

LECTURE XI.

IN all inflammations of serous and fibrous membranes, Aconite is undoubtedly a capital remedy.

In *Periostitis*, for instance, when occasioned by exposure to a keen wind, retrocession of sweat, or by standing upon damp ground or cold stones, Aconite is often sufficient to effect a radical cure. The pains are of a tearing character, accompanied by a sensation of burning. These pains were experienced by several of our Aconite provers, and clinical experience has abundantly shown that inflammation of the periosteum may be controlled by Aconite, and that, even in cases where an exudation had taken place between the periosteum and the substance of the bone, Aconite will effect an absorption of the fluid and restore the normal condition of the parts. In this disease, the third up to the sixth potency of Aconite is generally preferable both to the tincture and to the higher potencies.

Even in *Ostitis*, when the substance of the bone or the marrow has become invaded by the inflammation, you may depend upon Aconite as a great curative agent. If the bone itself or the marrow is inflamed, the symptoms differ from those which indicate the periosteum or fibrous covering of the osseous tissue as the seat of the disease. In the former case the pains are boring, throbbing, aching, and more or less circumscribed to a particular region; the patient may likewise complain of a sensation as if the limb were swelling up. Among the physiological effects of Aconite upon the bones, these boring, gnawing, crawling, pecking or beating, aching and burning pains occupy a prominent rank.

Gentlemen, Aconite occupies the same rank in our Materia Medica that the heart occupies in the human body. Without Aconite, the sphere of our usefulness would be limited indeed; our kingdom would be desolate. What immense advantages does the use of this one agent afford to the homoeopathic practitioner over his allopathic brother who seems somewhat disposed just now to steal his enemy's thunder instead of using it openly and honorably with appropriate acknowledgments. See how readily such distressing inflammations as *Ophthalmia* (acute inflammation of the eye), *Otitis* (acute inflammation of the ear), *Glossitis* (acute inflammation of the tongue), *Nasitis* (acute inflammation of the nose), and acute inflammations of the *face* in general, will yield to Aconite. In any of these inflammations the tincture or lower potencies will, as a general rule, be of more use to you than the higher attenuations.

A case of *Nasitis*, where the inflammation was intense, the nose swelled up to the size of a child's fist, and a phagedenic ulcer had developed itself at the tip of the nose which discharged a quantity of fetid green pus, yielded to the tincture of Aconite completely, inflammation, swelling, ulcer and all, in one week. The curative virtue of Aconite in

Iritis was fully tested in a case which I treated with Dr. Dixon, a distinguished oculist in New York. The doctor had couched a cataract for one of my patients. Our agreement was that, in case iritis should set in, and my treatment should not produce a favorable impression upon the disease within six hours, the patient was to be bled and put upon the use of calomel. The operation was performed in the afternoon, and next morning we visited our patient at an early hour. Iritis was fully developed. We found the pupil considerably elongated, with uneven edges. The frontal headache was agonizing. I put the patient upon the tincture of Aconite, five drops of a rather weak tincture of the leaves in a tumblerful of water. Within three days every trace of inflammation had disappeared, and the pupil was restored to its natural dimensions. The doctor admitted that he had never seen a case of iritis cured in this off-hand way.

Neuralgic Rheumatism frequently yields to Aconite alone, although other drugs have often to be given in alternation with it, or in its stead. Aconite affects the tissues as we see them affected in neuralgic rheumatism. It causes tingling, formicating pains, or a feeling of painful numbness in the parts, also pinching or tearing pains as if the muscular fibre were pinched or torn; it causes soreness of parts, burning-prickling pains in the fingers and toes, sensation as if a tight bandage were drawn around the ankles, and a variety of other symptoms which show that Aconite may be of great use to us in the treatment of

Arthritic and Neuralgic Rheumatism, or in acute and chronic

Arthritis or Gout with soreness, tenderness, heat and swelling of the parts, stitching and throbbing pains, etc. Give first to sixth potency.

Adenitis, or *Acute Inflammation of Glands*, finds its remedy in Aconite. Even in chronic adenitis, when the gland is hard, painful and hot interiorly, Aconite will often effect a resolution of the disorganizing process. But you have to use it in massive doses, one or two drops of the first attenuation or even the tincture in a tumblerful of water, a spoonful every two or three hours.

