anger, vexation, or mortification (*Staphysagria*), for breakdown after prolonged stress, or merely from severe mental or physical over-exhaustion.

Borland's Children's Types describes the bright child doing well at school who is being pushed to excel. His nervous system becomes overtaxed, and at the end of the day he develops a headache, tension of the facial muscles, or a facial chorea. With time his finer movements begin to suffer; he develops difficulties of articulation, becomes incapable of taking anything in, and is finally unable to function at all. The older "overconscientious" (Boenninghausen) *Ignatia* student immerses himself too intensely in studies, at times to the point of "monomania," or a girl practices to excess on a musical instrument until she collapses from exhaustion and can no longer control her emotions (see Kent). Hahnemann also describes the "fixed melodies" that a patient cannot banish from his mind and the "fixed ideas, which he follows out in thought or pursues all too zealously and completely in his conversation."

Other forms of stress suggesting a need for this remedy are the anxiety states resulting from a loveless marriage, a bitter and traumatic divorce, or the airless trap of some unavoidable work or family situation ("melancholic after much domestic trouble": Hering); an inescapable financial or other dependence upon someone who is neither liked nor respected, or the burden of constantly caring for others and being responsible for them, such as the long-term care of a sick or retarded family member. Consequently, *Ignatia* is often needed by the dutiful long-suffering *Natrum muriaticum* who finally breaks down.

Again, the remedy comes to mind for the inherently open individual living under the strain of constant dissimulation, or who is forced to invent and intrigue to survive in an inimical environment. Any fundamentally honest person who cannot endure a life of falsehood, or who is in other ways entrapped in a situation or relationship which he can neither tolerate nor relinquish, may begin to manifest *Ignatia* symptoms. His emotional state finds physical expression in a feeling of suffocation and restriction; the patient complains of lack of air or inability to breathe and wants to loosen or throw off the clothing that oppresses him. Whitmont sums up this picture of emotional bondage in writing: "the overwrought state is the expression of [the patient's] desperate attempt to break free from the net in which he feels himself entangled."

Ignatia's overstressed mode is sometimes reflected in the patient's dreams. He will "dream all night of one and the same subject" (Hahnemann), which may consist of repeated unsuccessful attempts to accomplish some task-like the mythical Sisyphus, condemned everlastingly to push a large rock up a hill, only to have it roll down again just as he reaches the summit ("dreams full of disappointment and miscarried expectations and endeavors": Hahnemann).

For example, the remedy was prescribed with success for a man whose marriage was breaking up and whose physical complaint was sharp shooting pains in the rectum (*Ignatia* has numerous anal and rectal symptoms; Hahnemann lists some forty-five of them, including itching, hemorrhoids, flow of blood from the anus, and various types of stitching or sharp pains). This patient's particular "fixed dream"

(Hahnemann) had him working fruitlessly to repair his car's electrical system. Yet he never became impatient in his dream and kept returning to the job.

Generally speaking, *Ignatia* dreams are less muddled and less symbolically intricate than those of other remedies. They are, as far as dreams permit, denotative of whatever is uppermost in the patient's mind and heart rather than being connotative of his psychic state. The intensity and acuteness of his grief or anxiety leave little room for emotional complexity or ambiguity, and the dreams reflect this literalness of his basic feelings.

The state of stress requiring this remedy need not necessarily be the unhappy kind, as *Ignatia* is useful even for pleasurable strains on the nervous system. The child's or adolescent's too strenuous participation in a school play or competitive musical or gymnastic event, the adult's self-imposed and enjoyable involvement in a scholarly pursuit or artistic endeavor, preparation for a major performance, i.e., any activity involving concentrated nervous or physical strain, can lead to a collapse requiring *Ignatia*.

A young physician just completing his internship spent a year investigating homoeopathy prior to commencing three years of specialized training in internal medicine. At the end of this period he had become so intrigued by the discipline that he resolved to practice homoeopathy exclusively but meanwhile had to embark on the residency program. Six months into it, worn out by the unending work and study, he was tempted to quit, saying, "What am I doing here anyway? What is the point of killing myself to learn procedures I will never use and drugs I don't believe in?" Then he remembered *Ignatia* and started taking it twice weekly in high potency. A month later he reported to his homoeopathic preceptor, "I thought I would be living on *Ignatia* during the whole three years, and a few weeks back I was doing just that. But then something in me changed, and I began to find the work so interesting in itself—I am learning so much that I can later apply in homoeopathic practice—that I don't need to take this remedy any longer." The excellent training he was receiving must have had much to do with his changed attitude, but one suspects that his multiple doses of *Ignatia* were also a causal factor.

The same strain can be provoked by intense socializing or too much high living. Dorothy Shepherd describes the "auto-intoxication....of the society woman who lives in a whirl of excitement, always rushing from one party to another. She does without much sleep, dances half through the night, and in order to keep going she smokes too many cigarettes, drinks much coffee, and too many cocktails" (*Nux vomica* in males).

Ignatia is further indicated in cases of *severe disappointment in oneself or others, frustration, and thwarted ambition*.

It alleviates self-blame arising from having "failed" someone as a friend or supportive family member ("thinks she has neglected some duty and dwells upon that much": Kent). The patient reproaches himself mercilessly (at times without any justification) for having been too demanding of, or bestowed insufficient affection or attention on, a recently deceased spouse or parent.

This individual harbors high expectations of himself and wants to excel in everything. But he may take on too much and fail. He then loses self-confidence and develops certain pathological symptoms. The child, as we have already seen, can become ill merely from being reprimanded, is over sensitive to criticism, and unduly upset with himself when not performing to his own satisfaction in school.

One thin, nervous, alabaster-pale girl of twelve, suffering from growing pains in the legs, had not been placed in the honor section of her class. High expectations of

herself had been cultivated by her parents, so she was mortified and began to feel an aversion to everything connected with her school. Other possible remedies were *Staphysagria* and *Arsenicum*. However, because she tended accidentally to "bite the inside of her cheek when chewing or talking" (Kent), or would do it habitually when reading or concentrating on her studies, and also her growing pains were "better from hard pressure" (Boger), a dose of *Ignatia* 10M was prescribed. Shortly afterwards, one evening at dinner, she volunteered; "You know, I'm really glad I didn't make the fast track in school. Now I have more time for extracurricular activities. I've signed up for drama and glee club, and I think I'm going to love them!"

Thus, instead of brooding on her failure (and perhaps developing *Natrum muriaticum* pathology as a result) or losing her nerve and refusing to try again in the future (*Calcarea carbonica* or *Silica*), she cheerfully and confidently went on to something else.

In both child and adult, then, the remedy is often indicated where the individual's most cherished hopes of accomplishment have been shattered or where circumstances have prevented him from fulfilling his ambitions. It helps restore vital self-esteem and faith in one's power to overcome adversity.

Disillusionment in others, particularly a much-loved person or one to whom the patient has devoted much time and effort, is another condition calling for *Ignatia*. Hence its frequent use for disillusionment in marriage. However, this individual approaches any relationship-friend, lover, teacher, student, colleague-with idealized expectations; and when the other defaults in his conduct or sensibilities, or treats him with less consideration than he expects, he works himself into a nervous agitation. The remedy should thus be considered for the person who is aggrieved, feels misunderstood, and is disappointed in his fellow-man; also for that most extreme disillusionment, often succeeding some great tragedy-loss of faith in a compassionate and loving God who permits such things to happen.

The inevitable discrepancy between the optimal and the possible, between ideals and reality, is reflected in an acute form in *Ignatia's* disillusionment. The collapse of an ideal forces the individual to reconstruct his perception of reality, and this *Ignatia* finds nearly impossible. He lacks the tools and the capacity to pick up the pieces of his crumbled dreams. This would demand a stronger faith and greater mental resourcefulness than the type possesses, at least at this moment when he is under the absolute sway of his feelings. In persons of strong intellect and moral fiber the yearning for an unrealizable love or an ideal at odds with the world's realities can be sublimated and transmuted into art, spiritual growth, or a utopian vision. But *Ignatia* displays intensity of feeling without the intellectual energy to create a new artistic or other reality. "Caught up in an impasse of emotions that conflict with the demands of reality" (Whitmont), he finds himself endlessly searching for what he cannot find, fruitlessly longing for what he cannot possess, or sorrowing over an opportunity that is forever lost.

The grieving or disillusioned individual in an *Ignatia* state may have lost faith that time will heal. Indeed, for patients with the *Natrum muriaticum* diathesis, or ones who have experienced overwhelming tragedy, it may not. As one patient stated, "They say that time is the great healer. Perhaps it is. But I don't know. Time passes, life goes on, one continues to live and learns to endure. But one does not necessarily heal." However, *Ignatia* can inculcate a state of mind (whether acceptance of reality, hope for the future, or emotional stability) enabling the patient to explore the meaning of his suffering rather than falling victim to it, and thereby easing his pain.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the reader is reminded that not every case of emotional trauma described in this chapter will respond to *Ignatia*. These emotional situations are merely typical examples. The need to individualize holds true in acute episodes no less than in chronic: the physical symptoms and modalities must correspond to and confirm the mental picture. Hahnemann himself reminds us that *Ignatia* will cure "provided always that the other corporeal morbid symptoms resemble those that the drug can produce [i.e., in a proving]."

Even the grieving dog with eczema mentioned earlier had an interesting physical symptom of *Ignatia*: yawning more than usual, and, especially, every time she was looked at. "Excessive yawning" (Hahnemann), like deep sighing, is a guiding symptom of the remedy. And the female patient with migraine headaches displayed the typical "pain as if a nail [or other sharp object] were driven out through side of head" (Hering).^{*} Other guiding physical symptoms accompanying the powerful *Ignatia* emotions are: pains in small circumscribed spots or that improve under strong pressure (*Bryonia*), "erratic, fleeting" (Allen) pains that come and go rapidly or change from place to place (*Pulsatilla*), twitchings, tremblings, "hiccups from emotion" (Hering), nausea, vertigo or light-headedness, and amelioration from urination.

"A stool needs three legs for one to sit comfortably on it," was Hering's famous exhortation, meaning that any homoeopathic case needs at least three good symptoms for the physician to feel comfortable in his prescribing. One mental symptom, however prominent, is seldom enough.

Romantic Love:

Nowhere are shattered ideals, disillusionment, disappointed hopes, and overpowering uncontrollable feelings encountered more frequently than in romantic relationships, and *Ignatia* is probably the principal homoeopathic remedy for the lovesick; however, this condition takes many forms, and other remedies such as *Phosphoric acid*, *Staphysagria*, *Aurum metallicum*, and *Natrum muriaticum* are also used to treat it (see the rubric: "love, ailments from disappointed" in the Kent Repertory).^{**}

The romantically idealistic *Ignatia* (to be contrasted with the intellectually idealistic *Sulphur* and the socially idealistic *Natrum muriaticum*) believes that love can change and transform people. And, indeed, it might—but generally only for a while. When the loved one slips back into his old patterns of behavior, *Ignatia* becomes completely disoriented and cannot adapt to the diminution of affection (*Phosphorus*) or to the loved one's failures in other ways to live up to her ideal.

These intensely romantic feelings can cause an imbalance in the *Ignatia* psyche. The classic picture of this imbalance is the idealistic young girl who has been deceived, fallen in love with a married man, or otherwise misplaced her affections. She has been hoping for signs of love or a proposal from her beloved, and falls apart completely when none is forthcoming. Or she has been loved and rejected, and he marries another. Kent describes how her grief wells up at night and she lies awake sobbing and tearing herself to pieces until, unable to bear it any longer, she weepingly confesses her unrequited or unsuitable love to her mother: "Mother, why do I do that? I can't keep that man out of my mind!" Indeed, the breakup of a love relationship can leave this type as fearful and lost as a child in a nightmare.

^{*}*Ignatia* types of headaches are numbered by the score in the standard repertories.

^{**}Because *Ignatia* romanticism is a predominantly female trait, we will henceforth use the feminine gender.

Boenninghausen lists only *Ignatia* and *Hyoscyamus* in the fourth degree under the rubric, "unfortunate love"; and *Hyoscyamus* usually covers a more extreme form of mental pathology: delirium, delusions, incoherent speech, or actual madness.

Selflessness is a prominent element in romantic love-the impulse to give one's time, possessions, affection, one's very self to the beloved. *Ignatia* possesses this impulse to a heightened degree (also the will to submit, in contrast to the need of many other types to dominate in love). It can be so all-enveloping that life outside the enamored state has no meaning, and anything but consummation (the ultimate giving of self) becomes empty existence or mere endurance.

Consequently, when the object of this overpowering giving impulse is withdrawn and her selflessness thwarted, *Ignatia* is left not only without direction-she has nowhere to turn her emotional energy now that its focus no longer exists-but even with a complete loss of identity. Having been entirely merged in the life of the beloved, taking on his interests, tastes, and concerns, and in the process obliterating her own, she is left with no self to fall back on. She has defined herself by her love, and now that the definition has evaporated she finds no inner resources to sustain her ("she seems to have no rule to work by, no philosophy": Kent).

Catherine Earnshaw, the romantic heroine of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, portrays this state. Her raw and poignant cry, "I am Heathcliffe!" and her decline and death from being thwarted in her passion, articulate and incarnate the *Ignatia* impulse of self-obliteration in love,*

A more complex portrait of the lovesick *Ignatia* is the pampered, wealthy, brittle, young American heroine of Henry James' novel, *Daisy Miller*, whose ultimately elusive personality takes on meaning and substance when seen as an *Ignatia* archetype.

In characteristic fashion, Daisy is all feeling, without frame or form. She is emancipated, rich enough to have everything she wants and do whatever she pleases, but lives in that perilous vacuum of wealth without commitment. Although possessing freedom, she has little use for it except to fall unhappily in love. Her romantic attachment is thus the only clear focus in an otherwise unformed and fragile nature, and when her love is unrequited, she has nowhere to turn. The unexpected depth of emotion in this, seemingly superficial, "little flirt" (as the protagonist mistakenly judges her) leads inexorably to death from an idealized and unfulfilled love.

The lack of hope ("despair and hopelessness": Boenninghausen), the feeling that there is no existence outside love-nothing but a vast emptiness and meaninglessness-can be disguised in silent grief, as in *Daisy Miller*. At other times, they can be openly expressed. Then, as in *Pulsatilla*, the lovelorn *Ignatia* bares her soul unstintingly; the main difference between the two being that the latter is more selective in her choice of listeners. *Pulsatilla* is seldom unwilling to share her troubles with whomever will listen and therefore pours out her unhappy love easily and flowingly, while *Ignatia* is driven by despair after having tried to hold it in (*Natrum muriaticum*).

*This phrase is taken from the passage where Catherine is saying of Heathcliffe, "He's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same..... If all else perished and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods: time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliffe resembles the eternal rocks beneath: a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliffe. He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure, to myself, but as my own being." (See, also, *Tuberculinum* chapter).

Hence the more emphatic, anguished, and dramatic tone: "How can I go on living, now that he is gone?" or, "When I get up in the morning, I don't see how I can get through a single day-with the dreadful loneliness facing me-much less the next week, month, or year. And when I think that, this fearful emptiness might last the rest of my life, a wave of terror sweeps over me!" Or, "He was such an integral part of me that I can never feel complete without him! It's like losing my eyesight or hearing, or my right arm, and I will always remain aware of the loss." A male patient expressed his despair in even more radical terms: "Since life can never be the same without her since there is no more enjoyment and nothing left to live for, I wish I could cut my heart out so that I could no longer feel, or cut my head off so that I could no longer think about her!"

When the lovelorn person is urged to get on with other aspects of her life, she will reply, "But where am I to turn? Apart from him there is nothing else that interests me!" And it is true. Fame, fulfilled ambition, wealth, success, artistic creativity are all nothing to *Ignatia* in the absence of the beloved. Every other aspect of life seems insignificant, all routine becomes meaningless, and concerns that had earlier occupied her energy, time, and emotions have now become irrelevant. There is nothing to which she can relate emotionally. She can turn nowhere for solace, and the very possibility of deliverance is rejected. No force inside or outside can counteract the vast and terrifying emptiness that engulfs her. "I must cease this obsessive thinking of him, day and night, month-in-and-month-out, but I don't know how!" she laments. "Sometimes, for short periods, I am able to divert my thoughts, but then memories of him well up again and overcome me. And there is nothing-absolutely nothing I can do to prevent it!"

In many of these cases, however, *Ignatia* is able to instil a measure of serenity in the despairing patient, while allowing time to achieve its healing effect.

One patient, who recounted her desolation in Dante-esque imagery, will serve as an example. At the first visit she said, "I am in Hell, all day and all night long, in the ninth and hottest regions of unadulterated Hell!" On the return visit, after several doses of *Ignatia* 50M, she described herself as having moved out of Hell into Purgatory. "I am still residing in the lowest circles, but I have moved out of Hell." At the next visit she was still moving upward: "Heaven is still far away, and I may never attain it, but I've ascended to a higher circle of Purgatory and finally see a glimmering on the horizon after a long dark night."

The intensity of her romantic desolation might lead *Ignatia* to entertain "suicidal thoughts" (Kent), but usually the impulse is not paramount. Even though the anguish of the moment may easily be as strong as the suicidal despair of *Arsenicum*, *Nux vomica*, *Natrum sulphuricum*, or *Aurum metallicum*, perhaps the love is so obsessive as to displace any competing emotion. Or perhaps the individual is determined to preserve this vital emotion at any price.

If the suicidal instinct should become uppermost, *Ignatia* is usually no longer the simillimum, and another remedy should be sought.

Commonly, in a disintegrating relationship, *Ignatia* seeks to recapture the initial romanticism, beseeching the other, "What do you want of me? What should I do to please you or make you love me more? I am really trying to understand you, so please try to understand me and my emotional needs ... " and so forth. But conciliatory behavior, attempted explanations, accusations, pleadings are all equally ineffectual because this individual is seeking more intensity than the partner is willing or able to express and is attempting, perhaps unconsciously, to regulate the others behavior and responses in line with her desires and ideals

The partner's defense against an *Ignatia* mate often takes the following (quite legitimate) form: "The trouble is that I don't want a relationship where the other person expects me to be her entire happiness. It is bound to lead to disenchantment. No one should have to be responsible for constituting another's entire happiness and meaning in life!"

And when love finally dissolves, after long periods of unfulfillment and frustrated expectations ("He never really satisfied me!" "He continually disappoints me!"), *Ignatia* starts to be irritated at little things-the partner's idiosyncratic mannerisms, habit of constantly sniffing or clearing his throat, for instance, not to mention some of the more intimate habits-until eventually his very presence becomes insupportable, and nothing he says or does can please (*Nux vomica* in males). Also, she feels so aggrieved by this time, so emotionally abused and exploited, that she resents having to explain herself to the other, or to spoon-feed him the correct responses. Convinced that she alone has been carrying the burden of the relationship, she is too drained to shoulder it any longer and at this point is ready to abandon all attempts at reconciliation.

When recounting their unhappiness in love, *Ignatia* patients often portray it as a bondage and admit that their passion has continued against their better judgment. They know the person is not "right" for them, that there are grave differences of taste, upbringing, temperament, or background ("I can't believe what is happening to me, or why I have such an ungovernable passion for such an utterly unsuitable person! It must be Fate!"), but all these factors evaporate in the heat of romantic passion ("she confesses her love..... for a man entirely out of her station that she is too sensible to have anything to do with": Kent).

Characteristic phrases used to describe the dominating obsession are: "Why am I doing this to myself? At best the relationship has brought me more grief than happiness. And yet, while I can never be completely happy with him, can I ever be happy without him?" Or, "I suppose reason is irrelevant to the Divine Passion. I haven't known a single day of peace and contentment since we met three years ago. Yet I love him to distraction." Or a man will volunteer, "She was never suitable. There was never an easy solution or clear future to our relationship. Objectively there were many more drawbacks than positive features. But on the emotional plane, somehow, none of this mattered. I purely and simply need her!" When *Ignatia* types are asked why they do not sever the ties that cause so much grief, the usual response is that the loved one still supplies them with the greatest happiness they have ever known and that, if deprived of these crumbs, they would go hungry.

In the enamored state *Ignatia*, on the whole, retains better perspective than *Phosphorus*. That is why the suffering is so acute. As in the death of a beloved, she perfectly understands the reality of the situation-but merely cannot accept it: her unbelieving, "It can't be true, what's happening to me!" is actually a desperate, "I don't want it to be true!" To repeat, she is caught up in emotions that conflict with the demands of reality. While objectivity may not desert these victims of love, their judgment is definitely overruled, and at times obscured, by "inability to control their affections" (Kent). "Love is the most irrational thing on earth! Do you think I want to love him?" was one patient's poignant cry. "If I could, I would love my husband, who is a much better and more suitable man."

"Love is not contingent on admiration, respect, or approval," were the words of another patient. "It's very uniqueness is its disregard of logic and reason. Otherwise, where would its virtue lie? So how can any remedy encourage me to be more 'reasonable' and to judge more clearly, when we are dealing essentially with an

irrational emotion?" She would have had a point there were it not that the potentized remedies heal so profoundly precisely because they address and influence the instinctive and unconscious level that ultimately governs the rational and conscious one.

Without a focus for her "giving" impulses, the romantically inclined *Ignatia* will often express her grief in terms of waste: "to think of all the time-consuming and unprofitable thinking and feeling I've expended on trying to make our relationship work, and all of it for nothing!" she laments. Or, reproaching herself for her fantasies that prevented her from experiencing real happiness, "I get sick just thinking about all the time and effort I've invested in this marriage. What was the point of it all?" Or, simply, "What am I now to do with all my emotions-that are just going to waste?"

Ignatia is not the remedy for a romantic (*Byronia*) Weltschmerz—the sorrow that is incurable because it stems from the tragic makeup of the world. That is closer to *Natrum muriaticum*. Nor is it the remedy for an overall intellectual or existential melancholy (*Sulphur*, *Lachesis*, and again *Natrum muriaticum*). *Ignatia's* romantic melancholy is entirely personal and concrete, and can always be traced back to some specific and clearly defined grief, such as the breakup of an earlier love-affair, marriage, or engagement. Solipsistically absorbed in her own obsessive passion, she sees and feels only her own overwhelming sorrow. The whole world could collapse around her, and she would not care at all.

In really serious cases of thwarted or unrequited love the mind becomes "unhinged" (Kent). Fiction abounds in these *Ignatia*-requiring heroines. One of the more poignant is the gentle, affectionate, and high-strung Nancy Rufford in Ford Maddox Ford's *The Good Soldier*- who loses her reason out of frustrated love for her uncle and guardian and who, in her insanity, can only reiterate the single word, "shuttlecock"-describing her fate to be battered back and forth by her own passions, the stronger personalities of others, and a merciless fate. At a less severe level the normally self-controlled woman can become rash and irrational, unguarded in her speech, impetuous and uncontrolled in her affections, compulsively communicative ("prattling") or "talking to herself" (Kent), in short, "subject to strange actions and passionate outbursts" (Whitmont).

At times the lovelorn *Ignatia* loses, not her mental balance, but her health and falls into a decline. In nineteenth century literature, and possibly in reality, sensitive young women (and men) pined for their lovers to the point of getting tuberculosis (and *Tuberculinum* is, indeed, another "romantic" constitutional type). In the more prosaic twentieth-century, however, the most common physical symptoms of *Ignatia* lovesickness are sleeplessness, loss of appetite with an empty queasy feeling in the stomach, frequent uncontrollable weeping, heart palpitations, tingling of the spine or even the sudden onset of spinal pains ("melancholy after disappointed love is combined with spinal symptoms": Hering), and, finally, trembling, prickling, or quivering in any part of the body.

Nevertheless many patients still claim that romantic love is, or affects them like, an incurable disease-with the same fearful anticipation, hopelessness of recovery, and inability to arrest the headlong progress of this devastating illness. "Can't *Ignatia*, if taken preventively, counteract my tendency to fall in love unsuitably?" one woman beseeched her physician. But usually, to accomplish this miracle in character change, *Ignatia* alone will not suffice and the deeper acting *Natrum muriaticum*, romantic *Phosphorus* or *Tuberculinum*, or even the dementia inducing *Hyoscyamus* must be prescribed constitutionally.

Ignatia individuals suffering from unrequited love display innumerable behavioral variants, and the two cases offered here are merely random examples—one an overtly, the other a silently, grieving type.

A woman in her mid-thirties who had recently broken with her lover was unable to eat, sleep, concentrate on her work, or take an interest in anything. She could only dwell obsessively on her loss, and in her overwrought condition she became "capricious" (Hering) and "morose" (Boenninghausen), making life at home a misery for herself and others. She would become beside herself when contradicted—a characteristic which in *Ignatia* can reach a pitch of intensity that is unsurpassed by any other remedy. Whenever overcome by the realization of her loss she would break out in clamorous sobbing.

At first she refused homoeopathic treatment, accusing the physician of conspiring with her family to make her forget her lover and declaring that, since life had no meaning apart from her attachment, she did not want to take remedies to forget him. "I have never in my life been as happy as when with him, and I know I will never be as happy again. Do you want to take away the memories 'which are my only remaining source of happiness?'"

"You need not forget him," the physician assured her. "The homoeopathic remedies do not mask true feelings. They simply help you to assimilate your grief and not be overwhelmed by it. *Ignatia* will help you place him in perspective and enable you to be receptive to other enriching experiences."

"But I don't want any other enriching experiences. I only want him, and no one can help me there!"

"You're right. No one else can help you. You alone, with the assistance of time, can heal yourself. Meanwhile, however, the medicine will help you eat and sleep better, giving you the strength to heal."

"But if my grief is appropriate," she remonstrated, "you shouldn't want to arrest it. You should allow it to run its course, no matter how long" (few types can be as "reasonable" in an unreasonable way as *Ignatia*).

The physician said nothing.

"Well, okay," she grudgingly consented after a full minute's silence. "You can try. But if I forget him, I'll sue you!"

The physician took his chances with a lawsuit, and the patient took the remedy in the 50M potency, at first twice weekly, to lead her through the well-established stages of recovery from unrequited love: despair, then a gnawing pain, then anger and self-condemnation at her mistaken judgment, followed by bewilderment at her misplaced affections. As she passed from acute unhappiness to regaining control over her emotions, together with a more balanced view of her former lover, the remedy was repeated less frequently until, after a few months, she was finally able to accept the affectionate ministrations of her friends and family and the healing balm of her work and artistic pursuits.

To repeat, *Ignatia* does not obviate mourning or prompt a patient to circumvent this necessary stage completely, it simply enables her or him to live through it more easily.

The "introverted" (Boenninghausen), "introspective," (Boericke), silently unhappy *Ignatia*—the person suffering from ill-effects of suppressed romantic sorrow—is equally common, and it is appropriate to note here that *Ignatia* patients do not always express themselves with the dramatic urgency of the patients quoted above. Natural reticence, a stoic upbringing, or a sense of fitness and propriety may make them reluctant to show excessive signs of grief. They succumb instead to silent

withdrawal. Some may even deny their feelings. Yet, upon the physician's urging, they will admit to "melancholy after great grief" (Hering).

Evincing this *Ignatia* picture was the female patient who never complained and gave no sign of being downcast or despondent. She was constantly joking and generally regarded as the pillar of her family. But she had a hacking bronchial cough that had hung on for weeks despite repeated antibiotic treatment. Upon being questioned she admitted feeling "desperately lonely, depressed, and defeated in her relationships" since breaking recently with her boyfriend.

She did not permit herself to manifest this in public, and even tried to hide her sadness from herself, but the stubborn cough symbolized her body's continuing attempt to rid itself of the psychological incubus. And there was a strained quality to her cheerfulness, a false hilarity that is the hallmark of *Ignatia*, *Nux vomica*, and *Natrum muriaticum* patients.

Several doses of *Ignatia*, in medium-high (1M) potency, followed three weeks later by *Tuberculinum* 200 for the cough, proved of benefit on the mental, and subsequently the physical, planes (in homoeopathic practice the mental symptoms often yield before the physical ones).

The reserved and stoically enduring *Ignatia* is sometimes hard to distinguish from *Sepia*, *Staphysagria*, or *Natrum muriaticum*, and at these times the physical symptoms assume primary importance. Nevertheless, certain mental differences can be pin-pointed.

When the *Ignatia* mind dwells obsessively on love, it is usually romanticized and idealized, different from *Staphysagria*'s "sexual thoughts intrude and crowd upon each other" (Kent). Also, *Ignatia* does not, like *Sepia*, become cold and unresponsive after being hurt by romantic disenchantment, and will not assert, "I do not desire another intimate relationship. I do not want a man even to *touch* me!"— or dream of "rats" (Kent) when disturbed over sexual matters. Her sensitiveness and emotions remain poignant, her nerves exposed and obviously frayed. She also differs from *Staphysagria* in harboring less implacable resentment or long-suppressed anger followed by violent eruptions—although she can be as "silently brooding" (Boericke) from suppressed grief.

Nor is *Ignatia* as imprisoned by her unhappy emotions as *Natrum muriaticum* (recall Dickens' Miss Havisham in that chapter); rather she is caught up temporarily in some self-destructive emotion or thought pattern. On the other hand, the mind is usually less controlled than in the other three constitutional pictures, and the patient exhibits more visible confusion, nervous agitation, and vulnerability.

To seek help from others a person must open up and make himself vulnerable. *Sepia*, *Staphysagria*, and *Natrum muriaticum* are often reluctant to run this risk of being hurt. So they close themselves in. But *Ignatia* (like *Pulsatilla* and *Phosphorus*), even when silently grieving, emits an obvious aura of helplessness and need of assistance ("I'm so unhappy— Can't you see how desperate I am? Please find a way to help me!").

Ignatia, without question, addresses primarily the immediate in emotional and physical disharmonies. Hahnemann wrote that the remedy is particularly "curative in sudden attacks and acute diseases ... its action is usually exhausted in a few days ... It is suitable for but few cases of chronic disease and then only with the intercurrent employment of some other suitable remedy of more persistent action." Thus the physician might find himself prescribing *Ignatia* until the acute crisis is past, and then proceeding to a constitutional medicine. Yet, as with many polychrests, this one often

transcends its traditional label and can play a constitutional role in the cure of chronic conditions.

For that matter, it may be difficult to draw the line between any remedy's acute and constitutional effect. Even so-called "acute" remedies such as *Belladonna* can act as constitutionals, while deep "chronic" remedies like *Sulphur* can act as acutes. For instance, *Sabina* was administered to a woman in the third month of pregnancy of her second child for threatened miscarriage and was never again required in subsequent pregnancies, even though miscarriages had earlier been common. Or *Sanguinaria canadensis*, which was administered on an acute basis to a woman for menstrual headaches, prevented their further occurrences when later given occasionally in high potency. *Kali bicbromicum*, prescribed for painful acute sinus conditions, can strengthen the patient's chronic weaknesses in that area.* And another important potassium salt, *Kali pbosphoricum*, prescribed acutely for mental exhaustion from overwork ("brain fog"), has often acted as a long-term constitutional as well, increasing the productivity of a scholar or creative artist for many months. *Causticum*, selected to address "stress incontinence" in elderly patients, has repeatedly assisted their rheumatic or sciatic pains, weakness of limbs, or even a long-standing carpal tunnel syndrome. Finally, *Arnica*—the supreme acute remedy for physical stress and for contusions, blows, falls, lacerations, and other traumatic injuries— repeatedly performs the function of a constitutional remedy, as in the following case. A man who suffered very severe bruises in a fall from a horse was given the medicine in ascending potencies; at the 10M dilution it cured him of a longstanding chronic headache dating from an earlier fall from a horse ("suited to cases when any injury, however remote, seems to have caused the present trouble": Boericke). In another case, several doses of *Arnica* 200X, given for severe jet-lag, apparently cured the patient of his long-standing gout!

Every practicing homoeopath has a similar store of episodes to recount. Who can say where the acute action of a remedy ends and its chronic action begins? This bridging of the two functions is especially pronounced with *Ignatia*, whose curative action is more far-reaching than even Hahnemann conceived. That is why this chapter treats it as both a constitutional remedy in its own right (for there definitely exists an "*Ignatia personality*") and as an acute remedy used from time to time in other constitutional types.

An instance of this dual role was seen in the distraught and unhappy woman who sought homoeopathic help for a colitis of five years duration. She had lost fifty pounds in the past two years, could eat virtually nothing, and had eighteen or twenty stools daily with cramping pains and bleeding. A decade earlier she had been in a stressful marriage which ended in a traumatic divorce; now she was having problems with her second marriage, the husband writing the physician that her heightened sexual and other neuroses and her overwrought behavior were bound to lead to divorce unless homoeopathy could help.

The patient was obviously of *Natrum muriaticum* history and background, but few of her physical symptoms fitted this picture. Her colitis was more *Phosphorus* or *Nux vomica*, her menstrual disorders more *Lachesis*, her attitude toward her husband more *Sepia* (also her food preferences and aversions), her time and temperature modalities more *Arsenicum*, her type of "fleeting" pains more *Pulsatilla*, and so forth.

*For sinus affections see "Nose, catarrh; extending to frontal sinuses" in the Kent Repertory; in that rubric *Kali bicbromicum*, should be raised to the third degree.

The physician, in any case, would have prescribed *Natrum muriaticum* with great reluctance to a patient in such a precarious, overexcited emotional state out of fear of exacerbating the symptomatic picture.

To offer some relief while giving himself time to study the case further he prescribed four doses of *Ignatia* 10M, a dose every second day. When she came back in ten days, she looked years younger, had gained five pounds, could now eat almost anything, and had no severe premenstrual symptoms. Her husband corroborated this alteration, writing that she was now a changed person. Except for occasional doses of *Ignatia*, no other remedy was required for more than a year.

