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*MEZEREUM: PORTION OF A PHYSIOLOGICAL  
STUDY.*

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Acceding cheerfully to the flattering request to prepare, as a representative of the Austrian Homœopathic Society, for the World's Homœopathic Convention, a physiological drug-study, I offer a portion of a study of Mezereum.

The relations of Mezereum are almost exclusively with the various membranous tissues (skin, mucous, serous, and fibrous tissues), and I have therefore separated the work into four divisions, corresponding to these tissues. The time at my disposal has allowed me to finish only the study of Mezereum in its relations to the skin. The continuation of the work will appear in the *Allg. Hom. Zeitung*, Vol. XCIII.

Daphne mez. is one of the first twenty-six remedies which Hahnemann considered worthy of a more extended proving, and whose symptoms appear in his *Fragmenta de Viribus*, etc., 1805. This collection included only such remedies as Hahnemann had found experimentally approved for definite diseases in the old practice. It was precisely this circumstance which, after he had discovered the law of cure, "Similia Similibus Curantur," stimulated him to confirm and define this law, by investigating the positive effects of these remedies, as well as to find indications based on experience for their use in disease.

We learn from Reil and Trinks, those diligent laborers in old school literature [H. V. S., 8, 51], as well as from others,

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that it was not the *Daphne mez.* but other species of *Daphne*, found in the east, which were used down to the most recent period. We must therefore sift the evidence furnished by the old school, concerning the action and use of this drug. Moreover, in accordance with Hahnemann's directions, we use the tincture of the carefully-dried bark, or of the fresh bark gathered during inflorescence, whereas, in many reported cases the *fruit*, known as *Grana gnidii*, or *Baccæ coccognidii*, was employed.

Undoubtedly the latter contains essentially the same ingredients as the bark; yet its action on the economy is different. It is therefore to be regretted that Hahnemann did not, in the case of this and a few other drugs, exercise, in this respect, a sharper criticism.

The study of *Mezereum* is the more difficult, from the fact that, in our systematic works on *Materia Medica* (Jahr, Noack and Trinks), the symptoms from these various sources are given without reference to their origin; whereas Hahnemann, in the first edition of his *Mat. Med. Pura*, separated them and, in the later editions, gave the authorities.

These differences are of great importance in *Mezereum*. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the symptoms produced by the bark and consider, subsequently, those resulting from other parts of the plant.

In the *Fragmenta*, Hahnemann cites fifty-six symptoms as positive effects of *Mezereum*. Some of them were unquestionably observed on the sick. Nevertheless these few symptoms contain, with slight exceptions, the pith and substance of the *Mezereum* pathogenesis. The numerous excellent provings since made, although adding something new, have served chiefly to elucidate and confirm these original symptoms.

We find the first reproving in *Archiv.*, IV., 2, 110, 1825, by Dr. Stapf. Eleven provers took part in it. Hahnemann's symptoms, of the *Fragmenta*, are included. In his introduction, Stapf gives important practical directions for the use of *Mezereum* in disease, and calls attention to its value, which Hahnemann emphasized by including it, with some additional symptoms, in the "Chronic Diseases," second edition, 4, 1837.



It was therefore much used in homœopathic practice; and our colleagues deemed it worthy of repeated provings.

1838. Dr. Theile, in his inaugural dissertation *De viribus Mezerei*, published a proving by himself and some friends [*A. H. Z.*, 2, 14, 105].

1857. Dr. Hartlaub [*V. J. S.*, 8, 1], provings by the Lusatian Society, 1849 to 1852.

1860. Dr. Dunham [*Am. Hom. Rev.*, 2, 164], published portions of a proving of Mezereum by the late Dr. Wahle, Sr., of Rome. We learn, by private letter from Dr. Dunham, that with the permission of the son of Dr. Wahle, he copied these symptoms himself, in 1856, as well as some of Eupion, Kreos. and Myrtis com.

1867. Dr. Watzke's proving on himself, Dr. Etterlin and Dr. Karl Wurstl, in 1863 [*A. H. Z.*, 74].

From a careful study of all these provings it will appear that the seat of the morbid process whence all these symptoms proceed, lies in the membranous tissues alone; and especially in the skin and fibrous tissues; to a less degree in the mucous, and least of all in the serous tissues. Consequently, the seat of the morbid action of Mezereum is the connective tissue with the arterial, vascular and ganglionic nervous ramifications imbedded in it; this gives rise to many reflex effects. The practical application of the drug is, therefore, quite limited; and even within the sphere of action above described, its effects are evident only in certain directions.

