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## INDIGENOUS DRUGS

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The Art of Medicine is as old as the human society. People of prehistoric times were not at all free from diseases. And whenever diseased they always took some treatment, some times by various magical or physical methods, but most often by means of various herbal drugs, found in the neighbourhood. Thus the art of Medicine developed empirically and spontaneously. And through the channel of blind experience there developed a close and almost infallible remedial relation of certain particular drugs, mainly herbs with certain diseases or accidents. Thus was developed a vast store of medical knowledge in the primitive societies. But this huge store of knowledge was kept as zealously guarded secrets at the hands of individuals or families of the priestly class—the then intelligentsia of the society. Still now, this sort of occult drug therapy can be seen in different remote villages—especially in the aboriginal tribal areas. Only a small part of this fathomless store of knowledge was handed over to the subsequent generations through the open and scientific channels like—Aurveda, Unani etc. Every one of us has got more or less personal knowledge of almost miraculous power of these herbal drugs in curing various diseases like jaundice, nephritis, obstinately chronic intermittent fevers (Malaria, Kala-Azar etc.), diarrhoea, dysentery convulsions, asthma, etc. etc., as well as of dealing with accidents like snake-bites, injuries, haemorrhages, burns etc. etc.

We, homœopaths, that is scientific therapeutists, know the

key of these miracles. These dramatic cures must have been due to the capacity of the particular drug to produce the symptoms they removed so miraculously and permanently. We know also that there is a close relation between the *flora, fauna* and *diseases* of any particular zone of the Globe. Thus we see, Cinchona grows most luxuriantly at the slopes of hills, as if to cure the malaria endemic at the feet of hills; Punarnava (*Boerhavia Repens*) grows at random in damp regions to cure the dropsical tendencies of the same regions; Kalmegh (*Andrographis Paniculata*) grows extensively throughout the planes of India, in the rainy season, when malaria, liver troubles, intestinal disorders are rampant in these regions, for which Kalmegh is used as effective specific by country folk. There are plenty of such examples.

It seems that the most suitable remedies for most of the diseases to which Indian People are vulnerable, can be found in the bushes and jungles of India. Our unpardonable unacquaintance with them, or blissful ignorance about their life-giving properties, has so long made us dependent upon foreign import, for the most vital task of healing the sick. Theoretically atleast, these foreign drugs cannot be thoroughly appropriate and congenial to the nature and genius of the people of our soil, (vide my article—"Research in the Science of Homœopathy"—*Hahnemannian Gleanings*, Nov. 1961, page 503). Moreover, we have no means of inspecting or ascertaining the authenticity and genuineness of these imported drugs, except by trying on patients. We have no surety as to whether in any particular case these imported drugs act simply as placebos on our patient.

So it is high time that we should turn our attention from these imported gems to the limitless treasury of the invaluable and most congenial drugs luxuriantly growing in the multifarious climates of our mother country.

The surest, the most direct and the most scientific way of ascertaining the therapeutic properties of these invaluable gems also belong exclusively to ourselves—the Homœopaths. We need not depend upon any hit and trial, any speculation or hearsay about any drug. We have the scientific method of accu-

rately determining the dynamic pathogenetic and therapeutic properties of any drug viz., by proving on healthy people of various age, sex and community in various potencies under appropriate control.

So far as I know, the only modest move that had ever been taken in this direction was by Dr. Promoda Prasanna Biswas, Dr. Sarat Chandra Ghosh and a few others. But all made only very insufficient proving of some drugs depending exclusively on their individual resources, which could not but be extremely limited. Any really effective move in this direction can only be taken by the Government, with the help of research-minded Homœopaths and experienced Herbalists. All Homœopaths and lovers of Homœopathy should exert sufficient pressure on our popular Governments to take into hand this urgent task, which brooks no further delay.

At the same time, the different homœopathic teaching institutions, as a part of education of their students, should form proving Unions with their respective staff and students and start thorough scientific proving of indigenous drugs. For this noble cause financial aid may be sought from philanthropic minded rich men as well as from Government.

In the meantime, as our serious efforts are directed to this essential line, we should get ourselves acquainted with the informations about Indian drugs already gathered by authors like Dr. Promoda Prasanna Biswas, Dr. Sarat Chandra Ghosh, Dr. K. N. Basu, Dr. D. N. Chatterjee and others. Apply this knowledge in suitable cases and publish the results stating clearly the indications and unreservedly and precisely the results. Both the Pathological diagnosis and results should be corroborated by a thorough description of clinical examination and whenever required and possible by pathological reports of examination of blood, stool urine, X-ray etc. we would be very glad to publish any report on the clinical trial of any Indian Drug fulfilling these requirements, so that they may have any really dependable educative value.