

## LOBELIA HYPODERMICALLY.

(Discovery of Dr. E. Jentsch, of Chicago, Illinois.)

HISTORY.—At the meeting of the Illinois Eclectic Association, 1908, Dr. E. Jentsch of Chicago, read a paper entitled, "Lobelia; A Vegetable Antitoxin." This was of such exceptional importance, by reason of the history of Lobelia, as well as the statement of the physician, as to have led Dr. Jentsch, before the Society, to fortify his paper by a personal injection of the Specific Medicine Lobelia, into his own circulation, in order to illustrate that it is safe hypodermically.

Following this, at the meeting of the National Eclectic Medical Association, in Kansas City, June, 1908, Dr. Jentsch again contributed a paper on the subject of Lobelia, a Vegetable Antitoxin, and again, before the Society, he injected the remedy into his own veins, in order to quiet apprehensions concerning its possible energetic nature, when used subcutaneously.

The original paper of Dr. Jentsch is of interest in connection with this subject, as marking the introduction of a new epoch in the use of Lobelia. Our Bulletin would not be complete without the original article of Dr. Jentsch, which we therefore present, *verbatim*.

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## LOBELIA; A VEGETABLE ANTITOXIN.\*

THE APPLICATION OF THIS REMEDY IN THE TREATMENT OF DIPHTHERIA.

*A paper read at the Chicago meeting of the Illinois State Eclectic Medical Society, 1908.*

BY E. JENTZSCH, M. D., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

The title of this paper reveals to some extent my intention, which is a desire to inform you of my experience with Lobelia as a vegetable antitoxin in diphtheria. I will confine myself entirely to the therapeutic discussion of the disease mentioned, basing my contentions on personal experience and observations, which extend over a period of nearly four years in about 150 cases of diphtheria, with not a single death.

Right here let me tell you that I have no longing for notoriety nor a desire to reap financial benefit from this. It is merely an effort to reduce, nay, even to abolish, the high death-rate which regularly prevails from this disease. The remedy has proven itself so universally reliable in my hands that I have no doubt that what I claim can be accomplished by you as well.

### HOW I CAME TO USE LOBELIA IN DIPHTHERIA.

You may be interested to know how I came to use it. There are two vital points which are responsible. First, my studying eclectic therapeutics; second, the desperate condition of my own child who was then about three years old, due to diphtheria.

\*The preparation used by Dr. Jentsch was an alcoholic preparation of Lobelia Seed, 240 grains to the fluid ounce.

## LOBELIA

To save time and trusting that you will credit me with sufficient competency in my vocation, I will say that my boy was stricken with a fulminating case of naso-pharyngeal diphtheria. The serum antitoxin was exhibited promptly in sufficiently large doses and repeated, but with no other result except that the child passed from an active sthenic condition, with dyspnea, into a passive collapse, with apnea. This I had witnessed before and knew it to be fatal with certainty. Instantly I recalled the writings of the great Scudder, where he extols Lobelia as a life-saver.

Thereupon I filled full my hypodermic syringe with the Lobelia and gave the child the entire dose subcutaneously. Strange to say, I gave it with a confidence altogether out of proportion to the circumstances. However, the result proved this to be justified, for the patient responded immediately in a marvelous manner.

All the fatal symptoms gave way to those of returning health, the patient passing from a death-struggle into a peaceful slumber, from which he awoke after three hours, somewhat weak. Another dose was given, which was followed by a still more pronounced reaction for the better. The patient from that time continued to convalesce and, with the exception of a postdiphtheria pharyngeal paralysis, made a rapid recovery, the paralysis yielding to another dose of the same remedy.

### LATER EXPERIENCE WITH LOBELIA.

This happened nearly four years ago, and since then I have repeated in many cases the phenomenal experience with this remedy. At first I used the serum and the vegetable antitoxin in conjunction. But gradually I realized that the latter was entirely reliable, doing even better without the serum, so that now I can tell you with absolute certainty that the vegetable antitoxin is in every respect far superior to the serum for the reason that it is more reliable because it acts quicker and with a much greater certainty than the serum and, secondly, it prevents, arrests and cures the disease promptly, irrespective of what other treatment is instituted.