The old school use Mezereum externally, after the manner of cantharides, by bringing the outer surface of a piece of fresh or moistened dry bark, deprived of its epidermis, into immediate and long contact with the skin. Redness and pain follow, the epidermis rises, serum and, subsequently, pus collect between it and the cutis. Sometimes, if the skin be tender, the application causes violent pains and eczema around it. Its continued use produces very painful itching, ulcers with a profuse watery discharge and peculiarly offensive odor, and sometimes surrounded to a considerable distance by a pustular eruption. These pustules often break and discharge freely. According to Pluskal [*Oest. Wochenschrift*, 1844, p. 1375], a

pale girl, fourteen years old, having been told that the leaves of *Daphne mez.* would give her a color and fatten her, went to the woods and rubbed her cheeks with the leaves. The whole face, especially the nose, eyelids and front part of the scalp, immediately swelled enormously, with burning pain.

Persistent, violent and painful sneezing, delirium, severe dull frontal headache, disagreeable dryness in the throat and irritation provoking a dry, racking cough proved that the poison, by inhalation of the vapor or of some particles of the juice, must have reached the nose, the frontal sinuses, the trachea and pharynx. The face soon presented a picture of erysipelas bullosam, for on both cheeks there appeared confluent vesicles. The nares became entirely closed, so that she breathed only through the open mouth. The pulse was feverish, the urine burning and red. After using external cooling applications (oil and cold-water compresses), the swelling began to subside on the second day; in a few days desquamation took place.

She did not, however, regain her health. Weakness, despondency and indifference, bordering on imbecility, were observed in her. In a few weeks she fell into a typhoid fever, lasting twelve weeks, and thoroughly exhausting her vital powers. Nine months after the poisoning, she died of hectic fever. In this case, if we consider only the external skin, *Mezereum* produced, not only in the immediate point of application, an inflammation with serous exudation under the cuticle, which rises in blisters and then scales off, but also in the adjacent parts, eczema and a pustular eruption as well as itching and offensive ulcers. The seat of the latter processes is in the parenchyma of the papillary portion, as well as in the deeper layers, of the dermis.

An essential feature, therefore, of this skin affection is an unusual serous secretion appearing, not only at the place immediately irritated, but also at distant points. This is the visible effect on the skin of the external application of *Mezereum*.

We possess many and remarkably accordant observations of its action on the skin after its internal use alone.



I. In his *Lesser Writings*, published by Stapf (1, 212), we find the following observation by Hahnemann: "An otherwise healthy man took Mezereum bark internally for some difficulty, but, as he continued its use for some time after the cessation of his trouble, he got an intolerable itching over the whole body, which allowed not a second's sleep. He stopped the drug, and came to me after thirty-six hours, insisting that he could no longer bear the hourly increasing itching (the first direct action of Mezereum is of very long duration). After taking several grains of Camphor, the itching ceased."

II. Among the symptoms in the *Fragmenta*, we find:

527.\* Very obstinate itching for several days over the whole body. 236. Pimply, ulcerative eruption on the finger-joints, itching most in the evening. (In the original, "Eruptio cutanea maxime vespere in lecto pruriens.")

In Stapf's reproving [*Archiv*, 4], there were eleven provers besides Hahnemann; the provings were made with the tincture of the carefully-dried bark, or with the expressed juice (mixed with equal parts of alcohol) of the fresh bark gathered in early spring during inflorescence. From eight to ten drops of these tinctures, much diluted with water, sufficed to produce in most of these provers very marked and enduring symptoms; for some a few drops were enough. Almost identical skin-symptoms appear in seven provers.†

In Theile's reproving [with eight, twelve to twenty-four drops of tincture. *Allg. Hom. Zeitung*, Vol. 14, p. 114] three of the same skin symptoms are repeated:

III. P—R. a.‡ Brownish, miliary rash on the chest, arm and thighs (5 d.)

b. Vesicles full of clear serum on the nose and back skin under the ruptured vesicles inflamed; formation of a brown scab.

\* The numbers are taken from *Chronic Diseases*, Vol. IV.

† These symptoms are given in works on *Materia Medica*, and especially in Allen's *Encyclopædia*, to which accordingly we refer the reader — TRANSLATOR.

‡ As the symptoms of the later provings have not yet been collected in any schema, we designate them, provisionally, by letters, to distinguish them from those of the — M. M. Pura."

*e.* Roughness and scaling of the skin here and there.

*d.* Very troublesome itching in a sore, even after it had healed.

IV. E—D. *e.* Violent itching in almost all parts of the skin : neck, chest, extremities ; compelling to scratch and thereupon changing location ; worse at evening ; lasting several weeks.

*f.* Burning, itching and tension on the back of the left ear ; on scratching, the epidermis peeled off in patches half an inch large.