Once again *Ignatia* demonstrated its capacity to resolve any physical symptoms when the mental picture fits. And yet, this patient's trauma—unhappy first marriage, divorce, and financial stringency during the years of supporting her child—had commenced a decade earlier. This indicates that *Ignatia* will cure the effects of a trauma occurring many years earlier provided they remain raw, vibrant, on the surface-i.e., have not solidified, crystallized, or been pushed into the subconscious. For the remedy to work, the continuity or "immediacy" of the emotional stress must remain unbroken.

"Remedy of Contradictions" and Hysteria:

Ignatia is known as "the remedy of great contradictions" (H. C. Allen) and "great paradoxalities" (Nash), which is hardly surprising in view of the typically delicate psychic balance, frayed nerves, "overexcitability," and "mental confusion" (Kent) of the individual requiring it.

On the emotional level this characteristic is manifested primarily in an "incredible changefulness of disposition" (Hahnemann). The child is overexcited one moment and "down in the dumps" (Borland) the next. The adult alternates strikingly between mood extremes, fluctuating between states of melancholy and panic, between love and hate ("they used to love, they begin to hate": Kent). Either he desperately needs company to talk out his sorrow, cannot tolerate solitude ("aversion to being alone": Hering), and absorbs unlimited amounts of sympathy, or is "taciturn" (Boenninghausen), "laconic" (Hahnemann), feels aversion to others, and "prefers to be alone" (Hering). Mirth and hilarity easily dissolve into tears, and vice-versa ("subject to rapid alternation of gaiety and disposition to weep": Hahnemann), and in his excessive reactivity his joking and laughter can reach a giddy pitch of "buffoonery" (Boenninghausen) or elation that at any moment can metamorphose into despair. This emotional lability differs from that of *Phosphorus*, *Tuberculinum*, or *Natrum muriaticum* in alternating with greater frequency—"every three-four hours" (Hahnemann) or even more often: "they can never be counted on from one moment to the next" (Kent). *Ignatia* differs also from *Pulsatilla* in that the mood swings usually exhibit greater nervous excitability and intensity than the latter's gentler weeping or joy. In short, "No remedy equals *Ignatia* in changeable mood" (Nash).

In homoeopathy disease is often regarded as an intensification of some underlying personality weakness, latent characteristic, or preexisting morbid state, i.e., illness is a quantitative, not a qualitative departure from health. But the situation with *Ignatia* seems somewhat different: due to grief, illness, or other stress the patient may change personality completely and emerge as a contradiction of his former self. The individual who is delicate and refined, of "amiable disposition when feeling well" (Hering), turns ultra-critical, difficult to deal with when ill or in adversity—unreasonable, incensed when crossed or contradicted, autocratic, and manifesting bizarre or unaccountable behavior which is later regretted. By nature the type is not

aggressive or nasty. As Hahnemann noted in contrasting it with the isomorphic *Nux vomica*: "these individuals have no tendency to break out violently or to revenge themselves," but under certain conditions the destructive properties of the *Strychnos ignatii* come to the surface and begin to resemble those of the *Strychnos nux vomica*. Then *Ignatia's* original gentle and conciliatory feelings are replaced by "quarrelsomeness, selfishness, reproach of others" (Kent), and he becomes impossible to please.

As mentioned earlier, selflessness is a prominent feature of the *Ignatia* love nature, and this same "giving" impulse is extended to spheres other than romantic love. But when frustrated in her ineffectual efforts to please (here, again, this picture is more often encountered in women), when the focus of the impulse is withdrawn, a contradictory one comes to the surface-to take, to demand. Under the stress of pain and unhappiness, when distraught or thwarted, *Ignatia* can become excessively demanding of another's time, sympathy, energy. And those who are trying to help are especially likely to become the butt of her unjust accusations.

The concerned physician who is anxious to cut through the excessive communicativeness of the hypochondriac and get on with the prescription, who is reluctant to hear lengthy metaphysical explanations of the patient's illness, will be told: "I don't like the way you question me; it is not spiritual enough." The patient recovering from a miscarriage ("miscarriages from nervous and emotional shock": Kent) will preface her account with: "You don't know how it feels to lose a baby, so you can't really understand my feelings; maybe that's why I don't sense any real concern ... " Earlier we saw the overwrought patient, in desperate need of assistance, still arguing with the physician about interfering with the "healthiness" or "appropriateness" of her grief. Another will repeatedly interject, amidst her torrent of symptoms, "Do you follow me? Do you understand what I'm saying?" in a tone which implies that the physician does not.

When the homoeopath finds himself wishing that the frenetic patient would desist from telling him how much he does not know, or that he cannot really understand her, and is tempted to reply in self-defense: "Believe me, I too have had my share of hardships," or "I have treated many patients with conditions just like yours....." he should consider *Ignatia*.

Many patients become demanding when ill, unhappy, or under stress, but this trait takes on an additional dimension in *Ignatia*. No one can do enough for her or offer enough assistance or consolation. She misconstrues their actions and misinterprets their comments. And the more they say the more thankless and judgmental she becomes.

Kent gave perceptive advice to the physician attending such a patient: "It is best to say as little as possible about anything. Make no promises, look wise, take up your travelling bag, and go home after you have prescribed, because anything you say will be distorted."

A mother of five, recently deserted by her husband, fell into a nervous collapse and manifested a quite contradictory side to her usual calm, gracious, and reliable disposition. She became suspicious and ungrateful-traits she had never before displayed. With the aid of frequent remedies and much personal attention by the physician she avoided having to be heavily sedated, or even committed to an institution for nervous breakdown. But her menses also ceased during this traumatic time ("suppression of menses caused by grief": Hering), and until they returned (only after *Ignatia* had been prescribed in the CM potency), she kept accusing the physician

of making her sterile and threatened to bring suit against him if this turned out to be the case!

Mark Twain once said, "If you pick up a stray clog and feed him, he will not bite you. That is the principal difference between man and dog." This may be an overly misanthropic view of mankind in general, but it applies to the distraught and "contradictory" *Ignatia*.

Another paradoxical symptom of the profoundly grieving and emotionally overstressed *Ignatia* is a strong sense of dissociation simultaneously accompanying the patient's state of intense involvement and fervent excitement: he goes around dazed, stupefied, incapable of feeling, "destitute of thought" (Hahnemann), completely disoriented from the turmoil inside him, and dissociated from his own mental processes. "I can't understand it. It's not me who is acting this way," is the common observation of the bewildered and "perplexed" (Boenninghausen) patient. "It is something happening to me, something from the outside!"

On the physical level this dissociation is manifested as light-headedness ("feeling of hollowness in head": Hahnemann), emptiness in the throat or stomach, together with a "weak, faint, all gone feeling" (Nash), a sensation as if floating (also Valerian), blank staring, and a strangely dissociated tingling of the spine or quivering of some other part of the body.

Also encountered is a feeling of disembodiment during which time *Ignatia* feels detached from his corporeal self as well as from objective reality; even time loses its comforting boundaries and becomes distorted. This feeling of detachment-not to be confused with *Lycopodium's* inherent ability to put behind him unpleasant or unhappy experiences, or with the acquired impersonality of *Lachesis*, or with *Sepia's* more chronic but less all-pervasive indifference-could represent the body's self-healing urge. The patient's too-intense feelings are mercifully numbed, as in the state of shock.

During such times, when the familiar premises, values, beliefs, and "givens" of life, including the very sensation of being in one's own body, are uprooted by stress or stormy grief, *Ignatia* can come wonderfully to the aid of the sufferer.

Ignatia's erratic or contradictory mental symptoms have equally paradoxical parallels on the physical plane. Some of the ones more commonly encountered in this remedy are: (1) during headache the head feels hot, but amelioration comes from hot, not cold, applications; (2) a headache or earache is ameliorated by music, not by quiet; (3) a toothache is relieved by chewing; (4) a sore throat is ameliorated by swallowing solids and worse from empty swallowing (*Lachesis*); (5) the patient's tickling or spasm in the throat is not relieved by coughing: a paroxysm of unarrestable coughing is triggered, and the more he coughs, the more he has to cough; (6) a pain in the abdomen side, back, or head is relieved (instead of being aggravated) by coughing; (7) the patient craves fresh air yet is irritated by a breeze; (8) the empty, "all gone," feeling in the stomach is not relieved or ameliorated by eating; (9) when the stomach is upset, the patient craves and can tolerate, rich cream sauces or indigestible foods ("lobster": Shepherd; "chopped raw cabbage and onions": Kent) and is worse from uninviting or merely bland foods such as milk porridge, toast, or fruit, even while craving them; (10) there is nausea with inability to vomit (*Nux vomica*), which is sometimes ameliorated by eating; (11) the constipated patient suffers more from passing a soft stool than a hard one, and his stool can be large (vs. *Nux vomica's* little balls); (12) in hemorrhoids walking is less painful than sitting, or the pain is worse when not moving the bowels; (13) red, hot, throbbing joints are better from handling and touch and are relieved by hard pressure; (14) there can be severe swelling and

inflammation of a joint without any pain; (15) painful or sensitive areas of the body are better, not worse, from the application of pressure ("better lying on painful parts : Boenninghausen; also *Bryonia*); (16) the skin itches without any eruption (*Arsenicurn*, *Mezereum*); (17) the pulse is unstable and variable, continually changing; (18) during fever the patient is pale and thirstless, feels chilled, and wants to be covered, while during a chill the face is red, he feels thirsty, and he wants to be uncovered; (19) one cheek is red and burning, while the other is pale (*Belladonna*, *Chamomilla*); (20) a chilliness is ameliorated by being uncovered; (21) there is external coldness together with internal heat (22) as with *Sepia*, energy and amelioration of painful symptoms come from dancing or other vigorous exercise; (23) the nervous patient who is generally aggravated by coffee is also calmed and "ameliorated" by it (Boger).

The idiosyncratic symptoms of the following case perfectly embody the homoeopathic tenet that in *Ignatia*, more than any other remedy, one encounters the unnatural, contradictory, and unexpected.

One night a young man with a severe abdominal pain was brought, like a sick puppy in a basket, to the home of a homoeopathic physician. He was crying out in his distress but begged to be put to bed there and not taken to a hospital, because he had no money and no medical insurance, and previous bad experiences in hospitals had made him adamant about staying away from them. The homoeopath agreed to prescribe as best he could, but stipulated that if there was no improvement by morning, or if he suspected peritonitis, he would remove the patient to the hospital.

The man was from out of state, a performer in a small traveling circus whose specialty was to swallow swords and flaming torches, to lie on a bed of nails, walk on hot coals, and perform other such painful feats.* Yet here he was, unable to bear his pain in the abdomen.

Two days previously he had asked a volunteer from the audience to stand on his stomach while lying on the bed of nails, but the woman had done it too quickly, before he had time to thoroughly tighten his muscles. There was a momentary twinge of sharp pain, but he quickly recovered, and the act passed without any apparent after-effects or subsequent discomfort. And yet the following night he developed the abdominal pain.

Thus the physician did not know whether he was confronted with an internal injury, atypical appendicitis, septic bowel, or even a possible malignancy. Strangely enough, the abdomen was neither hard nor sensitive to touch.

As the patient continued to talk about himself, the homoeopath learned that he was ending a six-month tour and was about to return home to the West Coast. He was not only homesick for his wife and new baby but also actively disliked the East Coast. The people here were unfriendly, everyone "was "out to get him," and even the elegant pure-bred dogs he encountered were hostile and "snobbish," constantly attacking the nondescript mutt which was his constant companion.

The physician sensed so much sadness and loneliness in the young man that he resolved to give *Ignatia* 50M to soothe his spirits while continuing to elicit the abdominal symptoms. But within minutes the pain began to subside, so that by morning the patient was substantially relieved and insisted on heading back West in

*When asked later if his acts were genuine and, if so, how he could tolerate the pain, the performer replied that the greater part of his arduous and never-ending training consisted of toughening himself up and learning to overcome pain. While he had some basic protective techniques and occasionally used subterfuge or sleight of hand (as in swallowing swords and flaming torches), the walking on coals, lying on beds of nails, and other acts were quite genuine.

his van. He was given two more doses of the remedy in case of need but apparently (as his friends related) never required them.

In retrospect *Ignatia* could clearly be seen to match the patient's picture, as the guiding symptoms were all ones of "contradiction." (1) Normally the abdomen would be hard and distended in the presence of such intense pain, and would have been worse from touch or pressure-yet it was not. (2) The paranoid attitude was not typical of this obviously trusting, friendly, easy-going individual. (3) His intolerance of pain was unexpected in one who had been trained to endure it ("like *Aconite*, *Chamomilla*, *Coffea* [and *Nux vomica*]), *Ignatia* is oversensitive to pain": Nash). These symptoms, capped by his acute homesickness, longing for family, and unhappiness, were sufficient to form Hering's three-legged stool.

The "hysterical pains" (Kent) of the circus performer introduce the final features of this *Ignatia* portrait. The brittle fragile psychic state of the patient who needs this medicine predisposes him to hysteria, and this remedy is, significantly, the only one listed in the third degree under this rubric in the Boger Synoptic Key. While Clarke warns against identifying the remedy too closely with hysteria: "It is necessary to get rid of two prevalent erroneous ideas. The first, that *Ignatia* is a remedy for hysteria and nothing else, and the second, that it is the only remedy ever required in cases of hysteria" (Dictionary), these very words attest to its importance in this condition.

It is indicated in nervous high-strung children who become hysterical when even slightly reproached or reprimanded, sent to their rooms in punishment, or simply when unable to get their way (in the hysteria of the very young child *Aconite*, and especially *Chamomilla*, should also be considered). It is further indicated in over reactive adults who are so strongly affected not only by profound grief but even by an unpleasant quarrel, mortification, or any of the vexations discussed above that their reactions cannot be predicted; or for women with post-partum or menopausal hysteria that alternates with depression; or in those who become hysterical when another's response is not precisely attuned to their desires. For, *Ignatia's* anxiety to please often coexist with unreasonable insistence on her own terms ("dictatorial": Boenninghausen). She becomes angry when anyone suggests a course of action differing even slightly from her own wishes, and at this point in her emotional agitation she is not only unwilling, but unable, to listen to wiser counsel.

In an extreme form, when thwarted in her urgent desperate needs, the high-strung girl will throw herself down on her bed and "howl" (Boenninghausen), "shriek in anguish" (Hering), or evince lack of restraint in various other ways. "Excitement, grief, insanity, all intermingles together as cause and effect," Kent writes of the female *Ignatia*, "the hysterical fits come ... oftener and oftener, until they come from every little disturbance." And yet, he concludes, such behavior is not the patient's fault: "It is unnatural to her; simply her mind has become unhinged." He also distinguishes her temporary and uncontrolled hysteria, brought on by emotional trauma or stress, and with an underlying desire to behave properly, from the natural hysteric or exhibitionist who "is born with a delight to bring on fits and make a scare." Only to the former type will *Ignatia* bring a measure of calm.

In the physician's office *Ignatia's* subliminal hysteria may appear as an *Arsenicum*-like panic at being ill ("anxiety about health," "despair of recovery": Kent). But the latter can usually be reasoned with, while the former's deranged mind cannot always respond.

In further contrast to *Arsenicum*, who is impossible when well, pitiful I when sick, Ignatia is fragile and "tender" (Allen) when well, impossible when sick!* The importunate patient urged to restrain his haste for a cure, or told that the remedy sometimes acts gradually, may become difficult and unreasonable or even weep from angry impatience, hysterically demanding that the physician immediately give him a remedy allowing him the customary eight hours of sleep or three bowel movements a day: "Why is it taking so long to get me back to the way I was?" he will tearfully complain.

However, not all impatient *Ignatia* patients are irrational. One sufferer from erratic (i.e., off and on) paralysis of the vocal chords (probably from long-standing family tension), who started showing improvement with this remedy, suddenly and testily announced to the doctor that she was tired of being ill ("How long must I go on taking these minuscule sugar pills?") and insisted on being cured by the following weekend.

"Why next weekend in particular," he inquired.

"just because it seems like a reasonable period of time to give you!"

But catching sight of his doubtful look, she graciously conceded with a long-suffering sigh, "well, all right, I'll give you a few days beyond Sunday, if you insist!" *Ignatia* displays hysterical impatience in other ways also. When in a state of excitement, he falls into a frenzy at any delay or obstacle to the fulfillment of his wishes: "the mind is always in a hurry" (Hering), "no one can do things rapidly enough" (Kent). Especially in romantic love, the impatience may become so uncontrollable as to be self-defeating, and the judgment may be impaired.** For the emotional chaos characterizing this type spills over also into the mental sphere ("the mind flies all to pieces": Kent). The more the patient tries to understand "what is happening to me?" or "Why is it happening to me?" the more relentlessly is this prevented by the confusion and "crowding of his thoughts" (Boenninghausen).

Even when the hysteria is controlled, the physician may still sense it in the patient's underlying brittleness of manner. He or she laughs too much, too loudly or uncontrollably, or giggles irrepressibly (*Natrum muriaticum* also carries this hysterical note in laughter), while tears are just below the surface or may even be mingled in the laughter. Or the individual talks compulsively, asking questions without waiting for answers (*Lachesis*, *Aurum metallicum*), and flaring up in anger at any attempt by others to interrupt the flow of words. Finally the prevalent *globus hystericus* (lump in the throat) syndrome (see *Lachesis* chapter) indicates the individual's attempt to suppress a rising hysteria ("a state of anguish with suffocating constriction of the throat, difficult deglutition": Hering).

*Hahnemann writes of this "altered emotional and mental state" in general terms:

"For example, how often does not one find, in the most painful diseases of many years' standing, a mild, gentle disposition commanding the physician's tender consideration and compassion? But when he overcomes the disease and restores the patient, as frequently happens under homoeopathic treatment, he is often surprised and shocked at the dreadful change in the patient's nature: ingratitude, hardheartedness, unusual maliciousness [while] ... one often finds that people who were patient when they were healthy become obstinate, violent, hasty, or unbearable and self-willed indeed, impatient or despairing-when they are ill....." (*Organon*, Section 210).

***Ignatia's* unbalanced judgment and impetuous behavior in a compelling feverish love which is thwarted by circumstances are graphically portrayed in *Romeo and Juliet*. Swayed by their passion, the lovers exhibit the remedy's unaccountable actions and moods, swinging from uncontained elation to rash despair. Even those who are close to them, Juliet's old nursemaid and the friar who dispenses the poisonous sleeping draught, who should have known better than to yield to the lovers' importunate demands, are caught up in their hysteria and definitely act as if guided by *Ignatia's* "lack of sound judgment" (Kent).

Sometimes *Ignatia* in her mental confusion, desperate impatience, and inability to control her emotions, fears she is losing her mind. *Lachesis* and *Calcareo carbonica* can also be alarmed for their sanity. But with *Lachesis* the anxiety tends to emerge during some major change in life or growth in the understanding when, like a snake, the old skin is being shed and replaced by a new one, while, with *Calcareo*, the apprehension is chronic. With *Ignatia* the loss of emotional or mental balance being the more immediate result of some shock, stress, or grief, is consequently more superficial, and the fear of losing her reason is thus more easily cured.

It should also be stressed that the mind of the aggrieved, overstressed, or frustrated *Ignatia* is not necessarily deranged, however demented she may feel, however hysterically she may behave, or whatever loss of control she exhibits ("inability to express herself in talking and writing ... does everything awkwardly": Hahnemann). As often as not hers are *simply the normal healthy reaction of a trapped person to an abnormal and objectively unhealthy situation*.

Ignatia's highly irritable and over reactive mental state finds its physical correspondence in such symptoms as: a hysterical stomach that craves indigestible foods, hysterical paralysis of the vocal chords or intestinal tract ("incarcerated flatus": Hering) or hysterical paralytic weakness of some other part of the body "with as perfect a paralysis as if it had come from cerebral hemorrhage" (Kent), hysterical neuralgia or rheumatic pains-any of which may pass in a short time, and the patient is well again.

Above all, the patient manifests hysterical, or near hysterical, ultra sensitivity to the environment.

Like *Phosphorus*, *Nux vomica*, or *Arsenicum*, *Ignatia* is extremely sensitive to, or intolerant of noise; hence an inordinately light sleeper who hears anything in his sleep-"even a fly on the wall" (Tyler). When concentrating on his work, "any noise nearly drives him crazy. He is likely to fly into a rage and then lapse into tears" (Borland; also *Nux vomica*). At times he displays the craving for air and feeling of suffocation that are classic for hysteria, and the smell of flowers, perfume, coffee, and especially tobacco can all lead to a hysterical reaction. In a restaurant or other public place a woman might embarrass others by making a scene over someone smoking at a nearby table ("Why are people allowed to poison the air for others? I can't stand it! Get me out of here! I want to speak to the manager!"). While other constitutional types might sympathize with these sentiments, it is the uncontrolled behavior that distinguishes *Ignatia* in females and *Nux vomica* in males.

Crowded places, elevators, and small rooms also bring on a state of panic, as *Ignatia* cannot tolerate the confinement and lack of air ("feels faint in a crowded place": Kent). This symptom, by the way, is not to be confounded with *Aconite's* or *Argentum nitricum's* "fear of crowds" (Kent).

The hysterical individual whose disintegrating personality is full of contradictions is bound to embrace characteristics of other remedies, and the patient requiring *Ignatia* may simultaneously manifest *Nux vomica's* irritable sensitivity, nervous irascibility, fault-finding, quarrelsomeness, and readiness to accuse others; also *Lycopodium's* dictatorial and autocratic behavior during illness; *Arsenicum's* panicky reaction to being sick, overpowering need to talk about his symptoms, and critical demanding nature; *Pulsatilla's* clinging dependence, weepiness, plaintiveness, and insatiable need for sympathy; *Sepia's* discontent, dissatisfaction with those trying to help, and intolerance of contradiction; the *Phosphorus* lack of emotional restraint, unexpected ingratitude, and collapse when life does not measure up to some romantic ideal; also the uncontrolled loquacity and self-destructive drives of *Lachesis*; the

Aurum metallicum feeling of the meaninglessness of life, its black cloud of hopelessness and despair, and the wish that "it all would end"; *Staphysagrias* indignation, pent-in grief and dwelling on angry thoughts; and finally the *Natrum muriaticum* depression or loneliness following bereavement and feeling of the futility of life in the absence of the beloved yet occasional insistence upon remaining unhappy ("enjoys being sad": Boger).

So, when the physician sees no clear constitutional picture in the distraught or hysterically grieving patient before him, is unable to unravel the tangled web of overlapping symptoms and remedies, and is floundering in a profusion of choices, he should give thought to *Ignatia*. In many cases it will prove to be the simillimum.

Conclusion:

As suggested by the numerous cases cited in this chapter, *Ignatia* possesses the most remarkable capacity to help a suffering patient come to terms with his loss, temper his overly high expectations, distil his disappointments or minor hardships into humor, relinquish his love obsessions or other self-destructive thought patterns, or acquire a whole new frame of reference that encourages a growth of understanding and enables the individual to benefit from his trials rather than succumb to them.

This raises the issue of the preventive powers of homoeopathic remedies. Unlike the allopath in the anecdote who tells the patient with an intractable cough, "We have no treatment for your present condition, but if you walk around in the cold and come back when you have pneumonia, then I will be able to treat you," homoeopathy possesses a whole arsenal of medicines for the subtle premonitory stages of the more serious physical and mental illnesses (see *Natrum muriaticum* chapter). And, because *Ignatia* is applicable to a wide range of emotional traumas ("as may be seen from the symptoms corresponding in similarity to symptoms of diseases frequently met with in daily life": Hahnemann), its beneficial preventive role is incalculable.

For all its dramatic powers, *Ignatia* is one of the gentlest of homoeopathic remedies and can be prescribed with little fear of provoking a serious aggravation (although exceptions are found here as well, in which case, according to Hering, the primary antidote is *Pulsatilla*). When used in acute conditions, it bears repetition well, even in high potency. The patient can be likened to a sponge: the more acute the illness, the drier the sponge, and the more medicine he can absorb. *Ignatia* patients, with their ultra-acute emotional episodes, are among the driest of sponges.* Even Hahnemann, although making confusing statements about repeating this remedy in the introductory essay to its proving, ultimately advocates "for therapeutic purposes, the administration of one small globule [in the ultra molecular dose], repeated once or twice daily."

Naturally repetition should not exceed the bounds of reason and good sense. An example of definite immoderation was the woman undergoing a particularly stressful time in her marriage, who was suggested to take a dose of *Ignatia* 1M whenever needed (meaning once every 2-3 days). On the return visit two weeks later she announced to the appalled physician: "The remedy works beautifully, "but how much longer can I keep taking it?" I must already have consumed at least a pint of the stuff!" Fortunately, even this did not provoke harmful sequelae.

*Belladonna is another prominent example. In acute physical ailments such as high fevers, severe earaches, and sore throats ("strep throat"), convulsions, and even status epilepticus, the remedy might have to be repeated every ten or fifteen minutes until the patient is out of danger or pain.

Ignatia's action can be as subtle as it is far-reaching. An elderly gentleman suffering from a lingering degenerative illness had recently lost his only child in an automobile accident. He grieved deeply but undemonstratively, only occasionally, with a heavy sigh, asking the heart-rending question, "Why did he, who was still young, strong, and useful to the world, have to be taken away, while I have survived these many years old, useless, and with my illness a burden to others?" He received a dose of *Ignatia* 10M, and that night dreamed that his son appeared to him and said, "Father, I am going away on a long journey and have just stopped in to say good-bye. But it is not for long. Be patient, and we will soon be together again" The dream soothed and comforted the old man who thereafter remained serene until his own death.

Those unfamiliar with homoeopathy might claim that the dream was a coincidence. But physicians who prescribe *Ignatia* regularly and who, over the years, have witnessed legions of those coincidences that instil in the patient belief in his capacity to endure, enable him to adopt a more positive perspective on his sorrow, soothe his distress, or help make bearable even the most seemingly unendurable pain, are repeatedly in awe of its curative powers on the nervous system and healing action on the psyche. Together with the patients who have been helped, they can only be humbly grateful to Divine Providence and one of its noblest instruments-Samuel Hahnemann-for the infinite wisdom and miracle of homoeopathy.

Part II

Introduction

THE medicines known as "nosodes," which are the potentized extractions of diseased matter, tissue, and discharges, occupy a unique and sometimes controversial position in homoeopathic prescribing.

They are the natural outgrowth of Hahnemann's theory of the "miasms," which he developed toward the end of his life to explain the origin and nature of the chronic diseases that underlie acute ailments and hinder their cure.

The word "miasm," from the Greek for "defilement," "taint," or "contamination" and meaning "infection or noxious exhalation from putrid organic matter; poisonous articles or germs floating in and polluting the atmosphere" (Oxford English Dictionary), was part of eighteenth-century medical terminology. Hahnemann would have been well acquainted with the term, but he chose to use it in a slightly different way—to denote an inherited *susceptibility*, a pre-existing disturbance of the patient's life-force, his *predisposition*, as it were, to being affected by certain morbid influences. The miasm thus represents an underlying cause, a state of low resistance, generating a variety of lesions and symptoms which would not arise otherwise.

In *The Chronic Diseases* Hahnemann discussed Syphilis, Sycosis (gonorrhoea), and Psora* in these terms. They represent the later manifestations of the acute diseases of the same name and contribute to the emergence of numerous supervening symptoms, superficial ailments, and pathological processes which are not necessarily characteristic of these three diseases in their acute form.**

Hahnemann treated these three chronic diseases primarily with *Sulphur* (Psora), *Mercurius* (Syphilis), *Thuja occidentalis* and *Nitricum acidum* (Sycosis), but homoeopaths soon started employing the nosodes *Psorinum*, *Syphilinum*, and *Medorrhinum*. After all, in a medical doctrine based on the law of similars what could be more logical—even inevitable—than to potentize the disease tissue or discharge and thus treat the miasmatic "defilement" with its own matter.

Later in the nineteenth century tuberculosis was added as a miasm in its own right, and the nosode *Tuberculinum* soon found its way into the materia medica. Kent regarded the tubercular miasm as a subspecies of Psora; Roberts saw it as a combination of *Psora* and *Syphilis*; while Pierre Schmidt interpreted it as a combination of Psora and Sycosis. But for prescribing purposes this dispute has little significance, as the nosode possesses its own distinctive personality.

Shortly thereafter the cancer miasm was added, with its corresponding nosode *Carcinosin*. This theory of the contamination of the human organism by miasms—now seen primarily as a theory of congenital disease has served as the basis for an elaborate philosophical structure at the hands of such leading homoeopathic thinkers as Kent, J.B. Allen, and more recently Sanchez Ortega and others. Hahnemann himself never refined completely the concept of the miasm or resolved the conflict inherent in attempting to classify diseases according to their miasmatic origin and the

*"Psora" is the name given by Hahnemann to the condition originally arising from the suppression or maltreatment of skin diseases. Throughout the ages it has taken various forms: leprosy, scabies, erysipelas, and others. Hahnemann regarded *Psora* as the matrix of all diseases and responsible for a large number of contemporary mental and physical illnesses.

**For instance, the thesis that acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) represents a reemerging form of suppressed syphilis has been argued in Harris L. Coulter's *AIDS and Syphilis: the Hidden Link* (see Bibliography).

homoeopathic stress on the totality of the symptoms together with the necessity of individualizing. This has left room for others to step in and fill the doctrinal void with theories. Occasionally these have become a little top-heavy,* but are always thought-provoking, and in the following pages we draw on the insights of the masters to facilitate recognition of the indications for a particular nosode.

In all of this the reader should bear in mind that, while the miasmatic theory may at times explain the origin and development of the patient's illness, it is not a technique for finding the patient's remedy (whether nosode or other). To be sure, any homoeopathic prescription must be based on the patient's history and inheritance, and, at times the congenital condition must be treated before success can be obtained with the acute condition. But in the final analysis the nosodes themselves must be prescribed according to the patient's symptoms, like any other remedy, and not relying on some theoretically extrapolated miasmatic etiology or pathogenesis ("Isopathy").

As in all homoeopathic prescribing, the administration of nosodes is subordinated to the principle of individualization, of finding the simillimum from the patient's idiosyncratic features.** This takes precedence over any mode of miasmatic analysis or theorizing.

The primary exceptions are when the patient presents too few guiding symptoms (at such times the nosode can be prescribed in the hope that this will bring out further symptoms), when there is a clear personal history of the given miasmatic disease (syphilis, gonorrhoea, cancer, tuberculosis, or one of the psora diseases) and the patient has not responded to well-selected remedies, or when the nosode is used for prevention (see the *Psorinum* and *Tuberculinum* chapters).

Whitmont describes the miasmatic influence as "structural or archetypal fields of force, vortices of energy ... capable of destroying living activity but ... also integral life and consciousness enhancing factors of the human condition." As is our custom in these Portraits, we shall examine the healthy, "normal," creative characteristics of the nosode types as well as the pathological and self-destructive ones.

*Hippocratic. Ancient Roman, and even Eastern Mystical terminology are invoked, and the supposed vulnerabilities of the miasms are described in terms of "contracting" versus "dilating" properties or "expanding" and "plethoric" versus "restricting" and "sclerotic" energies. The "dys-energetic" "sustaining" nature of psora is distinguished from the "hypo-energetic" "destructive" nature of syphilis and the "hyper-energetic" "creative" nature of gonorrhoea, and so on.

**"Although the discovery of that great source of chronic diseases, psora, and its most specific homoeopathic remedies has brought those involved in the art of healing a few steps nearer to understanding the true nature of most diseases, the homoeopathic physician must still piece together the perceptible symptoms and peculiarities of the chronic disease being treated just as carefully as to form an indicative picture, because no true cure of a psoric or any other kind of disease can take place without the strictest individualization of every case." (*Hahnemann, Organon: section 82*).

Psorinum

PSORINUM is made from the scabies vesicle, the seropurulent matter of the vast chronic disease which Hahnemann denominated the "hydra-headed miasmatic disease psora," and which he saw as infecting most of the human race. But even so, despite the fact that what is common to all is not specific to anyone, *Psorinum* presents certain distinctive recurring patterns that can be traced through the mental and physical symptomatology of this important remedy.

Kent, in a compelling account in *Lectures on Homoeopathic Philosophy*, and later Roberts, in a more elaborate one, expanded on Hahnemann's hypothesis that the psoric miasm came to underlie all human illnesses as a result of continuing suppression or maltreatment of a primordial skin disease. They viewed the parent miasm as the original "flaw, defect, or pollution" that has been engrafted on mankind, the psychophysical equivalent of Original Sin. Psora is the congenital "stigma" to which all mankind is subject and which must be overcome before good health can be achieved.

While admitting the many issues relating to the spiritual dimensions of health and disease that such a concept raises, and without prejudging them in any way, we still retain the concept of "Original Sin" as a valuable mnemonic device and recurring theme of our analysis of *Psorinum*.

Implicit in the doctrine of Original Sin is the concept of its ineradicability otherwise than through divine intercession. This quality of ineradicability is associated with much of the *Psorinum* symptomatology. The patient is unable by his own efforts to eradicate this deeply ingrained "pollution" of his "constitution," and good health (cleansing, redemption) requires the potentized *Psorinum* nosode (Divine Grace).*

Elizabeth Hubbard (as quoted in Blackie) called *Psorinum* "the great unwashable," because however much he scours and scrubs and spruces up he still appears unclean ("the skin has a dirty, tawny color, although carefully kept": Hering), blemished ("skin dingy, filthy, studded with capillary blood vessels and enlarged veins": Kent), unhealthy ("skin looks as if never washed, coarse, greasy, as if bathed in oil": Allen), and *unkempt* ("the hair is dry, lusterless, tangles easily, glues together": Hering).