It makes no difference whether it is the first or the sixth day of the existence of the disease, with the exception that in the longer-standing cases the treatment must be repeated more often—every two to three hours, until the desired result is obtained.

I note that Dr. Walls of our City Health Department recommends a repetition of the serum every twelve hours in very bad cases, but it has been my experience that this is a slow and unsatisfactory method and usually of no avail.

The vegetable antitoxin (Lobelia) produces no symptoms whatever except those of returning health. It is therefore preferable to the serum when we consider the unpleasant symptoms which are often produced by the latter and which Dr. Walls takes great pains to pronounce harmless, although he aptly describes them as distressing (and which are known as the serum disease).

### WHY THE REMEDY IS EFFECTIVE.

The use of the vegetable antitoxin is consistent with our motto, "*Vires Vitales Sustinendae.*" It strengthens all the vital functions, notably the circulation. It does not dispel the symptoms of the disease at the expense of the patient's strength. It creates no other disease but simply cures the patient, all of which can not be claimed for the serum.

Another feature of the Lobelia is that it is so cheap that the cost need not be considered; besides it is more uniform in quality, does not readily decompose, is easily carried around, and may be given by the doctor with as little ado as a hypodermic injection of morphine. It is safe as well as harmless on account of its nature and origin.

## LOBELIA

What I have told you, Fellow Members, is true. I have found it to be so not in a few instances, but in many. However, I want you to convince yourselves and for that reason have given you a demonstration of the benignness of the drug.

I have preached of this before to societies and individual doctors and have found two principal arguments against its use: first, that it is a highly dangerous drug. How well founded this is you may judge by the demonstration I have given. The drug when so given is absolutely harmless. I have given in this manner a half-dram dose to an infant but a few minutes old as a means of resuscitation, with success. Let there be no more fear of this remedy.

The second assertion is that the serum antitoxin gives satisfactory results. Let me quote here the official statistics of the 1906 report published by the Chicago Health Department, which gives 547 deaths out of a little over 5,000 reported cases of diphtheria. This is an average throughout the year of 10 per cent—ten fatal cases out of every one hundred reported.

### RESULTS AS COMPARED WITH THE ANTITOXIN TREATMENT

The vegetable antitoxin, in my hands, has transformed diphtheria, an otherwise dangerous and malignant disease, into a benign and harmless affection, the proof of which I have been and am willing to demonstrate to any doctor anywhere and on any case of diphtheria.

### MY METHOD OF TREATING DIPHTHERIA.

In conclusion, let me give you a concise description of my method of treating diphtheria. In any case where there is the least suspicion of diphtheria I give a half-dram dose of the Lobelia hypodermically, and repeat in from two to twelve hours, once or oftener, as indicated, until reaction sets in, which means a return to health.

The drug may be used as it is or it may be filtered through ordinary filtering paper; the latter method I have adopted. For those who can gargle I give a half-dram of argyrol in six ounces of water. This I have found to be most effectual from a bacteriological standpoint, as well as the most soothing to a sore throat.

Systematic remedies I give according to specific indications. A prescription most often used by me is:

Aconite,\* gtt. 1-4; Belladonna, gtt. 1-6; Phytolacca, gtt. 10; Sarracenia, drs. 2; water, q. s. ad. ozs. 4.

Directions: One teaspoonful every two or three hours.

By experience I have found the hypodermic injection best borne by the patient when injected anywhere on the trunk, abdominal parietes, the back and thighs.

As to my theory about the action of this remedy it is briefly stated. I consider it fully the peer of all stimulants of the vascular system, not only in diphtheria, but in any infectious disease, equalizing, so to speak, disturbed circulation. If there is high pressure it acts as a sedative, and if there is low blood-pressure it stimulates, but in any case its secondary action is that of a cardiac tonic.

When used as here described Lobelia is a prompt and most reliable remedy in apoplexy, epilepsy or any condition where the cerebral circulation is disturbed. In collapse due to anesthesia it is unsurpassed; likewise in pneumonia. In diphtheria I believe it has a specific antitoxin property.

This, Fellow Members, is my case. I hope I have made my purpose clear, and I thank you sincerely for your kind attention.

\*These were alcoholic preparations representing one grain of the drug to each minim.