V. THEILE. *g.* Burning itching, especially on the nape and calves.

*h.* Burning, red miliary pustules on the thighs.

*i.* Burning vesicles with red areolae on the sides of the fingers, depressed rather than elevated. They dry up, leaving either bright red spots, or the epidermis peels off in round scales.

*k.* Stitching pains in a scar on the end of the right middle finger, in which, for two years, there had not been the least sensation.

We come now to the provings of the Lusatian Society :

VI. HARTLAUB. Hartlaub made four provings on himself with the fresh plant, which he inhaled while dividing and triturating it, and while preparing the alcoholic tincture, and took in substance both crude and in the form of tincture. The provings were from two to eight days apart. We connect the related symptoms.

*l.* Itching on many parts of the body : nares, lower lip, violent on the wrists, about the anus, scrotum and lower extremities (217).

*m.* A large sugillation on the dorsum of the right hand above the index ; a party-colored, not round, spot about one inch in diameter, painless ; faded the next day.

*n.* Violent itching on this hand but not on the spot of sugillation ; especially on the wrist, so that it was rubbed sore. An eruption appeared. Before scratching there were no pimples ; but afterwards, many small, superficial, dark-brown scabs like those in scabies after it has been scratched and has dried. Just before falling off (twenty-two days) they were quite white and



had become much thicker (conical) and those which had healed left brownish spots the size of the scabs, with fading brownish areolae.

*o.* Violent itching on the lower extremities when going to sleep; especially at the hollow of the knee, so that he scratched it sore; it became very painful lasting several days. 119.

*p.* Often waked at night by severe itching of limbs.

*q.* A small pustule in the beard on chin; a few pimples on the chest. That on the chin became a small ulcer with thin, oily, sticky discharge; very painful.

*r.* The liver-spots desquamate more than usual and are very dark (127, 207.)

*s.* The skin, at least of the hands, is dead and rough.

In three other provings, with the first dilution, by Dr. Link, a young man under direction of Dr. Speer, and a lady, we find:

VII. DR. LINK. *t.* Burning stitching sensations like insect-stings on various parts of the body.

*u.* Itching at the right eye and the side whiskers.

MRS. T—. *v.* Slight stitches here and there.

*w.* Creeping and single stitches on various parts.

VIII. SPEER. *x.* Itching eruption like flea-bites, over the whole body; vanished in three days; lasted longer on the head and there looked scabby.

IX. HERING.\* *y.* His long hair became more troublesome; seemed more bristly; after some weeks it grew more curly and thicker. (Was this aggravation or curative action?)

*z.* Small painless pimples, like millet seed, on the fore-head at the edge of the scalp.

*aa.* Dandruff more abundant, whiter and drier than usual.

*bb.* Small, red pimples on the forehead, itching but painless.

*cc.* Twitching of the eyebrows.

*dd.* Constant itching behind the ears; small elevations appear after much scratching, which are scratched sore and pain.

*ee.* His nose seems to him larger and shiny.

*ff.* Severe itching at the edge of the lower jaw (fifth and following days.)

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\* Some symptoms confirming and completing those in the Chronic Diseases.

*gg.* Burning in well defined spots at the outside of the wrists after using the hands in cold water.

*hh.* A moveable, somewhat hard swelling under left knee.

*ii.* Painful walking as from hard tight boots.

To this symptom Hering remarks: "Rejected from my MSS. by Stapf," we suspect, then, that "the medical student H." was our honored veteran Hering; and perhaps W. was Wahle, as Dr. Dunham suspects.

X. LEMBEKE. Lembke made a truly self-sacrificing proving, for about two months, partly with two to twenty drops several times daily of the first dilution; then with the tincture, three to fifteen drops several times daily. The skin was but little affected; the fibrous tissues very much.

*kk.* Burning itching in the left brow; itching and biting in the skin of the nose.

*ll.* Burning on the alae nasi, end of nose, in the septum and nose, skin of cheeks, of nape, inner surface of forearms and at various points of leg.

*mm.* Burning and stitching on inside of left arm, evening.

*nn.* Burning and itching on inside of thigh and scrotum.

XI. WAHLE. Most of these symptoms of head and face are from observations on patients. From an observer like Wahle, however, they are valuable.

*oo.* Head covered with a thick leathery crust, under which pus collects and mats the hair.

*pp.* Large prominent white scabs on head; ichor forms under them, becomes offensive and vermin breed in it.

*qq.* The scabs on the head look chalky and spread to brows, nape and throat.

*rr.* Gray, earthy complexion.

*ss.* The child scratches the face incessantly; it is covered with blood. Face and forehead red and hot; great restlessness and irritability. At night it scratches the face so that the bed is smeared with blood. It constantly tears off the scabs from the face and on the wounded places great "fat" pustules form

*tt.* The humor from under the scabs irritates other parts.