In scrofulous subjects inflammation of the glands occurs quite frequently, so much so that a tendency to this sort of inflammation is generally regarded as a symptom, of constitutional scrofula. There is one form of scrofulous glandular

inflammation which it may be appropriate to notice in connection with adenitis; I allude to

Inflammation of the Mesenteric Glands or Mesenteric Ganglionitis. Gentlemen, let me urge you to depend upon Aconite in this devastating affection as one of your staunchest friends. You may deem it advisable to use *Balladonna, Mercurius, Iodine, Arsenic, Calcarea, Hepar sulphuris*; I care not what medicine you use besides, but never lose sight of the power which Aconite possesses more perhaps than any other drug in our *Materia Medica*, to restore the process of animalization if it has been interrupted by some cause or other. The mesenteric glands seem to be the chief means by which this process is carried on in childhood. In every stage of this disease Aconite is in its place. Not only pathological considerations, but the symptomatic condition of the patient lead us to recommend Aconite in this disease. The febrile dryness of the skin and the fever which is more or less constant, the diarrhea or the alternate diarrhea and constipation, the abdominal enlargement, the alternate loss of appetite and canine hunger, the fitful mood of the little patient, or his habitual fretting and his depression of spirits, his peculiar restlessness at night and the nightly exacerbation of the symptoms; all these signs indicate Aconite as a proper remedy in this disease. But, Gentlemen, you must not be afraid of using the lower preparation* and even the tincture of this drug. I care not how long homoeopathic physicians may overlook the great fact that Aconite is one of our most efficient remedies for *Tuberculosis*; the time will come when the retroformative virtues of Aconite, by which I mean the power which Aconite possesses, to stimulate the absorbent vessels, and, by this means, not only to remove the tuberculous infiltration but to restore the normal tissue whether parenchymatous, serous, muscular or any other, will be acknowledged and made use of in practice. But do not tell me that you have used Aconite in the 200th or 2000th potency and found it wanting. There are cases where the higher potencies of Aconite are perfectly applicable; but tuberculosis is not one of them. I have uniformly got along far better with the lower potencies and with the tincture. As I said before, you may use the Aconite in alternation with other drugs such as *Iodine, Kali hydriodicum, Belladonna, Calcarea, Hepar sulphuris, Mercurius* and others, but your safest plan, in all tubercular diseases, will always be to give an occasional dose of Aconite, no matter what other medicine you may resort to along with it. Never give more medicine than is necessary to cure your patient, but do not give any less either. It is your privilege to use the tincture up to the merest breath of a drug. I am no advocate of massive doses; I have taken and shall take every opportunity of recommending the higher potencies to your careful consideration, but I believe, and I would urge you to believe, that it is no more a lower homoeopathy to use low doses than the use of high potencies constitutes a higher homoeopathy. Some physicians have been pleased to designate the use of the higher potencies as a species of higher homoeopathy.

Gentlemen, this is doing great injustice to a vast majority of the practitioners of our School. The homoeopathicity of a drug to a disease depends upon the qualitative, not upon the quantitative, relation of these two elements, and ten drops of the tincture of one drug may be far more homoeopathic than ten pellets of the ten thousandth potency of another.

I have alluded to *Neuralgic* and *Scrofulous Inflammations*. In neuralgic inflammation, which is generally of a rheumatic character, the fever may be exceedingly moderate, and at times almost wanting, although the pain is most severe, often excruciating: the affected region is swollen, tender, sometimes hotter than the surrounding parts, and the pain which is felt in the interior of the tissues, is of various kinds: burning, stitching, aching, throbbing, tearing, wrenching. This neuralgic rheumatism may affect the joints, muscular tissue, the neurilemma, the periosteum, or some internal viscus. Aconite is a very efficient remedy, but you must give the middle potencies from the 6th to the 12th; the tincture generally produces severe aggravations of the symptoms. Nevertheless cases may occur where the low potencies may seem preferable. Neuralgic, scrofulous or arthritic inflammations probably all belong to the same family of diseases. If these inflammations are accompanied by high fever, you will get along better with the lower than with the higher or middle potencies.

In *Scrofulous Ophthalmia*, with a rose-colored inflammation of the conjunctiva, profuse discharge of acrid tears, swelling of the lids and excessive photophobia, the lower potencies and even the tincture of Aconite are uniformly preferable. You will recollect, Gentlemen, that in one of our cases of poisoning, scrofulous ophthalmia was a marked effect of the drug.

In *liheumatic Contraction of the Tendons* which may be looked upon as a species of neuralgic rheumatism, the lower potencies of Aconite are generally to be preferred. Dr. Arneth produced this symptom in his proving of Aconite.

