THE RELATION OF THE SCIENCE OF HOMŒOPATHY WITH THE SCIENCE OF MEDICINE IN GENERAL

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Before coming to my actual topic, I like to make some preliminary observation on certain terms and concepts. These terms and concepts are so commonplace, that any elaboration on them might appear redundant. Still, in actual practice, we find various degrees and forms of misconceptions about their real meaning and significance.

WHAT IS A SCIENCE?

The curt definition of Science is—systematised knowledge of the phenomena of nature. But this little sentence implies a vast thing.

UNITY IN THE INFINITE NATURE

We know, Nature is limitless, its phenomena are limitless in their number, dimensions (minuteness and vastness) degree. quality etc. But amongst these limitless diversities there is unity, or there would have been chaos. Every matter from the minutest to the biggest, is moving, every affair is happening, according to definite laws. And thus every phenomenon is connected with myriads of other phenomena by definite Laws of Nature. It is the task of Science to observe these phenomena and find out the definite Laws of Nature and utilize them for beneficial purposes.

DIVISIONS IN SCIENCE

Compared with the infinite vastness of the task, the span of human life, nay, the age of the whole intelligent human race, i.e., the human civilization is meagre. Still human being, endowed with that exclusive faculty, known as intelligence and

thinking, cannot sit idle prey to the whims of nature. So the human race has all along tried to observe the different aspects of different phenomena of nature, to find out the connecting link amongst them, thus systematize the phenomena and to find out their underlying Law. And thus have arisen the different branches of science, viz., Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Astronomy, Medical science, etc., etc.

Thus, from the studies of Physical properties of matter have evolved the various Laws of Physics (e.g. Newtons Laws of Motion, Einstein's theory of Relativity, Laws of Electricity, Magnetism, Heat, Light etc.); from the studies of Chemical properties of matter have evolved the chemical laws (e.g. laws of chemical relations, reactions in definite proportions, conservancy and indestructibility of matter, mass action etc., etc.) similarly have arisen the science of Biology, Astronomy etc. with their respective laws.

Although laws of any particular type or aspects of phenomena, are not applicable to any other type or aspect of phenomena, still none of them deny or contradict each other. Rather each must take into consideration and fit in with other aspects of the same matter. While studying the biological properties of a substance—we study and apply biological laws—taking into considerations at the same time the physical and chemical properties of the same matter as far as possible and consistant with the biological properties. All must be interlinked—because all are properties of the same matter—and the whole Universe is one. If any part of our studies cannot be linked with the rest of the Universe, we should be conscious that there is some gap in our studies, which must be bridged up. Due to the scantiness of our advance in any field of knowledge, there are still many such big gaps in all branches of science. Hence the necessity of continuous progress—*ad infinitum* in every field of science. The truth and validity of any Law that the Scientist may discover, in his long march on this long long route, is ascertained by the fact that, when applied to any set of phenomena on which the law is based, it must lead to the same result,—the same corresponding phenomena, e.g.—accord-

ing to the Law of Gravitation, a body with definite mass, raised to a definite distance, if allowed to drop, must fall on the Earth, passing through a definite amount of resistance in the air with a definite amount of momentum, at a definite time; and so on.

Here one point deserves attention. Matter in Nature is ever moving and ever changing in form and properties, slowly or fast, by dint of its intrinsic energy as well as by interaction with its environment. Inorganic matters is changing into organic matters (containing carbon as the central atom of the molecule), which again by dint of the same forces is changing into living matter, protoplasm. Living matter again is changing from the elementary protista to man. The reverse process is also constantly taking place simultaneously. Now, the laws applicable to higher forms of matter are not applicable to lower forms; but the Laws of lower forms may remain valid, though often in a more subtle or indirect way, in the higher forms also; —e.g. Biological Laws are applicable only to the higher forms of matter (and not to inorganic or nonliving organic substance), but Laws of Physics and Chemistry remain in force in these higher forms and may even directly or indirectly influence them, although they cannot explain or guide the phenomena of Life,—e.g. the secretory cells of gastric glands and intestinal glands have similar physical and chemical properties, but the Laws of Physics or Chemistry cannot explain or guide, the acid secretion of gastric glands or alkaline secretions of intestinal glands.