*uu.* The skin of the face is deep red and the eruption is "fat" and moist (impetigo.)



*vv.* Honey-like crust about the mouth.

*wv.* Between the buttocks four large scabs on a hard base with a dark red areola.

*xx.* Itching in the hollow of the right knee.

*yy.* The whole skin is covered with white elevated scabs.

*zz.* Itching and burning in upper and lower extremities; after scratching violent stitching as with needles.

*aaa.* The fiery-red inflammation on the joints of the left foot extends over the instep and calf. Hard pustules form in the connective tissue, and itch at the slightest touch, with violent burning pain.

*bbb.* Vesicular eruption over the whole body.

*ccc.* Pale red eruption over whole body, itching and scratching; the scabs adhere firmly and are depressed in the centre.

*ddd.* Ulcers covered with thick whitish or yellow scabs under which thick yellow matter collects.

*eee.* Throbbing around the ulcer which has a bright red areola.

*fff.* Burning in ulcer at evening.

*ggg.* Fiery, shining red areola around the ulcer.

*hhh.* Vesicles around the ulcer, itching violently and burning like fire. After eight days, these vesicles dry up, leaving scabs, the removal of which causes great pain and delays the healing.

*iii.* The affected parts feel, but are not, swollen.

*jjj.* The ulcers bleed easily.

XII. GERSTEL. While engaged in this study, I have made some provings on myself, hoping to learn what symptoms predominate, their order and physiological connection. I took, at various times, some drops of the first, third and seventh decimal dilution, and once some drops of the tincture. Many Mezereum symptoms were confirmed. I will at present mention only those of the skin.

*kkk.* Oft-recurring, severe itching, compelling to scratch, now here, now there, on almost all parts of the body, and very soon after taking the drug; especially on the scalp above the forehead; in one or the other eyebrow, also under the eye; and especially, a persistent, oft-recurring itching on the external ear and in the left concha.

*lll.* The itching often extended over the whole body ; I felt it simultaneously on back, abdomen and scalp, impelling to scratch and relieved by scratching. I could perceive no difference in the time of day.

*mmm.* At times it was a burning itching or a tickling as from insects on the chin, the shoulder, the clavicle, the right thorax along the lower ribs and the back ; also the thumb and right middle finger.

*nnn.* The later the itching began, the greater the inclination to scratch.

*ooo.* Smarting in the eyes, compelling to rub them.

*ppp.* Violent stitching and burning itching on the outer aspect of the right shoulder, as if in the flesh, as though an eruption would appear there.

Mezereum contains a so-called acrid matter, daphnin, of a bitter and astringent taste and soluble in boiling water, alcohol and ether. Mezereum or its active principle, daphnin, may thus be readily absorbed and produce general effects corresponding to those of the local application.

The normal secretion of the skin is a secretion from the arterial blood of the wonderful vascular network of the sebaceous glands. Now, since the external application of Mezereum evidently increases the arterial secretion, producing serous, easily coagulating, excretions, we can easily comprehend that the Mezereum atoms absorbed into the blood, will act similarly, showing, in quality though not perhaps in degree, a relationship and similarity to the aggregate of its external action. Experiment has shown that it is only the various membranous tissues which have a primary susceptibility to the action of Mezereum ; and the degree is different in different individuals. The first appearance and form of morbid action on the skin is a pricking itching, compelling to scratch ; *i. e.* prurigo.

The basis of prurigo, especially prurigo formicans (Bateman), is a morbid secretion ; it is always accompanied by white, smooth papules so small as often to escape notice, seldom red or inflamed unless they have been vigorously rubbed.

According to other dermatologists, when itching occurs it



is the result of excoriation. The microscopic Mezereum atoms produce on a small scale the same effect as the external application of the bark, that is: increased secretion from the vascular network of the sebaceous glands and congestion or rupture.

This congestion of the capillary network or the dried secretion produces the irritation of the sensory nerves felt as itching and prickling.

This prurigo is the mildest and most universal form of the Mezereum skin disease. The irritation is general and moderate, and soon ceases after scratching, though it may reappear in other places. Single localities are especially affected and certain nerve-twigs show an affinity for this Mezereum irritation. These localities are: the scalp, face, nose and ear; the stitches and itching extending into the ear. The irritation follows certain fibres of the trigeminus, especially those of the optic ganglion. We shall see hereafter that the auditory apparatus is affected in another direction. The back, the shoulder, (the cutaneous sphere of the plexus cervicalis), the wrist and scrotum are also affected.

The parts affected are especially, if not exclusively those in which the panniculus adiposus is almost entirely wanting.

