

An Unhappy Philanthropist: *Cicuta Virosa*

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Abstract: *Cicuta Virosa* is a homeopathic remedy that is discussed in this page along with its botanical composition, efficacy, and correct administration. A review has been conducted with the identification of research goals, and it is crucial to understand the foundation of treatment in order to guarantee optimal utilization of this drug, which has several intriguing but often missed aspects.

Keywords: *Cicuta Virosa*, Homeopathy, Materia Medica, Therapeutics

Introduction

There is absolutely zero possibility of obtaining a prescription for this cure if you only read what is in current (I mean "standard" or "classical" *Materia Medica*). Convulsions that spread to the lower extremities are a hallmark of epilepsy, and this medication is almost always administered to treat this condition. We have to look for more subtle clues now since these « heroic » examples are rare. When Nat Mur or Sulph looked to be a good indication but didn't work, I became interested in this odd cure. One must concede that homoeopathic remedies are never restricted in their activity, and I hope that this research will help you to uncover the remedy's extremely broad action. Thus, I will provide a detailed description, beginning with the less distinguishing qualities, in order to fit all the parts together until they form a cohesive image of the solution. Gathering some basic botanical and pharmacological information is a good place to start.

1. Botany



Figure 1. *Cicuta Virosa* Plant

Tincture of newly harvested roots taken as soon as the plant begins to bloom is the standard method of preparation according to Hahnemann. *Cicuta* is a member of the Umbelliferae family, as can be observed in the accompanying photo (the plant does resemble an umbrella, after all). The neurological system, mucosa (catarrh), and skin (pustulous or scabby eruptions) are all affected by any member of this family. *Aethusa*, *Asa foetida*, *Cicuta*, *Conium*, *Petroselinum*, and *Phellandrium* are some of the other Umbelliferae that are well-known and used in homeopathy.

In contrast to *Cicuta*, which stimulates the neurological system and causes spasms, *Conium* gradually causes paralysis, making a comparison between the two remedies intriguing. Both treatments cause crusty breakouts, particularly in the region of the lip where *Cicuta* removed cancerous cells that had been secreting a yellowish fluid. When compared to *Conium*, *Cicuta*'s impact on glands is less.

When it comes to controlling spasms, *Asafoetida* is right up there with *Cicuta*. A lump in the throat, irregular menstrual bleeding, and other well-known side effects are all signs of its anti-peristaltic activity. When compared to *Cicuta*, which has less of a correlation with this condition, this is a much more effective treatment for hysteria. *Asaf* is so hypersensitive that no one should ever go too near him while he is hurting. Because he has to isolate himself to avoid the triggers that make him aggressive, *Cicuta* shares this heightened sensitivity. Mind

At first, studying the mental signs of the remedy does not reveal very much. As long as the clue has not been found, it is

difficult to have an idea of the remedy since there is such gibberish of information in total opposition to each other.

1.1. Absent Minded, Catalepsy, Automatisms

These symptoms are very often found in the Cicuta patient. For a long period of time, he absolutely does not remember what is going on around him.

Thus, you will find students who have missed entire sections of courses and who do not even realize they have stopped taking notes. When this phenomenon occurs, patients say they are literally "disconnected". I have even seen cases where the patient was voluntarily able to put himself "off". This way of evading is one of the first that leads to understand this remedy.

The patient has frequent fits of absentmindedness of variable duration or he is so buried in his thoughts that he is no longer aware of what goes on around him.

In Hering, we find an even deeper description of the phenomenon:

She knows no one, but when touched and spoken to, she answers

Suddenly consciousness returns, and she remembers nothing of what has occurred

Loss of consciousness with open eyes, knows no one, but when touched or spoken to answers questions ; consciousness returns suddenly, and she does not remember what has passed ; attacks twice a day

This ability to immediately be « back again », whilst being in his own inner world, is absolutely specific to this remedy.

Care should be taken not to mistake this symptom with that typical of Arnica or Baptisia. In this case, the patient is in a stuporous state, replies when spoken to, then falls back into lethargy. Whereas Cicuta can leave his inner world and immediately be able to be "back again", without reverting to obliviousness.