TWO METHODS OF APPROACH IN SCIENCE (1) EMPIRICAL AND (2) RATIONAL.

(1) In the *Empirical Method* the phenomena are simply studied in relation to each other, without any attempt to explain them. The task of this method is to find out, by method of induction, a fixed formula or Law, expressing the relations between two sets of phenomena. The truth and validity of this Law will depend upon its applicability as a connecting link between the two sets of phenomena in the same branch of study in the widest minutest, deepest, diversest possible observations. In the process, the Law instead of suffering

from any damage, assumes a grander and grander generalization as our study advances step by step. In this process of advance, new relations, and new laws may develop without any prejudice to the Law already established. Thus, in the field of Chemistry, the Law of conservation of weight (of Lavoisier and Lomonossoff) was not exploded, but confirmed, further generalized and made deeper by the Atomic theory (of Dalton); In Physics—Einstein's theory of Relativity does not negate Newtons' Laws of motion—it only immensely improves and generalises the latter. It is by this method that the main structure of Physics (including Electricity, Heat, Light, etc.), Chemistry and all other Natural sciences are built up.

(2) *The Rational Method* seeks to explain the phenomena, find out the essential cause of the phenomena or connecting link between phenomena and formulate theories based on speculations, and deal with phenomena depending on these theories, by method of deduction. The advantage or benefit of this method is that, it gives impetus to the Empirical Method in going deeper into phenomena in search of the essential cause of them, and in that process tends to link up various apparently separate categories of phenomena to a common cause e.g., the Quantum Theory links up the sciences of heat and light, with Electricity and Magnetism, essential nature of all of which, according to this theory is a material particle of energy.

The draw-backs of this method are: (i) Its formulations viz., the hypotheses & theories are often based not on observed facts, but on pure reason and speculation. (ii) The finding out of the proximate cause, i.e., one phenomena as the cause of another set of phenomenon (e..g. mechanical, electrical or physical energy as the cause of heat and light; retroverted uterus as the cause of certain pelvic and general symptoms; and so on) is not always a difficult task; but the essential nature, the primary cause of phenomena are often inscrutable. The more near you reach it the further it recedes towards infinity. Take for example Light: so far two theories have been propounded as to its essential nature—(a) it consists of waves in ether (b) it consists of energy particles or quanta. But none of it can explain all the phenomena of Light and its allied sciences

Heat, Electricity, Magnetism. (iii) Unlike the Laws in the Empirical method, where with the progress of science the minor laws are enriched and often merged into general laws, theories in the Rational Method conflict with each other and try to annihilate each other. What would have happened to the Science of Light if instead of being built upon the Empirical Laws (of refraction, reflexion, diffusion, polarization etc.) if it were built upon the speculative wave theory! The whole structure of Optical Science would have been seriously disturbed or even perhaps crumbled down by conflict of theories.

Thus, we see, however congenial the Rational Method may be for widening our observations of phemomena, any practical science must, of necessity, be based on the Empirical Method. And as such, it must fulfil three main conditions viz.:

(1) It must give limitless scope for further research and infinite progress, in each of its elements without detriment to its integrity as a whole, rather enriching it all the time.

(2) It must provide for the prediction of Phenomena within its own domain. It must furnish us with such Laws by application of which to one set of Phenomena, we are enabled to predict exactly a corresponding set of Phenomena.

(3) Also it must impel us to further observation when we fail to predict the resultant events or fail to apply the Law of Nature.

After this preliminary discussion on the General natures of any science, let us come to that special branch of science, known as the Medical Science.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OR JURISDICTION OF MEDICAL SCIENCE?