The itching is felt particularly at evening and is increased by warmth, hence also by the warmth of a bed.

I consider burning a higher degree of itching; it likewise depends upon congestion of the smaller vessels without loss of nerve sensibility.

If the seat of the affection be near the epidermis, the almost imperceptible vesicles will be removed by the scratching and the itching will cease for a while; but if its seat be deeper in the cutis the exudation will remain in the cutaneous connective tissue, and can only be removed by deeper scratching, *i. e.*, until the blood comes (*vide* 495 and Haubold's symptoms).

The second form of the Mezereum skin affection consists of visible eruptions. Their forms and modes of origin are diverse, but all tend to loosen the epidermis, to alter and exfoliate it and even to form ulcers.

1. A pale suggillation which gradually fades out.

2. An already existing suggillation exfoliates; even in a portion of cellular tissue rendered impermeable by a scar this tendency is manifested by painfulness (pityriasis).

3. When the exudation is deeper in the cutis, it is only brought out by scratching, and leaves dark-red or brown scabs colored by the blood); or it does not come to the surface but remains in the skin, forming papules (Wahle).

4. Herpes on the skin, with inflamed base, exudation of oily sticky matter, and exfoliation with brown scabs (Rupia).

4. Regular pustules form.

With all these forms there is the characteristic itching and burning, worse at night; hence, especially in 4 and 5, the scabs are torn off and new eruptions form on the denuded spots.

6. Ulcers, of which we shall speak hereafter.

In all these forms, and from corroborative observations, we must conclude that the morbid secretion induced by *Mezereum* is a pure serum, partly mixed with the coloring matter of the blood, resulting partly from rupture or obliteration of the finest arterial capillaries. If, therefore, we should regard only the exudation, the scrofulous eruptions could not be included in the sphere of action of *Mezereum*. But a single symptom can never suffice for an accurate diagnosis; other circumstances must be considered in determining the choice of the remedy. And in this connection we refer to what Stapf has emphasized in his preface to *Mezereum*. He says: "Coldness, subjective and objective, either general or partial, and especially in the extremities, with intense thirst, is a characteristic and noteworthy primary effect of *Mezereum*. It accompanies other symptoms, as headache, stool, bone-pains, etc."

The symptoms in the "Chronic Diseases" which confirm this statement are Nos. 45, 280, 482, 587, 588, 580, 501, 505, 56, 288, 583, 584, 585, 590, 592, 598, 593, 594, and 601.

In Hartlaub's provings we find: "Chilly at evening. Feeling as of a cold wind blowing on the head. Chill runs over the body often at evening, also over single parts, down the left leg; pulse at the same time 80 to 90, and rather full. Chill runs down over the whole body, at evening, with yawning;



though the body and room were very warm, chilly, with cold hands and feet, quickened pulse (89 to 90); the skin, at least of the hands, dead, cracked and wrinkled, as from long exposure to cold and as if it would peel off; increased thirst for cool water with the chill. At evening he is rather too warm and yet chills run over him at the same time, especially down the left side of the back and the lower extremities."

Theile's four provers report: "Constant chills, so that he cannot get warm the whole day."

I also felt frequently slight chilliness on single parts of the body, not followed by heat. We perceive how trustworthy were the first provings of Mezereum. This symptom, mentioned in them as a characteristic, is confirmed by all the later provers except Wahle.

Why is this cold feeling a characteristic of Mezereum? Chilliness, coldness of single parts, not being precursors of fever and not followed by heat, are, as physiology teaches, subjective sensations, having no necessary relation to the actual temperature, which is often not at all modified. These sensations result from the immediate action of the morbid irritation on the spinal cord, whose reflex action induces contraction of the skin, producing cutis anserina, roughness, dryness and brittleness.

From the same cause we may have a simultaneous determination of blood to internal parts, producing actual external coldness.

The Mezereum atoms, which, irritating the capillary system, determine the sensation of itching, act also specifically, so that a reflex action of the spinal cord produces cutis anserina, and a chilly feeling may ensue. But the chilliness of Mezereum has other peculiarities:

1. It is accompanied by thirst. Now, according to Budge, one of the prime causes of morbidly-increased thirst is a relative diminution of the serum of the blood, such as arises from its loss in excretory fluids; this loss, as we have seen, is produced by Mezereum. We find thus a physiological connection in all these phenomena.

2. The other peculiarity is that there is no need of warmth

and no dread of cold air; perhaps, in the open air, the tone of the cutaneous nerves is altered and the normal condition sooner restored; moreover, warmth increases, while cold diminishes the itching.

Chilliness belongs so specifically to *Mezereum* as to occur independently of other kinds of skin-irritation; it accompanies headache, bonepain, etc. But these symptoms are not accompanied by thirst.