No less ineradicable is the offensive odor emanating from the *Psorinum* patient, whether it be his breath, secretions from the male genitals, or such discharges as diarrhoea, leucorrhoea, the menses, running ears, or open sores ("fetid odors, fetid breath: discharges and oozings from the skin smelling like carrion; stool so offensive that the odor permeates the whole house eructations taste of boiled eggs....": Kent) The perspiration is especially rank; hot baths or showers merely exacerbate the condition by opening the pores and allowing more odors to escape, while washing in cold water or applying deodorants provide only temporary relief; any exertion which heats up the body again releases an "abominable" (Kent) smell.

* Hahnemann writes of a woman in a poor marriage, and a man unjustly under suspicion and ultimately involved in a serious criminal suit, who, when liberated from their trying circumstances, remained ailing: "How shall we explain this? If that disagreeable event had been the cause, the sufficient cause of these ailments, ought not the effect, i.e., the disease, to have entirely ceased of necessity after removal of the cause? But these ailments do not cease [and] it is seen that they only served as an occasion and impetus toward the development of a malady which till then only slumbered within. The recognition of this internal foe, which is so frequently present, and the science which is able to overcome it, make It manifest [that generally an indwelling itch disease (Psora) was the ground of all these ailments, which cannot be overcome even by the vigor of the best constitution, but only through [the] art [of Homoeopathy].]" (*Chronic Diseases, I, pp. 50-51*)

This picture of the great *washable* contrasts with *Sulphur*, "the great *unwashed*," (Roberts) who merely refuses to bathe, or absent-mindedly forgets, or, in his laziness and unconcern, washes only in parts. When he cares for himself adequately, he is perfectly presentable and sweet-smelling.

In modern industrialized societies the easy accessibility of soap, cosmetics, and toilet articles, as well as improved hygiene generally, render the *Psorinum* patient less of a standout than was formerly the case. Closer examination, however, will show that this well-groomed appearance requires an enormous amount of effort. And sometimes, like the blood on Lady Macbeth's hands 'that all great Neptune's ocean cannot wash clean, "this unfortunate type cannot overcome his condition unaided and, despite all attempts to the contrary, remains "offensive to sight and smell" (Kent).

A graphic illustration of the remedy's power to eradicate this particular stigma was the university professor of literature suffering from cancer who came to homoeopathy for treatment of the extraordinary odor emanating from his malignancy-ridden body. While his days were strictly numbered, he wanted to live them out as productively as possible. Teaching to him had always been the breath of life, but now, while his mind remained clear and strong, his smell was so offensive that students could hardly remain in the classroom with him, and social intercourse was out of the question.

Psorinum 200 administered periodically miraculously relieved this symptom. The putrid pungent odor was reduced to a manageable minimum, and the patient was no longer embarrassed to teach or socialize-both of which he was able to do well beyond the time, initially allotted to him by his physician and, indeed, until shortly before his death.

However, this remedy is less effective than *Sulphur* for eradicating *untidy habits*. After a dose of the latter, for example, male patients have experienced a sudden urge to clean up a room or the backyard, tidy up a workbench or desk, get a haircut, shave off or trim a scraggly beard, or purchase a better-fitting pair of trousers. *Psorinum* seldom provokes such startling alterations of character. And the same is true for women: the dirty dishes, unsorted laundry, and half-empty tea mugs continue to lie around untended, just as they did prior to administration of the remedy.

Also prominent in the *Psorinum* picture is the *ineradicability of illness*. This nosode is invaluable for diseases that have been treated imperfectly or suppressed, for lingering or relapsing symptoms, and the scars of past or long latent illnesses; for patients who have never recovered fully from some acute ailment, who suffer from prolonged viral infections, or, generally, who exhibit "lack of vital reaction after severe diseases [and] *when other remedies fail to permanently improve*" (Hering).

Homoeopathy is rich in "never well since" remedies and predictably, *Psorinum* is a leading remedy for ailments that will not "wash off." Just to list the principal ones-"never well since":

- a childhood disease (*Sulphur*, *Psorinum*)
- a particularly severe attack of measles or whooping cough (*Tuberculinum*, *Carcinosin*)
- puberty (*Pulsatilla*)
- childbirth, miscarriage, or abortion (*Sepia*)
- menopause (*Lachesis*)
- a grief or the death of a beloved (*Natrum muriaticum*) mental exertion (*Silica*, *Kali phosphoricum*)
- influenza (*Gelsemium*, *Carbo vegetabilis*, *Psorinum*) pneumonia (*Sulphur*, *Carbo vegetabilis*, *Phosphorus*, *Tuberculinum*, *Psorinum*)

a head injury (*Arnica*, *Natrum sulphuricum*)
 an abdominal operation (*Staphysagria*)
 vaccination (*Thuja*)
 a lingering or chronic Epstein-Barr virus infection (*Natrum muriaticum*, *Psorinum*)
 mononucleosis (*Cistus canadensis*, *Carcinosin*)
 hepatitis: (*Phosphorus*, *Psorinum*)

During the healing process *Psorinum* can provide dramatic illustrations of the third postulate of Hering's "law of cure" which states that the patient should relive past illnesses in the reverse order of their original appearance-like a movie played backwards.* In fact, the concept of healing as a "dynamic process" takes on new meaning when one witnesses the action of a truly "similar" dose of *Sulphur* or *Psorinum*.

A memorable case was the woman of fifty with post-menopausal hot flashes and "abysmal" terrifying black fits of suicidal depression. On the surface she was a *Lachesis/ Arsenicum* mixture, but out of consideration for her history of "never well since" a series of illnesses and operations, the physician deemed it advisable to start with either *Sulphur* or *Psorinum*. The former fitted her hot flashes and history of heavy use of allopathic medication. But *Psorinum* 30C was the remedy ultimately chosen because, when not having flashes, she was an exceedingly chilly person (this nosode is sometimes called the "chilly *Sulphur*") and because her hair was graying in a clearly delineated stripe or streak which started at the right temple ("just call me 'skunk,'" she would jest). This was one of those "strange, rare, and peculiar" symptoms upon which the choice of a remedy can hinge ("hair becomes gray in spots": Kent). In fact, Hering recounts a case, in a younger person, where the shock of gray hair regained its natural color after treatment with *Psorinum* (!).

The patient was taken off all medication except her anti-depressant, and she agreed to cut down even on this once she had satisfied herself that the *Psorinum* would "actually work."

She did not have long to wait. For, immediately upon taking this remedy she started re-enacting her whole medical history, starting with the most recent episodes and proceeding back into earliest childhood.

The hot flashes, whose severity had been controlled by synthetic hormones, returned in full force, with episodes every ten minutes day and night for a full week-many of them requiring a complete change of clothes. When these subsided, she started itching over her whole body, with an uncontrollable desire to scratch herself raw; this was the echo of an earlier intolerable burning itching ("as if my entire body were invaded from inside by a colony of red ants") brought on by an allergic reaction to penicillin after a hysterectomy, and it also lasted a week. When it abated, she began to feel the pain and discomfort of a previous allergic reaction to catgut stitches used in a cosmetic breast operation. This persisted for several days and was succeeded first by the symptoms of a past cystitis and then by pain and discharges from the eyes, resembling an attack of iritis experienced many years before. There upon followed deep nerve aches and pains. But whereas the earlier attacks had lasted for months and

* "With intensification of the disease process the symptoms move from the surface to the interior, from the extremities to the upper parts of the body, and from the less vital organs to the more vital ... Its corollary was that administration of the correct remedy causes the symptoms to disappear in the reverse order of their appearance-the 'new' symptoms which appear during the curative process representing the earlier stages of the disease" (Constantine Hering, "Hahnemann's Three Rules Concerning the Rank of Symptoms," *Hahnemannian Monthly* I, 1865, 5-12. Summarized in H. L. Coulter, *Divided Legacy*, III, p. 340).

were only allayed by heavy allopathic medication, the reincarnations or "shadow episodes" only lasted a few days and required no painkillers or other drugs.

Thereafter she experienced a crippling headache of two decades before; again the symptoms lasted a few days instead of many years. Then there was an outbreak of boils in the precise locations they had occurred twenty-five years earlier, followed by burning and pain of the soles of the feet, until all her adult troubles finally concentrated and lodged in an ache in the left heel. Then, some weeks later, reaching back still further, she started reliving her adolescent menstrual cramps, all of which finally brought her around to her childhood illnesses. "I have just been through the measles," she announced "Now I am waiting for the chicken pox."

Indeed, chicken pox, German measles, and whooping cough all came and went, and when they disappeared, the remedy apparently went back and started all over again, picking up on the less obvious and more subtle ailments missed the first time around. For example, an unpleasant burning sensation in the hairs of the nose, caused by snorting cocaine (and which prevented her from repeating the experiment) returned in all its clarity. The brain fog she had experienced many years ago from emotional stress and overwork, and which had led to partial loss of her mental powers, also revisited her for a few days. But afterwards she announced "I have had an idea—a good solid thought—for the first time in fifteen years!" Then her former cravings revived, and she passed through a period of insatiable desire ("carline hunger": Kent) for "junk" or "fast" food—after which time she was seldom to crave it again. She even relived echoes of her adolescent guilt and shame: guilt at not being the good student she could have been and shame at being considered "sexy" because of her early physical maturation. In the end the patient declared in a mock complaint that the only ailments not aroused by the remedy were her childhood mumps and a broken leg. Nothing else, however, was omitted.

Throughout such "healing" performances both physician and patient feel like spectators at a vaudeville performance, where one act follows another in quick succession, and no one is sure what will appear next on the stage. During the curative process a remedy takes on a dynamism of its own, and even the most experienced physician cannot predict the next act. But as long as the pain is bearable, no vital organ appears endangered, and the *deja vu* symptoms do not persist too long without improvement, the prescriber waits and observes without interfering.

A heartening and encouraging factor in this whole recapitulative process was that, after the first few weeks, the intervals of respite between episodes began to lengthen, with the patient experiencing greater emotional well-being and physical energy than she had felt in years. And the reruns of her earlier illnesses grew shorter and less spectacular—a certain indication that the single dose was acting properly.

Meanwhile the patient had steadily reduced the doses of antidepressants, but without any corresponding lowering of her spirits. In fact, like the prodigal son—who returned home to more than his fair share of favor—after abusing her body with allopathic drugs, and in many other ways besides, she was welcomed back into the fold of good health with an *increase* of her native buoyancy, cheerfulness, and intellectual creativity. Conceivably a large part of her "inherited stigma" had been eradicated. In any case, she never went back to the world of mood elevators, synthetic hormones, antibiotics, corticosteroids, and the like.

To be sure, any homoeopathic constitutional remedy can provoke the patient into reliving his whole pathological history—as symbolized by the time-honored image of the onion with its many layers of dead skin surrounding the life-generating sprout at the center. The remedies lead to the sloughing of the outer and middle layers

as the patient passes again through the various diseased conditions he has experienced in the past, more or less in chronological order (although, truth to tell, more often "less" than "more"), ultimately to disclose the core of life at the center of his being. But *Sulphur* and *Psorinum*, where "even a single dose may elicit other symptoms lasting for weeks" (Boericke), most consistently exhibit the cathartic process of cure following Hering's Law.

Another tenet implicit in the doctrine of Original Sin is deficiency. Some "fault" or "flaw" in man's "fallen" nature bars him from the state of grace to which he aspires and to which he feels himself entitled. Similarly, in respect of *Psorinum*, "deficiencies" (Kent, Roberts) of various kinds impede the attainment of good health (deficiency of vital reaction, which Clarke calls "the chief keynote of *Psorinum*, " has been discussed earlier).

This remedy is frequently prescribed for cases where pathology results from such "deficiencies" as poor hygiene, inadequate nutrition, or inability to assimilate food properly. Associated weaknesses of the digestive system are too diverse to group under any single heading (they are fully described in the homoeopathic literature). A typical picture is the scruffy sickly child with chronically inflamed eyelids (blepharitis) and a runny nose, presenting a pitiful appearance of actual or apparent undernourishment and neglect (looking as if just emerged from Dotheboys Hall in *Nicholas Nickleby* or the workhouse in *Oliver Twist*). The adult also looks unhealthy, with an unbecoming pallor-contrasting with *Tuberculinum's* attractive romantic paleness. The patient is apt to be constantly hungry ("great hunger even after a hearty meal": Hering) and feels nervous and faint if he cannot get food immediately. This is the infant who "is good and plays all day [but] troublesome and screams all night" (H.C. Allen; also *Sulphur*), and who can only be calmed by feeding ("appetite increased nights": Kent).^{*} In contrast, the *Lycopodium* or *Medorrhinum* baby sleeps all night and screams all day.

Psorinum's deficiencies may further take the form of lack of vital heat. This is one of the chilliest of all constitutional types. There is aversion to the open air and aggravation from it, also an extreme sensitivity to change of weather and drafts-which give him a cold, a headache, or sinus trouble. Fear of exposure to air conditioning severely restricts his activities during the hot months and may hinder him from travelling in public transport, eating in restaurants, shopping in department stores, going to the movies, or attending theaters.

In general, his head is most sensitive to cold ("averse to having head uncovered": Hering)-in contrast to *Arsenicum* who likes his head cool even when the rest of him is warmly wrapped. Often he wears a cap (or the woman a kerchief), indoors and out, all year round ("wears a fur cap even in summer": Hering), and sometimes even in bed. Occasionally he is even "worse from getting the hair cut" (Kent).

But he may cover his head for reasons other than warmth, claiming that he concentrates better with his "thinking cap" on. His thoughts do not scatter and fly off but remain captive and collected under his headgear. "The cap preserves my vital ideas as well as my vital heat," was one patient's explanation.

Another manifestation of deficiency is in an allergic constitution and extreme sensitivity to the environment. His "terrain" is deficient, in the sense that his

^{*}Hering writes: "Child apparently well, but at night will twist and turn and fret ... and next day be as lively as ever."

constitutional economy, in addition to an "inability to assimilate sufficient energy from sunlight, air, water, food" (Roberts), is inadequately equipped to withstand the assaults of an inimical environment. "Too bright light, the loud talking of several people at the same time, the ringing of bells ... cause harmful impressions: trembling weariness, headache, chills, etc. Often the senses of smell and taste are immoderately sensitive" (Hahnemann).

These days the picture is complicated further by such chemical and other environmental pollutants as pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, indoor sprays, and food additives. So that, like the hypersensitive Marcel Proust who survived by living in a cork-lined, soundproofed, sealed chamber, *Psorinum* at times can exist only in special isolated quarters cut off and protected from external irritants. A striking case was the young woman so beset with allergies and sensitivities ("to the whole world, and to life in general," was how she put it) that she could not function as a normal human being. Prevented from attending classes at the university because of her allergy to the heating and ventilation systems, barred from driving because the smell of exhaust incapacitated her for days, unable to venture out of doors except in winter because of pollens, molds, the smell of vegetation, or, indeed, of dry leaves, she could not even swim in a lake or pool, or expose her skin to a gentle wind or a mild rain without a severe urticaria appearing all over her body. She wore only cotton clothes, being allergic not only to synthetic materials but even to wool, which raised ugly welts ("the skin itches when wearing wool": Kent), and so on, ad *infinitum*. *

Psorinum 200X, then 1M, then 10M, administered at regular but infrequent intervals, immediately started to build up her resistance, and she was substantially improved in a year or two. A few sensitivities remained with her always, and she had to avoid those particular culprits, but thereafter she led a normal life.

These excessive sensitivities and the lack of natural defenses make *Psorinum* a major hay-fever and asthma remedy, and many physicians, inspired by Clarke's description of the nosode, will automatically give it first. The choice of this remedy is reinforced, in any respiratory tract affection, if the patient obtains marked relief from lying on his back in a *spreadeagle* position with "arms abducted from his sides" (Kent), making certain that none of his extremities touch one another or any other part of the body.

Psorinum, moreover, is supreme as a *preventive* and *prophylactic*, forearmg the constitutional resistance to *seasonal* allergies, asthma, and hay fever. "Hay fever is one of the most difficult conditions to cure," writes Kent. "It belongs to a low constitution which must be built up before the hay-fever will cease.....the psoric miasm must be changed." If a dose of this remedy in the 1M or 10M potency is given to counteract susceptibility, preferably a few weeks before the allergy season, this morbid condition can be attenuated and eventually even eliminated.

One of the first principles of classical homoeopathy is that remedies be given on the totality of the symptoms, not just on one or two "keynotes," but at times even the staunchest purist must rise above principle. One of those times is the routine preventive use of *Psorinum* against environmental assaults and irritants. Fortunately, this procedure was approved by Kent himself when he stated (*Lectures in Homoeopathic Philosophy*), "A remedy will not have to be so similar to prevent disease as to cure it."

Psorinum has a strong affinity for the skin-not surprising in view of its origins-and is used in various dermatological conditions. Hahnemann, Hering, Kent,

* "Highly poetic, but I don't believe most of it," was one listener's sceptical comment.

and H.C. Allen devote many pages to describing *Psorinum's* skin eruptions and affections, emphasizing the rough and uneven skin that cracks and chips easily, the ulcerations around the beds of the nails, fingertips, and lips, the raw and bleeding fissures, or violent itching ("he is driven to despair with excessive itching": Hering). They also describe the papules, pimples, boils, and little pointed vesicles; the moist, raw, oozing sores; the new crop of eruptions that breaks out under the old crusts; the tingling, the formication ("crawling like ants [or] insects running over the surface": Kent); and the excoriation so extreme that the hair falls out on that part of the body. Further there is the whole spectrum of eczemas-on any part of the body, but more peculiarly in the flexor joints, and behind or around the ears; also the thick and indurated—as well as white, flaky, and scaly-skin. *Psorinum* has them all!

Roberts developed the theory (already prefigured by Hahnemann) that many psoric disorders are relatively superficial and hence benign-causing pain and discomfort but not yet pushed into the more profound regions of the body. Thus the psoric miasm manifests mainly skin and *functional* disorders, and not the organic variety associated with the syphilis, sycosis, or tubercular miasms. Indeed, patients requiring *Psorinum* are often victims of elusive complaints with no observable cause or apparent pathological basis. All tests come out negative. But they still experience tremendous "dis-ease" and discomfort ("suffers much, but lives long": Roberts).

A word of caution is appropriate here on the treatment of eczematous or other acute skin conditions with this nosode. It is usually inadvisable to give *Psorinum*, certainly in high potency, as the first remedy. The effect may well be a violent exacerbation of the condition instead of its anticipated serene regression. Hahnemann himself warns physicians against this practice. "There are those who would like to introduce..... isopathy, treating a disease with the identical miasm that produced it ... But trying to cure with a human disease substance—for instance, using a *Psorinum* derived from human scabies to treat that same disease in man, or troubles arising from it—is going too far! Nothing can come of it but misfortune and aggravation of the disease."

A case in point was the man in his early thirties suffering from a raw, itching, "weeping," eczema under his beard and in the bends of his knees—perhaps exacerbated by many years on an unreasonably rigorous and unbalanced vegetarian diet with insufficient protein and other essential nutrients. Many of his modalities—the "autumn aggravation" (Kent), exacerbation from cold weather, hair falling out of his beard, and other symptoms—fit the *Psorinum* picture well, so a dose in the 1M potency was prescribed. This led to such a volcanic skin-eruption that he soon resembled some prehistoric reptile or amphibian just emerged from the sea, his body covered from head to toe with fish-like (ichthyic) scales which peeled off leaving open, raw, bleeding sores. The condition eventually subsided, after weeks of administering *Sulphur* palliatively in low potency, but the final cure was obtained, and the skin cleared, only by another dose of the potentized scabies vesicle—this time in the 30X potency. Thereafter the patient received a 200X preventive dose of *Psorinum* every year in the late summer, before the cold autumn weather set in, as well as a 30X dose of *Sulphur* whenever his skin showed signs of a dry and grainy or white and flaky eruption.

The remedy has further proved invaluable for asthma resulting from suppressed eczema—in keeping with Hahnemann's theory that chronic disease often arises from suppressed skin conditions. During the process of cure, therefore, to the patient's chagrin but the homoeopaths delight, the eczema can recur (in accordance with the first and third postulates of Hering's Law of Cure: "symptoms move from the

inside of the body outward ... and from the more vital organs to the less vital ones") and should be permitted to run its course.

A final pointer on the practical administration of *Psorinum*: this deep-acting remedy "may require something like nine days before it manifests its action" (Boericke). Thus, in an acute condition the physician may sometimes prefer to start with a fast-acting remedy, following with *Psorinum* to continue or clear up the case. And he should, of course, refrain from interfering with any aggravation ensuing 9 to 12 days after prescription of this medicine.

The theme of ineradicability is also mirrored on the mental level. The most obvious emotion associated with Original Sin is guilt, and *Psorinum* is one of the few remedies listed by Kent in the highest degree under the rubric, "anxiety of conscience." It is thus a good remedy to bear in mind for the patient suffering from guilt or remorse. However, guilt is somewhat out of fashion today, and "anxious oppression" (Hahnemann) is more commonly found, with its associate *fearlessness*, *insecurity*, and *dejection*, which could symbolically be associated with Man's fall from Grace, seemingly having to fend for himself without God's sustaining help ("feeling forsaken": Kent).

These emotions are accorded full coverage in the homoeopathic literature (e.g., "his ideas are sad and joyless; depressed in Spirit; melancholy, full of anxiety and evil forebodings": Hering) and are common to many types but in the following sections we will examine some of this nosode's more idiosyncratic aspects.*

Corresponding to the above-mentioned physical inability to escape from "stewing in his own [ineradicable] juices," so to speak, *Psorinum* is incapable of throwing off a debilitating anxiety—to such an extent that "the thoughts he cannot get rid of constantly reappear in his dreams ... [or] on waking, cannot get rid of the one persistent idea" (Hering).

A patient chronically ailing with constipation and frequent, waking at night, and who did not respond adequately to the more obvious *Sulphur* and *Natrum muriaticum*, was recognized as needing *Psorinum* partly by a recurring dream. He was always trying to convince others of something that was obvious to him but which they failed to understand or refused to heed. In his dream he reacted according to his normal character when awake, never taking effective action, merely pleading fruitlessly or arguing and explaining endlessly, and awakening in the morning tired, depressed, and hopeless of ever being able to communicate well with others.

Psorinum does not court martyrdom, as does *Staphysagria* and to some extent *Natrum muriaticum*, but he does feel himself a victim of circumstances beyond his control.

The challenge of deciding what in life we can and cannot control—of distinguishing "choice" from "chance" and acting on this awareness—is part of being human, and the various homoeopathic remedy types take different attitudes to it. *Arsenicum*, for instance, feels that man can or should direct the course of his life and often falls ill from frustration at inability to exercise more control over his own and others' destinies. *Psorinum*, on the contrary, harbors a subliminal feeling of impotence, of being helpless.

*The reader is referred to the numerous *Psorinum* entries in the Kent *Repertory*, ranging from the more general "fear of death ... evil ... misfortune," "anxiety about the future.... health," and "despair of salvation," to the more specific "fear of failure in business," "anxiety while riding [in a carriage, and especially] downhill," and so on.

Whether it be such purely physical manifestations as his uncontrollable asthma or hay fever which, while as predictable as clockwork in their seasonal aggravations and other "constants," he still cannot avert; whether it be his ineradicable skin condition, which cannot be washed clean; whether the odor of his own effluvia which hangs around him constantly; whether his intractable headaches and inability to recover from some past illness; whether the numerous restraints imposed on his life and activities by allergies; whether because "every moral emotion causes trembling [and he experiences] severe ailments from even the slightest emotional excitement" (Hering); whether it is a general tendency of the psoric constitution "to suffer more for less apparent cause" (Roberts) than any other constitutional type—everything conspires to inculcate timidity, apprehension, "doubt of recovery" (Kent), and, especially, a feeling of being at the mercy of chance.

The positive side to this fatalistic attitude is a mature awareness of the legitimate limits to man's free will and a philosophical surrendering to the reality that some problems have no apparent solution; some circumstances must be submitted to gracefully, in accordance with a higher law. Time and again the physician recognizes in the *Psorinum* patient this deeper wisdom, born of chronic ailments and patience, which contrasts, here again, with the combative *Arsenicum*—who invites misery by fighting unrealistically against any limitations on his destiny, or the *Natrum muriaticum* reformer who depletes his emotional energy by railing against a fate he can neither change nor accept.

Yet *Psorinum* can also be an ever-complaining pessimist and malcontent—perfectly exemplifying Emerson's assertion that, "Discontent is want of self-reliance, it is infirmity of will." He feels imposed upon by life and his fellow humans and never tires of pointing this out to others. Duress, combined with inherent weakness and numerous environmental sensitivities, can provoke "irritability" (Kent) — whether on awakening, at night, from heat, on being subjected to pressure, or from other causes, and sometimes emotional *lability*: "quick changes of moods ... sudden transition from cheerfulness to sadness, or vexatious without cause" (Hahnemann). Occasionally, too, he is less sinned against than sinner: "quarrelsome" (Kent), "very disagreeable ... extremely ill-humored ... intolerably self-willed, and annoys those around him":(Hering). But, although he may evince "attacks of passion resembling frenzy" (Hahnemann), they are elicited only when he is quite distraught, and later he feels guilty about them ("outbursts of anger are drowned in remorse": Ortega). Hence they are not an integral part of his nature (as are the tantrums of *Tuberculinum*).

Other patients in the *Psorinum* mode may not complain but rather display a needless diffidence and faint-heartedness, being frightened of their own shadow. Such an attitude breeds "irresolution" (Kent), so that merely making decisions fatigues him. Depression saps his energy ("I feel so low, I have to physically lie down") and prevents him from even rising in the morning ("desires to remain in bed": Kent) which contributes to the picture of indolence. The portrait of Goncharov's Oblomov taking the best part of the morning to get out of bed and put on his dressing gown (see the *Calcarea carbonica* chapter) suggests an underlying psoric miasm.*

Whichever impression the patient projects— whether victim or merely lacking willpower—the *Psorinum* type is more conscious of being affected by his environment (and fate) than of acting on it. Courage, confidence, and resolution are not inborn but must be gained through repeated trials. Running through all of this is the fear of

*Boericke refers to *Calcarea* as "the great Hahnemannian antipsoric." Another unusual mental symptom common to these two remedies alone is "cheerfulness when constipated."

making mistakes, being criticized, exposing oneself to the consequences of one's actions. As explained by an intelligent female graduate student, whose hay-fever and timidity had been substantially aided by *Psorinum*, "I used to fear to act because of all the possible ramifications. But recently I have realized that even if you don't act, there are consequences. So I might as well assert myself more and enjoy it!"

Certain constitutional types (*Phosphorus*, *Medorrhinum*) are willing to act in the absence of comprehensive knowledge, trusting that understanding will be generated by action and involvement. Not so *Psorinum*, who can bring himself to act only after carefully weighing every step and every conceivable consequence, knowing precisely where he stands and what he thinks.

The *Psorinum* type, then, is undoubtedly inhibited and frequently poor-in-spirit * The physician, in his heart of hearts, will sometimes wonder if some radical change, or a hefty jolt from life, placing his relatively minor anxieties and concerns ("dejection on account of ... trifling causes": Hahnemann) in proper perspective, would not be more salutary even than a homoeopathic remedy.

An interesting case was that of the middle-aged man or melancholic and retiring disposition, with incessant and lingering ailments. He was prescribed *Psorinum* 1M which improved his physical symptoms but seemingly left the mental ones unaffected until, several months later, he confided to the physician: "I think that remedy energized my spirits. For years my well-wishers have been trying to get me into group therapy, but the very notion of sharing my private life with ten perfect strangers was abhorrent. After the remedy, however, I concluded that it might be good for me to do the very last thing I really wanted to do. Such an experience is bound to be mind-expanding; and just to be inconsistent with my own nature-for once-might be liberating."

Thus, although this nosode is commonly regarded as the chilly *Sulphur*, the correlation does not necessarily spill over into the mental sphere. In contrast to *Sulphur's* manner of taking life by the horns and bending it to his will (this is how he takes recalcitrant ideas and molds them into systems), the patient who is emotionally or mentally *Psorinum* exhibits a timid approach to life and places little stock in free will or life's choices. Capricious fate holds sway, and he can only submit to its decrees.

Hence, the inability to act effectively, even when the individual is capable (*Calcarea*) and ambitious (*Silica*), *Psorinum* does not shirk responsibility and is meticulous in his work, but reluctant to take risks and lacking the enterprise to implement his ideas and express his true competence. Often he will

*One of the finer literary portraits of *Psorinum's* fears and faintheartedness is the valetudinarian, Mr. Woodhouse, father of the heroine in Jane Austen's *Emma*.

"[Since] his own stomach could bear nothing rich, and he could never believe others to be different from himself ... [when] he entertained, Mr. Woodhouse's feelings were in sad warfare. He loved to have the cloth laid, because it had been the fashion of his youth; but his conviction of suppers being very unwholesome made him rather sorry to see anything put on it ... and his care for [his guests'] health made him grieve that they would eat. Such another small basin of thin gruel as his own was all that he could with self-approbation recommend, constraining himself, while the ladies were comfortably clearing the nicer things, to say, 'Mrs. Bates, let me propose your venturing on one of these eggs. An egg boiled very soft is not unwholesome. Searle [the Butler] understands boiling an egg better than anybody. I could not recommend an egg boiled by anyone else-but you need not be afraid-they're very small, you see-one of our very small eggs will not hurt you. Miss Bates, let Emma help you to a little bit of tart-a very little bit. . I do not advise the custard'

"Me. Woodhouse was enjoying a full flow of happy regrets and fearful affections with his [eldest] daughter ... 'It was an awkward business, my dear, your spending the autumn at South End instead of coming here. I never had much opinion of the sea air I have been long perfectly convinced, though perhaps I never told you so before, that the sea is rarely of use to anyone. I am sure it almost killed me once. . I cannot say that you are' looking well at present...."

accept a secondary position for himself or be content with an unchallenging job; or, "if a businessman, he will search for an associate to be at the head" (Ortega).

Even in his creativity *Psorinum* does not usually display the vigor, intensity, and irrepressible rush of ideas of a *Sulphur* (also *Lachesis* and *Medorrhinum*) or the enthusiasm and inspiration of a *Phosphorus* or *Tuberculinum*. To quote Whitmont, "*Psorinum* may possess *Sulphur's* drive, but is devoid of vital energy to back it up, [and] the optimistic sense of attainment is lacking." He is lowkey in every way—in part because he is combating the anxiety or "joylessness" (Hering) that lie just beneath the surface by resorting to some creative occupation, or because his deeper understanding comes from the profound despondency out of which he has just emerged. His style is thus to plod along patiently and doggedly, polishing and pruning (even while anticipating failure; *Arsenicum*, in his reworkings, anticipates success) until finally arriving at that luminescent quality, that "hard gem-like flame" (Walter Pater), that marks the true artist or scientist.

In the face of opposition, or when he senses that change is necessary, he will argue, complain, and become irritated, but, like *Calcarea carbonica*, still cling to the status quo, however draining on his morale ("obstinate": Kent). Furthermore, he worries unduly about events which may never transpire, depleting his limited energy anticipating entirely improbable vicissitudes. Thus, although productive enough in his daily routine, he may remain powerless and ineffectual in potentially more satisfying areas of life. "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence," wrote William Blake; and, indeed, this attitude can lead to "disturbances of the mind and spirit of all kinds" (Hahnemann), and eventual development of *Psorinum* pathology.

An illustration was the middle-aged patient with Meniere's Disease. He was an accomplished editor in a reputable publishing house who shouldered many duties and obligations, none of which were particularly prestigious. Since a bout of influenza two years earlier he had experienced the characteristic vertigo with severe nausea, roaring in the ears, and loss of balance. He was extremely chilly and irritable, worse in the morning, under constant stress at work and disgruntled with his family, hence the first prescription was *Nux vomica* 10M. This wrought a major change for the better, and on the next visit the Meniere's symptoms were seventy-five percent improved. Eventually, however, the effect of the *Nux vomica* wore off, and despite several changes of potency, the patient remained only about fifty percent improved.

Then *Sulphur*, the natural complement to *Nux vomica* (where *Nux* is present, can *Sulphur* be far behind?), was recruited, and again there was a seventy-five percent improvement in the frequency and severity of his episodes. But the physician sought a better cure. Deeper probing elicited the (for the patient) frightening admission of occasional stitches of pain around the heart. This was viewed by the physician as a tempered version of *Psorinum's* "believes stitches in the heart will kill him if they do

[His "tender habits," which required him to have a fire even in the summer, prompt Mr. Woodhouse to comment on a portrait drawn by Emma.] "It is very pretty ... The only thing I do not thoroughly like is that she seems to be sitting out of doors, with only a little shawl over her shoulders—and it makes one think, she must catch cold."

'But my dear papa, it is supposed to be summer: a warm clay in summer. Look at the tree.'

'But it is never safe to sit out of doors, my dear.'

'You must not stay out late [he admonishes his grown daughter]. You will get very tired when the tea is over.'

'But you would not wish me to come away before I am Papa?'

'Oh, no, my love; but you will soon be tired. There will be a great many people talking at once. You will not like the noise. [recall Hahnemann's aggravation from "the loud talking of several people at the same time."]

'But, my dear Sir, [says Mr. Weston], if Emma comes away early, it will break up the party.'