Quite often, we will also find a closely related sign to those just described: a tendency to automatic actions (listed in Mind under "Unconsciousness"). For example, the Cicuta patient takes his car every morning for the same drive to his office. He is able to drive it in an automatic way whilst being deeply in his thoughts or while being "disconnected". This is so true that when he has to run an errand in an opposite direction to the usual one, he will probably drive several miles on his usual way before getting aware of his mistake.

All these phenomena are readily aggravated by the tendency to be mistaken in going to places and in estimating times. Since the patient has a strong tendency to take refuge into his own world (to the point of ecstasy), he can reach the point of mingling the present with the past (likewise, we find Dullness of Senses symptoms, everything appears Strange).

Nux moschata is very absentminded. Kent mentions the typical example of the housewife interrupted in her tasks and unable to remember what she was just doing minutes ago. Where Cicuta feels absences and withdraws into his thoughts, Nux moschata feels extremely drowsy with a dryness of the mouth quite characteristic because devoid of thirst. Moreover, there is a tendency to fainting and to digestive bloating which is not found in Cicuta.

Now is the time to talk about Natrum Muriaticum, which is the major differential diagnosis with Cicuta and to which it can be compared as far as absences and other tendencies to be lost in thoughts are concerned. However, Natrum Muriaticum keeps reminiscing on and on about sad thoughts of the past, unlike Cicuta. Natrum Muriaticum is very reserved, just like Cicuta when on the defensive. Natrum Muriaticum also has many alimentary signs which differ from Cicuta, and above all he is improved by physical exertion, which is rarely found in other remedies.

1.2. Anxiety About the Future

This symptom is another lead to understand this unfamiliar remedy which appears at the 3rd grade in the rubric and deserves our attention. It is not (or rarely) anticipation, as found in Med, Lyc or Carc, but a real anxiety about the future with a hardly disguised pessimism.

Cicuta is often interested in the fate of humanity and is very worried about its future. Sometimes, the patient is more concerned about himself with the fear of falling ill or of the occurrence of a catastrophe.

In this case, Cicuta is very close to Sulphur on the philosophical side. The Sulph subject often looks like the ragged philosopher as described by Hering, but Cicuta can also be totally unconcerned with his appearance (Indifference/ External things), which leads to the confusion between the two remedies. However, Sulph always has a joy of living and convivial side, unlike Cicuta, even though the remedy can be found at the 3rd degree in the Gaiety heading under cheerfulness. On the contrary, Cicuta is often a disappointed person who can still be in a good mood at moments, even though he might try more and more to turn his back on the world and no longer feel concerned.

1.3. A Distinctive Mental Sign

These notions just described set the scene. We now have to focus on the symptom which is the key to the remedy.

MIND: Shuns the foolishness of men; or Misanthropy, shuns the foolishness of men.

We see here that Cic. is the only remedy in the rubric. In Allen we find this symptom:

Contempt and scorn for mankind; he avoided them, abhorred their follies excessively, and his disposition seemed to tend towards misanthropy; he withdrew himself into solitude.

Now, a few explanations: Cic., like Nat-m., is a very sensitive and bashful person. Here follows a set of characteristic rubrics in my usual format. This means the principal number is the remedy grade. The comma indicates that the remedy has a relative valorization; i.e. 3,2 means third grade, two points relative strength. If there is a slash, the following number is the rubric's size:

excitement, horrible things, after hearing (1). Frightened easily (1). Men, shuns foolishness of (1/1). Mildness (1). Misanthropy, shuns foolishness of men (1/1). Narrating her complaints agg (1). Sadness, sad stories (3/1). Sensitiveness, sad stories (3,2/1). Sympathetic (2). Talking, unpleasant things agg (1).

This short list of symptoms will enable us to explain why Cicuta needs to run away from what is unbearable to him.

Let's notice here the similarity with Pulsatilla's gentle, nice and very compassionate sides. Both remedies are very aggravated when they have to talk about their symptoms. While Cicuta seeks safety in escape and withdrawal, Puls. needs affection and will do everything to get it.

Basically gentle and compassionate, the Cicuta subject feels shocked by the realities of society or human behaviors which do not agree with his own moral values.