There is a most important form of inflammation which it is proper to class in the category of nervous or neuralgic inflammations; I allude to

Inflammation of the Spinal Marrow or Myelitis. The effects of Aconite upon this important organ, which have been obtained by several of our provers, shadow forth this disease in sufficiently distinct outlines to permit us to recommend Aconite as a specific remedy for its cure.

The symptoms of this disease show themselves more in the extremities and other organs of the body than in the spinal marrow itself; but all these symptoms correspond most perfectly with our Aconite-provings.

If the whole spine is affected, all the organic functions are more or less impaired; in the upper part of the body we have paralysis of the upper extremities, dyspnoea, orthopnea, excessive irregularities in the heart's action; in the middle portion we have: numbness and paralysis of the abdominal walls, diarrhea or constipation, symptoms of enteritis; and if the lower portion of the spine is affected, we have all sorts of derangements in the abdominal functions, retention of urine or else inability to hold it; uterine derangements, paralysis of the rectum and of the lower extremities. All these symptoms, together with the constitutional fever, the violent flushes in the face, the pain in the head, dizziness, and the peculiar pains along the spine, shocks of paralytic pain, boring and tearing pains, and the like, indicate Aconite as a great remedy for this disorder.

In *Chronic Myelitis* or *Spinal Irritation*, the same remedy may be used; the functional disturbances which characterize spinal irritation, find their counterpart in the physiological action of Aconite upon the healthy organism.

Among the recorded provings of Aconite, the following symptoms point more or less to irritation of the different portions of the spinal column:

Burning-gnawing pains near the dorsal vertebrae;

Violent sticking, digging pain all along the spine, aggravated by an inspiration;

Boring pain in the sacral region, left side;

Crawling sensation in the spine;

Feeling of weakness in the nape of the neck, with sensation as if the flesh were loose, and stinging in the nape of the neck, when moving the head;

Stitches in both sides of the nape of the neck.

Accompanying these symptoms, we have soreness in the whole or in parts of the spinal column; soreness of the vertebral processes; soreness of the spinal marrow which may only be felt when making pressure with the finger.

Spinal irritation gives rise to a number of constitutional symptoms, such as drawing and tearing pains in the extremities; violent rush of blood, headache; oppression on the chest, palpitation, cough; soreness and spasmodic pains in the bowels, constipation or diarrhea; numbness, deadness, coldness or heat of single

parts; stitches through the joints, and many others which will be all found enumerated among the provings of Aconite.

Among the symptoms of Aconite there is one of great pathological importance; it is this: "weakness in the region of the head of the femur, and inability to walk, owing to an indescribable, intolerable pain, as if the head of the femur had been crushed, particularly after lying down and sleeping." This symptom shows that Aconite may be depended upon as a most useful agent in various important affections of the hip-joint; it shows us that Aconite may be used in

Acute or Chronic Rheumatism of the Hip-joint, and in that dangerous disease:

Scrofulous Inflammation of the Hip-joint or Coxarthrocace which is so insidiously inclined to terminate in suppuration and destruction of the joint. Give from the 3d to the 12th potency.

Carbunrulous Inflammation should be treated with the lower potencies or with the tincture of Aconite. The inflammation involves the muscular tissue, which is hot, red and sore and, after a while, sloughs off. Aconite will not only diminish the constitutional fever, but bring this painful process to a speedy termination.

Some time ago I had an opportunity of witnessing the curative powers of Aconite in acute carbunculous inflammation. It commenced with a black point in the upper part of the thigh, whence the disease spread with astonishing rapidity. In twenty-four hours a large portion of the thigh was hard, excessively painful, and exhibited a shining redness. The fever was very high. I put the patient on the tincture of Aconite. The inflammatory process was speedily arrested, the fever subdued, the inflamed parts sloughed off, and the patient was restored in ten days.

In *Gangrenous Whitlow*, of which you may read a description in Cooper's Dictionary, you will find Aconite an invaluable remedy. In some cases of poisoning, Aconite has been known to cause gangrene. I treated one case of this disease in a family where it was hereditary. The grand-father, father and a brother had died with it. A sister was attacked with it. It commenced in a black point in the palm of the hand, gradually traveling upwards along the arm. The hand and fore-arm were black as ink. The patient was entirely restored by means of poultices and the internal use of Aconite and Arsenic.

In *Acute Stomacace*, with heat in the mouth and sloughing of the lining membrane, no better remedy can be used than Aconite. The so-called *diphtheritic inflammation of the mouth* and throat, when the throat is studded with numberless little ulcers of the size of a pin's head, excessively stinging and painful, with hard, inflamed borders and secreting a whitish, cheesy matter, Aconite is a true

specific in every case where the disease has a rheumatic origin and the constitutional fever is more or less developed.