The science of Medicine treats of Prevention and Cure of Diseases and indispositions in general. It concerns knowledge in two composite aspects: (1) The subject diseased or prone to be diseased, viz. the living body and (2) The means and measures for saving the subjects from attacks of disease or curing the same if already attacked.

So, the Medical Science, in its full scope demands as a pre-

requisite, as through knowledge as humanly possible in the following branches of Nature:

A. Re: the Subject:

(1) Properties of Matter which compose the subject (as well as the means) viz: Physics, Chemistry etc.

(2) Properties (Phenomena and Laws) of life and living matter Biology.

(3) The structure of healthy body. Anatomy, Histology etc.

(4) The functions and phenomena of healthy living body—Physiology.

(5) The functions and phenomena of diseased body—Pathology.

Each of these sciences is already so vast and so fast advancing, that it is simply absurd for any person, in his short span of life to be thoroughly conversant with all of them. But still, in order to be a Medical Scientist, one should have so much equipment, as would enable him to be in touch with the basic facts and advancements in those sciences, so that he can collaborate with the works in those branches, and utilize the data supplied by them whenever required.

B. Re: The Means:

(1) Knowledges, about the environmental factors and their relations—actions, and interactions, with the living organism—Hygiene, Bacteriology, Dietetics, Toxicology, Forensic Medicine, Sociology etc.

(2) Knowledge about Mechanical and other allied measures for preventing or ridding the mechanical or material removable cause, of disease or indisposition: Surgery, Midwifery etc.

(3) Knowledge about Therapeutics—which consists, of that part of the Science of Medicine concerned with the means of curing disease, in the true sense of the term – i.e., the means of bringing into order disordered functions and structure of the Organism.

There are myriads of disorders and indispositions, which may some times be even fatal, that can be traced to palpable or removable causes: e.g.—unsuitable environmental conditions—air,

light, humidity etc.; unsuitable of inadequate diet; prolonged or intensive exposure to irritants—physical, chemical, bacterial, protozoal, helminthic etc.; gross physiological errors sexual excess, prolonged lactation, too frequent pregnancy, undue abstention etc. serious contradictions or conflicts in conditions of living—economic or concerning ideas and ambitions etc., or in relation with family or society; and so on. These causes may not disturb the function and structure of the organism permanently, or vitally; the balance of life returns to normal equilibrium, soon after the cause of the disturbance is removed, the vital force of life is imbued with immense capacity to adjust itself in various odd situations. So, these cases do not fall within the domain of Therapeutics, in its true sense, rather they fall under the jurisdiction of Hygiene and allied sciences.

But there are by far many more innumerable disorders of life for which no cause has yet been traced, or in which the removal of all palpable or apparent causes does not vitally alter the situation, and fail to bring a disbalanced life into order. Hence in such cases the Rational Method—the method of finding out the causes of observed phenomena and dealing with them, is inapplicable or insufficient. Limitless number of examples can be given on this point. But I shall refer to only a few simply with a view to clarify my assertion:

* A case of Renal Colic—After thorough examination (including X'Ray investigation) the cause of the condition is found to be a stone in renal pelvis, and that is removed by surgical means. But after a long or short interval the colic reappears, as the stone is reformed. No cause has yet been definitely ascertained as to this stone forming diathesis (lithiasis), so the disease cannot be radically cured by removing or counteracting any cause, i.e., by the Rational Method. Prospect of cure of such a case lies on the possibility of making the system of the organism work in an orderly balanced way so that uric acid (or other metabolic products) is properly disposed of, or eliminated, instead of being deposited in the urinary tract. This prospect is furnished by the true Science of Therapeutics.

* Peptic Ulcer—is said to be due to autodigestion of Gastric mucosa by its own juice. Attempts of giving relief (palliation)

are done by altering the gastric juice (by various antacids etc.) or ultimately removing the ulcer crater by surgical means. But these do not alter the basic condition or prevent the reformation of the ulcer. As the fundamental cause which makes the cells of Gastric glands produce abnormal secretion of lowers the normal resistance of gastric mucosa against digestive influences of its own juice, has not yet been ascertained, so it cannot be removed or obviated by hygienic, physiological or surgical means. So its cure lie outside those spheres of Medical Science and fall within the domain of true Therapeutics.