One of my patients, whom I had unsuccessfully treated with Nat-m, then with various other remedies for his skinny, depressed and very introverted sides, was totally transformed with Cicuta. During the war in Yugoslavia, interrupting his current business and life, he volunteered to drive lorries delivering vital supplies to civil populations. He considered it was his duty as a human being to go and bring assistance to those in need. Once over there, he was very disappointed, to the point of feeling deceived, by the behavior of a lot of these supposed volunteers. He was also badly shocked by awful stories he heard there. Back home, he withdrew more and more, rarely going out of his home. When consulting, he hated to talk about these very personal subjects, saying he would prefer not to think about them.

You have here all the "ingredients" you need to diagnose of a Cicuta subject.

Be sure to remember the above list, it makes you understand this process of a sensitive person feeling disappointed and consequently withdrawing into his own world. Cicuta is able to regain cheerfulness and even gaiety every time he feels appreciated or in a friendly environment, but generally he will not willingly seek comfort or companionship, like Pulsatilla does.

Keep in mind these key-words:

- Sensitivity, compassion, moral values
- Disappointment, grief
- Escape, withdrawal

Cicuta has to be added indisputably to the 1 grade in the rubric Ailment from disappointment (as this is just a clinical note, we'll need pathogenetic confirmations to add it to a higher grade some day).

2. Different Adaptive Mechanisms

Homeopathy teaches us to see both sides of the same hill. Every situation has its own counterpart; every desire is subject to become an aversion, etc. The French school for example, used to describe a Sepia portrait corresponding to a worn out woman, dressed in black, sad and depressed. Practice shows that in fact many Sepia cases look like a "super" Nux-v, in overactive women. Likewise, Cicuta is able to display two different pictures whilst struggling to adapt itself in this cruel world. We'll describe here the passive mode, that is the more classical one, and the sthenic? modes, looking like Caust or Lyc for example.

2.1. Passive Mode: The Escape

Escape is quite symptomatic in various Cicuta aspects and at different levels. First, we have seen the mental signs of absentmindedness or deep reflection, they are only some of many sides of Cicuta. Feeling repelled by human behavior, Cicuta tries to run away from it.

Company, aversion to (3), strangers, presence of (3), avoids sight of people (3), menses, during, desires to be left alone (1,1). Fear, crowd, in a (1), people, of (1), people, of, men (3,2). Home, desire to go (1). Indifference, external things, to (1). Insanity, escape, tries to (1,1). Recognize not, relatives, his (1). Suspicious (3). Talk, indisposed to (1). Unconsciousness (2). Unconsciousness, conduct automatic (1), periodical (2/3), recognizes no one but answers correctly when touched or spoken to (1/1). Work, mental work, evening (1,1/3).

Needless to say how infrequent are the extreme following symptom: he no longer recognizes his close ones and madness with attempt to escape...

However, this aversion to company leads us to talk about a frequent behavior. The Cicuta patient no longer wants to meet people he does not know. He cannot stand crowds, not because of a claustrophobia feeling as seen in several other remedies, but because he feels repelled by the frequent instinctive reactions of an anonymous crowd. Cicuta patients describe quite acutely how they cannot stand the lack of regard shown to others by people they come across (street scuffle, cigarette butts thrown everywhere, etc...), so, rather than getting angry and rebelling, they prefer not to be confronted with it.

Indignation is an omnipresent component in Cicuta. This reminds us of Staphysagria, a remedy for the wounded dignity of someone who avoids conflicts, refusing to quarrel. Staphysagria has a romantic, nostalgic side, possibly found in Cicuta, as well as an extreme sensitiveness for "external impressions", as mentioned in texts, that is a tendency to easily feel offended or look on the bad side of things, etc... The subject who needs Staph often has a personal history of injustice, whereas Cicuta is disappointed with human beings' behaviour. Cicuta runs away from humanity's stupidity, he's not so affected by personal injustice. Staph also shows a strong sexual excitation, a strong desire for spicy foods and a tendency to produce condylomata, styes, cystitis...

