

## HOMŒOPATHY OVERCOMES WITCH-DOCTOR'S POISON

DR. ROBINA

Our cook-boy came to us in great distress, and when a cook-boy is in trouble, the results are disastrous—for the whole family !

His wife was apparently much desired amongst the local bloods of his kraal, but he with the aid of many cows and mealies had persuaded the father of the girl, that he was the most desirable suitor. This system of "Lobola"—or payment to the father of a certain number of oxen or cows for a maiden, constitutes a sort of dowry payable by the male for a wife.

One luckless suitor who had apparently been a runner-up in the auction for the girl's charms, was most disgruntled—so much so that he exerted the age-old custom of giving "kaffir poison" to the girl.

Kaffir poison is the transmission of thought, performed through the medium of a potion, on payment of a sum of money to the local witch-doctor. Any disgruntled native can apply to his relatives for this "voodoo" to be executed, and believe me it works ! I suppose a book could be written on the power of the sub-conscious mind in these things, for I personally have seen the most dire results of it. Only the other day they buried a boy who let a simple festering sore, which appeared as a result of the insertion of the kaffir poison drug in a glass of beer, work on his mind so that he died—not a thing else wrong with him.

The word "kaffir poison" uttered to the greatest specialist by a sufferer can make the specialist groan ; for if the patient is that type of patient, he will die. It does not matter what miraculous drug is brought to bear upon him.

Our cook-boy on receipt of his news, was in terrible distress. When natives turn white—and they can, or rather a dirty pasty grey—you must know it is the last extremity of fear.

His beautiful (?) wife, to be like this ; Getting a word in edgeways, I said "like what" ? "Ohhhhhh, when I felt her she

was too much all right (an expression denoting quite well) and now his sister says she ran screaming through the village, and they had to chain her to a tree outside, and now she is dying—I pray you to save her for me” (he certainly was praying too).

“She is very beautiful.” Well this urgency meant thinking fairly fast, and taking into consideration her appearance; elicited with many adjectives from the cook, and quite a great deal of inaccuracy—tall, slender, nervously temperamental—mother died of sores on the lung (native description of tuberculosis) her sudden irascibility, which the cook seemed to find attractive and the fact that her feet kept him warm; remembering one of the “great ones” lectures on brainstorms—one dose of *Tuberculinum 1m* was given. Owing to the distance away, and knowing *Sulphur* was a great activator of *Tuberculinum*, it was followed by *Sulphur 30*, three times a day for three days.

The whole prescription was taken off by the cook, in a battered edition that Henry Ford could hardly have credited as being one of his ideas, proudly designated as a taxi, and for which the magnificent sum of three pounds was charged for riding eighty miles over the most ghastly roads in creation.

Four days later the cook-boy returned, all smiles! His wife had been restored to him—quite all right except for a large suppurating sore from which all the “kaffir poison” was pouring—an object of wonder to the village (a curtain can be drawn over the numerous “patients” this brought me), and was quite happy in her nine days wonder. We had a wonderful dinner, so everybody was happy. All on one dose of *Tuberculinum* and nine of *Sulphur*! “Heavy prescribing” one can hear the wiseacres say, but taking into consideration the distance away and the urgency, the vague symptoms, and also the treatment meted out to these poor unfortunates. They receive the same treatment as maniacs did in Medieval England. (See History books Chapter X page so-and-so.)

I thought any prescribing better than nothing. In fact was so upset—thought a potentized Pharmacopeia about the only thing. Incidentally, the boy they buried was not a victim of any medicine—he died before the doctor went to see him, or

so his sister-in-law told me, with many head-shakings for not having known us before—so remove that vagrant thought!

How I entered the noble halls of Homœopathy—was because we had a farm situated at the nether end of Natal—right in the heart of the great Darkensberg Range—a real hill-billy estate, far away from the grocer, or any medical aid whatsoever, in fact your case had to be a pretty good one for the local practitioner to venture those roads in broad daylight—let alone night.

In passing, I would like to pay tribute to all country G.P.s who work under the most punishing conditions—all hours, all weathers, over fearful roads, and always the friend and the helper. They deserve every medal invented for courage, honour and bravery.