Another characteristic of *Mezereum* is equally explicable; that which, in the skin, is itching, appears in the muscular parts as twitching or quivering. Thus we find:

102. Annoying muscular twitching in the left upper lid for eight weeks; and by the same observer (Gss).

120. Frequent troublesome muscular twitching in the middle of the right cheek (eight weeks).

224. Muscular twitching in the scrobiculus, and transient shocks in that region (Gr., Gss.).

359. Jerking in the left side of the chest, transient and painful like electric shocks (Gr.).

386. A burning stitch and strong muscular twitching under the left scapula (Gss.).

401. Dull pain and twitching in the shoulder, as after carrying a heavy load (Gr.).

491. Transient stitching—jerking on the upper part of the left shin-bone—when sitting with the knee bent.

505. Twitching about the right outer malleolus (W.).

512-513. Painful twitching, like nervous jerking in the great toe, like muscular twitching, or as if vesicles broke (Gss., Gr.).

Hartlaub also had twitching of the eyelid, muscular movements, shocks in the stomach, abdomen, back, etc. We find these symptoms uniformly located in those places where the muscles are in immediate connection with the firmer connective tissue of the cutis, and where the panniculus adiposus is wanting. *Mezereum* seems, then, to act specifically on these places; hence the conclusion that it is especially suitable for slim, thin persons with rather dry skin and a lack of fat; and, as regards the itching, especially for pruritus senilis. *Mezereum* acts



specifically on the scalp, and has manifold relations with the hair; as might have been inferred from the action of Mezereum on the muscular structure of the skin, the smooth fibres of the *arrectores pili* being attached at the lower ends of the hair follicles, into which the *glandulæ sebacæ* discharge. By the contraction of these muscular fibres *cutis anserina* and *horripilation* are produced.

Accordingly we find the following symptoms:

84. The hair painful as if sore to touch (Gss.).

85. The hair much inclined to stand on end.

And in the Lusatian proving, Hering's symptoms [*vide* XVI.].

These are the essential relations of Mezereum to the skin, in so far as we can deduce them from physiological provings. Let us see how far experience confirms these deductions.

Dr. Kafka [*A. H. Z.*, 91, 140] reports a brilliant cure of *pruritus senilis* in a man seventy-four years old, a subject of *marasmus senilis*, whose skin was wrinkled and in folds, and who could not sleep at night because of the itching. He was weak and dyspeptic. He could not refrain from scratching, feeling as though millions of insects were creeping on him compelling him to rub, successively, his arms, legs, abdomen and throat. On the parts scratched were innumerable, insular, white elevations on a red or reddish base, as in *nettlerash*, which, when deeply scratched, displayed in their centre a drop of blood the size of a pin-head and burned as if a bright coal lay upon them.

By day the itching was tolerable, and there was no visible trace of morbid alteration in the skin; the blood spots appeared as small, brown points on the surface of the skin.

During the violent itching and burning, the patient was chilly, feeling cold along the spinal column and in the extremities; and where the itching was most intense there was a sensible diminution of temperature.

After long and ineffectual allopathic treatment, he was cured in four weeks by Mezereum<sup>o</sup>, two doses daily.

This case confirms the following characteristic Mezereum symptoms: the elevations of the cuticle filled with serum, the

pin-head drops of blood appearing after scratching until the itching was relieved, the burning like bright coals and the chilliness.

Kafka mentions that, although many parts of the skin of this patient were tolerably fat yet, on the throat, abdomen, forearms, legs and face, the skin was not only atrophied, but in folds and wrinkles. The temperature of these parts was diminished, while that of the fatty parts was normal. And it was upon these atrophied parts that the prurigo established itself. This observation confirms the inference that Mezereum affects especially those parts of the skin that are normally deficient in fat and reveals an essential characteristic of the drug.

2. A case of pityriasis versicolor (Bateman), Noack [*A. H. Z.*, 14, 168]. A blond girl, aged eighteen years, of sanguine temperament, with scanty, intermitting menses, had, after the healing of an axillary abscess, large, irregular, sometimes confluent, distinctly-defined, copper-colored spots on the inner side of the thighs extending to the groin. They were not elevated, showed no disposition to suppurate, were the seat of a distressing burning itching, worse at the menstrual epoch, at which time the spots assumed a darker color, especially at the edges. This had lasted two years. She had occasional hemi-crania, stitches in the spleen, frequent chills, trembling of the limbs, and was morbidly fretful. Syphilis was out of the question. Graphites and Nitric acid did nothing; Conium but little. Mezereum<sup>3</sup>, one drop every three days, made a complete cure. The spots faded away, the itching ceased, menses became more copious, and the concomitants disappeared.