We see that the Cicuta patient does not feel like going out of his home or, when he has to go out, he wants to come back as soon as possible. This tendency to stay home is very evocative, and although it could be mistaken with the Nat-m withdrawal, two other remedies should also be mentioned:

Bryonia, has a fear of the future, is easily irritated against others and has a yearning to go home. But the comparison stops here because Bry is down to earth, he does not think for one minute about mankind's well being, his anxiety for the future is

due to his fear of being deprived and the yearning to go home is linked to his aversion for movement.

Baryta carbonica likes to stay home and is afraid of the future. This is due to his shyness and his extreme lack of confidence in himself. His home, a familiar environment with well known marks, is a haven of peace which secures him. The fear of the future can be explained by the fact that Bar-c is aware of his deficiencies and lives in the future with a lot of anticipation.

Cicuta will find refuge in intellectual work. The repertory only mentions this evening modality but we often find people who like to carry on literary or philosophical works, etc... Depending on previously mentioned circumstances, the Cicuta patient is often taciturn, distrustful and not very talkative.

2.2. Active Mode: Provocation, Anger

The depressive description of the disappointed philanthropist appeared to me initially. Upon developing a better knowledge of the remedy, I have discovered that there are often very sthenic forms of the remedy, prior to the patient's withdrawal on himself, exhausted by his permanent struggles.

In these conditions, we often find an easily irritable patient who gets angry while voicing his indignation on subjects he feels concerned with: the way employees are treated in such factories, our governing heads' corruption, etc... I have noticed that many teachers are possible Cicuta subjects. Indeed, these people are often idealistic, sometimes to the point of utopia. They feel directly shocked by the harsh reality of a crushing administration. All the conditions are there to reveal Cicuta cases.

The first signs of backing out are "I can no longer stand to be in a group, I am rejected, I am troublesome". But the patient still has enough energy to pursue his fights and stand up for his ideals.

Lycopodium has a great duality. He is bossy in well known situations, but becomes respectful of authority and "established order" with unfamiliar people. Cicuta is not as cowardly and rather tries to pick a quarrel with provocative attitudes to have an opportunity of loudly voicing his indignation. Quite often patients will say "I have become vindictive and I send everyone to hell". On the other hand, Cicuta is neither in a bad mood when waking up, nor does he show Lycopodium domineering character. On the contrary, he will often make fun of authority which he feels rarely based on merit. However, both remedies show bloating and stomach ache symptoms: Cicuta's stomach pain may occur very suddenly. As Cicuta has also a sweaty head while sleeping, this can lead to confusion with Lycopodium.

Causticum is very sensitive to social issues. The (young) patient can easily be identified with his warts around finger nails and clearly marked food likings. He is an authoritarian who likes salt or smoked food. Cicuta is not afraid of the dark, nor does he have the need to be accompanied or have someone hold his hand when going to sleep, like the Causticum child. Both remedies show very deep compassion and are truly able to act in favor of those in need. This will typically make Causticum cry, but I think that both remedies are quite similar here. Causticum is improved with dampness, has paretic signs (voice, urines) not to be found in Cicuta.

We have just drawn the picture of a sensitive person with high views on humanity's future, but who is hit hard by reality which he finds sordid (more than anyone else would do). How will he react?

To my knowledge, there are two types of reactions which, sometimes, can be found in the same person.

2.3. Provocation, Contestation

Initially, provings show a childish behavior linked to epilepsy.

A woman on coming out of the cataleptic attacks often takes on childish behavior. A man thinks that he is a child and acts like one; silly laughter, playing with toys, and other acts of childish behavior...[Kent]

Considering the cases I have come across, I think the reality (I mean, at the present day) is more subtle. In fact, this wounded subject tries to attract attention on his suffering, although without seeking consolation. This attitude, somewhat haughty and proud, warrants the place of the remedy in the followings rubrics:

Censorious, critical (1). Haughty (1). Contemptuous (1).
Reproaches (1)

Feeling constantly disappointed, Cicuta is reproachful to everyone and can come to have a haughty way, considering himself above everyone else since he thinks he is the only one to have human and moral values in this "degenerated world".

