

MIASMS

SHRI BHUMANANDA, PONDICHERY

Dr. Hahnemann made use of the word 'miasm' to convey the same meaning as 'miasma' of which the plural is 'miasmata' and 'miasmas'. The dictionary meaning of miasma is: "Noxious affluvium, formerly supposed to emanate from putrescent matter, swamps etc. and to float in the air, especially night mist. Figuratively, noxious influence or atmosphere".

How he was led to the discovery of the miasms will help us to understand them better. Repeated returns of the complaints in the end left the best selected Homœopathic remedies then known and given in the most appropriate doses, the less effective the oftener they were repeated. They served at least hardly even as weak palliatives". Why, then, cannot this vital force, efficiently affected through Homœopathic remedies, produce any true and lasting recovery (even where the mode of living has been correct)? What is there to prevent this? The answer to this question . . . led me to the discovery of the nature of chronic diseases".

He discovered that chronic diseases left to themselves 'increase with the years and during the whole of man's life . . . and are aggravated even till death'. "In Europe and also on other continents, so far as is known, according to all investigations, only three chronic miasms are found, the diseases caused by them manifest themselves through local symptoms and from which most, if not all, chronic diseases originate, first, SYPHILIS ; which I have also called the *venereal chronic disease* ; then SYCOSIS, or the fig-wart disease, and finally . . . PSORA or the itch-disease".

That these miasms are noxious, harmful, subtle influences will be clear from their chief characteristic features, First, they infect the organism "in one single moment". No ablution, burning or even excision can undo the infection within.

The same is the case with small-pox, cow-pox, measles, dog-bites, anthrax infection etc. Even an immediate exclusion of the wound caused by a mad dog could not prevent death from Hydrophobia. Even after the quick removal of the chancre venereal disease breaks out. This confirms the indubitable pre-existence of syphilis in the system. The French doctor 'Petit' cut off a part of the labia minora, in which the venereal chancre had appeared; the wound healed, but the venereal disease broke out.

Miasms of syphilis and sycosis infect the system during impure coition, all washing and cleansing of the parts afterwards is in vain. The miasms of itch is the most contagious of all. Things rendered unclean by the Psoric fluid-infected the persons who unwittingly touched them.

Secondly, there is a period of incubation during which the invisible disease infused develops and pervades the whole organism.

Thirdly, they (the miasms) manifest themselves through local symptoms of syphilitic chancre (or bubo), sycotic excrescences of fig-warts usually first on the genitals, or Psoric itch-pustules on the skin. Through these local manifestations nature demonstrates the completion of the internal development of the miasmatic maladies throughout the whole organism. These local lesions act vicariously for the internal malady; through them the diseased nature endeavours to mitigate and soothe the internal evil. So long as these local symptoms are left unmolested, secondary symptoms do not generally break out.

Syphilis and sycosis both have an advantage over the itch disease in this, that chancre (or bubo) and the fig-wart do not leave the external parts until they are either artificially removed or rationally healed through the internal cure of the whole diseases.

They remain standing even until the end of man's life and prevent the breaking out of the internal disease. This good feature Psora has lost in the present more and more mitigated form which has changed leprosy to itch. The eruption of itch by no means remains persistently. It frequently disappears, as

we say, of itself, i.e. through causes which are not noticed. Whatever may be the cause of its disappearance the secondary ailments of the internal Psora will break out sooner or later.

The cutaneous eruption of the mitigated PSORA does not differ materially from ancient leprosy. Even leprosy, when not inveterate, could be driven from the skin by cold baths, warm mineral baths etc. only to be followed by insidious maladies in course of time.

Fourthly, the most grand feature of these three miasms is that they are capable of being transmitted to offsprings. Dr. Hahnemann says, "Psora is a chronic miasma . . . which in several thousands of years has passed through several millions of human organisms, and must have assumed such a vast extension of varied forms . . . that one single and only medicine is insufficient to heal the entire Psora and all its forms etc."*

"Passing through millions of human organisms" signifies heredity, which may be modified by innumerable circumstances. Dr. Hahnemann has laid great stress on Psora being non-venereal but at last he discovered that all diseases are connected. The following words are significant:—"Before I had this knowledge, I could only teach how to treat the whole number of chronic diseases as isolated, individual diseases." (Foot-note to para 80, Organon).

On this point Dr. Paterson says, "from his clinical experiences of twelve years he (Hahnemann) was not able to treat chronic diseases as isolated, individual maladies even by the most careful application of the law of similars."

We have mentioned above that cutaneous eruptions "do not materially differ from ancient leprosy". Leprosy is the external form of psora and skin eruptions are milder forms of Leprosy. So, Leprosy being the result of venereal diseases (on what authority or proof?—Ed.), ordinary skin diseases are also indirectly venereal. Thus if Psora is transmitted from generation to generation there is no reason why the other two miasms cannot be passed on the posterity. In fact there are

* All the above are free quotations from the Chapter "Nature of Chronic Diseases", of Hahnemann's "Chronic Diseases". [ED.]

many instances to point to the obstruction of healing due to venereal hereditary influence.

A case of continued fever had yielded to Kali-iod 200, one dose, administered by Dr. H. P. Das Gupta on the voluntary confession of the father of the patient that he had syphilis when the son was born. An obstinate case of eczema could not be cured before syphilinum was employed on the basis of the syphilitic history of the patient's grand-father.

The children of warty parents are found to develop warts signifying sycotic inheritance. A boy aged six or seven had developed a wart on the dorsum of his left foot, his father had warts on the left side of his back; a dose of Thuja removed the boy's wart leaving behind a whitish mark; the boy referred the matter to his mother, who said "There was nothing there."

In the light of the above discussions let us define Miasms as follows:—

Miasms: (1) Are constitutional poisons that prevent even rightly selected Homœopathic remedies from effecting radical cure without recurrence;

(2) Originate primarily from infection and secondarily from suppression of (a) gonorrhœa or its offshoots, (b) syphilis or its innumerable manifestations, and (c) skin diseases by un-natural and un-homœopathic treatments;

(3) Are Capable of being passed on as taints, or diathesis to offsprings, sometimes even overlapping a lucky generation;

(4) Pervade the whole body like salt in a cooked vegetable;

(5) Cannot be detected by ordinarily known chemical tests;

(6) Can be known by their peculiar signs and symptoms.

Miasms can be eradicated, along with all the chronic ailments which they produce and hold up; by judicious and persistent use of the most similar remedies in minimum doses allowing time for their full action.