'And no great harm if it does,' said Mr. Woodhouse. 'The sooner every party breaks up, the better.'

not cease" (Hering). Again, Hering's additional *Psorinum* symptom, "vertigo mornings; objects seem to go round with him, eyes feel pressed outwards, with confusion and drawing in forehead; with roaring in ears" and Hahnemann's "vertigo ... at the same time seized with nausea" fitted the picture closely enough. Most significant, however, was the patient's attitude. He conceded to being a defeatist at the office, one of the "worker bees" who feed the queen and support the drones-carrying much responsibility without commensurate recognition. Although fretting at these career constraints and resenting them, he took no rectifying measures. "Purpose I possess in abundance," he explained. "It's chutzpah that I lack!"

For all these reasons, also for his inability to throw off his disease even with the well-chosen simillimum, not to mention the nosodes unique ability to assist "when *Sulphur* seems indicated but fails to act" (H. C. Allen), and, finally, because Hahnemann, Kent, Roberts, and other faithful adherents of the miasmatic theory unequivocally link vertigo with the psoric miasm, *Psorinum* 10M was prescribed.

Some psychologists associate chronic vertigo, in the absence of discernible pathology, with a conflict between the individual's perception of how things are and how they should be. Ineffectually trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, his mind goes around in circles, leading to a feeling of dizziness.

In any case, the patient was now ninety-five percent improved physically. He also announced his resolve to assert himself more forcefully at work-to take fate into his own hands, as it were, and cease waiting for fortune to intervene in his behalf. While *Psorinum* did not make him exactly intrepid ("I will always retain the mentality of an underling", he admitted), he was speaking out more at work and less inclined to be a malcontent at home.

In fact, good fortune was added to his new resolve, and in an example of Carl Jung's "synchronicity," soon a rival publisher offered him a more prestigious and lucrative contract.

Psorinum's defeatism and inhibitions are, admittedly, often unconscious, the patient being aware merely of a vague depression or discouragement, a "Why bother?" feeling and lack of energy or enterprise ("I feel like a half-sunken log!"). Or his formerly lively interest in life starts to dwindle ('. disinclination to work in persons who else are most industrious; no impulse to occupy himself, but rather the most decided repugnance thereto"; Hahnemann); or his concentration gives way ("vanishing of thoughts"; Kent). But the homoeopathic nosodes are well suited to address the unconscious psychological levels, and, especially in the *Psorinum* patient, to strengthen his ability to recognize "choices," to shape his own destiny, and, in a word, to exercise that equally fundamental aspect of human nature-his free will.

There is one "strange, rare, and peculiar" symptom 'which seemingly legitimizes *Psorinum*'s feeling of being the victim of fate: this type never feels better than the day before, or just prior to, some acute illness (feels unusually well day before attack": H C. Allen)

If a radiant and optimistic *Psorinum* patient confides that he has not experienced his customary headache, sinus condition, bronchitis, or eczema for the longest time, and that lately, in particular, he has had a wonderful sense of well-being, he is sure to relapse with his preferred illness the very next day-as though chastised for presuming to believe himself cured. When this happens repeatedly, even the most sanguine and equable temperament becomes wary.

"Yes, I have been feeling better these past few weeks," he allows in a barely audible whisper, then immediately appends superstitiously, "But who knows how

long it will last? Let's not talk about it, so as not to arouse the notice of the capricious gods."

Extrapolating from this phenomenon, the individual then becomes generally mistrustful of good fortune or achievement and may lapse into pessimism. Even when everything is going satisfactorily, apprehension prevents him from enjoying attachments or accomplishment ("he fears he will fail in business or that he will end in the poorhouse"; Hering; "he takes no joy in his family and has no realization of benefit, , . he feels that these are not for him": Kent).^{*} He knows something will happen to mar his success and extinguish his hopes. What for others is "the light at the end of the tunnel" is for *Psorinum*, indeed, the headlight of the express train bearing down on him at full speed! Yet, paradoxically, to the homoeopathic prescriber this very symptom is a beacon of hope, since it strongly indicates the curative remedy.

His "hopelessness" (Kent) may prevent him from even envisaging emerging from the black shroud that surrounds him. Characteristically, the individual trying to arrive at some difficult or unwelcome decision will almost literally thrash around like a fish out of water as his despair augments: "walks up and down his room, wringing his hands and moaning continually, 'Oh, such anguish! Oh, such anguish!' ... Is so downhearted she could commit suicide" (Hering); other gestures of the distraught *Psorinum* are 'grasping and reaching at something' and, if demented, "picking at bedclothes" (Kent). Boenninghausen lists only *Aurum metallicum*, *Ignatia*, and *Psorinum* in the highest degree under the rubric, "Despair," while in Boger's Repertory the latter stands alone. In Chronic Diseases, Volume I, Hahnemann devotes a lengthy footnote (in true *Sulphur* fashion) to chronic depression, analyzing it in terms of an inherited psoric miasm, in cases where sadness, dejection, ennui persist long after the source of the irritation, stress, or unhappiness has been removed (the psychological equivalent of the "never well since" syndrome).^{**} Thus, when other remedies fail, *Psorinum* should always be kept in mind both for chronic despondency ("It's been so long since I've been happy that I've forgotten what it feels like!") and for acutely suicidal anguish and despair.

This nosode repeatedly reminds both physician and patient that, while life is fraught with hardship and sorrow there is also grace to which one remains receptive through courage and by trusting the homoeopathic remedy.

^{*} *Psorinum* ranks as high as the male *Nux vomica* and the female *Sepia*, and *Arsenicum album* of either sex, for "fear of poverty" (Kent; see also *Bryonia* and *Calcarea carbonica*). And, on the general theme of "acquisitiveness," while not immune to the charm of finding a bargain or getting something for nothing, *Psorinum* does not take the same delight in it as *Sulphur* or *Arsenicum*.

^{**} Hahnemann wrote in 1828, long before psychology or psychoanalysis:

"I now pass to the other hindrance to the cure of chronic diseases which must be avoided as far as possible- ... An innocent man can, with less injury to his life, pass ten years in bodily torments in the Bastille or on the galleys rather than pass some months in all bodily comfort in an unhappy marriage or with a remorseful conscience...

By far the most frequent excitement of the slumbering psora into chronic disease, and the most frequent aggravation of chronic ailments already existing, are caused by grief and vexation.

Uninterrupted grief and vexation increase even the smallest traces of slumbering psora into more severe symptoms, and they then develop these into an outbreak of all imaginable chronic sufferings more certainly and more frequently than all other injurious influences operating on the human organism in an average human life." (Chronic Diseases, I, 112-113)

Many *Psorinum* patients, to be sure, exhibit only traces of the fearfulness or despondency described above, but even in his "cheerfulness" (Kent) and optimism this type often remains reserved and self-contained; his quiet independence is the polar opposite of the more extroverted, dependent, and attention-seeking *Tuberculinum*. Like *Silica*, *Lycopodium*, or *Natrum muriaticum*, he keeps his own counsel, is generally "contemplative" and "introspective" (Ortega). Yet his emotions do find an outlet in "sentimentality" (Kent)-not necessarily of the romantic type but the kind that is "touched" by children, home, tradition, the past.*

A forty-year old woman was afflicted with intractable recurring headaches which continually changed in character, depending on her monthly cycle, mental state, and the circumstances which triggered them. Hence it was difficult to find the suitable remedy. She also suffered from episodic attacks of violent itching without eruption (particularly on the upper arms) in bed at night, which prevented her from sleeping. Whatever her family or other difficulties, she certainly put a good face on them, being attractively confident, amusing, and uncomplaining.

Natrum muriaticum at first attenuated the severity of her headaches, while with *Arsenicum* the night itching abated substantially, and *Sepia* resolved some of her menstrual complaints. But none of these eradicated her predisposition to frequent headaches.

In seeking the most appropriate nosode the physician questioned her more closely about her emotions. "Do you cry easily?" he asked.

"I do, indeed," she replied. "Outwardly I am strong and confident enough, but inside I am all jelly. However, I don't cry from sadness, anger, or self-pity, but rather about things that move me in a pleasurable way: a sentimental scene on the screen or stage, hearing a sentimental story, remembering some sentimental incident, even at the horribly sentimental commercials on television-just press the right button, and] will supply the appropriate responsive tears."

Pulsatilla did not fit the totality of her symptoms, and it was *Psorinum* ("touching tales, yea, even thinking of them and recalling them cause a tumultuous excitement of the nerves": Hahnemann) that proved to be her simillimum.

This last case, as well as the earlier cited (fictitious) Mr. Woodhouse, introduce the final topic of this chapter: *Psorinum's* (or, for that matter, any nosodes) "umbrella role."

Because the nosodes cover the ailments of a much broader cross-section of humanity than do any other remedies (except *Sulphur*), their psychological portraits tend to overlap with many polychrests. Mr. Woodhouse himself, for example, is *Arsenicum* in his inordinate concern about his and others' health and anxiety about his diet; while his dependence and sentimentality are *Pulsatilla*. But he also represents the *Calcareo carbonica* "oyster without a shell" with it all its accompanying insecurities and limitations. And, most of all perhaps, he embodies the apologetic manner, mouse like timidity, beset by needless and constricting apprehensions, and "measuring out life with coffee spoons" of *Silica* (see the corresponding chapters). Yet, altogether, he is *Psorinum*.

*Toward the end of the eighteenth century the Russian writer, Nikolai Karamzin, wrote a short story, "Poor Liza," whose heroine, after being seduced and betrayed, drowns herself in a pond at the outskirts of Moscow. This sentimental romance caused such a sensation that for many years readers made pilgrimages to view the pond and weep into the waters where Liza perished. Literary tastes change, and today there would be less sympathy for the likes of Poor Liza, since our predominantly *Natrum muriaticum* sensibilities are more closely attuned to social issues than sentimental ones. But the romantically sentimental *Ignatia* and *Phosphorus*, and certainly *Pulsatilla*, might still feel compelled to make visits to such a shrine. Not necessarily *Psorinum* ..

One of the strengths of the anti-miasmatic nosodes is precisely that they aid the patient in whom one remedy picture is pitted against another. So when the confused and floundering physician finds that "many [remedies) are called," the one "chosen" may well be a nosode like *Psorinum*

Medorrhinum

Ever since Roberts wrote of the sycosis miasm, "This is the most markedly degenerate of the stigmata in its suspicion, quarrelsomeness, tendency to harm others, and animals..... criminal behavior..... resorts to any and all means of vindication..... it produces most forms of cruelty and cunning deceit, the worst form of meanness ... ,* the remedy *Medorrhinum*, made from the gonorrhoeal virus nosode, has been tainted with these same dark colors.

But neither the original provings by Swan (who introduced *Medorrhinum* in the 1870's), nor its description in the texts of Hering, H. C. Allen, Kent, and others, nor, most significantly, in the prosaic reality of ordinary daily prescribing, do the patients whose arthritic, respiratory, gastro-intestinal, genito-urinary, or head complaints are benefited by this remedy, fit this sinister picture.

While, as with almost any constitutional type, *Medorrhinum* can be cruel, degenerate, malicious, and the like, the average patient requiring this nosode need not bear the moral stigma of the venereally contracted disease.

As could be expected, the gonorrhoeal nosode abounds in ailments of the reproductive organs and urinary system. In men they range from the specifically "fishbrine" (Kent) odor, and yellowish or transparent color, of discharges from the genitals, to stricture, urethritis and other urinary disorders, prostatitis, induration or inflammation of the testicles, and other sexual disorders. Women have cystitis, uterine cysts, fibroids, and ovaritis ("for women with chronic pelvic disorders": Boericke), and numerous disturbances of the menstrual cycle: severe headaches prior to or during menses, great soreness of the breasts, excessive cramping or heavy bleeding with clots, burning and debilitating back or ovarian pain, intermenstrual bleeding, endometriosis, and other forms of dysmenorrhoea. Since so many variations on these themes are possible, no single case is representative, and the reader is merely referred to the well-documented male and female "urinary" and "genitalia" sections in the homoeopathic texts.

The remedy is called upon for many symptoms of "sycotic" origin-whether the original gonorrhoea has been maltreated or suppressed with improper medication, or transmitted in a miasmatic form.** It is also suited to the primary stage of gonorrhoea (although there is some disagreement here among the authorities, Hering expressly cites this use of the nosode). Whenever this venereal picture whether in the present, past, or inherited-is found at the root of the patient's problem, *Medorrhinum* should be considered as well as Hahnemann's two principal anti-sycotic remedies, *Thuja* and *Nitric acid*.

As concerns sexual impulses, *Medorrhinum* can display strong sexual drive ("intense and frequent erections day and night" Hering) and a high level of activity generally. But, in a classic polarity, intense preoccupation with sex can alternate with periods of deliberate abstinence; the type may lead an entirely celibate existence by choice, or he may be impotent.

Roberts' phrase, "all kinds of perversions," has conjured up the picture of homosexuality, yet, with all due respect to this distinguished authority, professed or

* Principles and Art of Cure with Homoeopathy. See, also, Proceso Ortega, *Notes on the Miasms*, "Sycosis is the consequence of excess pleasures, gluttony, alcohol, overindulgence in sex ... of selfishness, covetousness" etc.

**In this chapter "sycosis" or "sycotic" refer to congenital gonorrhoea or its long-term sequelae.

practicing homosexuality is found no more frequently in *Medorrhinum* than in other nosode and polychrest pictures.

But certain sexual ambiguities have been dispelled by this remedy, and *Medorrhinum* has upon occasion been selected as the simillimum for a physical condition on the basis of the isolated finding that, while apparently heterosexual, the male patient cannot get along with men because he feels too attracted to them, too ambivalent, and is far more comfortable with women. A case in point was the slightly effete man in his mid-thirties, married and with two children, whose chronic headaches had in the past responded well to *Pulsatilla* and *Natrum muriaticum*. But now they were back, and these constitutional remedies were no longer effective. When his personal life was queried more closely, it emerged that at work he had been subjected to subtly homosexual advances by more than one colleague. He was concerned at finding himself either attracted to these fellow-workers or too repelled and began doubting his own sexuality. Since he was unwilling to discuss the subject, the physician merely noted it. He could have wished for some unusual guiding symptom, such as "needing to lean far back to pass a stool" (Hering), to confirm his choice of this nosode but was willing to settle for the patient's thick yellow-green discharge from the sinuses when infected.

To stave off further headaches the patient received occasional doses of *Medorrhinum* in high potency over the course of a year. At the end of this time the doctor again raised the question of sexual insecurity, and the patient was momentarily taken aback: "Did I really have those doubts? Yes, actually, I did. But they vanished completely a year ago and have never been an issue since. I no longer feel threatened by my colleagues—probably because *they* no longer display any interest in me. Come to think of it, I should feel offended, shouldn't I? Anyway, I guess something in me changed."

Suppression or improper treatment of the gonorrhoeal virus, or its inheritance, also reemerge as sciatica, arthritis, rheumatism, erosions of the cartilage, and other bone and limb affections: restless legs, edema of the limbs, cramps in the calves and feet, swelling, and painful stiffness of the ankles, tenderness of the heels or balls of the feet so intense that the patient cannot walk on them, and so forth. Many of these pains and discomforts exhibit the nosode's characteristic general time modality: worse from sunrise to sunset, better from sunset to sunrise. This important symptom is a classic contrast with *Syphilinum*'s nighttime aggravations. Not to be disregarded, however, is the *Medorrhinum* early morning (5-6 A.M.) aggravation, as well as the nighttime burning of the legs and feet (like *Sulphur*, in bed he sticks his feet out from under the covers), and the aching limbs that make sleep impossible.

Suppressed gonorrhea can surface as the sycosis miasm in a myriad of other physical forms, and, what is far more severe, in a polar opposite or "shadow side" of the strong, energetic *Medorrhinum* intellect, with its often prodigious memory, it can resurge as a predisposition to mental illness, where "the [venereal] iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children," —perhaps even, as the Bible states, "unto the third and fourth generation."

Roberts claims that mongoloidism and mental retardation are linked with this miasm. And, to be sure, when prescribed intercurrently with the patient's other constitutional remedies, *Medorrhinum* has often proved of benefit in these tragic cases. Progress can be discerned at various levels of the afflicted person's development whether in learning to dress himself, improved bowel or bladder control,

an increased sense of responsibility, or comprehension of simple rules of behavior.* Less severely affected children—who are dyslexic, learning-disabled, or just "slow learners"—also manifest improved academic skills.

The following case—a brain-damaged boy of six—is an example. The condition had commenced at the age of eight months when he suddenly stopped breathing and had to be rushed to the emergency room. His life was saved, but the brain had been impaired, and soon afterwards the parents noticed signs of inadequate mental development. When first seen by the physician he was mentally retarded, living isolated in his own autistic world, emitting peculiar noises, talking disconnectedly and off the point, and with a two year old's sense of responsibility for his behavior and actions. He attended a special school where he learned little and could not relate to his peers.

He was primarily *Sulphur*, which he received regularly during years of homoeopathic treatment. His progress in developing mental strength was heartening, and, at length, although still in a school for the learning-disabled, he was able to take his place as a responsible and well-functioning member of his class and family. Certain intellectual disabilities remained, especially in mathematics, and his reading skills were below age level, but in athletics, certain simple technical areas, and ability to peruse the newspapers and sports publications, he was well within the range of normality. Although he still went off on a tangent occasionally, he could carry on thoughtful conversations most of the time and displayed a well-developed moral sense. He was as controlled and responsible as any other teenager.

But his progress was not uniform. Especially in the early stages of treatment he occasionally relapsed and seemed to lose ground, as is typical of such cases; his behavior degenerated, he made odd noises, and retreated into his autistic world. When *Sulphur*, and also *Calcarea carbonica*, *Lycopodium*, *Natrum muriaticum*, or *Baryta carbonica*, which are generally the most useful polychrests for treating mental retardation (also the less severe dyslexias, etc.), failed to operate, he was given a dose of *Medorrhinum* 10M or 50M, and the case once again jumped forward; furthermore, he now responded to the indicated simillimum. This illustrates what might be called the nosodes' "tugboat role" of assisting other remedies to do their work.

Medorrhinum's efficacy in different kinds of brain damage is soundly rooted in the mental picture emerging from its provings and clinical cures—notably Hering's comprehensive listing of the various defects of mind and memory: "entirely forgets what she has read in previous line; forgetfulness of words and initial letters; cannot remember names; has to ask name of her most intimate friend; *forgets her own name* [!]; cannot spell right ... cannot comprehend what is being said; momentary loss of thought; loses constantly the thread of his talk; in conversation occasionally stops, and, on resuming, could not think what word he wants to use; because he does not know what to say next, begins all right but does not know how to finish," and so forth; also H. C. Allen's "cannot remember the least thing any length of time; writes everything down of any importance; cannot trust herself to remember it" (and note the latter's comment: "*Syphilinum* forgets occurrences, *Medorrhinum* names, words, and what he is reading"). Thus the mentally deficient patient merely presents the remedy's episodic or low-grade weakness of intellect in a chronic and intensified form.

*For Mongoloidism (Down's Syndrome) see, also, *Syphilinum* (H. C. Allen) and *Carcinosin* (Foubister).

"Many of us have seen the symptoms of failure of memory following the suppression of a gonorrhoeal discharge," writes J. H. Allen, but even those who have not been so privileged can witness the reverse process: the strengthening of the memory with the gonorrhoeal nosode.

For instance, *Medorrhinum* was selected for the stinging, sticky, dripping, yellowish discharge from the penis of an otherwise healthy and certainly bright adolescent, once he had described his surprising lapses of memory for familiar names of streets and people, for what he had just read, said, or thought, and his use of wrong letters in spelling and wrong words in speaking. Both his physical and his mental complaints were resolved with this medicine.

Roberts and Ortega rightly emphasize the "excess" and "exuberance" in the sycosis picture. These traits—also "excitement" (H. C. Allen), "exhilaration" (Kent), and enthusiasm—provide a recurring theme in a portrayal of this constitutional type. Even if *Medorrhinum* starts out to behave moderately and methodically, somehow his actions take on a non-systematic, exuberant coloration. He takes the second step before the first, *hurling* himself into any chosen endeavor: "When my mind is on a particular point, I act as if it were the only thing in the world," a patient admits. "All other aspects of my life are neglected, sometimes to my own detriment."

Exuberance, enthusiasm, even excess, can be positive traits, encouraging high productivity and nourishing talent ("I don't know where my father gets all his energy," one *Calcarea carbonica* adolescent observed, enviously and admiringly, of his *Medorrhinum* father. "He sure didn't pass it on to me!"). But when unmanageable or misdirected, as seen most clearly in hyperactive children with uncontrolled exuberance, they become serious handicaps. *Medorrhinum* is one of the most effective remedies for the unruly or undisciplined youngster who is constantly touching things, breaking them, tripping over himself, and rashly lurching to do everything hastily and enthusiastically—as likely to hurt himself as others.

Such behavior actually reflects a deeper psychological stratum of the *Medorrhinum* makeup—the general way in which he processes knowledge and experience. In contrast to *Psorinum* for whom action is only possible on the basis of thorough knowledge of the situation, *Medorrhinum* must act out a situation before it is credible, or even comprehensible, to him; knowledge is born of action, or must first be experienced in action (the child cannot learn from being told that the stove is hot but must burn himself more than once before anticipating the consequences of his actions). Thus, he will not hesitate to act, so to speak, in the dark—in order to learn from the consequences what he really knows and thinks.

Another idiosyncratic *Medorrhinum* symptom is a deranged sense of time ("time moves too slowly ... as though things done today occurred a week ago": Hering). This contributes to his impatience ("is in a great hurry; when doing anything is in such a hurry that she gets fatigued": Hering; "impatience about trifles": Kent), and in part accounts for his restlessness ("he fidgets, moves around, and cannot keep still": Wheeler). He invariably attempts to hasten events to their resolution. Yet, while rushing to accomplish everything that is on his agenda (he "scarcely begins one thing that he wants to start another": Wheeler), worrying about all he has to do by a certain deadline ("anxiety if a time is set": Kent), and reminding everyone of how little time he has to do it, he is a procrastinator. "Why do today what can be postponed until tomorrow?" is his motto ("hating to do anything that must be done, even nice things": H. C. Allen). A methodical approach tires his patience (at best, never a distinguishing feature). He puts everything off until the last moment and must then operate in haste and under pressure.

A case in point was the sturdy ten-year-old boy with nocturnal enuresis. While *Medorrhinum* must always be considered for children who are "pale, rachitic, dwarfed, and stunted in growth" (H. C. Allen; also *Syphilinum*), there is also the opposite type: solid and compact as a Shetland pony, with thick skin and strong ("yellow": Kent) teeth-contrasting with the more finely built and delicate *Tuberculinum* whose teeth are chalky white and brittle.*

Sulphur, *Calcarea carbonica*, *Natrum muriaticum*, and *Pulsatilla* had helped only marginally, so the physician resolved to address the miasmatic level. Although *Tuberculinum* is the classic nosode for this condition, the boy's studying habits provided the guiding symptoms to the curative *Medorrhinum*. He was a notorious procrastinator, putting off all the weekend homework until Sunday night, then working in haste until the early hours of the morning. With his typically *Medorrhinum* intelligence and heightened cerebral activity at night ("exhilarated at night": Hering; also, *Lachesis*, *Sulphur*, and *Thuja*), he generally succeeded in completing the assignments on time and, despite the unnecessary pressure, or possibly due to it, got good grades.

Medorrhinum's intellectual output may be of high quality, despite unmethodical work habits and the last minute rush, because some mental process has been slowly unfolding on the unconscious and conscious levels; the subject mulls over, doubts, reconsiders, loses his ideas, recaptures them again, then sets them aside and leaves them to simmer in the back of his mind until, all of a sudden, they come together, and he experiences "excitement while reading [or] writing, [and] from mental work" (Kent), as well as a heightened productivity. Dostoyevsky, who wrote in frantic spurts of energy at night under extreme pressure to meet magazine deadlines and who could produce a nearly finished draft in one sitting from his long-simmering and detailed outline, exhibits a sycosis miasm underlying his *Lachesis* work habits.

But Dostoyevsky was unique, and *Medorrhinum* has been prescribed successfully for persons of similar intellectual habits who "got away with murder" as students, working in a spasmodic fashion, but as adults, playing for higher stakes and with more demanded of them, can no longer afford to wait for last-minute inspiration, then operate in hasty excitement. Now their rapid execution of half-baked projects becomes a positive disadvantage. Brilliant insights are no longer enough, and they must henceforth think more systematically and collectedly.

The hurried quality is often exhibited in *Medorrhinum's* very speech. He talks hastily, eruptively, in a compulsive and compelling rush of words, at times in garbled phrases, beginning in midthought, repeating himself frequently as if fearful of being misunderstood ("does not trust himself, so goes over the same matter again and

* The cases of two boys, both children of slightly-built parents, illustrate this nosode's variegated powers. The first, an eleven-year old, was tiny, and wasted in appearance, which had a deleterious effect on his disposition. To offset his half-pint size he became a mean-natured bully of anyone smaller. *Medorrhinum* 10M was prescribed for him several times over the course of two years. He grew a little, but not more than was normal. However, his disposition altered markedly for the better. Although he still could not stay away from smaller children, now he became their protector instead of their oppressor.

The second was a small and frail sixteen-year-old who appeared to have stopped growing once and for all (he was of a mild, retiring nature, so squashed by the other intellectually high-powered members of his family, his very body refused to grow). He came to be treated for chronically blocked sinuses and a stuffy nose, with post-nasal drip causing him constantly to hawk up thick, occasionally greenish, tenacious mucus. Because he also loved oranges, eating not one, but half a dozen, at a sitting ("desires oranges": Kent; *Medorrhinum* may also evince a strong liking for hard, green, "unripe" [Kent] fruit), this remedy was prescribed several times. Within a year he had shot up two inches, but after this tremendous spurt his body could do no more, and he remained at five feet, five inches.

again": Roberts). When asked for a simple explanation of some event, he is liable to launch into some long-winded and mangled disquisition which only adds to the existing confusion. He also loves "talking" the world to rights, and if this requires many words and much repetition, so much the better. Even if inspired, he often expresses himself disjointedly, with thoughts springing up from nowhere and ending everywhere.

The type's prolixity differs from *Sulphur's* steady outpouring, whose words are like the flow of water from a tap that cannot be turned off, also from the chatter of *Lachesis* who cannot close her mouth once she opens it. Both of these types, if interrupted, return to exactly the same point, even the same syllable, when they resume. In speech style *Medorrhinum* most closely resembles the burst dam of *Natrum muriaticum* who likewise talks in sporadic outbursts, as if this were his last chance to say his piece; and repeatedly goes over the same ground.* Thus even in speech habits, this nosodes overall pattern is encountered— *an internal welling up that finds urgent release in art eruptive and exuberant form*.

Medorrhinum may perform in spurts of haste because he fears that otherwise he will not only "lose his thread of thought" (Hering) but also his rush of inspiration. In fact, when the energy generating pressure, or the focus supplying intensity, are missing, the individual might be unable to collect his thoughts, has "difficulty concentrating his mind on abstract subjects" (Hering), and may even be hard put to express himself, at a loss for words or breaking off in the midst of a sentence.

This well-known state of mental "confusion" (Kent) can be observed in the physician's office. On the most obvious level, the patient can hardly even present his case. "He starts, then forgets what he was saying and starts over again telling his symptoms. is unsure of saying the right thing." Or he complains of a "sensation of life being unreal, like a dream"; or he fears (especially in the dark) that someone or something threatening is creeping up on him from behind: "hears whispering ... and voices beckoning; sees faces peering at her; thinks someone is behind her" (Hering)**. Sometimes the most ordinary word sounds strange to him, or it takes on such an unreal quality or so much symbolic meaning, that he hesitates to use it, or he repeats it in a wondering way ("familiar things seem strange"; Kent). If he is writing, he "wonders how the word how is spelled; reads a letter and thinks the words look queer; cannot read what he has written" (Hering).

Finally, *Medorrhinum* should be considered for the patient whose confused mind or turbulent emotions cause a "wild feeling in his head" (Kent) or who fears he is losing his reason: "desperate feeling of incipient insanity" (Hering).

This remedy has been called "selfish" (Hering) and "egotistic" (Kent). Indeed, when ill or in the grip of fear, anxiety, or depression, the type's inordinate egocentrism, solipsism, and selfishness can be a guiding symptom. But when he does give his attention, it is in a conscientious and unsparing manner.

An endearing example of this not-to-be-deterred from her charitable resolve was the twelve-year-old girl suffering from asthma. While *Natrum sulphuricum*, a prime remedy for children's asthma, had helped in the past, its effect did not hold; the

* Boger offers *Natrum muriaticum* as one of *Medorrhinum's* four "related" remedies, the other three being *Thuja* (naturally), *Baryta carbonica* (with its mental dullness, feebleness, or retardation), and (surprisingly) *Psorinum*.

**This symptom can be the concrete expression of a true persecution mania. And Kent lists *Medorrhinum* in a number of "delusion" rubrics, such as seeing peoples' faces, animals (especially rats') running across the room, the feeling that a hand is caressing him or being laid on his head, etc.

same was true for *Sulphur*, *Psorinum*, and *Arsenicum*. Questioning elicited that the patient, who was exceedingly fond of animals, entertained the fixed notion that the dogs and cats in the neighborhood suffered excessively from thirst. Every day, therefore, before and after school, she would indulge her passion, and implement her compassion, for them by setting out little pans of water in choice shady nooks and dutifully refill them from time to time. This ultra-conscientious tending to the pets of others had been going on for years with no sign of abating and directed the physician's attention to *Medorrhinum*.

Once on the right track, her concomitant symptoms and modalities began to fall into place. To begin with, this remedy has chest and respiratory complaints and ailments no less strongly than *Psorinum* and *Tuberculinum*. Then, also, the tip of her nose tended to get cold long before any other part of her body, and she was "sensitive to inhaled [cold] air" (Kent). Above all, in severe asthma attacks she breathed better from lying draped over a chair with her head down-an interesting variant of *Medorrhinum*'s time-honored symptom: better in the knee-chest position.

In fact, a patient's preferred lying or sleeping position can be crucial for choosing the remedy. Briefly, and referring only to the polychrests described in these volumes, *Medorrhinum* feels better lying on the stomach and especially in the knee-chest position (also *Carcinosin*, Foubister); *Psorinum* lying in a spreadeagle position; *Pulsatilla* and *Nux vomica* on the back with the arms up over the head; *Phosphorus* on the right side. *Arsenicum*, *Natrum muriaticum*, and *Pulsatilla* often lie in the fetal position; *Sulphur*, *Lycopodium*, and *Arsenicum*, when ill, are better lying half sitting or propped up; *Medorrhinum*, like *Arsenicum* and *Nux vomica*, also lies on his back with hands clasped under his head. *Pulsatilla* sometimes lies on her back with hands folded on her chest.*

Medorrhinum 200X was prescribed every week for a month then less frequently in ascending potencies. Over the course of a year it was the girl's principal asthma remedy and proved wonderfully curative.

The decidedly forceful *Medorrhinum* individual, with his fine ability to concentrate, can be a tremendous aid and comfort in any undertaking demanding vigorous effort. He flails away at a chosen task or idea until others are *forced* to attend to him, and thus leaves the imprint of his mind and character on whatever cause he espouses. But the dire warnings of Roberts and Ortega should be heeded. Some of these "sycotic" individuals, while socially agreeable and possessing a caring disposition, are nonetheless manipulative: it is instinctive they simply cannot act otherwise. In their own sight, of course, their behavior is justified, and they label as "hostile" or "antagonistic" anyone who protests their behavior and does not accede to their wishes or demands. Or, projecting onto others their own complex and scheming cast of mind, they then view them with "suspicion" (a trait attributed to the sycotic miasm by Roberts). Sometimes behind a seemingly frank and straightforward manner lurk such

*For a more complete picture consult the rubrics, "Sleep; position" and "Generalities; lying" in the Kent Repertory.

oblique mental processes that the resulting personality is obscured like a tangle of vines and vegetation into whose depths little sunlight penetrates.*

If a *bon vivant* ("fascinated with beauty, money, sex": Ortega- but then, who isn't?), *Medorrhinum* might possess a profound melancholy ("spirits in the depths, weighed down with heavy solid gloom": Hering) side by side with a Rabelaisian expansiveness and appetite for life. Guilt, remorse, and self-accusation ("feeling as if he had committed an unpardonable sin": Hering) are certainly encountered in this nosode picture. However, when asked if he suffers extreme remorse for some action or is ever overcome with self-condemnation, a patient is just as likely to reply, "Quite the contrary. Most of the time my friends and family consider me not nearly contrite enough and wish I were a lot more so!"

Medorrhinum's mental excess or exuberance even finds a physical parallel in the overproduction of secretions: profuse expectoration, catarrh ("gonorrhoea is the mother of catarrh": Burnett, quoted in Wheeler), nasal, vaginal, or urethral discharges (the nosode "often restores a gonorrhoea discharge": Boericke), and an "overgrowth of tissues" (Roberts): moles (especially on parts of the body exposed to the sun), warts, condylomata, polyps, and other fleshy excrescences (the word, "sycosis," is from the Greek for "fig wart"), thickened skin, and stockiness (in contrast to *Tuberculinum*, who eats much yet remains thin, *Medorrhinum* eats little, yet remains fat). Also thick crop of hair, bushy beard, or extra-full mustache suggest an underlay of *Medorrhinum* in the person's constitutional makeup.

In respect of symptoms, however, a completely different picture emerges. It is *Psorinum* who exhibits an overproduction-fat more than the physician knows how to handle. *Medorrhinum*, on the other hand, is the nosode best suited to patients 'with seemingly strong constitutions who display few or no symptoms apart from their principal complaint or who unexpectedly succumb to a serious disease (*Lycopodium*).** The illness or pathological process has been slowly building up inside and has had a long incubation period but is recognized only in hindsight.