Here, Platinum is one of the differential diagnosis. Plat always has an authoritative side and shows off in eccentric, costly and very immodest clothes, whereas Cic does not like to show off and does not care about his look (it could even be an additional contestation). It is a fact that Plat is often a very idealistic person also disappointed by reality. This disappointment in Platinum is compensated either by a "Natrum aspect" when patients keep dwelling on sad things of the past, or by an unrestrained narcissism. This is in no way like Cicuta. The sexual drive is very strong in Plat, this is not the case in Cicuta.

As his sensitiveness does not allow him to easily show his feelings – remember that Cicuta is aggravated while speaking of unpleasant things – acting then like a clown to be noticed is the only option left for him.

2.4. Anger

Sometimes, he feels so fed up that his inner anger bursts out.

In the repertory, we find some interesting rubrics:

Answer, abruptly (2). Discontented (1). Hatred (3).

Impulsive (2). Irritability (1). Malicious (1). Rage, fury (1). Sensitivity, noise (1). Violent (3). Violent, deeds, leading to (1).

Our Cic subject can then express all the resentment he feels against people who offended him (Staph); but there again the anger has seldom something to do with personal matters, it's rather directed towards people - he thinks - involved in anti-humanitarian actions. Therefore, we discover that Nat-m is not the only remedy to have this "Indian hate", as mentioned by Lathoud, Cicuta can also be very caustic.

Impulses can often be overwhelming and the person will have real fits of rage.

With such a behavior one should also think of Nux Vomica: sensitivity to noise, sympathetic. Sometimes, the Cicuta patient only shows these fits of anger and his sensitivity to noise, which is the reason why it can be confused with Nux. However, we'll see that Nux usual modalities are not there, there is no desire for "good food", wine, coffee, spicy food, no insomnia, no bloating, no fussiness. This means that Cicuta should come to mind.

3. Other Neurological Issues

Although nowadays Cicuta is rarely prescribed for epileptic troubles or chorea, this remedy is nevertheless still "flirting" with neurological phenomena.

3.1. Shocks and Shakes

These symptoms are often found in various entries of the repertory:

HEAD: Motions of, jerking (2), jerking, lying on back (2), backward (2), talking (2/1); Shocks, in head (2), electrical (2), cold, air (2/1), motion, on (2), sudden (2), extending, extremities, to (3/3).

STOMACH: Shocks (3). Shocks, convulsions, before (3/1). BACK: Pain, jerking, coccyx (2,2), coccyx, menses, during (2/1); Shocks, along spine (1), dorsal (1). EXTREMITIES: Jerking (3), upper limbs (3), left (2), forearm (3), talking, while (1/1), fingers (3), fingers, epilepsy, in (3/1), lower limbs (3), foot (2); Shocks sensation of (2), upper limbs (3), left (2), lower limbs (2), violent, causes leg to jerk (1/1).

GENERALITIES: Jerking internally (1), convulsions, like (2), muscles (3,2); Pain, jerking, externally (1); Shocks, electric like (2), cerebral commotion, from (1/1), sense, return of the, on (1/1).

There is a wide spectrum of symptoms going from the feeling of shock, like an electrical shock, to the actual shaking of a limb. Epileptic patients acutely describe the feeling of a shock in the stomach just before having a fit. However, I would recommend systematically looking for the feeling of a sudden shock in the head, since many patients experience it. Before pointing this out to them, it is something they have a hard time defining as it is a sudden shock with a variable loss of senses, vision, although it is not like an ordinary positional vertigo. This feeling will often propagate in the rachis and feels like the brain is dropping out.

At other times, as the patient is quietly sitting in front of his TV set, he will jolt everyone by suddenly stretching a limb.

Natrum muriaticum mainly has lower limbs restlessness, also known as "the fidgets". He also has shakes when falling asleep, which differs from Cicuta who has sudden discharges while being awake.

3.2. Sudden Starts and Sensitivity to Touch

The following headings give an idea on the remedy's nervous sensitiveness :

Frightened, easily (2). Starting (1). Starting, noise, from (3,2), easily (3,2), fright, from (3,2), bed, in (0/3)

Touch brings about numerous troubles, the Cicuta patient feels countless confused pains, the slightest touch is painful. In common cases, touch causes sudden starts, it can go to the point of convulsions. The person is easily frightened, which is showed by jumps, but Kent gives examples where children start squinting whenever they are scared.

