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## EDITORIAL

### THE THEORY OF CHRONIC DISEASES

Hahnemann after discovering and practising Homœopathic method of treatment for about 30 years (1790 to 1820) found that Homœopathy failed to bring a real cure in some diseases in the sense that though the diseases appeared to subside for a time under proper Homœopathically selected drugs always had a tendency to relapse at some future time i.e. the vital force efficiently affected through Homœopathic medicine failed to produce any time and lasting recovery in these chronic maladies with the aid of remedies which best cover their present symptoms while the same force which is created for the restoration of our organism is nevertheless so indefatigably and successfully active in completing the recovery even in severe acute diseases. This apparent failure of radically curing certain diseases may be due to one or more of the following causes :—

- (i) Either the Law of Similars is not a true law of universal application, or
- (ii) The number of drugs hitherto discovered for using as Homœopathic remedies were too few to cover all the varieties of diseased condition that human flesh is aired to, or

- (iii) There was some defect in the application of the law of similars, or
- (iv) Some omission in ascertaining all the symptoms the totality of which really constitutes disease, or
- (v) There was some obstacles over-looked, the persistence of which prevented lasting recovery.

I. Hahnemann dismissed the first item on the ground that the validity of the law of similars is based on observation and experiment and supported by inductive and deductive processes of thought and reason and as a law was found to be followed by Nature herself to bring about cure of diseases.

II. Hahnemann dismissed the second item by noting the following in his book of chronic diseases:—

- (a) The followers of Homœopathy have hitherto thus consoled their minds but this excuse or so-called consolation never satisfied the founder of Homœopathy—particularly because even the new additions of proved valuable medicines increasing from year to year, have not advanced the healing of chronic (non-venereal) diseases by a single step, while acute diseases (unless these at their commencement threaten unavoidable death) are not only passably removed by means of a correct application of Homœopathic remedies but with the assistance of the never-resting preservation vital force in our organism, find a speedy and complete cure.

III & IV. As regards the third and fourth items, he came to discover a new fact after noting that the non-venereal chronic diseases after being time and again removed Homœopathically by the remedies fully proved up to the present time, always returned in a more or less varied form and with new symptoms or reappeared annually with an increase of complaints. This new fact is to the effect that the Homœopathic physician with such a chronic (non-

venereal case—yea in all cases of non-venereal chronic diseases) has not only to combat the disease presented before his eyes, and must not view and treat it as if it were a well-defined disease, to be speedily and permanently destroyed and healed by ordinary Homœopathic remedies, but that he has always to encounter only some separate fragments of a more deep-seated original disease. In other words, Hahnemann was led to note that though certain cases were temporarily benefitted by remedies which seem to correspond accurately with the apparent symptoms there were points of importance in these cases to which they failed to correspond. In the cases referred to there was the fact that the disease manifestations, though taking the form it might be of an ordinary acute illness, were really only one event in a series; and it was necessary to find medicines corresponding to the series, if a cure was to be effected. All these isolated attacks of particular syndromes are not many diseases but varied expressions of one morbid process which constitutes the disease "per-se". So the law of cure was not at fault but the defect was in ascertaining the totality of symptoms which comprises not only the present syndroms but the past syndroms as well.

V. Thus Hahnemann was led to think of the existence of some obstacle which after it has once advanced and developed to a certain degree which can never be removed by the strength of any robust constitution or can never be overcome by the most wholesome diet and order of life nor will it die out of itself. This obstacle to the cure of many cases was found by Hahnemann after searching investigations and prolonged observations with non-venereal patients, to lie very often in a former eruption of itch which was not unfrequently confessed; and the beginning of all the subsequent sufferings usually dated from that time. This was noted with similar chronic patients who did not confess such an infection or what was probably more frequent who had, from inattention not perceived it,

or at least could not remember it. After a careful enquiry it usually turned out that little traces of it (small pustules of Itch, Herpes etc.) had showed themselves with them from time to time, even if but rarely, as an indubitable sign of a former infection of this kind. These circumstances in connection with the fact that innumerable observations of Hahnemann and other physicians had shown that an eruption of itch suppressed by faulty practice or one which had disappeared from the skin through other means, was evidently followed in persons otherwise healthy by the same or similar symptoms. This obstacle according to Hahnemann was the original malady which was named by him as PSORA, i.e. the internal itch disease with or without its attendant eruption on the skin.

