

Euphrasia – big heads making grimaces

Euphrasia officinalis is well known for its numerous eye symptoms (its common name is eyebright). The eyes water all the time and the discharge is nearly always acrid and burning making the eyes even more sore. In time the discharge can become yellow and thick especially if it is representing conjunctivitis that has a catarrhal nature and concomitant symptoms appear from the nose – a profuse bland coryza, fluent during the day and stopped at night.

There can also be a cough associated with the eye and nasal symptoms. Easy and profuse expectoration during the day again and likewise little at night which makes breathing difficult – it is the lying down (that usually happens at night) that provides this modality rather than the time of day/night. Just to make things confusing you can have a modality where only the coryza is << lying down but the cough is >>.

Disorders of the eyes can alternate with other conditions in chronic cases. So, for example, you might have a case of summer Hay Fever with all the typical symptoms of Euphrasia but out of season there is a digestive disorder – constipation, vomiting from the retention of mucous, bouts of dysentery, anal warts.

It is this last symptom of warts that suggests the overall but deeply multi-layered application of Euphrasia (part of the Scrophulariaceae family that are described as ‘figworts’). Sycotic eruptions about the genitals or anywhere on the skin, condylomata that burn, itch and sting (along with the other symptoms of the nose, lungs and eyes) are the prodrome to measles and possibly the suppression of measles as is common these days from vaccinations and other suppressive means.

Although generally recognised mainly from its eruptive stage the Measles virus usually takes hold with a fever, then comes the cough, coryza and the conjunctivitis and finally the eruptions – this latter stage can occur several days later.

The real danger is with the fever which can be very high and contribute to the scare and fear that people have regarding Measles. The fever can involve the brain causing encephalitis that can result in brain damage and this brings us back to Euphrasia.

The fever of Euphrasia is usually a ‘cold’ fever but with copious sweating but it is what goes on inside the head that is interesting. With the high fever affecting the brain activity there is complete abstraction of the mind and a delusional state emerges and this is especially bad when the eyes are closed. This delusion is characterised by the visions of big heads that make grimaces.

So Euphrasia really does have an affinity not only to the outer eyes but also the inner visions as well – think of it when presented with Measles and all will not be lost.

“But to nobler sights.

Michael from Adam’s eyes the film removed,
Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
Had bred; the purged with Euphrasy and rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see.” Milton, Paradise Lost.

“Yet Euphrasy may not be left unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander leagues around.” William
Shenstone.