Sensitivity to touch, sudden starts, shocks in the stomach area also remind us of Kalium carbonicum. The resemblance stops here, Kali-c being a conservator, down to earth and very regular in everything. However, Kali-c often shows a sensitiveness for what is fair or unfair, while Cicuta is concerned with humanity's well being. Kali-c has a tendency to cling on, with a fear of letting go, for example, it often is the remedy for women who stay with husbands who give them a lot of trouble. On the opposite, Cicuta slowly breaks away from everyone. Moreover, Kali-c does not have as strong a tendency to convulsions as Cicuta.

3.3. After-Effects of Head and Rachis Injuries

Again, it is difficult to get away from Nat-m which also shows this modality. In fact, Cicuta is a major remedy for traumas, not only for mental ones:

MIND: Injuries, mental symptoms following (1). Sadness, injuries of the head, from (2).

VERTIGO: Injuries head, after (1).

HEAD: Concussion of brain (3). Pain, injuries, after (2,2). Injuries of head, from (2).

THROAT: Injuries oesophagus (2/1), splinter, bone (2/1), convulsions, provokes (2/1).

GENERALITIES: Injuries, concussion (1), glands (1). Shock injuries, from (2). Shock electric like, concussion of brain, from (1/1). Convulsions, commotion of the brain (3), splinter in throat (2/1), injuries (2). Wounds (1)5, knife (1), splinters (3,2), penetrating (1).

An external aggression, may it be a shock on the nervous tissue or a simple sting, fully reveals the convulsive nature of the remedy.

As far as perforating wounds are concerned, the major indications are of course Ledum palustre and Hypericum. With Ledum, we see coldness of the wounded areas, although the patient does not feel the cold. Hypericum is indicated when the same trauma damages the nerves, with the presence

of strong shooting pains (neuritis). Here, we see that *Cicuta* induces convulsions through reflex effect of the nerves, which is not at all the case with the two other remedies. However before the discovery of *Ledum*, *Cicuta* was used fairly efficiently in prevention of tetanus.

If we get back to the signs following cranial trauma, *Cicuta* can develop convulsions, as well as convergent strabismus (not listed in the repertory), or an anxiodepressive condition.

In this case, we could think of *Natrum Sulfuricum*, especially as *Cicuta* can also have suicidal ideas. Like all *Natrum* remedies, *Sulfuricum* is sensitive and uncommunicative, but as indicated by Vermeulen, he is the less sensitive one and the most uncommunicative of all *Natums*. These people are very realistic, objective, not spontaneous, down to earth, very responsible and with a strong sense of duty, etc... Here again, *Cicuta* differs with his particular sensitiveness to humanity and human beings in general. *Cicuta*'s sense of duty is directed towards humanity, whereas *Nat-s* is more self centered or for his close ones.

3.4. Vertigo

The *Cicuta* patient often has dizzy spells, which is easy to understand, considering the nervous irritation specific of the remedy. Of course, it can be dizziness following cranial trauma, but there are many kinds of dizziness. There can often be a tendency to stagger, wobble, and sometimes fall. It can also be a very strong orthostatic sickish feeling with loss of vision and the classical feelings of shake in the head and drop of the brain, etc..

3.5. Meningitis

Fortunately, we no longer find cases such as described by Kent, but in order to be exhaustive on the subject, you will find below his much detailed description:

It has cured cerebro-spinal meningitis when there were convulsions and the convulsions were aggravated from touch, with fever and even spotted mottled skin. Mind and head symptoms after injuries. On going into a cerebro-spinal meningitis the patient sits in a chair talking as if nothing were wrong, when, quick as a flash, he passes into another state in which he knows no one; he falls over limp, he is put to bed, and though he answers questions he remains in a semi conscious state, knowing no one.

This may change into a spasm. The head is bent back in spasms; jerking back of the head; spasms begin in the head and go downward. Violent shocks in the head, arms and legs. Head hot and extremities cold, like *Bell.* in its convulsions. Sweat on the scalp when sleeping. Child rolls head from side to side. Hot head.