Such is the situation in the various so-called deficiency diseases, endocrine disorders, most of the nervous diseases etc. etc.

Even the so-called infectious diseases, the cause of which has been traced to one or other specific germs or parasite, demand certain considerations:

The remedies by which the causes are removed are not based on any principle, but on a method of "hit and trial". No body can say why, on what principle quinine removes malaria parasites from blood in certain cases, and why it fails in certain other cases. The same is true of any antimalarial drug or for the matter of that, any anti-infectious drug (e.g. Sulphas, Antibiotics etc., etc.). As the so-called efficiency of them is based on theoritical speculations, blind trial and statistics, one of them become very popular today only to be utterly discredited tomorrow.

It has often been found (in cases of Malaria for instance) that even after the germs or parasites have been removed by so called specific remedies, the clinical symptom (intermittent fever, enlarged spleen etc.) obstinately persist. So there is ground for doubting that these germs or parasites may not be the ultimate causes of the respective diseases. But, in any case, there is no question about the fact that they can utmost constitute only one half aspect of component causes of the diseased conditions. The other half must necessarily be filled in by the susceptibility of the subject. No germ can grow and produce its effects unless the soil is ready to accept, nourish and be influenced by them. This susceptibility may be increased

or diminished by various means, but its ultimate nature and causes remain as yet an inscrutable property of life itself, and hence beyond the range of rational methods, in the present stage of human knowledge.

THE LIMITS AND NATURE OF THERAPEUTICS

Thus we see that, in so far as the cause of a disease can be traced to any external influence, the treatment falls within the limits of hygiene and other branches of the Medical Science. But, on the other hand, in so far as the cause of a disease is identical with the essential cause of modified function and structure of an organ, or the whole organism, it is beyond the scope of any attempt at discovery with the present set up of scientific attainment of man; for it is the same, in its nature, as the cause of healthy functional and organic action,—or in other words the life itself, the essential nature and first cause of which is as inscrutable as the essential nature and first cause of matter, mass, gravitation etc. In such cases—which constitute by far the greatest number of diseased conditions, the rational methods of Hygiene, Surgery, Midwifery etc. are inapplicable. Here we have no other alternative than to fall upon the Empirical Method—namely, to observe two sets of phenomena connected by a general principle and to be guided by it, as is done by the chemist, physicist, mechanist or any practical scientist. And this is the exclusive task of a therapeutist.

The subject of research of a therapeutist must be:—

1. The phenomena manifested by the patient—viz., the modified functions and structure of the body (ie., the Totality of Symptoms of patient).

2. The phenomena produced by a special stimulus on healthy living body; and his endeavours will be to discover a general formula which shall express a constant relation between these two series of phenomena and shall serve as a Therapeutic Law.

THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS IN THE MEDICAL SCIENCE ARE BASED ONLY ON THE DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH TO THE SCIENCE OF THERAPEUTICS:

It is clear from the above discussions that in all the sub-domains of the Medical Science (General Sciences, Biology, Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene, Surgery, Midwifery etc.)—with only exception of Therapeutics—all the school of Medicine share a common ground without any basic difference, because in all those branches work of a scientist consists of observation and study of material facts or actual phenomena. There are of course some minor differences, and they are on the question of interpretation and utilization of those data.

But on the question of Therapeutics there have cropped up in the history of Medical Science various schools. If we keep aside the pre-historic school of Cult or Mystic or Magic Medicine—all the school of Medicine may be divided into two main groups viz., the old school—the most dominant of which is the Allopathic Medicine, and new school established by Samuel Hahnemann, the great scientist of the last decades of the 18th and first half of the 19th Century, known as the Homœopathic School. Between these two main schools (old and new) there are basic difference in approach towards the Science of Therapeutics.

(To be continued)

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