However, when the doctor is not available something has to be done—and often pretty quickly too, and the only thing that really works, of all the avenues I have tried, is Homœopathy—herbs at times, but generally speaking—Homœopathy, the miracle worker, on all the raw suffering of these poor unfortunates. It works safely, surely, and gently, and if it doesn't, blame the practitioner—never Homœopathy! All this is, of course, leading up to something. There were about three thousand natives in this district and only four other white families.

One thing I noticed there, was that in every village one tree, of what seemed to be *Datura Stramonium*, was lovingly cultivated. The *Datura* is a shrub actually, but this had been tended so well that it was a small tree; whether it is another variety, I cannot say. The flowers, seeds and appearance were exactly the same, only it was a tree, with a sturdy little trunk (no bark). I asked what it was for, and they told me that when the warrior had to fight, the leaves of this tree are brewed and the brew given them to drink, and it makes them fighting mad—some more so than others. Read Clarke—"Ungovernable fury—desire to bite, to strike and to kill." I saw the effect on a few of these "warriors"—some with extreme melancholy and despair, some rolling on the ground and crawling into the dark (hydrophobia symptoms) with foaming of the mouth and thick

ropy salvia—in fact any and every symptom of Stramonium according to the weakness of the participant. A boy was brought to me who was subject to these fits of almost ungovernable rage, which resulted in *constriction of the larynx*, with a yellow streak in red part of lips, all these are found in Stramonium, so in case he had been partaking of the warrior brew, he got *Stram.* 200 once in three days, result—excellent, no more fits of rage and general health immensely improved.

Small native boy brought to me with high fever—burning one's hand on touching him, terrible pain in the back and inflammation of the stomach—eyes a queer yellowish colour, and *passing blood* in the urine. Generally speaking the district from which he came would indicate he had shipped a dose of *Bilharzia*. However, for these symptoms he was given *Cantharis* 30 every four hours, six doses. In two days he was up and about, but owing to my strong feeling of *Bilharzia*, I finished off the case with a dose of *Antimony tart.* 6, twice a day for two weeks, to take care of any latent possibility of this disease, which is quite horrifying in its long lasting effects on people. I know a man who had it recurring for twenty years. It affected his stomach with green diarrhoea, so badly, that he went over to America and was in a clinic there for three months before it left him. Wish I had known then what I have had actual experience of now. However, the case in point of the little native—progressed wonderfully, and so far (six months later) there has been no recurrence of symptoms.

Native baby—temperature 104, almost in a coma—dry heat, restless, and when not restless, listless. It is very difficult to assess natives, owing to the colour of their skin. One cannot say whether the face is red or any other colour except black, so the one cheek red, the other white symptoms, simply cannot be assessed. Furthermore, a native's eye pupils usually become dilated, even with toothache—they have a strange fear of any body disharmony. In this case however, seeing the extreme dryness of the skin, and knowing the sweating powers contained in a little dose of *Aconite*, he got *Aconite 1m*, a few globules in water—a teaspoon to be taken every six hours. The next day the temperature was 99.

Then taking into consideration his parentage and their general skin troubles—a few dose of *Sulphur* brought the case to a most satisfactory close with no after effects whatsoever.

However, knowing their habits too, of too little clothing in a bitter winter—the following autumn he got cod liver oil, and a few doses of *Natrum Sulph. 6* (one every other day for three weeks) and he went through the winter all smiles! His mother too, as he had been a trouble to her since his birth with colds, etc.

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## HOMŒOPATHY AND MENTAL HEALTH

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Homœopathy and Psychiatry are not only compatible but mutually helpful. Psychiatrists as a group are the most tolerant of all medical specialists. There are a number of reasons: first, the subject matter with which they deal; second, the newness of the field—it may be the oldest of the Arts but it is the youngest of the Sciences—third, Psychiatrists are their own severest critics. As Dr. Kalinowski says, "We are treating empirically disorders whose cause is unknown with methods such as shock treatment whose action is also shrouded in mystery."

Many of the psychiatric views and procedures are very close to homœopathic thinking and philosophy, such as recognition of repression and the possible dire results to which its excessive use may lead; also, recognition of that something in the individual, a psycho-biological entity, (the constitutional factor), which determines how and why he will react to stress in a certain way, such as with either psychosis or neurosis, or even be undisturbed or, at the most, only temporarily upset.

It has become apparent that a great many factors enter into the causation of mental illness. To borrow a mathematical