

CALENDULA

EXCERPT FROM DOROTHY SHEPHERD'S *A PHYSICIAN'S POSY*

It is like a clock, the flowers open at 9 o'clock in the morn, and close punctually at three PM, and it takes no notice of the man - made daylight - saving bill. This peculiarity has been noticed by many writers in the past. Shakespeare refers to it in *The Winter's Tale*:

The Marigold that goes to bed wi' the sun
And with him rises weeping.

The name Calendula is derived from the fact that it is said to open its bloom on the calends (the first day of the month), and Marigold is associated by some writers with the Virgin Mary, and by other with Queen Mary of Stuart fame.

Calendula Officinalis is the Similar for clean cuts, wounds with or without loss of substance, with sharp cutting pains, redness, rawness, and sometimes stinging pains during febrile heat. These are the indications in the Materia Medica, and this has been proved correct in practice. Carleton states, he prefers the Succus Calendulae to the tincture. He states that in hemorrhage a douche of clear tincture of Calendula acts like magic and promotes rapid healing. I have proved the truth of this myself in many instances. I was looking on once while a veterinary nurse was docking the tails of some pedigree puppies a few days old. She cut the tails across and then applied pure tincture of Calendula, and immediately the bleeding stopped, and there was hardly a whimper from any of these wriggling pups; when I saw them the next day, all the tails had healed up beautifully.

Let me quote what is said about the preparation of Calendula in a herbal, and later I shall quote the method of preparation of Calendula mother tincture from the American Pharmacopoeia.

(1) Herewith the herbal recipe:

Use the ray florets of the deep, orange - flowered common variety of Marigold, which should be collected when the flowers are fully open in fine weather in the morning, and when the dew has been dried by the sun. Dry them quickly in the shade in a current of warm air, spreading them out on sheets of paper, without their touching each other. When the flowers are dried, keep them in clean glass jars, stoppered against dust, and make an infusion of the strength of one ounce of dried flowers to a pint of boiling water. For use externally as a local application to slow - healing water.

For use externally as a local application to slow - healing superficial chronic ulcers and clean cuts.

(2) The recipe in the American Pharmacopoeia is more elaborate:

Use the fresh leaves at the tip of the plant, together with the blossoms and buds, which are chopped and pounded to a pulp, enclosed in a piece of new linen, and subjected to pressure. The expressed juice is then, by brisk agitations, mixed with an equal part by weight of 50 per cent alcohol or best French brandy. This mixture is allowed to stand in a well - stoppered bottle for eight days in a dark, cool place, and then filtered. This makes the mother tincture.

I am told that a Marigold flower can be rubbed on the swelling caused by the sting of a wasp or bee and will rapidly make it disappear. Since writing this I have gone to live in the country and went through a plague of wasps one summer and found that frequent dabbing with the cork of the Calendula bottle eased the pain and prevented any swelling. Another way of using Calendula was picking off two to three fresh petals of Marigold, moistening them with one's own saliva and laying them on the stung area and covering it lightly with a handkerchief. No pain or swelling followed.

I find by personal use that Calendula is first - rate as a local application to the vulva and the perineum in maternity cases. I usually spray the perineum with the pure tincture, after the perineum has been sutured, I apply a moist pad of Calendula, 1 in 25, to the parts. The lochia becomes very quickly sweet, there is no general systemic reaction, and the healing takes place in less than half the usual time.

For years I gave up the use of antiseptics at the Dispensary, where more than too children were treated daily for all kinds of minor ailments. No more fomentations, no more Lysol or its modern substitute, Dettol; no more carbolic acid; no mercurial dressings. Unashamedly I confess, I am not afraid of germs, not even tetanus, and sepsis has no terrors for me. Arnica is applied in contusions, sprains and even fractures, where the skin is unbroken, both externally and internally. Calendula or Hypericum lotion 1 in 10, or 1 in 25, is applied to cuts, abrasions, clean and dirty wounds; even ulcers, abscesses, local carbuncles, all get treated with either Calendula or Hypericum. Calendula I reserve for clean wounds, and they do not go septic; Hypericum is perhaps more applicable for already infected states.

Let me affirm, on my solemn oath, to my medical colleagues, that, after many years' experience along these lines, I get no erysipelas, no pyaemia, no septicaemia, and no tetanus. And many of the cases I have seen were already heavily infected with staphylococci or streptococci. Also they get on rapidly and heal more quickly than in the old days, when I followed slavishly in the footsteps of my surgical teachers and used the antiseptics of the day.

Septic gums clear up rapidly with a Calendula mouth - wash, 1 in 25, and clean cuts, clean wounds, big or small, get on miraculously with it, and we never inject anti - tetanic serum, either. We neither expect any trouble, nor get it.

So do not forget, Calendula mother tincture in your first - aid medicine chest; use it for hemorrhages, cut fingers, apply it to the nostrils in nose bleeding, by moistening a piece of surgical gauze or cotton wool - or a clean handkerchief in an emergency - with Calendula, neat if you like, and pushing it up into the bleeding nostril.

Tell the dentist to use it for bleeding after dental extractions, and for bleeding and oozing gums while filling teeth. Take it with you boldly and offer it to him when you are the victim in the dental chair.

Proselytize and make the virtues of Calendula, the golden Marigold, known. It carries within it the solar forces; these are they which envelop the germs in its life - giving power, so that they can no longer live; thus the natural resistance is raised.