

George Elias Dienst



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"More than two years ago an elderly Scotch lady called at my office for help in a painful ulcer.

Her story, briefly stated, was that, more than eleven years previous, she noticed a cluster of enlarged veins on the inner side of the left leg about four inches above the ankle, which caused her great pain and discomfort. In the course of a few months these veins "broke" and caused an ulcer which has remained there in a more or less aggravated form for years. She had consulted a number of physicians who prescribed Ung. as a local treatment and which would, after applying it assiduously for a few weeks, dry up the ulcer and cure (?) it for a few weeks. Sometimes it would stay cured (?) for two or three months. Thus matter and the ulcer went on for years until the poor woman almost drifted into the despairing mood so common among them that have been "plastered." Her symptoms were largely negative. Having been a woman of unusual health and vigor, she did not notice this trouble until some time after the birth of her last child, when, according to her statement, she had to be on her feet very much of the time.

The ulcer itself was about the size of a silver half-dollar, smooth edges, irregular base, discharging a grayish-white pus of pungent odor. The skin for three or four inches surrounding this ulcer was of a blue-black appearance and the pains, which centered in the ulcer itself, radiated in every direction up and down the limb, making it extremely sensitive.

Then again, this ulcer came on just as she was passing through her climacterics, and when it was open and discharged, the internal symptoms seemed to be less aggravating. When the ulcer was closed, she felt "mean", meaning particularly irritable, nervous, feverish at times and more or less despondent. She was tall, well proportioned, light complexioned, and once a very energetic woman. Symptoms were not numerous, nor could I prescribe on pathological conditions only. As I listened to her story and the good health of her ancestors, I outlined, mentally a few points.

1. Her age. The ulcer came on during her climacterics and about one year after the birth of her last child.
2. The base of the ulcer was uneven, margin smooth, discharge grayish-white and surrounding skin of a blue-black color.
3. The pains were sharp, stitching, worse moving about and usually worse in the morning.
4. This ulcer was on the left limb, with a tendency to great sensitiveness.

These were my points. I gave *lachesis*, 50m., one dose, dry, on the tongue, and liberal sac. lac. I told her to keep the ulcer clean and well bandaged until about well. She did so. The ulcer healed in about three months. She did not return for more medicine, nor has the ulcer returned. Her daughter, a nurse, tells me that her mother is in excellent health. This is now more than two years ago. Did *lachesis* cure that ulcer?"

(A Varicose Ulcer. By G. E. Dienst, M.D., Naperville, Illinois. The Critique vol. 13 (1906), p. 465-466)

1907 - A Suspicious Growth. Was it Malignant?

"On July 7, 1904, a stoutly built, dark-haired, and sallow complexioned German lady called at my office for consultation and medicine. She was 49 years of age and apparently well nourished. Had passed her climacteric two years previous. Her story was not long, but interesting. Up to her forty-eighth year she had enjoyed fair health, with the exception of a very excoriating leucorrhoea. This had been so severe for fifteen years prior to the menopause that her thighs to the knees were one mass of crusts. These all passed away with the cessation of the menses. She is the mother of two children who seem to be healthy.

She now complains of feeling despondent, and at times spends an entire day in weeping and lamenting about her condition and family affairs the latter being no real cause whatever for any sorrow. Her face is turning an ashen hue, and she has the appearance of one who is suffering mental or physical pain. After some exercise of patience the following symptoms were obtained:

Hot flushes, they drive her almost to desperation.

She complains of a tumor in the left mammae, also in left axilla.

She has always suffered more, when she did suffer, on the left side than on the right, and felt very miserable in the morning on waking; as the day wore on, however, she usually felt better.

On examining these tumors, I found the one in the breast as large as a hen's egg, oval, moveable and painful on pressure. The one in the axilla was about one-half as large, also moveable, and painful on pressure.

On soliciting further symptoms, I found these tumors painful most of the time, and that to be alone very much aggravated all her symptoms, often resulting in prolonged paroxysms of crying.

This was all I could obtain without direct questioning, and I let the matter rest here, while I set to work on a diagnosis and treatment. The disappearance of an eruption and excoriating leucorrhoea with the menses, the pallor in an apparently stout woman, the painful growths in mammary and axillary glands, and the great despondency led me to diagnose the case as one of malignant growth. As to the line of treatment to be pursued, two methods suggested themselves; surgical and medical. Looking at the case more carefully, I reasoned that surgery could but remove what the disease had produced, leaving the disease intact to reproduce similar growths, or change its base and reproduce another form of morbidity more difficult to control. For this reason surgery was excluded. To treat this case medically, I at once saw that, that which furnished nutrition for morbid growths must be removed or I will fail in curing either patient or growths.

How will I find a remedy that will accomplish my purposes? For after ruling out surgery I must do with medicine that which I reasoned surgery could not do. A search for the remedy was begun, how shall I find it?

You will notice that there are but few major symptoms in this case: *those < from being alone, hot flushes and cessation of an eruption followed by internal growths*. I find but one remedy similar to these conditions and symptoms, namely, Lachesis; of this I gave a dose in the cm. potency.

On August 1st she returned, with the following symptoms: "I do not feel so well, the lump in the breast is about the same, the lump under my arm seems larger, the pain shoots down the

arm and up to my head. I do not perspire as much as I did, the hot flushes are worse at night on going to sleep, they are preceded by a sensation of chilliness and followed by a sweat."

This certainly did not look encouraging. I thought the case over, and concluded to repeat my remedy in the same potency.

On August 27th, nearly a month later, she reported the following: Very much better, the lumps in the breast and under the arm are growing smaller; there is still pain, but it is dull instead of being sharp; the severest pain being under the left clavicle. I gave no medicine at all, and told the lady to report later.

On October 2nd, 34 days after this consultation, she has a sensation of coldness on the upper outside portion of both arms ; the lump in the breast is growing smaller ; there is no pain nor discomfort ; the lumps under the arm pained considerably after the last medicine, but does not pain any more, there are no more hot flushes. No medicine.

On October 29th she reported having taken some cold; there was some pain in the left shoulder and arm.

I repeated my remedy in the same form and potency. There was no further report from her until January 11, 1905. There were really no symptoms at this report, as she was feeling better in every way; the growth had almost disappeared.

It was my purpose to let the case rest here, but fearing a return of the growths, repeated the prescription given on October 29th, and told her to report at her leisure later on. I heard nothing from her until the following April, when she came and told me that she was feeling better than she had felt for years; and that the growths had entirely disappeared. There is no more weeping, very little if any melancholy, and life had assumed a more pleasant aspect. There was no return of the leucorrhoea nor of the eruption.

It has been my pleasure to see this lady frequently since then, and I am pleased to say that she continues in good health."

(G. E. Dienst, Naperville, Illinois, A Suspicious Growth. Was it Malignant? The Medical Advance vol. 45 (1907), p. 346-349)