A case which, conceivably, illustrates this nosode's capacity to counteract a threatening miasmatic weakness or "flaw" was the energetic man in his mid-fifties with a number of urinary symptoms: burning pain on urination with strong-smelling urine, a slow stream with occasional cutting pain, pressure on the bladder, etc. Otherwise he felt well and had no other symptoms. *Lycopodium* substantially relieved this condition, but *Medorrhinum* was needed to complete the cure. Thereafter, for almost three decades, periodic doses of these

* *Medorrhinum's* conniving and intrigues have their limits, however; not everything is permitted. Certain values must be respected, and certain rules of behavior hold good. Count Fosco, the villainous but fascinating protagonist of Willkie Collins' *The Woman in white*, is a fine literary example of the complex *Medorrhinum* nature. With his own blend of falsehood and magnanimity, moral refinement and cynicism, sinister intrigue combined with honest self-appraisal, absurd foppishness and childish tastes, along with a superior intellect, he retains to the end the awareness that certain people like the high-minded heroine, Marian Holcomb-must be dealt with respectfully, and that certain standards of decency and humanity must be maintained:

"On a calm revision of all the circumstances-is 'my conduct worthy of any serious blame? Most emphatically, No! Have I not carefully avoided exposing myself to the odium of committing unnecessary crime? ... Judge me by what I might have done ... Behold the cause in my heart-behold, in the image of Marian Holcomb, the first and last weakness of Fosco's life ... " etc.

** "Psoric patients have many uncomfortable sensations, such as sharp, cutting, neuralgic pains in the heart [and] think they are about to die ... but there is no danger; it is the sycotic ... heart patients who die, and then suddenly and without warning" (Roberts).

two remedies kept him in good health.*

Medorrhinum was selected to follow *Lycopodium* because the patient's seemingly healthy father, grandfather, and older brother, as well as several other male relatives, had all succumbed to heart attacks in their fifties. This heritage caused him anxiously to await a similar fate.

The extent of *Medorrhinum's* contribution to this patient's survival despite his heritage cannot, of course, be determined with precision, but the relevant points were: (1) the complete absence of physical symptoms other than urinary ones and (2) the indisputably calming effect of the nosode on the patient's psyche at a time of increased unease. Despite this (in his view) threatening sword of Damocles hanging over his head and suspended by the thinnest of threads, *Medorrhinum* dispelled all his anticipatory anxiety until, at the age of seventy-three, he began to experience episodic shortness of breath. Never completely believing that "those little white pills" might have played a substantive role in his unexpected longevity, he visited a heart specialist who put him through the basic tests.

"Your heart is perfectly sound," was the verdict. "When exactly is it that you suffer from dyspnea?"

"Whenever I get upset and shout at my wife, and sometimes when I walk to work."

"And how far is your work from home?"

"Thirty-five blocks-and up three flights of stairs ... "

The wise specialist threw up his arms in mock despair and without further tests or medication returned the patient to his family physician.

In this case the patient's earlier "anticipation of death" (Hering) fortunately proved to be wrong, but the type is subject to presentiments of various kinds and, like *Phosphorus*, "feels matters sensitively before they occur and generally correctly" (Hering). Also like *Phosphorus*, however, he can harbor "feelings of impending danger without a cause" (Allen).

A typical case in which *Medorrhinum* was given after *Pulsatilla* in a cure of cystitis was the intelligent, "sensitive" (Kent) young woman who suffered greatly in her relationships with family, friends, and colleagues because, from the start, she anticipated how they would evolve. She saw through people with incisive clarity ("sensibilities exalted": Boericke) and could anticipate all the potential difficulties. And when, despite all her own efforts to behave worthily and decently, these very problems arose, her relationships took on a *deja vu* quality. Even when the anticipated offenses did not occur, she still had to endure all the agony of presentiment. This state of anticipatory apprehension and unmanageable second sight ("clairvoyance": Kent) probably contributed to her poor health. It is not easy for mere mortals to venture beyond the rational and become privy to the insights of the gods. So disturbing to her were these incidents that tears would gather in her eyes whenever she spoke of this chronic problem in her life ("cannot speak without weeping": Boericke).

Just as in genito-urinary infections of the male *Medorrhinum* often plays the role of a deeper acting *Lycopodium*, in these same infections of the female it follows *Pulsatilla* well. Thus it is used to treat, and sometimes to complete the cure of,

*When the physician suspects a sycoric miasm but, through paucity of symptoms, cannot decide between *Medorrhinum* and *Thuja* for a lingering genito-urinary tract ailment or infection, rheumatic pains, or some mental condition, he might opt for the former if there is a clear history, background, or indication of gonorrhoea; for the latter if there is a history of vaccination engrafted on "sycotic" soil, as with persons in the armed services, frequent travellers to Third World countries, or heavily immunized children (see Appendix to *Silica* chapter). In any case the two remedies are complementary.

chronic conditions underlying the acute states calling for these two remedies. But *Medorrhinum's* mental state is usually that of a more experienced *Pulsatilla*, as symbolized by the gentle, dependent, and extra-attached Persephone after she has been abducted from her mother by Hades, and dragged off to the underworld; who, having learned of death and sorrow, has lost her *Pulsatilla* innocence and dependence and gained maturity. Similarly, *Medorrhinum* takes on the attributes of a more conscious *Lycopodium*. It is the hero who has lost his hubris and self-deception and anxiously senses himself on the threshold of a new awareness. At its extreme this apprehension can be described, in Whitmont's words, as "an unconscious panic ... as if a protective function of the inner life has broken down, allowing the patient to become a helpless prey of waves of anxiety, restlessness, and hurried impatience," or it can lead to "confusion as to his own identity" (Kent).

The specifically *Medorrhinum*, gestalt is not easy to establish. Yet the homoeopathic physician, in looking over his cases and excluding the routine chronic catarrhal or rheumatic conditions, will see that the remedy's restlessness, impatience, mental confusion, his "tremendous excitement at anticipating events [or] complaints from anticipation" (Kent), are often the outward expression of an inner sense of unease presaging some turning point in the patient's life or growth in his understanding: a time of disquiet before impending change. This resembles the anticipatory psychological tension before a thunderstorm (and, indeed, the nosode is listed under "aggravation at approach of a storm": Kent), with inability to settle down until, with a clap of thunder followed by a downpour (his surge of high productivity), it is resolved. And the "gathering storm" image—the buildup of pressure and sense of imminent change often helps to recognize the *Medorrhinum* patient.

An illustration was the young actress, rising fast in her profession, who had an inexplicable pain in the right knee. Outwardly she was *Pulsatilla*—sweet and *Phosphorus*—impressionable, yet neither of these remedies—nor yet *Calcarea phosphorica* or *Tuberculinum*—had helped her knee. Not until she admitted that underlying her easygoing exterior something was constantly welling up and pushing her on making her anxious and restless, did the physician recall *Medorrhinum's* "pain settling in some one particular joint, particularly the knee" (Wheeler) and pursue this line of investigation. "Haven't you already advanced fast enough in your short career?" he asked. "Couldn't you now move along in a more leisurely fashion?"

"I wish I could," was the wistful reply. "But an indefinable force is propelling me forward. I dimly sense that some important challenge is looming up—for which I am apparently being prepared. *Medorrhinum* 1M was administered, then repeated ten days later and again in two weeks. After every dose her knee became stronger, while she became more confident. When congratulated on her most recent stage success, she predicted, .. So far the world has only seen the heat lightning. Just wait until it sees the thunderbolts!"*

We conclude this portrait of *Medorrhinum* with a case which is archetypal in several ways.

A man in late middle age had suffered for two years from what appeared to be rheumatic pains in his back dating back to a day when he sprained it working in his garden. None of the more obvious back injury or arthritis remedies were effective, so the physician probed deeper into other areas of his life and personality, specifically, his feeling of self-respect and self-worth.

* Note her coincidental but significant use of "thunderstorm" imagery. It is possible that a sycosis miasm underlies "anxiety anticipating an engagement": *Argentum nitricum* and *Gelsemium* are the only other two remedies listed in the Kent Repertory under that rubric.

"What are you trying to do?" the patient exclaimed, "dig up and expose to public view all the litter, rotting vegetables and discarded tin cans of my nature? Well, all right, you shall have them! Some claim that my self-respect and feeling of self-worth are excessive and lead to disregard for others. But you must realize that I was fed this ethic from the cradle. It was taken in with my pabulum. My father's example, much more than any words, taught me that although self-interest might well corrupt character, it certainly *can* help gain the world's esteem. And you would be surprised at how swiftly this is followed by self-respect. But do not be overly concerned. Life has chastised me properly. I have passed beyond being motivated purely by the impulse to satisfy myself and have developed a reasonably mature and informed understanding of what constitutes the larger purpose of life ... "

He went on in this way, speaking openly, fluently, and intelligently, and with a *Medorrhinum* self-irony, about his character, boyhood, and work—all well and good—but the physician very quickly sensed that he was revealing almost nothing about his emotions and affections, his longings and desires. When asked about these directly, he replied, "I guess I am as happy as most men have the right to be. I am content."

He was prescribed a dose of *Natrum muriaticum* 50M which did not relieve his back pains but did release some of his inhibitions, and at the next visit he admitted that, although attached to his family and a dutiful husband, he was at an extremely stressful point in his marriage.

"But what happened two years ago when your back problems began?" the physician persisted.

"Two years ago? Nothing much. Just a progressive increase of tension between my wife and myself."

"Well, earlier then. Say, three years ago?"

The patient hesitated a moment and then started talking with a sudden rush. It turned out that this was the moment when he fell deeply, passionately, and tenderly in love with a much younger woman. It was the strongest emotional attachment he had ever experienced, and he had since then been consumed by an obsessive longing. Although reluctant to give details, he allowed that circumstances forced him to see her constantly and that this could not easily be changed. The result was both torment and bliss. She, in turn, was affectionate and friendly but quite unsuspecting of her romantic influence on him, knowledge of which would probably have estranged her.

Thus he was experiencing all the rapture and despair of a hopeless, unrealizable, but true love.

Although almost three years had elapsed, the yearning showed no signs of abating, despite his attempts to put the woman out of his mind. "I am getting too old and too tired to be racked in this way every waking moment," he commented wearily. "If only my back were stronger, and I could undertake some physical occupation to distract my mind from dwelling on her. But I can't even walk far, much less play tennis or work in the yard. Listening to music, reading, or the beauties of nature and art, just make me worse and more despairing than before; and because sitting is uncomfortable, I cannot even concentrate long at my job ['work impossible': Kent]. With this infirmity holding me back, how can I develop some new interest to help overcome my futile passion?"

"I don't like talking about this to anyone because there is just no point. It hasn't helped me in the past, and doesn't help now. In fact, it only makes it worse. If it weren't for the children, I would wish to take a pistol and end my life" ['suicidal disposition; by shooting': Kent].

Medorrhinum reserve is both an inherent and an acquired protective technique. Since talking or even thinking about his troubles only made them worse ("thinking of complaints aggravates": Kent), he combines *Natrum muriaticum*'s reluctance to expose his symptoms (and thus his soul) to the public gaze with *Lycopodium*'s preference for ignoring them.

In homoeopathic prescribing mental improvement often precedes physical, and this emotional unblocking indicated that the case was progressing in the right direction. *Natrum muriaticum* was thus repeated, in both higher and lower potencies, over the next few weeks. The patient's acute despair was modified into a lower-key despondency, but his back did not improve. Needed now was a nosode to encourage the indicated back remedies to work better, to alleviate the pain and allow the patient to carry out his self-healing resolve.

Medorrhinum 10M did just that-and more! First it substantially relieved the physical pain and thereafter the patient was able to respond to the other indicated remedies. Moreover, although he still had no notion of how his marriage would turn out, and his romantic affection still lingered strong, the fever had broken, and he was on the mend. Now that he had acquired some serenity he could take constructive steps to put his life back together.

The obvious question is whether the nosode should not have been administered at the start. Did it break through some impediment to cure and help resolve the case because its way had been paved by the earlier remedies or was it the simillimum from the start? Since every case is unique, one can only speculate. But *Medorrhinum*, like any nosode, often acts especially well when held in reserve, and is then brought out with a dramatic flourish.

Several of the major nosodes might have fitted this case. What ultimately determined the physician on *Medorrhinum* was partly H. C. Allen's keynote, "bears the same relation to deep seated sycotic chronic affections of the spinal ... system that *Psorinum* does to deep-seated affections of skin"—but even more the patient's decided mental improvement when he was by the ocean ("amelioration at the seashore": Kent). *Medorrhinum* often claims that his symptoms are better from swimming in the ocean or merely being at the seaside (one child's frequent canker sores and blisters in the mouth would only clear up at the beach). In response to the standard homoeopathic question: "Where would you prefer to live? in the city or the country? And if the latter, surrounded by woods or fields, in the mountains, by a lake, or at the ocean?" this patient will usually reply without equivocation, "By the ocean! I never feel better, physically or emotionally, than when I am by the sea. Just the sight of it can restore my self-confidence and serenity." The physical corollary of this preference is the modality, "better from dampness" (H. C. Allen), although Boger claims that *Medorrhinum* symptoms are worse from dampness.

This longing for the sea can be: explained in terms of the *Medorrhinum* gestalt defined earlier. "Deep calleth unto deep." The ocean's beckoning expansiveness and distant horizons suggest new possibilities to be experienced, unknown shores to be explored. *Natrum muriaticum* is worse by the seaside because the ocean pulls him back into the very "collective unconscious" which he is trying to escape; for *Medorrhinum* the ocean is a force beckoning forward inviting him to plumb new depths of awareness.*

*Yet here again (so that the discipline will not become too accessible to the struggling neophyte) *Natrum muriaticum* can be ameliorated, and *Medorrhinum* aggravated, by the seashore ("chronic rheumatism in joints. aggravated and ameliorated near the shore" Hering).

The *Medorrhinum* patient, we recall, has crossed some threshold and intuitively senses impending change. He is ready to confront the challenge with his usual energy, vitality, and exuberance but does not know what is expected of him and feels uneasy before the looming unknown. His restless impatience and hurried manner are a straining for resolutions whose outlines are still unclear. A psychiatrist might view this predicament as the straining of the individual to make contact with his inner "guiding" self-the pan of his being that enables him to work in harmony with natural law and his own destiny rather than against them-as symbolized by the vast and timeless, changeless but ever-changing ocean.

Tuberculinum

Of all Nosode, *Tuberculinum* possesses the most defined and distinctive personality*.

Frequently the outer appearance alone suggests the type. The patient is of slender build, with a narrow or caved-in chest; a thin or oval face frames small regular features; the hair is soft and silky (seldom coarse or kinky), the eyelashes long, the skin fine textured, clear, translucent, and frequently with a becoming pallor although sometimes freckled.

Certain characteristics of the disease are, predictably, manifested in the nosode picture. *Tuberculinum* often looks wan, anemic, and delicate; he tires easily from the slightest physical exertion ("lowered vitality": Boger). The frail nineteenth-century literary heroines who felt exhausted and faint merely from taking a turn around the garden and needed to lean on some supportive arm (preferably that of an eligible male) were manifesting the remedy's typical weakness ("great weakness in lower extremities ... so that she can scarcely walk": H. C. Allen). The individual feels better in the dry mountain air and is aggravated at the seaside where he is "worse from dampness" (Boericke).

Interestingly, in the nineteenth century tuberculosis was thought to be a "moist" or "humid" spot on the lungs, i.e., a disease of „dampness" originating and spreading primarily in the dank and humid habitations of the urban poor.

Despite a basic chilliness, *Tuberculinum* feels suffocated in a warm room and craves a cooling breeze, being particularly sensitive to any lack of oxygen in the atmosphere ("longs for open air, wants doors and windows open, or to ride in a strong wind": Nash).

A "relapsing" (Kent) state of weakness and debility is the modern parallel to the alluring languor of the nineteenth-century pre-consumptive. The patient falls ill with one physical affliction after another or exhibits "repeated exacerbations of local symptoms" (Wheeler). Although he may fight his illness with anger, irritation ("fretful, ailing, whines and complains": Hering), and exaggerated anxiety, he is just as likely to accept these periodic bouts with resignation for the rest they accord, the attention he receives, and the opportunity he thus obtains to try and fathom the origins of his interesting and often "obscure" (Boger) ailments. By taking to his bed he soothes the general irritability that arises from his weakened state. He needs the invalid's relative isolation to calm his non-specific fears and flagging spirits. Outside his sickroom the world is too harsh crude rough, and exhausting for his refined sensitivities

In the *Magic Mountain* a novel set in the rarefied atmosphere of a pre— world war I tuberculosis sanatorium, Thomas Mann depicts the particular hypochondria of the victims of this disease, the neurotic asthenics with their over-refined sensibilities,

* The principal nosode, *Tuberculinum bovinum*, was prepared by Swan from a cow's tuberculous sputum and pulmonary abscess. While there are a number of subsidiary varieties— *Tuberculinum Koch*, *Tuberculinum aviare*, *Tuberculinum residual of Koch*, *Tuberculinum Marmoreck*, *Tuberculinum Denys*, *Tuberculinum Rosenbach*— none have a truly distinctive personality differing from that of *Tuberculinum bovinum*. Only *Bacillinum*, from the bacilli of a mildly tuberculous human lung, which was proven and much extolled by Compton— Burnett, has gained a relatively independent status (but is still lumped together with *Tuberculinum bovinum* in H. C. Allen's Keynotes due to the close parallels between the remedies).

For a useful discussion of the various *Tuberculinum* preparations, with thumbnail descriptions of their principal characteristics, see Wheeler, *Introduction to the Principles and Practice of Homoeopathy*, for the *Bacillinum* picture consult H. C. Allen, *Nosodes* and Boericke, *Materia Medica and Repertory*.

their symptoms which are "worse thinking of them" (Boger), and the: *Phosphorus* like, ethereal, semi-anesthetized, not-quite-of-this-world ("everything seems strange": H. C. Allen) quality of the: sanatorium inmates.

Tuberculinum also presents a picture of intermittent fever slow-grade but persistently recurring (rising in the evening) encountered in children (sometimes with chronic diarrhoea) and occasionally in adults. Patients of any age perspire easily, both from the least exertion and at night, which leaves them drenched and debilitated. The remedy also plays a primary role in a variety of nervous afflictions and circulatory disturbances, as well as in different kinds of chronic headaches: the band-around-the-forehead type, the one with all-over tightness and compression, the one which settles deep in the eyes with a feeling that the eyeballs are bruised, ones at the base of the neck, with pounding in the temples, and so forth.

Most striking, however, is the remedy's curative action in various bronchial and catarrhal conditions. When the patient easily catches cold from exposure to the slightest draft, or merely from being out of doors a few minutes ("seems to take cold every time he takes a breath of fresh air": H. C. Allen), and his cold or catarrh lodges inexorably in the chest, or he displays a persistent hacking all-winter cough, a long-standing hard dry cough alternating with occasional violent paroxysms, or, conversely, a cough with easy expectoration of thick and profuse yellow mucus, *Tuberculinum* must always be considered.

For these reasons the remedy is routinely prescribed as a preventive— in the autumn, before the onset of cold wet weather—to anyone at risk of pleurisy, pneumonia, bronchitis, winter asthma, or other chest conditions (also *Bacillinum*). It benefits not only the "type tuberculinique," to use Vannier's phrase for the tuberculous looking patient, or the one with a predisposition to chest infections, or with a family history of tuberculosis, but also the sturdy, robust, full-blooded one, since nearly everyone has some degree of tubercular inheritance.

Children who have been repeatedly given antibiotics for respiratory tract infections ("can't get rid of one cold before another comes": Nash) will benefit especially from a dose of this medicine in high potency at the beginning of the school year (to be repeated in midwinter if needed). In fact, its value as a preventive as well as its efficacy in chronic ear infections, enlarged glands, tonsils, and adenoids, epistaxis, enuresis, eczemas, ringworm and other skin conditions, its service in young persons who grow too tall too fast without corresponding muscular development, cause *Tuberculinum* to be prescribed for children and adolescents more frequently than any other nosode.

Historically, of course, tuberculosis was a disease of the young, as reflected in the touching and pathetic death-bed scenes in so many nineteenth-century novels: Little Eva in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Paul Dombey in Dickens' *Dombey and Son*, Ilyusha Snegirov in Dostoyevski's *Brothers Karamazov*, and others.

Views on how *Tuberculinum* should be administered vary widely. The preferred mode of constitutional or preventive prescribing is to follow the classic rule of the single dose in medium or high potency ("It is not a recurring constitutional remedy ... you will want it once and then repeat it once more, but not within six months": Blackie). But some authorities call for it more frequently: "can be repeated every three weeks if prescribed on its own particular indications ... [or] prescribe it in ascending potency for several days in order to produce immunity to chest ailments in a child with a tubercular family history: give two doses of 1M, 10M, 50M, and CM on four successive days": Borland), and Clarke writes, "I have found *Tuberculinum* 30, 100, 200, and 1M [prescribed in close succession] the best general antidote to the

chronic effects of influenza poisoning," while in severe acute tubercular conditions some authorities have administered the remedy as frequently as 12 times a day for 10 days, until the crisis or danger is passed (Burnett). Others call for it on a monthly basis for recalcitrant ear, throat, or chest infections during the winter months, or until the patient is helped; from India one hears of cures of vitiligo and other intractable conditions by repeating the nosode in very high potency as often as three times a day for months on end! (!)

Such multiple prescriptions in high potency make today's Kentian purist (and this author) shudder, but Hahnemann himself experimented with frequencies of repetition ("If the doses of the dynamized medicine ... are small enough and if each dose is further modified ... by shaking, then even long-acting medicines can be repeated at short intervals, even in chronic diseases": *Organon*, Section 161; also 246-248). While such medicines as *Phosphorus* or *Silica* should definitely not be repeated frequently in high potency, the jury is still out on the moderate repetition of *Tuberculinum*.

A general restlessness ("intense restlessness; inward restlessness": H.C. Allen) often characterizes this constitutional type.

On the physical level, symptoms such as back or joint pains, headaches, asthma, and the like are often better from motion or change of position; the patient cannot tolerate standing still, or any fixed position generally (compare *Sulphur* and *Sepia*, respectively), while "walking fast" (Kent) or working Out of doors ameliorate. Thus the remedy has benefited arthritic or rheumatic conditions where *Rhus toxicodendron* fails.

A young and well-educated man with some professional skills, suffering from a colitis that responded only marginally to the seemingly well-indicated *Phosphorus* and *Nux vomica*, was recognized as needing *Tuberculinum* by his propensity to take jobs involving movement and work in the open air: messenger, delivery boy, door-to-door *Encyclopedia Britannica* salesman, postman, landscape gardener—anything enabling him to avoid sitting at a desk.

Because cool air and motion alleviate the depressed mental state as well as the physical symptoms, this nosode is commonly prescribed for the alienated youngster or insecure adolescent who spends his free time alone, roaming the city in which he lives or the surrounding countryside, rather than with his peers; also for the restless housewife who cannot settle down to any single occupation but pads around her house from room to room, repeatedly going outdoors and coming back in again; also for those lost souls who wander aimlessly through life, forever seeking they know not what, unless it be some emotional integration and respite from uncertainty and unease.

In illness the *Tuberculinum* restlessness can take the form of "symptoms ever changing; ailments affecting one organ then another.....beginning suddenly, ceasing suddenly" (H. C. Allen). For example: neuralgic pains start up when chest symptoms are relieved; rheumatism alternates with skin eruptions; headaches are followed by catarrh (or vice-versa); one day symptoms appear in the morning, the next in the evening; pallor alternates with a bright-red flush; sometimes the patient is thirsty, sometimes not; sometimes his appetite is enormous, sometimes entirely absent; diarrhoea (with no two stools alike) alternates with constipation; insomnia with sopor; hyperactivity with languidness; chills and fever set in when menstrual cramps cease; the formerly effective remedy will not act again for the same symptoms, and so forth.

A typical case was the woman who had cystitis whenever the weather turned cold; when this cleared up, she developed sinus congestion, and when that was resolved, she developed burning pains in the stomach; these, in turn, were replaced by

debilitating sweats with extreme weakness, with subsequent return full circle to the cystitis. Although each complaint responded well to the Indicated remedy (the cystitis, worse from intercourse, to *Staphysagria*; the sinusitis, relieved by a heating pad, to *Arsenicum*; the stomach (ulcer) pains, which woke her in the early morning hours, to *Nux vomica*; the debilitating sweats to *China*), these ameliorations were merely intermissions between the acts of her play. Only when *Tuberculinum* 10M had been prescribed two or three times a year for two years did the production gradually draw to a close. True to the potentized remedy's traditional curative pattern, the patient again passed through all the acts of her play but in an attenuated form. After some time even these "shadow" performances ceased, and she became a health woman.*

Tuberculinum's inability to settle down is seen also in the mental realm— as intellectual desultoriness, capriciousness, "dissatisfaction" (Boger). The prey ailing note is "changeability" or "variability" (Kent). The mind is everywhere at once, wandering off on its own, easily distracted, and incapable of concentrating on any single project or pursuit: "My interests are a mile wide and an inch deep," one patient lamented about his lack of focus and perseverance. When asked about his reading preferences, *Tuberculinum* might admit to an inability to get through anything longer than a magazine article. Any more substantial text causes his attention to stray, and he hastens to seek some distraction (here he resembles the *Phosphorus* child or *Sulphur* adolescent).

One patient with scholarly pretensions, whose headaches, brain fog, and hard pimples in the nose did not respond to *Silica* was recognized as needing *Tuberculinum* (which also has "crops of painful small boils in the nose": H. C. Allen) after admitting that she could not concentrate on her real studies and full-length books but preferred reading encyclopedia articles, excerpts from the classics, and, especially, Bartlett's Quotations.

Another patient admitted to being able to work on his studies only when on the move— in a train, airplane, or bus, waiting at depots, stations, or airports. "At home or in the library I cannot decide where to sit— here, there, or elsewhere— and by the time I make up my mind an hour has passed. I actually find it physically painful to sit and study in one place for long periods of time."

In the youngster this quality is seen in the way he picks up and puts down one toy after another, being unable to amuse himself even for any reasonable period of time. The older child easily tires of his own company and constantly seeks some new stimulus. Sometimes the mental restlessness manifests as a desire to get away from his surroundings (running away from home is a *Tuberculinum* characteristic).

The adolescent "schoolgirl's headache" (H. C. Allen) may stem from legitimate weakness or fatigue, but also from loss of interest in or "aversion to mental work" (H. C. Allen). It is typically encountered in *Pulsatilla*— sensitive, *Phosphorus*— impressionable, *Silica* refined young girls who were good students prior to adolescence but find their energy and interest flagging, their school performance deteriorating at the onset of puberty. Students of either sex who constantly change their field of interest and, although talented in one sphere (such as music) abandon it and restlessly try their hand at another (drama, visual arts), while remaining dissatisfied despite the change, or the older person whose former "vivid

*While the *Sulphur* and *Psorinum* patterns of cure are like vaudeville shows, where neither physician nor patient knows what will appear next on the stage, the *Tuberculinum* symptom— pattern is an entirely predictable merry-go-round.

responsiveness burns itself out and [who] becomes intellectually sluggish [while remaining] emotionally agitated" (Wheeler) might be displaying a need for *Tuberculinum*.

Or, in another vein, these patients will shop around for physicians of various "strange, rare, and peculiar" persuasions, less from an *Arsenicum*—like freneticism than from sheer restlessness and love of change. Some eager to experience new and varied emotions change friends and even —lovers with startling frequency. Or they develop powerful aversions to people they formerly liked, displaying a *Lachesis*—like sudden switching of affections rather than *Silica's* steadily mounting disapproval (*Natrum muriaticum* lies somewhere between the two).

Nor does *Tuberculinum* remain long content with his place of residence. A patient being treated for a rather ordinary dysmenorrhoea was seen to need this nosode from having lived in fourteen different houses, all within the same two square miles, over the course of twenty years. No house she ever bought, tastefully remodeled, and made wonderfully cozy could ever satisfy her (obviously) unending search for some unattainable security, happiness, emotional fulfillment. This state of dissatisfaction, with its attempt to "escape" from inner turmoil by a change of surroundings, is common to many, but her striving to appease it by changing homes frequently indicated *Tuberculinum*.

Others merely have a "desire to travel" (Kent), excitedly and fancifully anticipating every outing or journey. Blackie offers the familiar scenario of the listless, ailing patient in low spirits who springs to life and manifests boundless energy at the very mention of a trip abroad. Lethargic young persons react with similar alacrity at the mere hint of going to the movies. This type is easily bored with the same surroundings ("never satisfied to remain in one place long": Nash) and may refuse to go twice to the same place for a holiday: "I don't want to go back to Egypt with my husband again," moaned one *Tuberculinum* patient. "All those pyramids and sphinxes are definitely over-advertised!"

The young adult who needs to get out and "discover America," or the person of any age who wants to "find himself" by touring Europe or Nepal, prompted in equal measure by sense of adventure and agitated restlessness; expatriots who reside abroad but are never quite at home there either, and travel (à la Henry James) back and forth between their native and adopted countries— in short, all those who display a peripatetic or what Kent calls a "cosmopolitan" mental state—are driven by a *Tuberculinum* strain in their constitutional economy.

A remarkable literary portrayal of this *Tuberculinum* restlessness (not wanting to be tied down, needing to be on the move) is found in Marilynne Robinson's novel, *Housekeeping*. With haunting subtlety the author captures the profound effect of tragedy and loss on the free-spirited, yet not-quite-of-this-world *Phosphorus* /*Tuberculinum* Sylvie Fisher— who, sensing too acutely the ephemeral nature of all phenomena (including the stability of home and human ties), rejecting the most basic amenities of life, becomes an itinerant worker or a "transient," spending her life jumping and riding freight cars.

Rather than a desire for independence or new stimuli, *Tuberculinum's* true motivation is sometimes found, then, in unfulfilled yearnings and unsatisfied hopes or expectations; he travels for distraction and to kill time. The roving restless spirit forever seeking contentment in some other place is reminiscent of the nineteenth century tuberculosis patient's "exile" from his community as he sought betterment, or even cure, in a healthier foreign country, a sanatorium with drier air, or in an)' escape from the constraints of everyday reality.

Robert Louis Stevenson, whose health from youth was undermined by a tuberculosis diathesis, and whose restless nomadic lifestyle epitomized that of the tubercular "romantic exile," wrote: "For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move."

If *Tuberculinum* cannot afford to travel physically, he travels in his mind: reading the *National Geographic Magazine*, perusing travel books, or mesmerizedly watching travelogues on television. And often women love to work in Travel Agencies for the opportunities it offers them to visit new places.

The type may also frequently change career or occupation. Patients admit to never having held a full-time position for more than a year or two since leaving college. Or, "I've been in semi-retirement," he will say (meaning no 9-5 job), "for twenty-three years." Any routine makes them feel tied down, their freedom unbearably curtailed. This is no reflection on their competence or intellectual acuity, no indication (necessarily) of superficiality— in fact, by engaging in the most varied professions, these individuals will often have extraordinarily rich and productive careers— but is testimony to the underlying tubercular miasm.

On the other hand: sometimes this restlessness can prevent the type from completing the work he undertakes. A teacher who should be preparing his lectures will run around museums, visit friends, or read extraneous matter— anything rather than sit still and tackle the serious business at hand.

Such restlessness, agitation, dissatisfaction and changeability— in relationships, vocation, residence, sphere of interest—is reminiscent of Montaigne's image of birds and a cage: "The birds without despair to get in and those within despair of getting out." He was speaking of marriage, but the emotional state of wanting to be where one is not, of desiring that which one does not have, or always to be doing something different ("nothing can please him": H.C. Allen). is applicable across the board to the psyche of *Tuberculinum*.*

Another prominent feature of this nosode is alternation of moods. Being one of only two entries under the rubric, "Mind." in Hering's Guiding Symptoms ("although naturally of a sweet disposition, becomes taciturn, sulky, snappish, fretful, irritable, morose."), it has always carried much weight in the prescribing picture.

This mental instability is not the suddenly contradictory mood of *Ignatia* or *Chamomilla* but a chronic, inherent tendency: accommodating behavior alternates with disruptiveness, tenderness with violence, restlessness with passivity, anger with indifference, enthusiasm with loss of interest, reliability with capriciousness, cheerfulness with weariness of life, febrile activity with melancholic resignation, purposefulness with indecision, need for security and support with the desire for independence, a desire for seclusion with eagerness for intense experience— making the individual a constant fountain of emotional upheavals.

The alternating moods can be observed from an early age. The normally attractive and affectionate child periodically becomes ornery and disobedient, exhibiting violent fits of temper that upset the whole family dynamic. He constantly wants attention but at the same time unreasonably desires to be let alone (*Natrum muriaticum*). He is quick to strike out at others, will bite at a restraining hand, or hurls

*In a short story by O. Henry, 'Little Speck in Garnered Fruit,' a gallant newlywed, zealous to please his *Tuberculinum* wife, tells her to ask anything at all of him. It is midwinter, and also midnight, and she asks for a fresh peach. So he rushes out and, some hours later, after an incredible series of adventures returns, battle scarred but triumphant, with the piece of fruit for his beloved. "Oh did I say peach?" is her capricious response. "I think I would much rather have had an orange!"

objects with a "desire to break things" (Kent) and to injure. The child hurls not only objects but also words, the most offensive, preferably scatological, ones he can muster ("desires to use foul language": Boericke), and certainly the frequent tantrums of the "terrible twos" -the violent outbursts of peevishness and fury from little apparent cause- yield to *Tuberculinum* as to no Other remedy, with the possible exceptions of *Calcarea carbonica* (see that chapter) and *Chamomilla*.