The comparative study of the first four successive editions of Organon (1810-1819-1824-1829), especially the sections 39-61, shows us that Hahnemann was all the time struggling hard to reduce into order the vast chaotic mass of facts concerning diseases. He weighed every sort of classification of diseases in the balance and found each of them wanting. His realistic mind was always for concrete individual cases and abhorred abstractions which the nosological studies of diseases afforded in his time. He came to the conclusion "Nature has no nomenclature or classification of diseases. She produces single disease etc." (Sec. 46 of the 1st Edition of Organon and retained right up to the 3rd edition of Organon). But about some diseases he was not so sure, as they were so fixed in their character and course. They might have been caused by a peculiar contagion (a peculiar miasm of tolerably fixed character), e.g. plague, small-pox etc.; so that to each of them can be given a peculiar name. One thing to be noted here, is that though we find Hahnemann constantly busy in developing the knowledge of drugs and perfecting the art of therapeutics, there was no time when his mind was not occupied with the knowledge of diseases and how to improve it. That is why the main changes in the successive

editions of organon deal with changes of conceptions about the vital force and about the causative factors of diseases. In the first three editions of Organon we come across the term "miasm", but it was used in the then accepted sense—and its precise connotation and denotation had not yet been fixed by Hahnemann. Of course Hahnemann shook off the crude materialistic idea regarding miasm as he came to perceive the spiritual, dynamic character of the vital principle. As actions and reactions are only possible between entities of the same order of existence, anything which is going to affect the vital principle must be also of spirit-like nature, qualitative (as opposed to being material). Miasm is qualitative—this much was clear to Hahnemann till then. In the corresponding article Sec. 80 of 2nd and 3rd edition of 'Organon' we do not find any further clarification of the term 'miasm' nor any other more practical way of classifying diseases. But in 1829 in the fourth edition of "Organon" we come upon a tremendous change in the conception and classification of diseases as put forth in Sec. 5 and 72.

Sec. 5: Useful to the physician in assisting him to cure are the particulars of the most probable exciting cause of the acute disease, as also the most significant points in the whole history of chronic disease to enable him to discover its *fundamental cause which is generally due to a chronic miasm.*

Sec. 72 ends thus after dividing the diseases into acute and chronic types:

*Chronic diseases are caused by infection with a chronic miasm.* This is an epoch-making event like a mountain peak in contrast to the surrounding level country. As a realist Hahnemann's approach to the study of diseases and drug-actions was clinical; and it was in the fitness of things that his approach to the classification of diseases should also be clinical. Another outstanding point was that he came to the conclusion that all diseases

of dynamic origin (excepting occupational or drug diseases) were due to 'miasmatic infection'. I particularly draw, here, the attention of our readers to these two words—miasmatic infection—as 'infection' is still the current coin in modern medicine whereas "miasm" has become obsolete. Hahnemann must have formed a definite conception (comprising denotation and connotation) of the terms "miasm" and 'infection'; so he thought he made a tremendous discovery which baffled and eluded the medical profession ever since before his advent on the earth. His ideas about dynamic action (as distinguished from mechanical and chemico-physical actions) and about infection have been clearly expressed in a long foot-note to sec. 11 of the sixth edition of Organon. As dynamic action implies a process whereby one substance is acted on by another substance without communication or actual interchange of the material parts of the substances concerned; so infection is a process whereby a living organism is acted upon by another living being without communication or interchange of material parts of the beings concerned. A mechanical action between two substances is dependent on some sort of physical connections between them. A chemical action between two substances is dependent on the atomic interchange of molecules of the substances concerned. A physical action between two substances is dependent on the interaction of physical properties possessed by them *e.g.*, electrical, magnetic, thermal etc. But the interactions between a living body with another living one or with a drug falls under a category which is described positively by the term dynamic action which is, in fact, a negative way of expressing the mode of action or process as different from mechanical or chemico-physical processes. That is why when Hahnemann asserted that all diseases other than surgical or occupational are of the nature of infection what he meant is that in every case of illness the vital principle of the individual is vitally (and not mechanically or chemico-physically)

acted on by exogenous morbidic agents. During Hahnemann's time these morbidic agents were designated by a general term "miasm or miasma", which literally meant "any noxious emanation or effluvia or a polluting factor. There were no precise connotation or denotation attached to the term miasm. It was Hahnemann who picked up the term which was current in the medical literature of his time but he invested the word with a special connotation and denotation and used it as such. Hahnemann was misunderstood by contemporaries of his own school as well as of the orthodox school and he is still greatly misunderstood by the present generation as sufficient attention is not drawn to the particular conception which he developed in connection with the word 'miasm'.