Convulsive action about the eyes; pupils dilated and insensible patient lies fixed in one place, with starting, fixed, glassy, upturned eyes, like *Cupr.*

Strabismus may be the only spasm the child is subject to from cerebral irritation. Every time the child is frightened it has strabismus; when touched or when it has cold, or after a fall biting the head, or coming periodically, it has strabismus.

4. Skin Issues: Rashes

To complete the picture, let's not forget rashes. Although there are numerous sorts of rashes in *Cicuta*, I will focus on the cephalic extremity which is most frequently concerned.

4.1. Face

There are rashes on the beard or on the side-whiskers. Generally speaking, we can say that *Cicuta* shows rashes on all the hairy parts (beard, eyebrows, chest, etc...). *Cicuta* is also very helpful with aftershave rashes.

4.2. Scalp

It is the typical scabby eczema on the head. Scabs in addition to convulsions are quite exclusively found in *Cicuta* (Morrison). Sometimes, it can only be common dandruff, but generally the *Cicuta* patient has scabs exuding with yellowish serosities, which can bleed when removed.

5. Other Characteristics

5.1. Alimentary

So far, I have never met any patient with marked alimentary cravings. Typically, *Cicuta* feels like eating stodgy foods, coal, etc... He also craves for alcohol, cabbage and starchy foods.

5.2. Ulcerations

The remedy is able to provoke all sorts of ulcerations. Kent mentions cases of cancers on the corner of lip cured by *Conium*. However, although this is not mentioned in the repertory, *Cicuta* cures, just as well, stomach ulcers. In the case of strong annoyances, instead of systematically thinking of *Lyc* or *Nat-m*, remember *Cicuta*.

5.3. Foot position

In the repertory you will find a rubric where *Cicuta* is the only remedy at the 1st grade: walk on the external side of the foot.

Observing several *Cicuta* subjects has enabled me to go deeper into the meaning of this symptom. It is not so much a way of walking, but rather of keeping the foot on the external side, varus-like. When you meet teenagers going through an existential crisis, disappointed in humanity, who like to sit anywhere with their feet in that position, do not give *Staph*, nor *Nat-mur*, but

Cicuta. This is typical of the remedy.

6. Clinical Case

Here is a typical case of a decompensated form as reported by our friend, Dr. Emmanuel Blesch of Yutz.

"Strung out"

Yves is a guitar maker; a friend suggested that he would

come for a consultation. He is exhausted; tall, dark complexion, sparse hair on the forehead, he comes into my small office, glancing furtively and anxiously. Feeling uneasy, he sits in front of me with his feet strangely positioned on the external side (varus) and not flat on the floor. The look is gentle, a bit anxious, he looks tired; he has rings around his eyes in spite of a smiling air. Right away I find him likeable and the contact is easily made.

His professional life is not simple: although he loves his work, making string instruments is a meticulous work and the pitiless law-market makes it unprofitable. He confides to me that his banker was due to lend him money but in the last minute, he retracted; all this upset his plans and he was stuck with anticipated purchases contracts, a ludicrous situation he cannot cope with. He wants to leave everything, he is fed up and his vision of the present world has become very pessimistic; he smokes enormously, sleeps badly, drinks coffee; he is discouraged, considering the misery of current events with compassion and weariness. Further on in the conversation, he tells me that he went to India a long time ago, where he had enjoyed the "freedom" and "selflessness" aspects.

He prescribed Cicuta 30CH.

In the next few days, he told me that everything has cleared up; he is more detached from his problems, hardly smokes and is making many plans.

Two months later he comes back saying he feels fragile again, due to court affairs not completely settled and which bring back anxiety.

New Cicuta prescription.

Since then, no news, good news !

In this case, the major symptom for this man is his need to break away from an unbearable and crazy world.

7. Conclusions

I fear, after our thorough examination of Cicuta, that it will be overused in situations where Natrum muriaticum, Sulphur, or Staphysagria would be more appropriate. Cicuta is an unexpectedly useful remedy—if you know where to get it. This intriguing cure, which may seem similar to others but has its own distinct character, deserves additional study in the future, in my opinion.

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