What I have said of inflammation, likewise applies to *Acute Congestions*. Every acute congestion is ushered in with a chill, followed by inflammatory fever. The well managed use of Aconite, in conjunction with other remedies more or less specifically adapted to the part, will conquer these serious disorders.

Passive Congestion may frequently find its remedy in Aconite. This condition is characterized by many symptoms which correspond very strictly with the effects of Aconite, These are a sensation of fullness and swelling, and a feeling of soreness in the parts where this sensation of fullness and swelling is experienced. A feeling of heat may likewise be complained of in these parts.

The symptoms of passive congestion of course vary according as one or the other organ is the seat of the trouble.

Passive Congestion of the Bowel, for instance, is characterized by a sense of fullness and weight in the bowels, a dragging sensation in the bowels, soreness, constipation or frequent urging to stool, with discharge of small quantities of mucus or else frequent ineffectual attempts to relieve the bowels,

Passive Congestion of the Lungs is characterized by symptoms like the following: sensation as if the chest were empty; this feeling may be succeeded by a sensation of fullness in the chest, with desire to draw along breath every now and then; occasional turns of slight hacking cough as if for the purpose of clearing the chest, and removing some obstruction.

Passive Congestion of the Heart, may manifest itself by a feeling of weight in the region of the heart, occasionally amounting to suffocation, and accompanied every now and then with palpitation, and with a feeling of anxiety and even dyspnoea.

Passive Congestion of the Liver may likewise occur, and is generally indicated by a sense of fullness in the region of the liver; by pressing upon this region, the patient is able to bring up a quantity of wind. At times the region of the liver feels sore, and the patient may even complain of an undue sensation of warmth in that part.

Even the stomach, and more particularly the pyloric region, may become the seat of passive congestion, with fullness and heaviness in this region, and raising of a quantity of wind off the stomach on making pressure upon the epigastrium. These passive congestions of the liver, stomach and bowels are frequently alluded to as infractions by the older pathologists.

CEREBRO-SPINAL GROUP.

It seems needless to dwell upon the cerebral and nervous affections with which Aconite is in curative rapport. You recollect that by virtue of the manner in which it affects the brain, this agent must be a great remedy in *Cerebral Apoplexy* and in *Congestive Headaches*. In order- to render the indications in these affections still more definite, we will point out to the student of Homoeopathy the most important symptoms bearing upon these conditions which have been developed by our provings.

The symptoms which point to *Sanguineous Apoplexy*, are varied.

We have:

Stupefaction of the senses and giddiness as if intoxicated.

Crampy sensation in the forehead or above the root of the nose, with a feeling as if one should lose one's reason.

Rush of blood to the head, with heat and redness of the face.

Throbbing of the temporal arteries; swelling of the jugular veins.

These are some of the more prominent head-symptoms indicating Aconite in sanguineous apoplexy. Among the following headache symptoms we shall discover several which likewise point to Aconite in this affection.

Congestive Headache comprises a group of symptoms like the following, to be found among the positive provings:

Fullness and weight in the forehead, with sensation as if the brain and eyes would start out, or as if the brain were pushed against the forehead.

The head feels tight and constricted.

Crampy sensation behind the orbits, or as if in the bones, or over the root of the nose, with sensation as if one should lose one's reason.

Shooting, throbbing or shooting-throbbing headache, particularly when walking, abating when sitting down.

Distress as if the brain were moving up and down; it is aggravated by movement, or by talking.

Pain as if the head were compressed with equal force on all sides.

These forms of congestive or apoplectic headache may sometimes be so violent as to deprive the patient of consciousness. The extremities feel cold, the pulse is small and often scarcely perceptible; the features denote anguish and suffering; the face exhibits a deathlike pallor, or else looks bloated, mottled or dark-red. In some of these headaches, Aconite will act even in a highly potentized form; in other cases the strong tincture has to be used.

Bilious or Biliary Congestive headaches are characterized by many of the symptoms which we have enumerated in the previous paragraph. In addition to these, we may mention a few others, such as:

Burning distress in the head, as if the brain were moved by boiling water.

Headache as if the head were encircled with a red-hot iron.

Stupefying pain on the top, or in one side of the head, with excessive sensitiveness of the scalp, throbbing and stinging pain in the head, as if needles were stuck through the brain.

In bilious and congestive headache, the patient is generally exceedingly sensitive to noise and light. In bilious headache, the lower potencies of Aconite, or the tincture itself, are preferable.