3. *Pityriasis capitis* [*A. H. Z.*, 81, 144].—Dr. Cooper cured with Mezereum, in twenty-seven weeks, a very severe case, accompanied by great vaginal irritation. It had lasted two years. He was led to give Mezereum by the pathogenesis in Hahnemann's *Lesser Writings* (*vide ante*).

4. Wahle [*A. H. Z.*, 14, 146] told Noack that he used Mezereum with great benefit for a distressing exanthema, burning at night, compelling to scratch until the epidermis was re-



moved, and the denuded part was covered with a scab, or there was repeated exfoliation.\*

5. Schultz [*V. J. S.*, 8, 98] used Mezereum with advantage in Tetter (Flechten). They were dry, scaby, the scabs small, occurring especially in the bend of the elbows (therefore on a part destitute of fat) with red spots the size of a thaler.

The following symptoms from the *Fragmenta* ascribed to Hoffmann, from taking four berries, have been admitted into the *Materia Medica*.

286. Very large alvine evacuations (hypercatharsis effrina).

182. Violent burning in the throat.

609. Violent burning fever.

532. Exfoliation of the entire skin (with emesis and thirst).

6. Kreisler [*A. H. Z.*, 29, 153]. A woman had, by inheritance from her father, a growth as large as a thaler on the middle of the forehead, projecting about four lines. It was not constant, as her father's had been, but came and went spontaneously and suddenly. Mezereum<sup>12</sup> acted promptly and favorably. The swelling desquamated and gradually disappeared. Two years later it had not reappeared. The characteristic in this case was the scaly exfoliation of the skin, which we saw physiologically: *a*, in the case of poisoning cited by Pluskal; *b*, in proving XI. by E—d, symptom *f* (q. v.).

Hartlaub (XIII.) observed: "Habitual liver spots appear to exfoliate more than usual and are very dark." Liver spots and freckles are congenital or acquired organic changes of the epidermis, which may appear in the most diverse anomalies.

We again call attention to the fact that in the cases cited the parts of the skin destitute of fat were affected.

Mezereum has also cured pustular eruptions.

7. Hahnemann [Introduction to *Mezereum, Chron. Krank.*] cites as cured: "Moist itching eruption on the head and behind the ears."

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\* According to the provings contributed by Wahle, Jr. from his father's legacy the characteristic of the Mezereum skin affection should be—itching at evening in bed, aggravated by scratching and touch, and changed thereby to burning; sensitiveness to touch; ulcers with areola, sensitive, bleeding easily, painful at night; the pus forms firmly adherent scabs under which again much pus collects.

8. Noack [*A. H. Z.*, 14, 166]: *rupia prominens*. A delicate unmarried woman, aged 63, with weak digestion, addicted to the use of coarse snuff, after great fatigue had a group of vesicles on the dorsum of the nose, itching excessively and discharging a pale, somewhat cloudy lymph which formed a yellowish brown acuminate scab, easily separated but reappearing. The scab at last attained the size of a small bean. After using *Calcarea*, *Spigelia* and *Aurum* for three months without effect, a single dose of *Mezereum*<sup>10</sup> cured. The scab fell off without a new one forming; the slightly-inflamed moist base dried in two days, leaving neither tetter nor scar.

9. Stens [*A. H. Z.*, 55, 29] cured a moist scabby eruption with *Mezereum*.

10. Fielitz [*A. H. Z.*, 17, 1] reports two cases of *herpes crustaceus*. The leg, from knee to instep, of a woman aged 36, had for many years been covered with a thick yellow scab, from cracks in which thick yellow matter oozed on pressure. The scab falls off in pieces, leaving the skin deep red, sore, itching violently and exuding a thin, clear fluid, forming a thin scab under which pus again collects. The skin around the scabs is dark red, tense, hot, itching; the foot swollen, with painful stitches on beginning to walk. At night intolerable itching and burning in the eruption. The leg emits a foul odor. General health undisturbed. *Sulphur*, *Calcarea*, *Lycopodium*, *Graphites*, *Rhus*, *Clematis* did no good. *Mezereum*<sup>9</sup>, then third, every other day, then every day, almost cured the patient within two months, leaving only a few small patches of eruption. The patient declined further treatment.

11. *Mentagra*.—A vigorous countryman aged 32, had red pustules on the chin, very painful when shaving. They broke and formed a scab, which in 6 months presented the following appearance: The hairy part of the face was covered with a yellowish brown scab quarter of an inch thick, from cracks in which bloody lymph exuded, producing slight itching in the edges. Around the edges a dark red moist areola. The lids were inflamed, the lower lids beset with crusts and somewhat everted. *Sulphur*, *Nit. acid* and *Rhus* did no good. *Mezereum*<sup>2</sup>, one drop daily, effected a complete cure of face and eyes within six weeks.