The following case is illustrative. A thirty-month-old girl with beautiful small "porcelain doll-like" features (which *Tuberculinum* children of both sexes are apt to possess), a cupid-bow mouth, and shining eyes-in appearance a perfect cherub-was treated homoeopathically for her exceedingly disruptive behavior at home. She was quite incapable of remaining by herself for even a few minutes and would immediately seek out and annoy other family members. This intractable behavior, her frequent tantrums, and her destructive behavior (kicking her toys to smithereens) had become notorious. A single dose of *Tuberculinum* 10M produced a complete alteration of character. After two days of severe aggravation, during which time the child yelled and screamed as if possessed ("shrieking": Kent), the tempest ceased, and the sun emerged from behind the clouds.*

She became cooperative and amiable and for the first time was capable of playing by herself for an extended period, looking at books, coloring pictures, and the like. There were no more accesses of temper, and her disposition remained equable for many months.

Interestingly, an "angry" red pimple on one cheek, which had been there since the age of twelve months, now went away. This sign (a remnant of the "hectic" spot of tuberculosis?) is sometimes a guiding symptom to the remedy. as is a "red stripe down the center of a [moderately coated] tongue" (Kent) or "strawberry tongue" (Clarke; also *Belladonna*).

Misbehavior may take other forms than destructive behavior: this remedy ranks with *Calcarea carbonica* and *Silica* for excessive stubbornness in a child. There is also a similar willfulness. The principal distinction is that the two latter remedies are content when the object has been gained, while *Tuberculinum*, like *Chamomilla*, soon desires something else. At times he is merely tiresome. constantly asserting himself by tactics of delay and procrastination; or, like *Pulsatilla*, he may plaintively and whiningly interpret not getting what he wants as lack of love.

This type can also be mischievous. In fact, a mischievous streak in children often signifies an underlying *Tuberculinum* diathesis.

One three-year-old with chronically runny and pussy ears was being treated with *Silica*. While the ears responded well, his character remained unchanged. Although not disagreeable, he was unmanageable in an impish way. For instance, discovering the potential of a really sharp pair of scissors, he began to cut tiny, almost unnoticeable, holes in the backs of the upholstered living-room furniture. Confronted with these misdeeds and reprimanded, he stoutly denied his guilt and blamed the family dog, Patches. He realizes that no one believed him but was sufficiently shrewd to sense that, unless caught in the act. he could not be proven guilty. No threats or punishment could induce him to change his story. And, to make it more credible. in the presence of other family members he solemnly delivered upbraiding homilies to poor dumb Patches. Recourse was had to *Tuberculinum* in high potency to prevent this merely mischievous behavior from becoming truly destructive.

* The period of aggravation is usually shorter than this-or there may be none at all.

This same puckish streak indicated the remedy in another child of four whose recurring sore throats invariably developed into tonsillitis unless monthly doses of *Phosphorus* 30C were administered during the winter. The physician did not want this pattern to continue indefinitely and bethought himself of *Tuberculinum*, being guided by the boy's talent at sleight-of-hand in cards. At an age when others were barely learning the rudiments of gin rummy, this youngster had become proficient enough to cheat. Cleverly diverting others attention by his humorous antics, he picked up and discarded whatever he needed. No malice was intended. The boy saw the exercise merely as a test of wits. If caught red-handed, he would chortle over how clever he was, and evinced equal admiration of others' ability to best him at his own tricks. In any case, the remedy strengthened his throat, so that he no longer required *Phosphorus* regularly, without impairing his essentially well-adjusted and fun-loving, albeit mischievous, nature.

Returning, however, to the question of changeable moods, even the basically refined and sensitive individual, if frustrated, angered, or depressed, can display violence—battering his head against something hard, putting his fist through a glass door or plaster wall, clawing at himself, tearing at his clothes, or merely "cursing and swearing" (Boericke) at others. The alternation of mood can go so far as to change the very personality.* A case in point was the woman, originally of controlled disposition, who was undergoing a nervous breakdown during menopause. Refusing all allopathic medications and demanding only homoeopathy, she telephoned the physician up to three times a day, talking compulsively for thirty minutes or more at a time, inundating him with symptoms and demanding a speedier cure. At the same time she complained bitterly, "How long must I keep on taking your remedies? I don't want to be dependent on them any more than on tranquilizers. Why don't you give me something that will *really* help!" Her diatribes ended with accusatory reproaches: "What kind of homoeopath are you anyway if you can't even help a routine case of menopause!"

The picture was *Lachesis/Ignatia*, but neither remedy was effective for long, regardless of potency and whether given in multiple or single doses, until the patient received one dose of *Tuberculinum* 10M. This not only stabilized her moods but enabled her better to respond to the other two remedies. The three remedies together helped her get through this period of her life which was so difficult for everyone.

This, indeed, is the classic role of the nosodes. Perhaps because they reach back to the patient's congenital state, his inherited illnesses, they work at a more profound level to stimulate and revitalize the body's weakened reactive and self-healing mechanisms. Not only do they act as constitutional remedies in their own right, but, as noted earlier, they also enable the patient to respond appropriately to other acute or constitutional remedies. *Sulphur* plays the same role, but some authorities have held *Tuberculinum* to act even more profoundly in certain cases and recommend its use "when *Sulphur* or *Psorinum* fail to relieve or permanently improve" (H. C. Allen).

Another typical case was the young woman whose amenorrhoea and periodic neuralgic headaches had come on with her mother's death eighteen months earlier. Because she had never been able to cry over her loss, *Natrum muriaticum* was prescribed—but to no avail! Nor did *Sulphur* give any assistance. It was *Tuberculinum*, followed by *Natrum muriaticum* 50M a month later, that brought out the healing tears, restored the menstrual cycle, and eventually resolved the headaches.

*This could be part of the reason for prescribing *Tuberculinum* to alcoholics when the more traditional *Nuxvomica*, *Sulphur*, or *Lachesis* fail to assist.

The *Tuberculinum* changeableness can take the idiosyncratic form of physical and menial states alternating. As the patient's physical symptoms improve, he becomes melancholic or irritable; and, conversely, with a lifting of the depression, anger, or frustration, he develops various physical symptoms—from dislocations of the back to eczemas, rheumatic pains, diarrhoeas, and, especially headaches. "When mania comes on in a patient with phthisis," Hahnemann wrote in the *Organon* (Section 38), "it suspends this disease with all its symptoms, but the phthisis comes back and pursues its course ... after the mental disturbance ceases."

A patient whose post-midnight sweats were so drenching that he had to change both his night-clothes and the bed-linen was greatly benefited by *Arsenicum*, but he then became unaccountably moody and ill-tempered, and his pleasant disposition returned only with resumption of the night sweats. So marked was this altered behavior that the family, with some justification, reproached the physician for using his *Arsenicum* to render the head of the household unbearable. This medical dilemma was resolved by a couple of intercurrent doses of *Tuberculinum*.*

Wheeler even cites a case in which successful treatment of a chronic intestinal infection with this nosode markedly lessened an author's creativity and flow of ideas. He suggests, "It is probable that a disease toxin may encourage ideas and images. It may even lower the barrier that shuts off the unconscious and plays a part in the 'inspiration' which is so intimately related to this part of the mind." But this case might have been a coincidence, and Wheeler's deduction influenced by the romantic notion that tuberculosis spiritualizes, etherealizes, and edifies its sufferer, rendering him a more sensitive and refined being. Fortunately, no other practitioner has noted any permanent lessening of inspiration, or of the intellectual powers generally, from *Tuberculinum* or any other homoeopathic remedy; while the contrary—an increase of mental power—has been observed repeatedly.

A contrasting pattern was offered by a woman suffering severely from disappointed love who found that during this time her usual sinus headaches had disappeared. Several doses of *Ignatia* were administered for the emotional stress, but the crippling headaches came back with her returning serenity. The physician then remembered *Tuberculinum* which was administered with excellent results.

Such cases are numerous and all point to an important law inherent in cure with the similar medicine: as a patient recovers emotional equilibrium or resolves his mental problems, the morbid force can move into the physical realm. The same can be seen to occur in psychotherapy, and in the *Natrum muriaticum* chapter we discussed how serious diseases can set in some time after severe emotional trauma—presumably once the acute grief or shock has subsided, and the patient has become mentally stable. Such a pattern often points to *Tuberculinum*.

Perhaps it was not an accident that tuberculosis ravaged the Western world during the decades when Romanticism, with its liberation of the passions and emotions, was at its height.**

*The *Tuberculinum* night sweat, usually without offensive odor (especially not the pungent *Psorinum* variety) and unaccompanied by fever, often "stains the linen yellow" (Kent).

**A reverse process can also take place: "There are many cases in which a life-threatening so-called physical disease—suppuration of the lungs, or the destruction of some other vital organ, or some other violent (acute) malady (e.g., during confinement, etc.)—deteriorates into insanity or some kind of melancholy or mania through the rapid increase of the psychic symptom and thereby completely removes the threat to life occasioned by the physical symptoms, which improve, during this time almost to the point of health or, rather, until their obscure continued presence can be discerned only by a physician who observes persistently and closely. In this way the cases degenerate into a defective, as it were,

Although the all-encompassing nosodes cover many character types, certain features of the healthy, creative, "cheerful" (Kent) *Tuberculinum* personality should be noted. The patient is alert and enthusiastic: once his imagination has been captured, all aversion to mental work vanishes, and he does not spare himself. Quite to the contrary, he throws himself with abandon into whatever he is doing, seeking adventure and excitement and determined to live fully and intensely. The events of his life now become of world shattering importance, and his ideas and inspirations can only be spelled in capital letters ("You cannot IMAGINE what a WONDERFUL job has presented itself I'm working with a SUPER director who REALLY appreciates what I have to offer. ... etc.).*

Some try to accomplish too much, dissipating their energies in the process. The dilettante who is talented in several spheres but unable to settle down and never develops a true proficiency, often displays a need for this nosode. Others exhibit fitful high energy followed by sudden collapse.

At times the young *Tuberculinum* presses against the limits of his strength and abilities, as if sensing or fearing an early demise, like those nineteenth-century composers, writers, and painters who died young (under forty-five) from tuberculosis or related conditions: Chopin, Mendelssohn, Jane Austen, Keats, Shelley, Emily Bronte, R. L. Stevenson, Poe, Chekhov, and the early 20th-century painter, Modigliani, whose portraits almost invariably depict the "*type tuberculinique*." Consequently, there may be a general acceleration of the life process, and heightening of its intensity, as *Tuberculinum* "hurries to live and hastens to feel" (the epigraph to Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*) before being overtaken by, and succumbing to, his "galloping consumption"**.

When the *Tuberculinum* patient defies these rears of early death and survives into middle and old age, he can be amazingly youthful and well-preserved. A patient in his mid-sixties 'who sought homoeopathic help for "overpowering sleepiness in daytime" (Boericke) and consequent insomnia at night, and who retained the finely chiseled features, clear skin, trim figure, and alert mentality of a much younger person, was contemplating becoming a "specialist on aging" (!) after his imminent retirement from a series of the most disparate jobs. He had already started organizing this new career, arranging seminars, conferences, and visits to old-people's homes where he lectured to the geriatrics most eloquently on approaching old age as the "creative culmination" of a process of growth and the "maximalization of one's potential rather than a diminishing of one's resources."

Tuberculinum's insomnia is often ameliorated by food, the symptom, "cannot get to sleep from hunger" (H. C. Allen) being well known (also *Phosphorus*, *Ignatia*, and *Lycopodium*, any of whom may be driven to midnight snacks). To test this

local disease, in which the psychic symptom, previously only mild, has grown to become the main symptom, which very largely supplants the other (physical) ones and palliatively allays their violence; in a word, the affection of the coarser physical organs is, as it were, transferred and diverted to the almost spiritual mental and emotional organs, which lie forever beyond the reach of the dissecting scalpel." (Hahnemann: *Organon*, Section 216).

*Tuberculosis is known to produce periods of euphoria.

** "From adolescence onwards, or even before, there is often seen a rapid ripening of brain power and any noteworthy creative gifts come speedily to fruition ... There is a prescience that life will be short;" writes Wheeler of the type's precocity and mentions the opening lines from a famous sonnet of Keats, "When I have fears that I may cease to be/ Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain," as the poetic expression of this attitude.

modality in the above patient, he was told to eat a snack every night for a week before retiring, whether hungry or not. Indeed the "night eating" (Nash) did partially improve his sleep. This symptom, together with an early-morning diarrhoea that "drives a patient out of bed" (Kent; the other two remedies for this condition are *Sulphur* who makes it to the toilet and *Aloe*— who doesn't), supported the choice of *Tuberculinum* to better balance his sleep pattern

As a rule, this miasmatic type has a capricious appetite or, like the tuberculosis patient, can eat much but remain thin ("emaciated ... while eating well": H. C. Allen). A graphic literary illustration of this latter characteristic is offered in *The Magic Mountain* where Thomas Mann describes in hypnotic detail the copious and elaborate meals devoured four times a day by the consumptive patients.

Another pleasing attribute of this type is a lively sense of humor. A ten-year old girl cured of enuresis by periodic doses of *Tuberculinum* 1M used to warn her father that smoking, coffee, and alcohol would hasten his aging.

One day he parried, "I'm not aging any faster than you, young lady. You are growing older every day yourself!"

"Not so," was the ready reply. "Once you're over the hill you start picking up speed!"

The girl had obviously read this phrase somewhere but with typical *Tuberculinum* quickness she had unearthed it from her memory and served it up with perfect timing.

Incidentally, this child who so fearlessly confronted adults parents, teachers, and anyone else with whom she could match wits—was extremely fearful of dogs and when younger became quite hysterical if approached by one. "Easily frightened ... particularly by dogs" (Hering) is a key to this remedy. When the drowning physician finds himself in a sea of non-specific symptoms ("straws"), it may prove a sturdy plank. The fear of cats is more problematic: according to oral tradition, Paschero and Hubbard held that this pertains more to *Bacillinum*, but Boger and others regard this fear as also specific to *Tuberculinum*.

This patient frequently exhibits emotional refinement (*Silica*, *Ignatia*, *Phosphorus*) and an artistic nature ("extremely sensitive to music": H. C. Allen). In the nineteenth century tuberculosis was associated with artistic sensitivity, heightened inspiration, increased spirituality, and the like.* Whether this is myth or reality, the *Tuberculinum* patient often presents these very characteristics, or at least traces of them. The idealistic yearnings of this restless unfulfilled spirit can often find release, and the mind find equanimity, only in some artistic pursuit. Then he sheds all vestiges of dilettantism and reveals a professionalism and industriousness equal to any.

Typical here was the lady flautist seeking relief for severe dysmenorrhoea. *Tuberculinum* was one of several remedies suiting her picture of "menses too early, too profuse, too long-lasting, and extremely painful" (H. C. Allen), but her history revealed that she had been restless and changeable, with difficulty settling down in life. "For many years in my early adulthood I avoided anyone who asked me what I planned to do in life. Until I was thirty-five I had no idea what I wanted to be or do and could not find any calling." Eventually she found relative peace and fulfillment, and freedom from melancholy, teaching singing in high school and giving private flute lessons. These symptoms alone pointed to *Tuberculinum*, but the choice was

*So closely has this disease been related to artistic proficiency that some critics have even ascribed a supposed twentieth-century decline in artistic and literary production to the virtual eradication of tuberculosis in the Western world.

nailed down solidly when, in response to a standard homoeopathic question about food preferences, she indicated that her favorite meal was breakfast: "An English type of breakfast with kippered herring!" *Tuberculinum* craves smoked fish, smoked meat and pork, also cold milk, and ice-cream. Hering cites a young lady who, during a nine-month illness, ate nothing but ice-cream.

Tuberculinum harbors a romantic side which, with the extensive coverage given this topic in the *Phosphorus* and *Ignatia* chapters and in view of the similarity, need not be elaborated on here. Suffice it to mention that romantic longings, yearnings, pining away out of desire, falling easily and deeply in love, the welling up of romantic feelings to the exclusion of everything else ("sexual passion increased": Kent), with inability to eat and sleep, are a prominent aspect.

Again it is worth recalling that tuberculosis was rampant at the height of the Romantic Era, that the liberation of romantic feelings coincided with widespread tuberculosis pathology, and that nineteenth-century drama, opera, and literature are notable for romantically expiring consumptives-heroes and heroines going into decline from thwarted love. *

Thus the myth of the disease represents an ardent seductive personality with heightened sexual desire, consumed by passion and an inner burning which parallels the consuming of the physical body by the burning fever with its hectic glow. In reality, however, deficiency in vitality and lowered sexual energy are equally characteristic, so that, as Wheeler observes, the type's "keen interest, almost obsession with sexual matters, is not accompanied with any sexual potency, and the clash between desire and power may produce an emotional conflict."

Tuberculinum's esprit romanesque, intensity of feeling, and passionate yearning for fulfillment are displayed not only in love relationships, but also (as mentioned earlier) in enthusiasms, abnormal urge for travel, adventure, artistic sensitivities and ideals, and especially in the capacity to hope ("hopeful": Kent) and believe that achieving his current desire will at last allay his discontent and inner agitation.

The stimulus of any new experience does just that. But "nothing satisfies" (H.C. Allen) him for long, and, with achievement or familiarity he again becomes dissatisfied, once more resumes his "romantic" quest for self-fulfillment. This is not the unexpected and quite unpredictable switch of a *Natrum muriaticum* but a quite predictable pattern of boredom, loss of interest, and discontent following the waning of some initial excitement.

At the root of this restlessness, desire for change, and alternating moods, lies a primal conflict between our two opposed modes of being: on one hand, civilized, controlled and cultivated behavior, on the other, atavistic sexual and other passions and energies. This is not the moral conflict of a *Lachesis*, as morality is irrelevant to *Tuberculinum's* emotional turmoil. The physical and mental pathology arises from an even more primitive antinomy of the human spirit— *the longing for security, structure, and restraint's excitement, adventure, danger, and emotional freedom*.** Since the latter are more colorful, they are usually better known to the student of homoeopathy, but the former are equally prominent in the *Tuberculinum* picture and essential to an understanding of its inner tensions.

*The prototypical work of literature here is *La Dame aux Camelias* by Dumas Fils (which provided the plot for Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata*).

**This may be Why the remedy can sometimes reach a deeper level in the patient than even *Sulphur* or *Psorinum*.

Catherine Earnshaw, in Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, illustrates these *Tuberculinum* antinomies in an archetypal form.* From childhood she manifests the type's extreme alternations of mood and behavior which cause her to switch back and forth between being a vindictive hellion and a sweet, sensitive, affectionate child. She also displays the type's willfulness and capriciousness, passing at times into genuine malice (as when she cruelly taunts her sister-in law for her unrequited love of Heathcliff, in the latter's presence), or violent tantrums where the remedy's inner urge to inflict injury on herself (beating her head against the furniture) and others (hitting them or pinching them painfully) is released into action when she is crossed or frustrated in her desires. Again, no heroine better portrays this remedy's high romanticism. "Nelly, you know as well as I do that for every thought [Cathy] spends on Linton she spends a thousand on me [says *Nux vomica* Heathcliff] . She has a heart as deep as I have: the sea could be as readily contained in that horse trough, as her whole affection be monopolized by him."

Yet, in true *Tuberculinum* fashion, for emotional fulfillment, Catherine requires the love of both the educated, intelligent, and tender Edgar Linton, and the outlaw, insubordinate, intense Heathcliff, just as she desires both the comfort and gentility, beauty and harmony, of Thrushcross Grange and freedom to roam the moors at will, wild and unhindered. The impossibility of resolving this emotional dilemma torments her into a *Tuberculinum* form of mental derangement and soon after to death.

In her final illness she displays the remedy's typical craving for cold air, as when she insists that the fatal casement windows be opened in mid-winter to allow her to breathe (of course, this is the physical expression of her psychological suffocation living with Edgar and without Heathcliff— of not being free to love and be loved as she pleases), and in her dementia she bites at or tears her pillow, and exhibits other forms of *Tuberculinum* violence, such as uncontrolled passion followed by weakness and exhaustion. The author leaves no doubt that her delirium is the result of the profoundest "melancholy [that leads] even to insanity" (Hering). She is so spiritually torn that relief and respite can be found only in death.

The *Tuberculinum* dilemma, then, consists in the need to fulfill both the civilized and primitive sides of one's nature. The conflict occurs largely at the subconscious level and, when thwarted, is expressed in tantrums on the slightest provocation, melancholy, restlessness, and alternating moods and modes of conduct. We are again faced with Montaigne's birdcage: the birds (passions) fight against the bars representing restraint, refinement, civilization, and yet, once released, prove ungovernable, destructive, and dangerous to the subject's health, and seek again to be structured and controlled.

But the homoeopathic remedies are directed precisely at this unconscious level. And the potentized tuberculin virus, like the other deep— acting nosodes, achieves its profound cures by addressing our archetypal conflicts and helping to resolve them.

*It is perhaps pertinent to note that Emily Bronte herself (died of tuberculosis at thirty years of age).

Syphilinum and Carcinosis

Two major nosodes remain to be discussed— *Carcinosis* and *Syphilinum*. While they cannot be given as extended coverage as the others, having been employed less frequently by this author, an analysis of several patients who have been helped by them will broaden our understanding of their mental and physical natures. The following pages, therefore, are intended merely as preliminary sketches, trusting that they may contribute to fuller psychophysical descriptions of these remedies by others in the future.

***Syphilinum*:**

This remedy (also known as *Lueticum*) has been thoroughly proven, and its physical symptoms are well documented. But its mental picture is handicapped by a dearth of idiosyncratic symptoms, and this void has unfortunately, been filled only too often with moralistic observations.*

The syphilitic miasm, even more than the sycotic, has suffered from identification with a physical or moral scourge. Not only is the disease viewed as a punishment for venereal sins and vices, but the miasm itself—the congenital weakness or inherited vulnerability— has come to be viewed in the same light, as if the scourge of the disease has rubbed off on, and been perpetuated in, the carriers of the miasm and the patients requiring this nosode.

Hence the picture of violence, cruelty, and vindictiveness, the "out for blood" mentality ("Now the degenerate, and criminal, and criminally insane are ... syphilitic," writes Roberts; and Sanchez Ortega in' a similar vein: "Commit acts of terrorism; rancor; hatred, wickedness, fury, the desire to kill, to destroy, contempt for others, unbridled jealousy ... etc. "). Possibly the picture was influenced by the violent mental symptoms that emerge during the last stages of the disease. But, whatever the reason, the sober reality is that the *Syphilinum* provings make no mention of any such reprehensible state (although, as with any polychrest, there are some undesirable characteristics, such as: "cross, irritable, peevish ... fear of going insane": Hering, "violence on being opposed ... craving for alcohol in any form": H. C. Allen), and the myth can finally be laid, to rest that the syphilitic miasm corrupts morally as well as debilitating physically, with the nosode picture carrying the same stigma.

One clear-cut case calling for *Syphilinum* was the charming nine-year-old girl affectionate, responsive, and anxious to please—who was born with two ureters leading from the right kidney. As a result she had chronic bladder infections and cystitis which responded to *Pulsatilla* and *Cantharides* on the acute level, and sometimes to *Phosphorus* on the chronic constitutional level, but the incidents kept recurring until she was finally prescribed *Syphilinum* 200X at regular but infrequent intervals.

The nosode was selected out of the widely held belief that a syphilitic miasm underlies any congenital structural defect or deformity of the organs, teeth, or bones. The patient may have a cleft chin or a hare lip. There are "small lunar clefts in the upper incisors, which are [excessively separated or] dwarfed in their general dimensions and converge at their tips; teeth decay at edge or gums arid break off": Hering); there is "asymmetry of various organs: (inc eye lower than the other, one ear larger or higher than the ocher" (Wheeler);

* Syphilis, in its secondary stage, is known as the "great imitator" for its ability to mimic numerous other diseases and conditions. Perhaps this explains why the nosode *Syphilinum* has so few distinctive mental symptoms and overlaps with so many of the polychrests.

"uneven pupils and strabismus" (H.C. Allen); a woman may have only one ovary and fallopian tube, a man only one descended testicle, a child is born with deformed fingers or a club foot, and so on. Roberts avers (admittedly somewhat questionably) that "Syphilis is the only miasm that actually destroys living tissue." Occasionally the *Syphilinum* child who looks somewhat retarded or peculiar, with a large strangely shaped head and small eyes, is actually precocious.*

The girl's only other physical symptoms were occasional "growing pains" in the legs at night (*Syphilinum* has "nocturnal pains in tibia; aching pains in limbs like growing pains": Hering), but she had one telling mental symptom. She was the child of divorced parents, strongly attached to her home and mother, and whenever she had to be absent from them, her insecurity was manifested in compulsive washing of her underwear, socks, and shirts. This prominent feature seemed comparable with *Syphilinum*'s well-attested "always washing her hands" (H.C. Allen) and offered further confirmation for the choice of this remedy.

The *Syphilinum* patient, in general, can possess small quirky fears and adhere to many insignificant but obsessive rituals: counting railings, parked cars, or how many steps to take before stepping off the curb into the street, avoiding the cracks in the sidewalk because of bad luck, and the like. One patient whose recurring eye infections were helped by *Syphilinum* spent every Sunday compulsively making up detailed lists to govern the following week's schedule (this nosode has numerous eye symptoms, from acute ophthalmia of the newborn to conjunctivitis, iritis, keratitis, and others).

A quite different example of obsession was the essentially *Lycopodium* attorney experiencing rheumatic stiffness of the legs together with mild tearing pains (*Syphilinum* pains can also be anything but mild: "burning like fire ... excruciating arthritis ... as if someone sawed at his bones with a dull saw": Hering). His mental symptoms were a weak short-term memory and forgetting names, while remembering well everything he had learned in the past; also the particular *Lycopodium* insecurity that does not pertain to the intellectual sphere (here he is legitimately confident) but reflects alienation from his own feelings or a lack of true emotional development. The physician essayed several remedies besides *Lycopodium*, *Sulphur*, *Arsenicum*, *Rhus toxicodendron*, *Kali bichromicum*— none of which proved beneficial. Then he recalled that *Syphilinum*, too, had the symptom "cannot recollect names, books, or places [and there is also weakness of memory for dates and arithmetic calculations] ... yet at the same time can recollect consecutive events and details which occurred twenty-five or thirty years previously, almost without effort" (Hering).

The patient was going through a "mid-life crisis" and sensed himself on the verge of nervous breakdown. In everyday terms this translated into an obsession with his health which was quite disproportionate to the severity of his ailment ('very despondent, does not think he will ever get better': Hering) as well as out of character. Several doses of *Syphilinum* 200X were prescribed and a few weeks later, when he could articulate his limbs more freely, he volunteered: "I understand that I have to break through some mid-life barrier, but, Thank Goodness! it no longer takes the form of anxiety about not breathing deeply enough, or needing to feel my pulse to

*Wheeler' offers Vannier's observation: "Children with remote syphilitic inheritance suffer from a disturbance of mercurial equilibrium. It is not only in slow and backward children that *Lueticum* should be thought of, but also in certain precocious children.

"The syphilitic type of child may thus be slow in learning to talk and walk, or on the Other hand be unusually brilliant, but (here we go again!) showing disturbing abnormal characteristics in his behavior, such as cruelty to other children ... I and adults) with definite artistic capacities show a morbid tendency in their works" (compare with *Mercury*).

check that it is not beating too rapidly, or constantly monitoring my heart-beat (also *Psorinum*: Roberts). As to whether I shall be able to raise my sights to higher things, time alone will tell!"

An even more singular case helped dramatically by *Syphilinum* was the man with a good heart but a pretty violent temper, who one day two years earlier had shouted so loud during an outburst of rage that he injured his vocal chords. Since that time, despite several laser operations, he had only been able to speak in a croaking rasping whisper which was painful to hear.

In *Syphilinum* the surges of passion do at times overcome moderation, common sense, and self-restraint, but this is equally true for other miasms and constitutional types. The first remedy prescribed was *Nux vomica*, which helped him control his temper but did not affect his voice. Next *Drosera* 30X was prescribed and remarkably improved the tonality of his voice but could not hold: he had to take it every morning, and, even in the higher potencies, the effect only lasted for a few hours. At this point *Syphilinum* 1M was administered ("hoarse, almost complete aphonia": Hering; "voice husky": H. C. Allen; "ulceration of vocal chords": Wheeler). Thereafter he needed only occasional doses of *Drosera* whenever he overused his voice.

Afterwards the patient, who loved to sing in church, would recount to all and sundry that his clear and bell—like tenor reminded people of Caruso. He was a man of artistic temperament with a vivid imagination, but the compliment to homoeopathy was sincere.

This may be the place to mention that *Syphilinum* is often prescribed for various kinds of ulcerations (not surprising, in view of the disease from which the remedy is taken)—on the legs, around the genitals, and particularly in the mouth. A woman who was regularly hospitalized for this last complaint (the inside of her mouth would be covered with "cancerous ulcers" [H. C. Allen] and looked like ground beef) was cured with *Syphilinum* after other remedies had failed.

Finally, a most severe problem that responded well to this nosode was a progressive muscular sclerosis (with locomotor ataxia) in an exceptionally courageous elderly woman who was not responding to her usual palliatives over the years (*Natrum muriaticum*, *Nux vomica*, *Plumbum*, *Staphysagria*, or *Picric acid*, depending on the changing pattern of symptoms), "The pain is nothing to signify, I assure you," she would stoically maintain to those around her, but her physician knew better. Since *Syphilinum* is a standby for what is listed in the repertories as *tabes dorsalis*—a tertiary form of syphilis which has the same symptoms of locomotor ataxia—and since the pain and discomfort were definitely worse at night ("worse sunset to sunrise" is a guiding symptom, contrasting directly with *Medorrhinum*'s "better from sunset to sunrise"), it was administered weekly in the 200X potency for two months. No remedy could arrest the inevitable debilitating process of the disease, but the pains were lessened and the sleep improved ("wakes after midnight and cannot sleep again until 6:00 A.M.; in absolute sleeplessness *Syphilinum* vies with *Sulphur* in producing quiet refreshing sleep": Hering), and thenceforth, in the nosode's classic "tugboat" role of enhancing the effectiveness of other medicines, the patient's customary remedies were enabled to lessen her discomfort.* Ultimately, with the aid of *Arsenicum album* in high potency during the final days, she died in peace and dignity at home, in her own bed,

*"Degenerative processes in the nervous system, such as Disseminated Sclerosis and Paralysis Agitans should be added to the [Luelicum] list" (Wheeler),

Carcinosin:

Carcinosin (or *Scirrhum*, as Clarke lists it, because the remedy is made from the scirrhus cancer of the breast) suffers from not having been proven in the comprehensive way of the early homoeopathic masters. Our knowledge comes from Burnett and Clarke who employed it principally for treating cancer (and thread worms) and, more recently, from Foubister who drew primarily on his clinical experience with children. Further provings must be conducted to elicit more symptoms, and more clinical cures must be analyzed, before this nosode can take its rightful place among the polychrests.

A main indication for this remedy is (predictably) a history of cancer in the family. But Foubister even prescribed it for a strong family history of tuberculosis, diabetes, or pernicious anemia, or when there was a severe whooping cough or pneumonia early in life. He also stresses its importance for patients who have experienced any childhood disease more (ban once or after adolescence

Mentally, *Carcinosin* is the earnest, responsible "preoccupied" (Templeton) individual. In "any patient where there is a strong history of excessive parental control and pressure.....or an excessive sense of duty" (Foubister), the remedy may be indicated even the young person takes life seriously— at times too seriously. "Today is the tomorrow I agonized over yesterday, and here I've emerged just fine. Why can't I relax and take every day as it comes instead of wasting all that emotional energy worrying?" is the patient's typical lament ("complaints from anticipation": Foubister; Worry at times amounting to anguish": Templeton).

This contrasts directly with *Tuberculinum's* attempts to escape the constraints and responsibilities of everyday life and his freespirited "Here I am, with an excellent college and graduate school degree, and should be thinking seriously of a career, yet my only ambition in life at this point is to wander about aimlessly, seeking adventure in some remote region of the globe, What a waste of a good education!"

Carcinosin's high degree of commitment and seriousness leads to easy assumption of guilt, in the physician's office this translates into guilt at falling sick. It is his own fault; his negative attitude has betrayed his body. If he had been less self-judgmental, more self loving, knew better how to "be happy" and was *less prone to experiencing all emotions in the form of pain*, he would not be ill.* *Tuberculinum* is the opposite: it is the body that refuses to support his' positive outlook. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.**

In the patient whose life has been one long hard struggle, or where there is a "background of prolonged fear and/or unhappiness" (Foubister) — as if all the grief and suffering of the world were piled upon and concentrated in this one individual-*Carcinosin* may be the indicated nosode.

An asthmatic woman in her thirties with a history of loneliness and rejection, who was currently unhappily in love, and who did not respond well to the indicated remedies, comes to mind as a typical *Carcinosin*— requiring patient. She was seen to need this remedy in part from a severe case of measles in her late teens, in part because she manifested the type's periodicity— its 1:00 to 6:00 P.M. aggravation

*It is perhaps noteworthy that the cancer patient is prone to take this self-reproachful attitude and feels in some way culpable for his disease.

** Earlier we noted how the rise of tuberculosis pathology coincided with the liberation of feelings, emotions, and behavior; certain physicians regard cancer pathology as arising from the opposite— a rigidity of behavior or suppression of feeling (see *Lachesis* chapter). Indeed, *Carcinosin* is repeatedly indicated in constitutional pictures displaying severely repressed emotions.