Hysterical Headache, with sensation as if a ball were ascending in the brain, spreading a coolness through the brain; dizziness, obscuration of sight, stinging, aching and throbbing pain in one side of the head, in the temples, forehead or on the top of the head: finds its remedy in Aconite, from the 3d to the 12th potency.

Rheumatic and Catarrhal Headaches, with tight feeling in the head, sensitiveness of the scalp or of one particular spot in the scalp; heat in the head, soreness of the eyes, lachrymation, sneezing fits, chilliness, etc., may readily yield to Aconite.

A *Gastric Headache* caused by indigestible food, may require Aconite.

Nervous Headaches, coming on in consequence of nightly watching, a sudden and violent emotion, or paroxysmally every week, fortnight or month, may have

to be treated with Aconite, from the 3d to the 12th potency. The symptoms generally are a violent aching pain in one half, or all over, the head.

In a common sick headache, one half of the head is generally affected. The head feels sore, hot, with excessive aching pain, stinging and throbbing, sensitiveness to noise and light; sometimes the eye of the affected side is irritated, swollen, red, and discharging a profuse quantity of tears. The middle potencies are generally preferable in this form of headache.

A headache may arise from the sudden suppression of an habitual discharge, such as the menses, piles, or even chronic coryza. Such headaches generally require Aconite, the lower potencies or the strong tincture. Aconite not only removes the distress, but restores the discharges.

You need not be reminded of the fact that Aconite possesses vast curative powers in paralysis, both of the motor and sentient spheres. The spasm-exciting action of Aconite, &c., will lead you in many cases of spasmodic or convulsive conditions to the use of this great agent.

We may as well allude in this place to the wonderful powers which Aconite possesses, of curing

Neuralgia. Aconite is not a panacea for neuralgia; but if properly used, sometimes internally, and at other times both internally and externally, it may prove a most wonderful deliverer from this most distressing malady. If you look at the symptoms of Aconite, you will find that burning, boring, stinging, jerking, screwing, aching, lancinating, wrenching and other pains, constitute so many therapeutic indications for the use of this great drug.

Neuralgic pains may occur in any part of the human body, although they are met with in some parts more frequently than in other. The face, scalp, liver, womb, bowels, and rectum are most generally invaded by this kind of suffering.

Neuralgia of the Face, or prosopalgia, is generally characterized by boring, wrenching, stitching, burning, shooting and lancing pains.

Neuralgia of the Liver, or *Hepatulgia,* is characterized by hard aching, burning, constricting, dragging pains.

Neuralgia of the womb or *Hysttralgia,* by gnawing, burning and hard aching, or screwing pains; and

Neuralgia of the Rectum, or Proctalgia, by hard aching, dragging or burning pains.

If I recommend Aconite for neuralgia, I do not recommend it as a panacea, but as a remedy which deserves far more attention than is generally devoted to it by homoeopathic physicians. In all the forms of neuralgia where our provings indicate it, I have seen the most brilliant effects produced by its use in various degrees of strength.

Before concluding this chapter, we will again advert to the great curative powers of Aconite in

Paralysis, where the symptoms obtained by our provers most pointedly indicate its use. Aconite causes

Numbness of the small of the back, extending to the lower limbs;

Formication over the back, upper arms and thighs;

Numbness in the shoulders;

Numbness and lameness of the left arm which scarcely permits one to move the hand;

Weight and debility of the fore-arms which feel as if gone to sleep when taking hold of any thing;

Numbness, icy coldness and insensibility of one hand;

Tingling pain in the fingers, even while writing;

Stinging and prickling in the arms and fingers;

Hot prickings in the tips of the fingers;

Similar symptoms are experienced in the lower extremities. All these symptoms are more or less characteristic of an attack of paralysis. These symptoms, in conjunction with the toxicological effects of Aconite which have been fully described on previous pages, show that this remarkable agent must be of eminent use in paralysis.

Another affection to which the provings of Aconite point, is

Nervous Tremor, which may befall persons who have worked too hard, especially females whose constitutions are not very robust, and whose nervous energy has been exhausted by excessive muscular exertions nightly watching and the like. Aconite causes symptoms like these:

Trembling of the arms and hands;

Trembling of the lower extremities;

The lower extremities totter, they are in constant motion.

This trembling is described by some pathologists as

Chorea Minor or Muscularis; it may sometimes occur as a symptom of hysteria.

In *Cataleptic Spasms*, Aconite may not be overlooked. This agent seems to be possessed of a power to affect the nervous influence similarly to what we know it to be affected in catalepsy. Without extinguishing the consciousness, it seems to neutralize the faculty of manifesting it by external acts.