12. A case of mentagra was cured by Elwert [*Hyg.*, 20, 103] with Mezereum', six to eight drops every forty-eight hours. It had lasted two years and was cured in two months. No relapse.

In the so-called herpes crustaceus reported by Fielitz, the following Mezereum characteristics occurred: *a*, clear or bloody secretion; *b*, dark brownish scabs from admixture of blood [in crusta lactea and in scrofulous eruptions the scabs are a bright clear yellow]; *c*, the location on parts devoid of fat; *d*, nocturnal burning and itching.

Both forms of mentagra have their seat in the hair follicles with which, as we have seen, Mezereum has a physiological relation.

In Hartlaub's proving [*Lusatian Soc.*] we find this symptom: "a small pustule in the beard, left side of chin; also small pimples on chest at the base of hairs."

We call attention to the fact that all of these cases occurred in adults, otherwise healthy; we regard Mezereum as scarcely indicated in the dyscrasiae.

Certain nerve-twigs have an especial affinity for Mezereum; *e. g.* the infra-maxillaris, branch of the trigeminus.

Herpes zoster or zona, which follows the course of one or more of the superficial nerves originating in the spinal ganglia has found its remedy in Mezereum (*vide* Baehr). But it can only cure when the concomitant symptoms correspond to the Mezereum characteristics; we would moreover suggest it, when the zoster appears in places devoid of fat or in thin subjects. It would correspond to the region of the ganglion cervicale.

Hendricks [*Allg. Hom. Zeitung*, 51, 63] reports that after a zona cured by Rhus there remained great coldness of the body with burning pain in the seat of the zona. This condition was cured by Mezereum.

Modern pathology regards such skin diseases as caused by parasites, which however can only take root when there is, in the patient, a predisposing condition. The predisposing condition may be removed by Mezereum when the concomitant symptoms correspond; then, the nidus failing, the seed dies.

Von Grauvogl says [*All. Hom. Zeitung*, 75, 27]: "Our opponents might for once try the experiment of giving, for eczema, Mezereum<sup>90</sup> for several weeks, every two hours four or five drops in a teaspoonful of water, and report the result. To prevent relapse, the remedy must be continued some weeks, even after the eruption has disappeared; for even a single living spore (especially a sexual) remaining in the spiral end of a sweat gland or in a fold of the skin might in a few days reestablish the eruption, if the condition of the skin-function still afforded nutrition for the parasite. The neglect of this rule, which many patients will neither understand nor observe, misleads physicians into the belief that the remedy used is of no avail."

Among the cases cited, some may be ascribed to a vegetable parasite, *e. g.*, Pityriasis vers., mentagra, etc.; they were cured by Mezereum without the favorite modern local treatment.

13. Wahle (*l. c.*) says the symptoms observed by him (*v. a.*) indicate Mezereum for crusta lactea, various forms of uncomplicated impetigo and syphilitic and mercurio-syphilitic ulcers on the lower extremities, so difficult to cure. He often saw the good effect of Mezereum<sup>90</sup> in these cases, the lower attenuations having failed. To this we remark, as regards crusta lactea, the good effect of Mezereum is confirmed by Dr. Dunham in a letter; but, as we have said, we do not consider Mezereum indicated in scrofulous eruptions. We think the term *crusta lactea* an insufficient designation, and that Mezereum is indicated in these cases only where the characteristic itching and bloody scratching (as noted by Wahle) are present and the exudation is serous rather than lymphatic. As to the ulcers the cure of which is reported by both Wahle and Dunham, we find in the provings no symptoms describing that condition, except Wahle's (*v. a.*); and it is doubtful whether these were observed on healthy persons. They present, however, the same characteristic features—vesicular origin, itching and burning, scabs under which pus collects—as the pustular Mezereum disorder. The ulcer, then, is only a cumulative pustular condition on a limited space; such an ulcerated surface results primarily from the local application of Mezereum.



The ulcer, in which Mezereum is indicated, must accordingly present the peculiarities we have noticed in the other skin affections; the peculiar itching or burning at night, the scab formation; the occasional bleeding, the location on parts containing little or no fat (hence especially on the shin), finally, the other concomitant symptoms of Mezereum.

Where the skin is in almost immediate contact with the fibrous tissue, as on the front of the tibia, it is the more susceptible to the action of Mezereum, since, as we shall see, Mezereum affects the fibrous tissues, and especially the periosteum, in an equal, if not greater, degree than the skin. Indeed its indication in affections of the bones and teeth is only for such as originate in the periosteum.

VIENNA, January 16, 1876.