(Foubister). She felt despondent to the point of ending her life every afternoon ("tendency to suicide": Clarke), and until twilight came she would pace up and down, sensing a rising fear and panic and increased difficulty breathing. Then, around 7:00 P.M., her asthma would subside, and she would remain relatively calm throughout the evening.

Carcinosin was prescribed, following Foubisters recommendation, in the 30X, 200X, and 1M potencies on three consecutive days (to minimize the aggravation) with the most excellent mental and physical results.

A quite different case calling for this medicine was the middle aged woman suffering from habitual insomnia who came in one day for treatment. She displayed a vital forceful personality, was witty and original in her conversation, sharp-tongued upon occasion, and with high sexual energy—seemingly a candidate for *Lachesis* with a generous dash of *Nux vomica* in her makeup. But she was not responding to either remedy.

Deeper probing revealed that the subject had been pugnacious and independent from youth, rebellious as a teenager and young adult, and later prone to mismanage her emotions—not abrogating the rules of society or the laws of morality in any egregious way, but tending to feisty self-assertion. Her fighting spirit came through in her speech, which was peppered with such militant phrases as: "Let me marshal my thoughts," "My privacy was assaulted," "I was subjected to an onslaught of unwelcome parental advice," "My defenses were all lined up, when suddenly....." "I am a prisoner of my own strong affections," "I had to vanquish his tendency to encroach on my territory," "I became a victim of their selfishness," "My very soul had been laid siege to," or even, poetically (speaking of her son, the apple of her eye), "He is one of those cheerful natures of whom the sun has made conquest."

This fighter mentality has been noted subsequently in other patients who respond well to this nosode. Interestingly, physicians and laymen alike employ such militaristic expressions when referring to cancer ("the war on..... the crusade against ...victims of" etc.) more than with any other disease.

Because of her "*Carcinosin appearance*," her brownish *café au lait* complexion with numerous moles, which Foubister regards as a key symptom (also pigmented naevi), and also because he regards a history of insomnia, in both children and adults, as a primary indication for this nosode, it was administered in the 1M potency. Her sleep improved, and thereafter she responded better to *Lachesis* or *Nux vomica* whenever again troubled by this complaint. When they failed to act another dose of *Carcinosin* was prescribed.

The *Carcinosin* type, furthermore, can be accused of misdirecting his energies and carrying things too far: pushing too hard, expending undue time or effort on a job, hobby, or favorite sport. One patient who sought homoeopathic help for long-standing allergies and sinusitis displayed this characteristic. Despite his depleting ailments, his high energy resembled a small car with an oversized engine, and he followed a typical crisis—management lifestyle—getting involved in still more projects whenever under pressure. Not surprisingly he felt professionally harassed and chronically frustrated that no area of his life ever seemed to offer him respite. He was tidy to a degree; his office, desk, and attire were always impeccable; he had a forceful personality, loving to tell others what to do and to push them around; he was also critical, demanding, and impatient. Physically he was wiry, of slight build, extremely sensitive to both heat and cold and liked animal fats— all symptoms fitting both *Arsenicum* and *Nux vomica*

but which Foubister ascribes also to *Carcinosin* ("chronic sinusitis; fastidiousness; there may be a strong craving or aversion to one or more of the following foods: salt, milk, fat meats, fruit; the subject may be sensitive to both heat and cold").*

Rather than open the case with one of the seemingly indicated constitutional remedies the prescriber decided to experiment with *Carcinosin* 1M. The results were good. His temperament became calmer, and his health improved. When asked about this newly acquired serenity, he replied, "Oh, I just conceal my means better while commanding the same effects. But maybe this in itself could be considered an improvement."

This nosode remained one of his principal remedies thereafter. In the following case *Carcinosin* was selected almost entirely from the physical symptoms—"twitching of the eyelids as well as ill, other muscle groups" and (like *Lac caninum*) "alternating symptoms from one side of the body to the other" (Foubister)—although the mental picture, the ongoing *conflict between conscience and convention*, has been found present in others whom this nosode has benefitted.**

The patient was a Boston "brahmin" of advancing years teaching at a prestigious university, who was subject to various facial tics— particular, blinking eyes and a twitch of one or the other corner of the mouth. A certain rigidity of personality and outlook included by his upbringing hindered him from adapting readily to unexpected or unconventional situations. But, being fair-minded, progressive in his thinking, and intellectually agile, his mind and heart condoned what his sensibilities censured. In this case it was his good-hearted wife's eccentric behavior— her quirky, unorthodox "health" and "missionary" causes on the fringes of what was socially acceptable and, above all, her odd and unsophisticated friends ("little old Johnny Appleseeds running about in tennis shoes") who propagated these causes. Because his conscience had to respect what his taste and more conforming nature deplored (one could see him wrestling with his feelings when he spoke of her) he lived in constant tension. which finally came out in various twitches

Carcinosin 1M was administered and repeated several times over the course of two years, intercurrently with *Lycopodium*, *Nux vomica*, and *Ignatia*. These substantially improved his twitches, which now came out only under particular stress. Furthermore, his disapproval of the unconventional, instead of eliciting his former irritated or sarcastic comments, was now manifested only in a pained look or a sardonic raising of the eyebrows— expressing his wonder at others' choice of friends and interests, and his opinion that there really is no accounting for tastes.

Occasionally, too, in view of the paucity of symptoms in this remedy picture, *Carcinosin* is selected purely on the miasmatic etiology. Typical here was the successfully treated elderly gentleman, who was prescribed this nosode for his keratosis (lesions on the face) and arthritic stiffness of back and hips on the isolated finding of a strong cancer heredity.

A final case emblematic of *Carcinosin* was the young woman in her early twenties complaining of lingering tiredness, nausea, and dizziness, and a general feeling of disequilibrium, who was diagnosed with the Epstein-Barr virus. She was of an earnest "inquiring" nature, a utopian loner in search of a community or a cause, but

*Other *Carcinosin* sensitivities are: to the seaside (either the *Natrum muriaticum*/*Arsenicum* aggravation or the *Medorrhinum* amelioration, or "better on the East Coast, worse on the West Coast" or vice-versa), to being reprimanded, to music, and sensitive ("sympathetic") to others' problems.

**The eternal conflict between conscience and desire, discussed in the *Lachesis* and *Natrum muriaticum* chapters, also generates the *Carcinosin* pathology.

at present apathetic, chronically depressed, anxious for approval, and aggrieved at not obtaining what she felt the world owed her. Since she had not responded well to *Sepia* or *Natrum muriaticum*, her apparent constitutional remedies, *Sulphur* or a nosode were clearly in order.

According to Foubister, *Carcinosin* possesses *Sepia's* marked love of rhythm and dance, a sense of exhilaration during thunderstorms, and the *Sepia* and *Natrum muriaticum* dislike of consolation. The patient admitted to all of these symptoms, and *Carcinosin* 200c was prescribed with happy results: the fatigue vanished, and her spirits lifted.*

Emerson wrote, "God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please; you can never have both." *Carcinosin* usually opts for the former. Yet it is the remedy's function, part of its beneficial effect, to lighten up the patient's heavy outlook— so that he ceases approaching every issue as a life-or-death matter— and to offer him a modicum of repose even in the worthy pursuit of truth.

Thus, from the dross of venery (*Medorrhinum*, *Syphilinum*) or disease (*Psorinum*, *Tuberculinum*, *Carcinosin*), when prepared following the homoeopathic rules and administered according to the law of similars, there issues a stimulus that helps the fearful, confused, or emotionally racked patient to a more hopeful, balanced, or peaceful state of mind.

*Important in this connection is Foubister's conviction that this nosode is of supreme value in lingering mononucleosis (also *Cistus canadensis*). The finding may have been prompted by Clarke's listing of "glands, enlarged" as one of the few prominent symptoms of *Scirrhum*.

Comparative Materia Medica

Staphysagria: Indignation

In the introduction we describe several possible approaches to studying the homoeopathic materia medica

One way to achieve deeper understanding of a remedy is by *analyzing* the words which denote its leading characteristics, as set forth in the repertories and classic texts. For Instance, how exactly does the "indifference" of the negative, self-deprecating *Sepia* differ from that of the aloof *Lycopodium*, the depressed *Natrum muriaticum* or *Staphysagria*, or from the apathy of the formerly sparkling *Phosphorus*? Or what does Kent mean by "fastidious"? Why are *Arsenicum* and *Nux vomica* the only remedies listed under that rubric, whereas we know from experience that *Natrum muriaticum*, *Silica*, *Sulphur*, and others can also be "difficult to please, delicate to a fault" (Webster's definition of "fastidious")? One answer, suggested in the *Nux vomica* chapter, may be that the first two types are more likely to be fastidious in everything, while others are only so in some particular or chosen field.

The present chapter applies this technique of analysis to *Staphysagria*. It explores in depth one of this remedy's prominent component emotions—indignation, in all its implications, variations, and ramifications, as well as its relation to "indignation" in other polychrests. In this way a single precisely defined word or key symptom, coupled with a comparative materia-medica approach, helps elucidate the innermost nature and overall personality of a specific constitutional type.

In homoeopathic prescribing it is often difficult to distinguish *Staphysagria* from *Ignatia*, *Natrum muriaticum*, *Nux vomica*, *Arsenicum*, *Lachesis*, or others when the symptomatology is primarily mental. Which of these remedies is best suited to the hurt, angry, resentful, indignation, or otherwise emotionally lacerated patient?

Of course, the physician always relies on the totality of the symptoms, meaning that in a mental or emotional *Staphysagria* case he looks to the physical disorder: the woman's cystitis, the man's prostatitis, the tell-tale styes, the swollen or indurated tonsils, adenoids, or lymphatics, the stitches in the ear upon swallowing, the constant internal trembling— he even welcomes the blackened crumbling teeth, the sticking tearing pains in the heart, the exquisitely painful tooth or hemorrhoid. These are all valuable guiding symptoms. But if the physician facing an emotionally overwrought patient cannot find a good solid physical symptom to seize upon, he may be forced to have recourse to the *fine distinctions* among mental states that help differentiate a remedy from its closest kin.

Let us begin by examining "indignation" in phenomenological terms, analyzing how it is generated in the *Staphysagria* type. Kent points to suppression as one of the leitmotifs of its picture: "suitable in cases where complaints come from pent up wrath, suppressed anger, suppressed feelings." This trait was later taken up and accorded due prominence by Tyler and others. However calm and controlled *Staphysagria* may appear on the outside (often this individual is reserved and self-contained), however "cheerful, talkative, enjoying existence" (Hahnemann) beneath the surface tranquility flows a generous undercurrent of injured pride, frustration, embarrassment, abasement, or disappointment in love.

All of these suppressed ingredients, together with the overt anger, disturbed sexuality, and over strung nerves (other features that constantly recur in the *Staphysagria* picture) form a Witches' Brew, a "bubble, bubble" of potential trouble, whose essence or distinctive distillate is indignation.

Whether suppressed or externalized, *indignation* ("being excited to anger and resentment by that which is base, unworthy, or disgraceful": Webster) is the

characteristic expression of the seething cauldron of heavy and sorrowful emotions of the unrecognized, humiliated, or degraded *Staphysagria* personality; and, in time, all his likes and dislikes, actions and reactions, may become governed by a sense of some overwhelming wrong.

The classic generating matrix of *Staphysagria* pathology is the man who has been insulted in an undignified altercation. He does not react visibly, is, in fact, "speechless" (Kent) with indignation, and "being too dignified to fight, subdues his wrath and goes home sick, trembling, and exhausted" (Hering). Later he suffers from mental agitation, fatigue, and inability to concentrate ("confusion as if stupid and heavy ... with depressed spirits and vanishing of thoughts ... when he reflects on anything, so many things confusedly mixed together occur to him that he cannot get rid of them and quite forgets what he wished to think about; weakness of memory; when he has read something, after a few minutes, he remembers it only dimly" (Hahnemann).

Or his silence and restraint generate a plethora of physical ailments, such as insomnia ("sleeplessness after vexation; sleepy all day, sleepless at night": Kent), various stitching, tearing, drawing, and pressing pains in the head, or "sharp burning needle pricks" (Hahnemann), manifold affections of the skin or urinary organs (pressure on the bladder, feels as if it did not empty, irritable bladder with frequent urination, sensation as if a drop were rolling continuously along the channel, loss of urine in old men with prostate troubles, burning in the urethra when not urinating, etc.), gastrointestinal spasms ("colic after indignation": Hering), certain highly specific neuralgias (trigeminal), and problems with the eyes and the eyelids, including iritis, conjunctivitis, blepharitis, smarting pains, and styes— for all of which *Staphysagria* has a particular affinity or limb and joint afflictions. For instance, the number of intractable sciatic or arthritic cases assisted by *Staphysagria* (only after much probing revealed some well-hidden indignation at the source of the physical picture), is legion.

The question is why does he suppress his wrath, why is he speechless from insult instead of retaliating and giving as good as he has received? What has brought him to this lamentable inability to defend himself?

In the first place, *Staphysagria* has a very sensitive pride although less a sense of personal superiority than the need to maintain dignity and self-respect even under extreme duress. He is torturedly self-conscious about how he appears to others and what they say about him, hypersensitive to another's anger or displeasure, and feels obligated to please ("sensitive to the way he is judged, in relation to his own artificially maintained appearance, he easily lays himself open to injury to his pride, which must never be admitted or noted by others": Whitmont). Thus, suppressing his resentment and *invoking humility to counteract his humiliation*, he tries all the harder to placate or ingratiate himself with his offender; in consequence, he is (predictably) forced to put up with even more insult and injury.

He is not unaware of refusing to stand up for his rights, yet may invite being imposed upon out of noble motives: he wants to be kind and helpful, his disposition is "mild and gentle" (Hering— under the rubric "constitution") and naturally peacable, or he harbors ideals of friendship, family harmony, and professional solidarity—all of which prompt submissiveness. But he also fears his innate "outbursts of violent passion" (Boericke). Although he is perfectly aware of his emotions, he cannot always control their expression, and the overall trembling is the physical correlative of his ungovernable excitement. He dares not relax his restraint and thereby jeopardize his much prized, but all-too-shaky self-respect.

At times, to be sure, the patient requiring this remedy has subdued his anger and stifled his humiliation not out of pride or nobility but from necessity. In a position of dependence, forced submission, or inferior status, unable to fight back or redress ail injustice, he is restrained by common sense and an instinct for survival. A typical subject of such indignation is the conscientious and capable worker or employee who is consistently denied promotion, salary increases, tenure, and other forms of recognition in favor of less worthy and competent, but perhaps more glamorous, individuals. The offended party— "serious, silent, occupied with himself, he speaks but little" (Hahnemann)— does not confront his superior directly from ,(feeling of powerlessness and inability to effect change.

Or, finally, an intrinsically low self-esteem and feeling of unworthiness can cause *Staphysagria* humbly to suffer repeated indignities and assaults on his honor and even to accept unmerited blame. "There is something in me that must enjoy bumbling along being abused and exploited," was one patient's rueful admission.

After taking this remedy, however, the intimidated and longsuffering individual may rebel, and confront his superior or oppressor without trepidation and without exploding in unbridled indignation. He may even be induced to take constructive action. One "anxious" and "timorous" (Hahnemann) patient, the wife of a domineering husband whose long-dormant self-esteem had been rekindle I by this remedy, said, "even a person with the humility of a worm, like myself, was finally able to muster a sense of self-worth and survival and take some effective steps to remedy the situation."

Admittedly *Staphysagrias* impulse to combat imposition can emerge on its own, but in a less controlled way (i.e., as erratic actions or impotent rage) which is more destructive to the subject.

Given the picture of unwilling submissiveness. it is not surprising that this constitutional type can be victimized even by mosquitoes. The pesky insect, indeed, prefers his blood chemistry to all others. However indignant he waxes, *Staphysagria* remains the helpless victim of this fatal attraction until a few doses of the remedy in medium high potency come to his rescue (in folic medicine *Staphysagria* tincture was traditionally used as a local application for head lice).

A similar physical parallel to the lacerated feelings of *Staphysagria* is the picture of ill-effects from "lacerated tissues" (Boericke): slow and painful healing of, incised wounds" (Hering) from surgical operations (especially abdominal: hernia, hysterectomy, Caesarean, prostate, etc.) with postoperative retention of urine, laceration or stretching of any sphincter muscle, traumatic tooth extractions, post surgery neuralgias, and the like. Just as *Staphysagria* reacts with indignation to any perpetrated outrage, a reluctance to heal (or "never well since" syndrome) is the indignant response of the tissues to the humiliation of being lacerated or incised.

An interesting, because somewhat less traditional, case was the woman who sought homoeopathic aid for an injury to the breast from a blunt instrument. Three doses of *Bellis perennis* 200X, the sovereign specific for breast injuries, cleared up her pain at once, but, even deeper than this injury was the trauma to her psyche. Somewhat reluctantly (being by nature reserved) she admitted to a history of broken relationships and was moving from a state of anxious wondering whether she could "ever be attractive to any man" to indignation against her single status. Whenever she worked herself up into this state, she experienced an echo of the lancinating breast pain, and this time around *Staphysagria* healed both the physical pain and the wounded psyche.

Whatever the underlying circumstances or reasons for the well-known "silent indignation" of *Staphysagria*, whether this be from pride or humility (being two poles of the same axis, forced humility easily metamorphosizes into wounded pride and then into indignation), the individual suppresses his instinctive anger and resentment and dons the hair shirt of martyrdom.

This is not the *Sepia* or *Arsenicum* complainer who uses martyrdom to call attention to his or her own ends. It more resembles the stoical *Natrum muriaticum* who out of sensitive pride refuses to parade his indignity and hides his humiliation in silent suffering (this is the usual Stage one for these constitutional types).

In this *Staphysagria* is sustained by the desire to prove to himself and others his powers of endurance. He can stand being imposed on, maltreated, and exploited. He is strong inside and, in his awareness of righteousness, can take whatever insult is 'heaped on him.

Moreover, the martyr's inner glow of courage and nobility can be a heady, even an addictive, experience— far more gratifying than to view oneself merely as the helpless victim of others' exploitation and abuse.

But few can wear the shirt of martyrdom in silence forever. At some point one's true feelings must be vented or one's fortitude applauded (Stage Two). Sometimes the suppressed emotions surface indirectly as "sadness, weepiness, indifference, peevishness" (Hahnemann). At other times the pent-up humiliation seeks a more dramatic or aggressive ("impetuous": Boericke) form of release, but one that does not jeopardize the individual's self-respect and pride in his ability to endure. Exciting himself into "righteous anger" (Boenninghausen) serves this purpose precisely; indeed, in many instances indignation is the only aggressive note in an otherwise "good-humored" (Hahnemann), even retiring, individual.

Indignation liberates its victim from trial and oppression because it can be shared more easily than embarrassment, shame, or insult. *Staphysagria's* pride does not exactly savor exposing to the world the indignities inflicted on him, as this would merely contribute further to his humiliation; but a righteous indignation— proclaiming to the world the guilt, villainy, or disgrace of another— is a catharsis.

All this, however, calls for verbal expression—which is why silent indignation is a "strange, rare, and peculiar" (i.e., "guiding") symptom. In fact, the release can even constitute a sort of social event: the overtly distraught *Staphysagria* sallies forth and rounds up friends, colleagues, and relatives to hear out his case. Often enough the physician himself is assaulted by a barrage of heated emotion directed against some third party.

Talking out an offense or injury serves to attenuate it. In the practice of psychotherapy negative (and even positive) emotions are often dispelled by being verbalized and vented. Indignation, moreover, can be energizing. Without its stimulus the wounded individual is overcome by feelings of abandonment or rejection ("Poor me! Nobody wants me!") or paralysis of the will ("What is the point of going on?"). After all, as one patient stated: "The pain doesn't go anywhere; it is still there!" But working oneself into an impressive state of moral indignation can instigate a change in attitude which propels the wronged and suffering individual into the beginnings of recovery from affront to his dignity.

Once launched into this particular orbit, however, *Staphysagria* has trouble getting out. Having donned the mantle of indignation, he will not willingly go back to his hair shirt of martyrdom; he will not readily exchange his newly acquired emotional release for the former captivity of silent suffering.

But indignation is double-edged. As a surrogate (verbal) instrument of vengeance for those who are powerless to avenge themselves in action it truly lessens the original hurt—which may have no other outlet or form of expression. Also, acting as a substitute for the real, and still raw, hurt, it eases the helpless individual's greater original pain. Vicarious vengeance or surrogate emotion are thus important protective techniques which *Staphysagria* has perfected into an art. But fuming indignation can only be a temporary stage. The subject must soon abandon it for a more positive emotion. If he remains stuck too long in this role, as often happens in this remedy picture, the increasingly concentrated (from long boiling) Witches' Brew starts taking its toll: draining his emotional and physical energy, clouding his understanding, and weakening his moral fiber ("He is very much prostrated in mind, has no desire to talk, is not disposed to think, and indifferent to outward things, as if dead in mind" [with] indisposition for serious work": Hahnemann).

Staphysagria is one of the most potent remedies for dislodging the patient from this particular orbit (into Stage Three), thereby forestalling more serious warping of the emotions and understanding.

A case in point was the eighteen— year-old boy suffering from severe cystic acne, crusty eyelids, depression, and fatigue, the last two probably stemming from long-standing indignation at his family. He was the oldest and, in his own view, the least favored child obedient, obliging, always willing to help with the younger children, but unappreciated, misunderstood, and unable to meet his parents' expectations. Consequently, he could neither cultivate his natural endowments nor generate a sense of self-worth, and his indignation was steadily mounting against his rival siblings and especially his extroverted and successful father. The object of his former love and admiration thus became the focus of his rage and frustration and also of the "transference" of all the losses and disappointments inherent to the growing autonomy of the child. Further, because his indignation reflected an unrealistic idea of his parents' culpability, when they treated him with their customary respect and affection, he became lost and confused from inability to match this decent behavior with his hostile image of them.

He was given *Staphysagria* 200, 1M, 10M, and 50M, two closes of each, to be taken a dose at a time in ascending potency (a method suggested by Kent) at six-week intervals. It took many months for his skin to clear, but his attitude changed significantly after the third dose. Now he was able to accept without guilt or fear the normal adolescent state of separation from, and criticism of, his parents, and he himself volunteered, "I now realize that I needed an indignation as an outlet for my personal failures and insecurities, and my father was the most obvious and convenient scapegoat for this inner need."

Just as *Arsenicum* needs anxiety to fill an emotional vacuum, and *Natrum muriaticum* a grievance, so *Staphysagria* requires indignation.

In other words, the boy's indignation had been transformed into a mature recognition that he had to pass through rejection of his parents to discover his own identity and independence, and that, to permit the necessary disengagement, a child's idealization of them must often yield to a more critical appraisal. Without the assistance of *Staphysagria* he might have had neither the emotional energy nor the mental resources to adopt this constructive and discrimination attitude; he might have been mired in unhealthy resentment and indignation well into adulthood.

This remedy, then, will often end the inhibited adolescent's indignation against a favored sibling (whether real or imagined) or some authority figure; also the guilt vis-a-vis his parents and the fear accompanying his striving for emotional independence, as manifested by a characteristic brusqueness, oversensitivity to any remark, and internalized aggressiveness readily transformed into depression (also *Natrum muriaticum*).

Having dissected the nature of the *Staphysagria* indignation as such, we now compare and contrast it with some of the other remedies discussed in these two volumes. Indignation is an excellent emotion for this kind of *differentiation* because, being many-faceted, its picture ("affect") will vary according to the constitutional type.

In the Kent Repertory under "Indignation" *Arsenicum* is one of the three remedies cited in the second degree after *Staphysagria*, which alone is in the third. Both are "haughty" and "censorious" (Kent) in this emotion— *Staphysagria*, so sensitive to another's overbearing manner, can be excessively overbearing himself. What is more, they are particularly humiliated by their own insufficiently good performance or deficient understanding and thus embody Hahnemann's "great indignation at things done by others and by himself" [stress added].

This kind of indignation is typically manifested in the following familiar situation. The patient is a person in a position of authority who introduces a junior colleague into his firm or office and establishes him as an assistant. Thereupon the junior partner proceeds to intrigue, manipulate, and undermine the senior's authority. The latter feels legitimately outraged ("The ingrate, after all I've done for him!!") but is especially furious at his own misjudgment of the colleague's character, morals, and potential destructiveness. His indignation is intensified by his wounded *amour propre* at having been duped, and this may be its most painful aspect.

"It is impossible for any man to be cheated by anyone but himself," wrote Emerson. These two types do, indeed, feel most keenly the betrayal of their own understanding.

Indignation comes easily to *Arsenicum*. He *knows* that he is right and that he performs better than others; consequently, unlike *Staphysagria*, he does not have to work himself up. He is quick to put others in the wrong and, having so labelled them, to become indignant at their sins or ineptitude. And his strong sense of what is owed him (his "due") easily turns into indignation when deprived of career advantages and success, recognition and acclaim, or what he deems his equitable portion of the world's happiness. He also waxes indignant at those who do not bow down to his rightness.

Lycopodium, also, is always right and can be insufferably self-righteous, but does not project it through indignation. Although every bit as arrogant, he is more diplomatic, and does not thrust his rightness into another's face as overtly as *Arsenicum*. He rather assumes an air of aloof and tolerant superiority.

Staphysagria's indignation differs from *Arsenicum's* in that, while often self-righteous, critical, and secretly desirous of acclaim ("I am a bottomless pit for praise!"), he does not usually exude that indisputable feeling of "I alone am right, and everyone else is wrong." If arrogant, he vacillates between superiority and unworthiness, an overbearing manner and timidity. He possesses as much pride as *Arsenicum* but often of a somewhat different kind: that of the self-conscious, tortured individual who feels unrecognized or humiliated by other personalities, or degraded by the circumstances of his life, and who, by means of indignation, is desperately striving to

preserve vestiges of his self-esteem. *Arsenicum* "I am better than others" is not for him, but rather, "I too, am a human being and need some respect and consideration."

Dostoyevsky's extensive portrait gallery of the "insulted and injured" but nevertheless proud, "Poor Folk," who dwell in silent or overt indignation on their offended dignity— or even his more forceful characters who, beneath their raging passions and spiritual torments are essentially crying out for just a drop of recognition and respect— are *Staphysagria* rather than *Arsenicum*.

Sometimes this sense of outrage remains low-key and controlled, behind a seemingly normal facade (like a seething bed of lava under the earth's tranquil crust), but it drives the individual's actions and contributes to his illness.

An elderly patient presented with a host of symptoms, including mild colitis (irritable bowel syndrome), arthritic pains, and spongy bleeding gums. He was a government bureaucrat, successful in his field, but at heart was an artist with the mission of combating the pernicious influence of "abstract" (especially "minimalist") art. Not only were his esthetic sensibilities offended by contemporary art, but he still chafed under the humiliation of having been rejected by the good art schools in his youth—and of having never become a recognized artist.

To arrive at the root of these excessively strong feelings, the physician asked about his childhood and relationship with his parents. The patient dismissed the question with a breezy: "I had my share of difficulties growing up. But we all know about Mom! — so there's no need to elaborate on her" (thereby obviating any immediate need for *Natrum muriaticum*). Sometimes in *Staphysagria* the former pain or vexation is so deeply buried, so thoroughly suppressed, as to be forgotten (in contrast to *Natrum muriaticum* who never forgets anything) but then bursts out in a transmuted form of indignation.

The patient's mentality and modalities were quite those of *Arsenicum*. He was a regular racehorse, quivering with intensity, alert and, although controlled, critical, always knowing best what was "real art" and what was merely a sorry surrogate. But his tendency to spasmodic yawning, even when not sleepy ("violent inclination to yawn": Hahnemann), an episode of Still's Disease in young adulthood that had forced him to withdraw for a year from college ("rheumatoid arthritis": Tyler), and "gums that bled when pressed on and when brushing teeth" (Hahnemann), led to a prescription of *Staphysagria* 200X-weekly for a month and then in the 10M potency monthly. After six months most of his symptoms had improved by at least sixty percent, and the edge had been taken off his long-standing indignation against the latest developments in abstract art. But *Arsenicum* was required to clear up his gastrointestinal complaint and further subdue his inner fulminations.

Both *Staphysagria* and *Nux vomica* are characterized by "impulsiveness" (Kent), heightened irritability and oversensitivity to noise, confusion, excitement, etc. Both can take to heart the most inoffensive remark ("the least word that seems wrong hurts very much": Hering), or become easily indignant at the slightest criticism, contradiction, reprimand, or in response to rudeness (although *Nux* permits himself to be rude and, puffing up like a rooster, confers a pompous quality on his righteous wrath that is absent in *Staphysagria*). Both feel so threatened by any wound to their pride. However slight, so "mortified" (Kent) as to develop pathology.* This might, in part, explain why these are two of only five remedies listed in Kent under the rubric "bad effects following indignation" (the others are *Colocynthis*, *Ipecacuanha*, and *Platina*), with *Staphysagria* accorded the most prominence.

*This interesting word, from the French *La mort*, meaning "death," has the connotation that the person feels virtually annihilated by embarrassment, or stripped of honor and dignity, and would like to die on the spot.

Charles de Gaulle, President of the French Republic, whose chronic irritability and indignation at his extremely individualistic compatriots was expressed in the famous lament. "How can one govern a country that has over 400 different kinds of cheese?" and whose cancer of the prostate was reputedly treated for years with *Staphysagria*, is a perfect example of the *Nux vomica*/*Staphysagria* personality. In his memoirs Winston Churchill stated that the heaviest cross he had to bear during World War II was the Cross of Lorraine, i.e., the symbol of the Free French government in exile and the Resistance headed by General de Gaulle who could not tolerate contradiction or criticism and whose touchiness and sensitive pride were a constant source of exasperation to his allies and comrades-in-arms.

But whereas the generally short-fused *Nux vomica* explodes into instant indignation when on the defensive, *Staphysagria* takes longer to react. While speechless at first, once he finds tongue he yields to no one in the intensity of his indignation. He could be compared to a whistling tea-kettle: all is quiet while the water is heating (the incubation period), but when boiling point is reached the kettle first starts to hiss and then comes to emit a highly penetrating and indignant screech.

But by the same token, *Nux vomica* generally overcomes his indignation quicker than *Staphysagria*, who takes a long time to simmer down.

Finally, the worn-down *Staphysagria*, who has no energy for tolerance, patience, or self-control once his balance has been disrupted and the indignation released, displays a hot temper and can erupt into physical violence just like *Nux vomica*: with the same hurling of objects, smashing of mirrors, breaking of furniture, lashing out at others, or self-injury ("desire to strike, to throw things": Kent).

Even children may be "ill-humored and cry for things, which, after getting, they petulantly push or throwaway" (Hering); and the adult's emotional state, under provocation, can actually resemble the indignation of the *Chamomilla* or *Tuberculinum* three-year-old in full tantrum at not getting his own way. But this is more common in *Nux* than in *Staphysagria* (who, on the whole, tends to keep his emotions in check).

A middle-aged man sought homoeopathic help for an extraordinary itchy, angry, swollen, weepy eruption all over his back, buttocks, and behind the knees. He was a Roman Catholic in a poor marriage, with six children and weighed down by financial stringencies—a typical "no way out" life situation. When he was not heavily depressed ("the most attractive things make no impression on him ... indifferent to everything; he would like to die": Hahnemann), he would be nasty, sarcastic, and mean ("disposition quarrelsome": Hahnemann) to his physically and emotionally incompatible wife, disproportionately indignant at her often minor defects, and even at times physically abusive. In many respects he fit the *Nux vomica* picture, but his idiosyncratic symptoms ("scratching changes location of itching": Boericke) and "swallowing while speaking" (Kent),* as well as the fact that he had taken a long time to manifest and express his indignation, led to the prescription of *Staphysagria* 1M, with another dose to hold and take ten days later if needed.

These two doses not only cleared up the skin eruption in a short time but helped make him less angry and resentful. His unfortunate marital situation could not be easily resolved, and nothing in his life had markedly changed, but in many small ways it became easier. Instead of spending his energies fuming indignantly at his wife, he began to cultivate his hobbies and concentrate harder on his work and his formerly intolerable existence now became tolerable.

*As if trying to swallow and repress the unpalatable Witches' Brew of rising emotions; *Staphysagria* is the only remedy listed for this symptom.

Thereafter he took periodic doses of *Staphysagria* to subdue any accesses of indignation at his unjust fate.

This instance of marital stress leads naturally to *Ignatia*, whose indignation is similar to *Staphysagria's* but with some definite distinctions.

Both are illustrations of "silent indignation," uncomplainingly enduring difficulties and nervous tension even when suffering acutely inside ("an easily excited and disturbed individual, but seldom manifests it": Kent). Also both can be highly strung and of a "variable humor" (Hahnemann), so that their indignation, when manifested, has a hysterical component—at first overexcited and uncontrolled and then, when passion is spent, relapsing into apathy and sadness:

However, *Ignatia* falls apart more readily than *Staphysagria*, who shows more fortitude and requires stronger provocation before succumbing to hysteria.

The two remedies frequently overlap with respect to injury from love, even though *Staphysagria* manifests more severe sexual warping and neuroses. *Ignatia* is more suited to the acute episodes of wounded affection and usually reverts to normal once the crisis (even if severe) has passed. *Staphysagria* remains disordered and gives the impression of being more profoundly disturbed.

Thus it is one of the most common remedies for sexual obsessions ("mind dwells too much on sexual subjects": Hering; "sexual thoughts intrude and crowd around each other; lasciviousness": Kent), increased desire or intense sexuality to the point of "nymphomania" (Hering), or an adolescent's doubts and high anxiety about his sexuality. It is prescribed for guilt feelings resulting from "sexual excesses" (Kent) or excessive masturbation. On the other hand, decreased sexual passion, impotence, and the fear of intimacy are also encountered, as well as pathology stemming from enforced abstinence or celibacy and other repressed sexual impulses (like *Conium*, it is a remedy for widows and widowers).

On the physical plane, *Staphysagria's* sexual disorders come out in genital warts and condylomata, tumorous growths in the genital region, prostatitis, ulcers on the penis, testicular atrophy or induration, cystitis (worse from intercourse—known in the nineteenth century as "ineffectual urging to urinate in newly married women" [Boericke] or "bride's cystitis"), increased or decreased menstrual flow, and a long series of other menstrual complaints, including "amenorrhoea in consequence of chagrin" (Hering; also *Ignatia* and *Natrum muriaticum*s, post-menopausal bleeding, etc.

In line with the theme of the present discussion, however, *Staphysagria* is one of the principal remedies for indignation which proceeds from romantic disillusionment and loss, failed or deteriorating marriages, betrayed or unrequited love, the frustrations of living with a frigid or impotent partner, and the like. Even such highly specific pathology as a violent toothache can arise from the unbearable indignity of having one's proffered love rejected.

A woman in her mid-thirties came to homoeopathy for excruciatingly painful hemorrhoids. The prominent symptoms, however, were mental. After several years of a childless marriage her much-loved husband had left her for a younger woman and started a family. The patient, dogged and unswerving in love, grieved profoundly, and took a long time to overcome her loss. But to preserve pride, or perhaps her own noble image of love ('Love desires nothing for itself': William Blake), she never outwardly displayed anger, resentment, or indignation.

Silent grieving, then, was Stage One, and *Ignatia* had assisted her through this trying period

In due course she married again and began building a new life, until several years later there came an interesting twist. Her exhusband's second marriage went awry, and he came back to her for comfort. Suddenly she found herself in the role of counselor, sympathizer, and main supporter of the wronged man-quixotic of course, but quite in keeping with her character and former conduct. For *Staphysagria*, like *Ignatia* and *Natrum muriaticum*, often feels excessively humble and vulnerable vis-a-vis those to whom they are, or have been, romantically attached and are consequently emotionally shackled by their own high-minded compassion. In true fineness of spirit the patient gave her ex-husband the support he desired, but, loving him still, her former chagrin was rekindled, and she grew more and more despondent at the senselessness of their ruined marriage and the needless suffering he had caused her.

This time around the *Ignatia* with which she treated herself did not help her sadness, nor did *Natrum muriaticum*. and it was not until her depression ceded to indignation at the man's nerve, his crust, his insensitive exploitation of her good will, that she moved on to Stage Two of her grieving. "What am I doing, assiduously acting as defense attorney for the one person who has injured me most deeply? Why am I helping him gain an acquittal from his own conscience? What is wrong with me anyway). This is completely abosurd!" was her healthy reaction and a step in the right direction

In yet another way, then, we see indignation providing the still caring and suffering individual with a technique to overcome a love that is futile, self-destructive, repeatedly frustrating, and endlessly disappointing. By concentrating on the offender's negative traits and ignoring the positive ones, it encourages a salutary narrowing of perspective that helps better to define the needed course of action.

Prior to this stage the romantically attached *Staphysagria* is crippled by doubts and opposing viewpoints, a tendency to feel too strongly for the other— recalling too vividly the good times and his or her good traits, and empathizing too readily with his or her needs and desires. To emerge from this draining compassion the individual must "harden his heart" against the offender. He cannot afford to see the other side of the case. And, after all, there is nothing better than indignation for painting phenomena in simple blacks and whites and bathing the offender's faults in a more glaring light—in a word, strengthening the case for the prosecution.

This patient's tenacious nature might long have prevented her from relinquishing her indignation, but, as luck would have it, a physical complaint brought her to a homoeopathic physician, and the *Staphysagria* 10M which he prescribed moved her to Stage Three of her healing— letting go of her injury. Romantic indignation is one thing, but concrete physical pain is a different matter altogether. Many a willing martyr to love will refuse to be a martyr to hemorrhoids!

Next we turn to two remedies which are not listed under "Indignation" in the Kent Repertory. This was an oversight, however, judging by the number of indignant patients who have been soothed and cured by them.

The first is *Natrum muriaticum* which Kent, for unfathomable reasons, cites only under "indignation, during pregnancy." Yet *Staphysagria* and *Natrum muriaticum* are the closest of siblings: in this as in other emotional modes the former is like a younger sister. Both possess a delicate sense of honor and readiness for sacrifice which makes them quell their rising wrath and rise above their offenders. "Far be it from me to entertain vengeance, bitterness, spite, or malice!" is a typical assertion, of these two types, even as they dwell on insults, injuries, mortifications, and are seething inside. Both are fortified in martyrdom by the conviction of having been selected by Destiny for their powers of endurance. This explains their

resentment of sympathy ("consolation aggravates": Kent) which questions their strength to endure (we recall that *Pulsatilla* and *Phosphorus* seek sympathy, while *Staphysagria* and *Natrum muriaticum* seek, above all, recognition of their nobility), their suppression of anger or other instinctive aggressive response ("There is some lesson here that I have to learn; maybe I deserve it")— in short, the stoicism, surface resignation, and silent indignation, as well as the subsequent picture of "ailments from reserved displeasure" (Hering) peculiar to both types.

Both, then, are often outwardly reserved: their mechanisms of response to vexation and frustration blocked; both are unwilling to burden others with their problems ("great inward anxiety ... but says nothing about it": Hahnemann); and, even while they might obsessively nurture painful memories of some past indignity, with accompanying thoughts of vengeance they themselves know to be pure fantasies of the powerless, neither is able to confront his offender (in direct contrast to *Arsenicum* who stands up for himself exceedingly well) or even adequately to express his anger—whether from poor self-esteem (the "lowly worm" self-image), a "What's the use?" feeling of resignation or fear that a confrontation will open the floodgates of his long-suppressed anger and thereby destroy the last vestiges of his dignity. And in both the "sadness [that] apprehends the worst consequences from slight things and inability to calm himself" (Hahnemann) eventually develops into indignation which then takes the form of ineffectual fretting and brooding.

What is more, their high-mindedness that not only induces humble acceptance, but even prompts both types to help those who have injured them, naturally encourages a still deeper resentment and leads to more misery. What is the point of sacrifice and noble-mindedness if it is neither recognized nor appreciated? The frustrated nobility of self-imposed humility eventually becomes *humiliation* (just as the two words have a common root, so the two mental states are separated by a mighty thin line), and then, as noted earlier, violent indignation: "From a noble and long-suffering person I have become, a monster of indignation!"

But the remedy *Staphysagria* more than *Natrum muriaticum*.... encourages the patient to take action: sever a relationship, confront an offender calmly, institute some rupture or change-in a word, emerge from the emotional paralysis of silent indignation or suppressed rage and do something!! (without falling ill as a consequence). *Natrum muriaticum* tends rather to bring about a change of attitude.

Staphysagria, like *Natrum muriaticum*, becomes particularly indignant at injustice and iniquity, or the violation of some ideal. The remedy is often prescribed for the conscientious child or adolescent unjustly picked on or criticized by some figure of authority, as well as, for the righteous one who refuses to accept the possibility that people can behave dishonorably, deliberately injure or lie to others, yet sail on unpunished without even showing contrition for their offenses and misdeeds. Even the adult displays a similar disbelief. Rather than come to terms with these facts of life and try to rise above them, he fights the realization, and his blood pressure rises (both remedies are effective in hypertension). This leads to an aggrieved "How can they do this to me? How dare they treat such a good person as me so badly?" and eventually drives him to disproportionate anger that so many conniving, self-serving, dishonest, and manipulative individuals flourish in the world like ragweed while he—virtuous and deserving—is left unhappy and unrecognized to do all the hard work of attempting to right the world's wrongs.

Beginning homoeopathic physicians sometimes yield to this weakness. After a few years of practice, and before getting their second wind, fatigue, discouragement, impatience to get better results and frustration that this is not occurring all cause them

to lose heart. Simultaneously they become indignant at the prosperity and professional acclaim of their allopathic colleagues and lament that their own virtue goes unacknowledged.

"Here I am," they say. "toiling long hours at the difficult arid tedious labor of finding the simillimum. I give time, tale talent my Very life to homoeopathy, taking in and absorbing so many patients problems day in and day out. And what do I get in return.? Pittance for pay and no professional recognition. A few patients are grateful, but most just become more demanding. Why, I deserve a medal just for handling the telephone calls! I don't know if I can go on this way much longer. There must be an easier way to earn I living!" grumble, grumble.

The obvious response to such complaints is the pragmatic: "If you don't enjoy practicing homoeopathy, don't do it! You have an M.D. and can do something easier or more profitable if you want: no one forces you to stay in homoeopathy."

"True, but I like practicing it. I just can't understand why others who do less good for the sick make more the money and get all the recognition, while I work my fingers to the bone.

"That is not your concern-at the moment. Leave that reckoning to some Higher Power and just do what you enjoy a rid think is right. Perhaps homoeopathy, like other virtues, must be its own reward!"

In such cases *Staphysagria* will often give the discouraged physician the heart and stamina to resume his difficult, bur spiritually gratifying, work.

But if the patient goes on to mutter indignantly, "Hmphh! Well I just hope Someone up there knows what He is doing. Judging by the state of affairs in the world, I sometimes doubt He does.....and continues in that vein, he is more likelv to need *Natrum muriaticum*, a medicine whose indignation has an existential dimension that is alien to *Staphysagria*.

To elaborate: the question often arises whether or not *Natrum muriaticum* is arrogant. This is not easy to answer because, unlike *Arsenicum*, *Lycopodium*, *Nux vomica* and *Platina*. *Natrum muriaticum* harbors little personal arrogance. Although critical, he does not feel himself more worthy than others as a person or a presence; in fact, all too often he feels himself inferior. But he does feel a sublimated arrogance, as it were, vis-a-vis God. His own hurt is so profound, and he sees the world as so bleak and painful, so full of injustice, that he cannot accept it as it is. He, *Natrum muriaticum*, would have made a far better job of it if put in charge at the Creation. Thus he does not measure himself against other mortals; rather his arrogance is a contest between his understanding and the Cosmic or Karmic laws of the Universe. This explains why his chronic indignation is so difficult to overcome. How does one indignantly confront or take action against God? Furthermore, because he sees that the world shows no sign of changing or repenting, so as not to remain forever a "stranger in his own land," he sets forth resolutely (and to some it may appear arrogantly) to better it.*

Staphysagria does not as readily escalate his indignation into the social and existential realms but remains more personally affected.

An extreme example from fiction is Miss Wade in Dickens' *Little Dorritt*, an early literary study of the concentrated neurosis of a deeply diseased mentality.

*Such feelings and thoughts are not unique to *Natrum muriaticum*. Almost everyone has entertained them at some point, and they have inspired many good works. But if they cripple the patient's performance and productivity, or if the well-indicated' remedy fails to assist, the potentized salt might yield better results.

Convinced that she can never be loved and torturing herself with imaginary offenses, Miss Wade is adamantly determined to feel resentment at her lot in life, to see rejection and humiliation in the actions of her benefactors, and even in the motives of the good man who wants to marry her. Here follow some passages from the "autobiographical" chapter entitled "History of a Self Tormentor" which describe this redoubtable young woman's indignation.

She begins her confession with the arrogant:

I have the misfortune of not being a fool. From a very early age I have detected what those about me thought they hid from me. If I could have been habitually imposed upon, instead of habitually discerning the truth, I might have lived as smoothly as most fools do.

She then proceeds to display her need to feel humiliated:

I must have been about twelve years old when I began to see how determinedly those girls patronized me. I was told I was an orphan. There was no other orphan among us; and I perceived (here was the first advantage of not being a fool) that they conciliated me in an insolent pity, and in a sense of superiority. I did not set this down as a discovery, rashly. I tried them often. I could hardly make them quarrel with me. When I succeeded with any of them, they were sure to come after an hour or two, and begin reconciliation. I tried them over and over again, and I never knew them wait for me to begin. They were always forgiving me in their vanity and condescension.

Such an attitude turns into warped pride.

The mother [of the girl she is tutoring] was young and pretty. From the first she made a show of behaving to me with great delicacy. I kept my resentment to myself, but I knew very well that it was her way of petting the knowledge that she was my Mistress, and might have behaved differently to her servant if it had been her fancy.

I say I did not resent it, nor did I, but I showed her, by not gratifying her, that I understood her. When she pressed me to take wine, I took water. If there happened to be anything choice at table, she always sent it to me: but I always declined it, and ate of the rejected dishes. These disappointments of her patronage were a sharp retort, and made me feel independent.

Until finally her profound neurosis culminates in a perverse and willful rejection of the honorable man she loves.

I loved him ... While I have sat in his presence recalling all my slights and wrongs, and deliberating whether I should not fly from the house at once and never see him again [which she soon does]— I have loved him.

Although emerging from a *Sepia/ Natrum muriaticum* background, Miss Wade's type of haughty indignation is more representative of the *Staphysagria* mentality. She carries a stronger sense of being wronged and abased than *Sepia*'s merely negative manner of putting herself down ("I am not good enough ... Nobody can like me ... ," etc.), and *Natrum muriaticum* is not ungrateful and will respond to kindness (perhaps unwillingly at first), despite being convinced that people are thinking ill of her. Also, she tries to overcome her chronic indignation through good works, while the implacable *Staphysagria* is more likely to wallow in it unproductively.

Staphysagria's warped emotions and unappeased torment bring us to *Lachesis*, the second remedy that belongs under "Indignation" in the Kent Repertory.

Frequently encountered in both remedies are passionate bouts of indignation resulting from sexual humiliation and wounded honor. The aura projected by

Staphysagria in unfortunate love is not quite the Ignatia loss of identity ("There is no 'me' without him!") Or Orpheus wandering through the world calling for his lost Eurydice, not knowing where to turn or how he can survive without her; nor yet is *Staphysagria* the *Natrum muriaticum* "Little Mermaid" from Andersen's fairy tales who willingly submits to having her tongue cut out (the *Natrum muriaticum* inarticulateness in love) and to suffering a knifelike pain with every step she takes (this type's infallible talent for laying herself open to injury) in order to become a human and thus draw closer to the-ultimately unattainable-man she loves. *Staphysagria*'s aura is more that of the wronged and insulted individual.

Hell hath no fury like a *Lachesis* or *Staphysagria* female scorned: both exhibit "jealousy" and "suspicion" (Kent), although they are stronger in *Lachesis*. Taking examples from the two authors already cited, the indignant "proud women" in Dostoyevsky's later novels—Nastasya Filipovna in *The Idiot*, Lizaveta Nikolaevna in *The Possessed*, and Katerina Ivanovna in *The Brothers Karamazot* all tortured souls, torn between extremes of tenderness and vindictiveness, self-abnegation and possessiveness, and who despite "the greatest hatred that flashes forth every moment" (*The Possessed*) would hesitate ~Il no sacrifice for the man they simultaneously Jove—--and Rose Dartell in *David Copperfield*, whose humiliating dependence and servile position in an alien household (forced submissiveness) and thwarted love for Steerforth drive her to strange mannerisms (and vindictive' behavior), are all typical *Lachesis*/*Staphysagria* figures.

In both types romantic and other varieties of indignation can take an obsessive form, manifested as *verbal voluptuousness*. Having no other outlet or instrument than "talking out" their injuries, they converse with passion and excitement, going over the same ground again and again. If they cannot do it face to face, they burn up the telephone wires with countless lengthy calls, their indignation mounting with each repetition. They work and rework the causes and reasons, consequences and ramifications of some particular indignity, assiduously exploring it in all its variants, bringing to their subject as much intellectual energy as Bach expended on his thirty-nine *Goldberg Variations*, until everything in the maelstrom of their emotions has been verbally processed and sorted out to the extent possible.

There is a difference, however, between the two types. While *Lachesis* may talk out his "indignation," he will not relinquish the subject-matter. Verbalizing to him is a creative process as well as a cathartic one, and does not necessarily have any natural limits. *Staphysagria*, however, does not possess the *Lachesis* emotional energy and, even if indignation momentarily lessens his pain, eventually tires of repeating the same story. It becomes a burden to him, and he senses himself a burden to others (*Lachesis* does not). In fact, his more inhibited nature seeks a different mode of release; if possible, he would hire a town crier to broadcast the injury to the whole world in a sweeping public announcement, then be done with it.

This *Staphysagria* mode has doubtless been the incentive for many a tragic work of romantic fiction.

The second type of indignation shared by the two remedies (also *Natrum muriaticum*) is officious ("excites himself over things that do not concern him": Hahnemann). But *Lachesis* excites himself more over the sexual mores of the young, the degenerate state of the world, and the imminent and inevitable collapse of civilization, while *Staphysagria* becomes indignant principally over the fate of some badly-treated friend, colleague, or family member for whom he (perhaps misguidedly) feels responsible. Although, like *Causticum* or *Nux vomica*, he might feel compassion

for the starving natives in some Third World country, he will not wax indignant over them as *Lachesis* and *Natrum muriaticum* are prone to do.

Lachesis, moreover, even when profoundly indignant, often appears personally unaffected, as if he had passed through some purification process and raised his subjective indignation to a more purely intellectual, ethical, or moral sphere. Certainly his indignation is initially founded on some personal experience, but he refuses to be devastated by his emotions and on them erects an impersonal structure. Conversely, *Staphysagria's* indignation may well have a moral dimension, but he cannot sublimate it to the same extent. He might try to do so, but, as mentioned earlier, he nearly always remains visibly and personally affected.

We conclude this chapter with the case of a predominantly *Lachesis* patient whose eventful and indignation—filled life over the course of several years required treatment with each of the five above remedies, culminating with *Staphysagria*.

She was an intelligent and intellectually creative woman in her late thirties, a university professor of history and a writer who came to homoeopathy for spring allergies, chronically blocked sinuses, and a tendency for her hair to fall out in small discrete patches (alopecia aerata).

A prominent mental symptom was indignation' at the status of women in academia. Although she herself had been well treated and had risen high in her profession, she had legitimate reasons for indignation (in one well-known law school, with sixty professors, only one or two were women, etc.!).

A dose of *Lachesis* 5M cleared up her allergies dramatically, unblocked her sinuses to discharge thick green foul-smelling ('antediluvian,' as she put it) mucus, but did not affect her alopecia.

Her marriage at this time had started to deteriorate, and she was growing more and more indignant at her husband. He was never her social or intellectual equal, and now she became furiously intolerant of his slowness, selfishness, insensitivity, and at the idea of wasting herself on an inferior mate. *Arsenicum* 10M was given, and for a while her attitude toward him mellowed, and her hair started to grow back in the nickel-sized bald spots. This remedy over the years continued to help her with the alopecia whenever it recurred.

Soon afterwards she became romantically involved with a student young enough to be her son (typically *Lachesis*). When he eventually forsook her for a woman of more compatible age, with whom he had been simultaneously involved, her hysterical grief and indignation at having been deceived called for *Ignatia*.

The love affair precipitated a divorce in the already shaky marriage. It developed into a bitter and drawn-out struggle in which she was represented by incompetent, if not unscrupulous, lawyers. And after the settlement she remained in protracted legal wranglings with her ex-husband over child support. Even though her lawyers' fees far exceeded the meager payments she could extract from him, out of principle, and well in keeping with her usual high-minded indignation ("For all the divorced and single mothers in the country!") she repeatedly hauled him back to court. *Natrum muriaticum*, with its high quixotic principles, was the remedy which helped during this trying period.

In the meantime she had settled down in a satisfying relationship with a (once again) somewhat younger man. Now in her early forties, she began to suffer from a premenstrual personality fracture starting a week prior to onset of menses. She would erupt into uncontrolled indignant outbursts against her innocent mate, keeping him awake all night with unjust accusations of loving her insufficiently. In short, she

seemed determined to undermine their good relationship ("I know I act provocatively, courting psychological danger, but I simply cannot stop it, however destructive.")

The remedy now was once again *Lachesis* 5M. Two weeks later her premenstrual mania was dramatically altered for the better, but her face and arms broke out into a flaming disfiguring rash with intolerable itching. *Natrum muriaticum* helped here, but the premenstrual fits of passion returned, and *Lachesis* was prescribed, this time in lower potency (30X). It had the same beneficial effect in the mental sphere but an even more disastrous effect on her skin, with an even more severe breakout. Clearly it was reaching too deep a psychic level during this vulnerable stage, and *Natrum muriaticum* was again administered to subdue the raging eruption as well as the constant indignation against her ex-husband (and her lawyers).

However, the protracted legal proceedings were putting her into a highly irritable and nervous state; her occasional nauseous migraine headaches, with inability to vomit and sporadic insomnia, especially after 3 A.M., called for *Nux vomica* 200X at regular intervals. This remedy, in time, enabled her to respond to *Lachesis* without undue aggravation. (See "The Cleanser" section of the *Nux vomica* chapter).

All the while her legal odyssey continued— now over child custody and her indignation over the ex-husband's vindictive behavior started taking a toll in her most vulnerable area: her ability to think and write. She took a Sabbatical, but the drawnout reenactment of the *Bleak House* Jarndyce v. jarndyce legal battles, draining her of emotional energy and much of her salary, prevented her from organizing her thoughts and focusing her mind on the work of scholarship she was planning to write. She had once been able to turn out a book in a few months, writing day and night. Now she would clean her kitchen frantically and tidy her desk and drawers instead. Furthermore, her alopecia came back.

This all called for *Arsenicum* which enabled her to concentrate better on her scholarship.

Then one day, in the midst of the still-ongoing court proceedings, her ex-husband died unexpectedly of a heart attack. Paradoxically, this did not liberate her emotionally or cause her to rejoice, but incited her to further indignation and even more profound feelings of having been abused and exploited over the years. Instead of acknowledging her release, she became more obsessively indignant than before that by an untimely decease he had escaped her vengeance. Now she could never get even with him for the grief he had caused, and every sinew in her body trembled at this frustration. Moreover, he had left behind a garbled will leading to a legal imbroglio over the child's inheritance. And, to top it all, she kept seeing him in her room when half asleep in the morning, glowering at her reproachfully and making her still feel guilty for their unresolved marital problems.

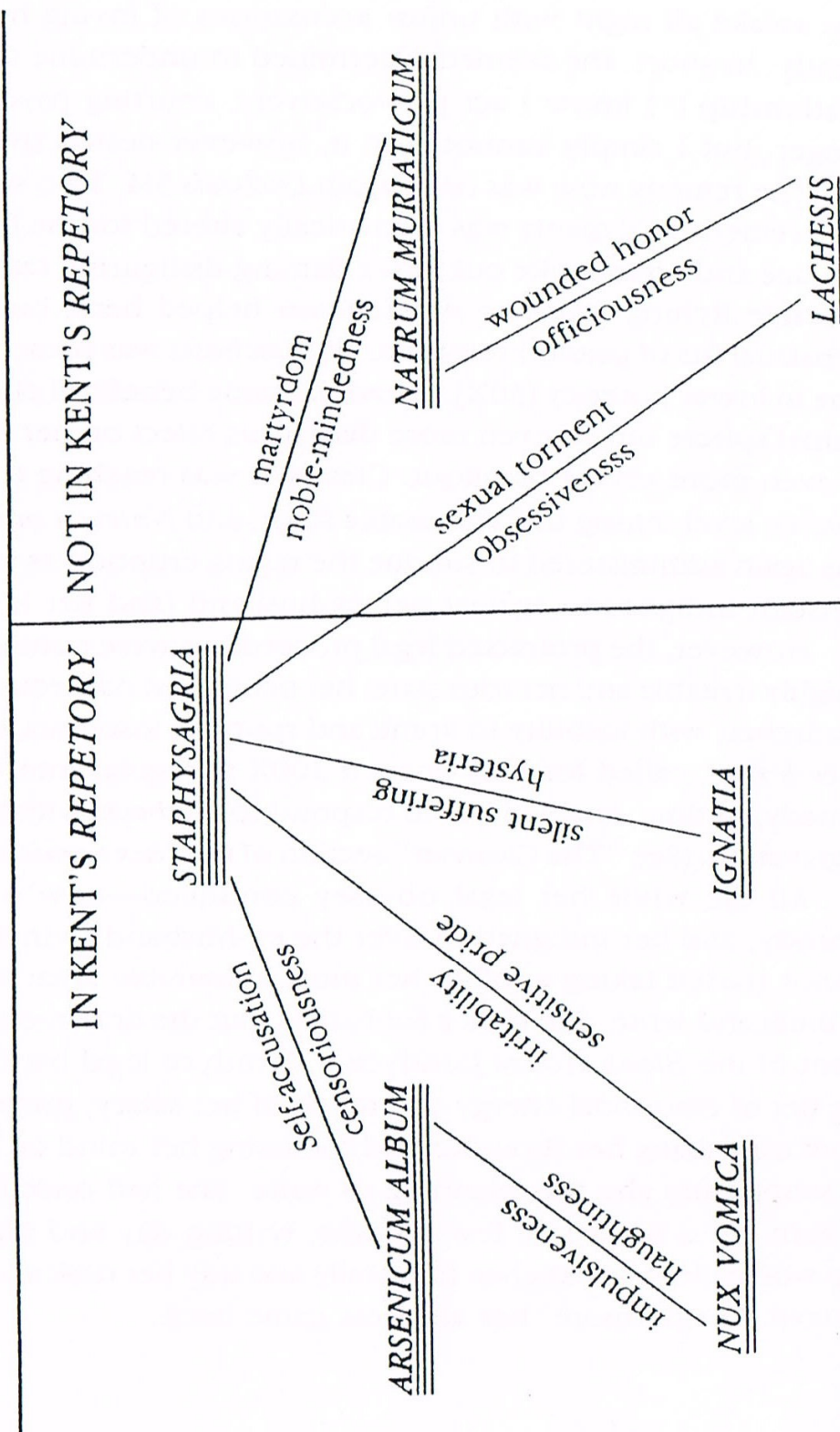
Here was the purest unadulterated indignation, no *Ignatia* hysteria or silent grieving, none of *Natrum muriaticum's* existential dimensions or quixotic principles, no transcendent *Lachesis* moral considerations, no *Arsenicum* self-righteousness or moral superiority, none of *Nux vomica's* heightened irritability— simply pure personal swelling indignation that , even dead and departed, he continued to harass her.

Obviously it was now time for *Staphysagria*. After receiving it she ceased being visited and intimidated by her deceased ex-husband, and although, being *Lachesis*, she could still occasionally "taste in her mouth the venom he had aroused in her," her indignation was substantially dispelled. Presumably he too, poor man, now liberated from her bonding anger, could throw off the resentment and wounded honor

which still tied him to this world, and move on unhindered to another level of existence.

Staphysagria, known in English as "larkspur or "stavesacre." was used in ancient times as an emetic or cathartic. But, in the homoeopathic preparation, its cathartic action has been expanded to act beneficially on both soul and spirit. 'When the suffering individual's silent or overt indignation (rooted in sensitive pride and noble resolve besieged by humiliation, embarrassment, mortification, and abasement) become too heavy to be borne, the potentized stavesacre, more often than any other remedy, will serve as a supporting staff or "stave."

FREQUENCY OF MEDICINES USED FOR INDIGNATION



Conclusion

No definitive answer can be given to _the question of whether this last patient could have needed *Staphysagria* long before it was actually prescribed, and the same problem often arises with the nosodes. Kent somewhat ambiguously states (*Aphorisms*): "a few drugs will be similar enough to cure, but there will be only one simillimum," and this simillimum is, to be sure, the ideal toward which each physician strives.* However, when working with a living science, the reality is often less tidy than the theory, and choices may have to be made, such as deciding at which level to prescribe for the given patient—the acute, chronic, or miasmatic.

The efficacy of the earlier and later prescriptions in the above case suggests that, although a few patients might be "pure" types, and over the course of their life respond to a single constitutional remedy (their "simillimum ") no matter what ails them (barring accidents, injuries, and acute illnesses), most individuals are too multifaceted to be covered at all times by one medicine. Too many factors of disease inheritance, ethnic origin, occupation, emotional stress, and environmental trauma affect this basic type, leaving their imprint and introducing complexities into the fundamental constitutional picture. The symptom— complex of the diseased patient may not be covered by anyone remedy, several remedies may have equally good claims, or the true simillimum may not have yet been discovered— and the physician may have to settle for a partial simile that achieves only partial cure.**

The stream of one's life is sometimes broad and calm, sometimes narrow and turbulent, constantly affected by the tributaries feeding into it. Seldom will a remedy cover the totality of symptoms for all time. The child's strong manifestation of a *Calcarea carbonica* symptomatology changes as he grows older— or the world would be full of *Calcarea carbonica* adults. The *Sepia* housewife was not necessarily always so-and will shed the *Sepia* picture when her children are grown and gone. A patient detoxifying from too much "high living" will require *Nux vomica*, perhaps for the only time in his life. Persons needing *Natrum muriaticum* are often in a transitional stage of their emotional and intellectual development and will eventually manifest another constitutional type. The awareness, conflicts, and doubts typical of *Lachesis* women often surface in middle age, while the underlying religious and existential anxieties of the *Sulphur* male might appear only in later years.

The stream flows on, expanding or narrowing, becoming deeper or shallower. The landscape changes, as do the fish and the plant life. The very waters, like the contours of the bed, are different at the mouth from what they were at the source. The prescriber must be ever alert to the patient's changing needs and remedies, and this adaptability is part of homoeopathy's beam), and strength. Indeed, the model of patient interrogation, the eliciting of symptoms, *compels* the prescriber to be aware of changes and take them into account. Only in this way can he prescribe on the principle of individualization and in strict accord with Hahnemann's fundamental tenet: "*it is the totality of symptoms*, the outer image expressing the inner essence of the disease, i.e., of the disturbed vital force, that must be the main, even the only, means by which the disease allows us to find the necessary remedy, the only one that can decide the appropriate choice" (*Organon*, Section 7).

*Perhaps a more accurate rendering of this idea is, "a few drugs will be similar enough to help, but only the simillimum will cure."

**Hahnemann discusses these issues in the *Organon*, Sections 162-172, 177-184. For example: "Because there are still only a limited number of medicines whose true, pure effects are precisely known, it sometimes happens that only some of the symptoms of the disease being treated can be found in the symptom list of the medicine that is as yet the most appropriate. Such a less perfect medicinal disease agent must be used for want of a more perfect one."

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Remedies mentioned in the text and their common names:

<i>Aconitum napellus</i>	Monkshood
<i>Argentum nitricum</i>	Nitrate of silver
<i>Arnica Montana</i>	Leopard's bane
<i>Arsenicum album</i>	Arsenic trioxide
<i>Aurum metallicum</i>	Metallic gold
<i>Bacillinum</i>	Bacilli of tuberculous lung
<i>Baryta carbonica</i>	Barium carbonate
<i>Belladonna</i>	Deadly nightshade
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	Barberry
<i>Bryonia alba</i>	Wild hops
<i>Calcareo carbonica</i>	Calcium carbonate from the oyster shell
<i>Calcareo phosphorica</i>	Calcium phosphate
<i>Carcinosin</i>	Tissue from breast cancer
<i>Cantharis</i>	Spanish Fly
<i>Carbo vegetabilis</i>	Vegetable Charcoal
<i>Causticum</i>	Hahnemann's tinctura acris sine kail
<i>Chamomilla</i>	Chamomile
<i>China</i>	See: <i>Cinchona officinalis</i>
<i>Cinchona officinalis</i>	Quinine, Peruvian bark
<i>Cistus Canadensis</i>	Rock rose
<i>Cocculus</i>	Indian Cockle
<i>Ferrum phosphoricum</i>	Phosphate of iron
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>	Yellow jasmine
<i>Hepar sulphuris calcareum</i>	Hahnemann's calcium sulphide
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	Henbane
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St. John's wort
<i>Ignatia amara</i>	St. Ignatius' bean
<i>Kali bichromicum</i>	Potassium bichromate
<i>Kali Iodatium</i>	Potassium Iodide
<i>Kali Phosphorica</i>	Potassium Phosphate
<i>Lac caninum</i>	Dog's milk
<i>Lachesis trigonocephalus</i>	Poison of the bushmaster
<i>Ledum</i>	Marsh Tea
<i>Leuticum</i>	See <i>Syphilinum</i>
<i>Lycopodium</i>	Club moss
<i>Medorrhrium</i>	Gonorrheal virus
<i>Mercurius vivus</i>	Mercury
<i>Myristica sebifera</i>	Brazilian ucuba tree
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	Sodium chloride, Table salt
<i>Natrum sulphuricum</i>	Sodium sulphate
<i>Nitricum acidum</i>	Nitric acid
<i>Nux vomica</i>	Poison nut
<i>Opium</i>	Dried latex of the poppy

<i>Pertussin</i>	Pertussis Vaccine
<i>Phosphorus</i>	Elemental phosphorus
<i>Picric acidum</i>	Picric acid
<i>Psorinum</i>	Scabies vesicle
<i>Pulsatilla nigricans</i>	Wind flower
<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Buttercup
<i>Rhus toxicodendron</i>	Poison ivy
<i>Sabina</i>	Savine
<i>Sanguinaria</i>	Blood root
<i>Sepia</i>	Ink of the cuttlefish
<i>Silica</i>	Pure flint
<i>Staphysagria</i>	Stavesacre, Larkspur
<i>Sulphur</i>	Elemental sulphur
<i>Syphilinum</i>	Syphilitic virus
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Arbor vitae, Tree of life
<i>Tuberculinum</i>	Tuberculosis virus
<i>Veratrum album</i>	White hellebore