In order to grasp the revolutionary change in Hahnemann's mind with regard to conception of the term miasm we have to look to his life-history. During a period of twenty-two years from 1799-1821, Hahnemann was constrained, by the persecution of his colleagues, under cover of law, to change his abode at least eleven times. From Leipzig, the city of his love, the last place from which he was driven away, he repaired to an assylum offered him to the tiny Duchy of Anhalt, Cœthen. Here his ever-increasing fame brought him throngs of patients from all parts of Europe—but a very different set of patients indeed who led him to take stock of his medical achievements afresh, to set him seriously thinking of a great problem which occupied him since the years 1816 and 1817, night and day; and "behold", he exclaims in his book on "chronic diseases"—"the Giver of all good things permitted me within this space of time to gradually solve this sublime problem through unremitting thought indefatigable inquiry, faithful observation and the most accurate experiments made for the welfare of humanity." He arrived at the final conclusion about the nature of miasmatic conception through three stages: *First* he came to a definite idea about the nature of acute diseases; *secondly*, he was able to

show a complete analogy between the origin and development (not termination) of acute and chronic diseases; *thirdly*, hitting upon the fundamental causes of chronic diseases, he could formulate that all diseases are of miasmatic nature.

In the fourth edition of *Organon* (1829) Hahnemann advocated the classification of diseases into two types—acute and chronic—in the following words (sec. 72):

“The diseases to which man is liable are either rapid morbid processes of the abnormally deranged vital force, which have a tendency to finish their course more or less quickly, but always in a moderate time—these are termed *acute diseases*;—or they are diseases of such a character that, with small, often imperceptible beginnings, dynamically derange the living organism, each in its own peculiar manner, and cause it gradually to deviate from the healthy condition, in such a way that the automatic life energy, called vital force, whose office is to preserve the health, only opposes to them at the commencement and during their progress imperfect, unsuitable, useless resistance, but is unable itself to extinguish them, but must helplessly suffer (them to spread and) itself to be ever more and more abnormally deranged, until at length the organism is destroyed; *these are termed chronic diseases.*”

As regards the first step, Hahnemann was the first to perceive and teach the parasitical nature of contagious diseases e.g. small-pox, chicken-pox, measles, scarlet fever, cholera etc. Though he makes it explicit in his article on cholera in 1831 “Appeal to thinking philanthropists respecting the mode of propagation of the Asiatic Cholera”, Cœthen, October 24th, 1831), he must have arrived at it before 1827 when he expressed his views on chronic diseases to his two disciples before publishing his book on chronic diseases in 1828. If we read between the lines of “Chronic Diseases”, it is evident even to a casual reader how he bases his arguments on the notion of acute miasms which he had arrived at previously. He might have used



the term 'miasm' in an abstract sense before but that he used it in a concrete sense (with fixed denotation and connotation) later is evident from his article on Cholera, the extracts from which are, here, quoted to justify our statement. In a strong protest against the current, terribly harmful, atmospheric-telluric theory of the nature of Cholera, Hahnemann stated the infectious, miasmatic, parasitic nature of Cholera and described its rise and growth in the following words: The most striking examples of infection and rapid spread of Cholera take place in this way:—

On board ships in those confined spaces, filled with mouldy, watery vapours, the Cholera miasm finds a favourite element for its multiplication, and grows into an enormously increased brood of those excessively minute, invisible, living creatures, so inimical to human life of which the contagious matter of Cholera must probably consist. . . . The cause of this is undoubtedly the invisible cloud that hovers closely around the sailors who have remained free from disease, composed of probably millions of those *miasmatic animated beings*, which at first developed on the broad, marshy banks of the tepid Ganges, always searching out in preference the human being to his destruction and attaching themselves closely to him, when transferred, to distant and even colder regions, become habituated to those also, without any diminution either of their unhappy fertility or of their fatal destructiveness. . . ." This pestiferous, infectious matter as he calls it, "which is carried about in clothes, hair, beards, soiled hands, instruments of physicians, nurses and others," seem to spread the infection and cause epidemics. Here we have an anticipation by more than 50 years of Koch's discovery of the Comma Bacillus of Cholera (1882). Hahnemann had had no microscope but he had a keen analytic mind and phenomenal intuition. He used the terminology of his day which he qualified to suit his purpose and thus made it clear that by the word 'miasm', amplified by descriptive terms "infectious, contagious, exces-

sively minute, invisible living creatures" as applied to Cholera, he must have meant precisely what we mean to-day when we use the terms of modern Bacteriology to express the same idea. In fact, the idea of "contagium vivum" originated with Hahnemann and he can be hailed as the Father of Bacteriology.

Thus Hahnemann's elaborate and accurate study of the miasmatic nature of acute diseases had previously paved the way for his theory of the nature of chronic diseases. He noticed "three different important moments" with respect to the origin of infectious diseases:—

- (1) The time of infection.
- (2) Secondly, the period of time during which the whole organism is being penetrated by the infection, until it has developed within (incubation period in modern terminology).
- (3) Thirdly, the breaking out of the external ailment, whereby nature externally demonstrates the completion of the internal development of the miasmatic malady throughout the whole organism.

Hahnemann showed the presence of these stages in the origin and course of chronic diseases. As acute diseases (mostly) manifest themselves at first with some sort of skin eruption so the three types of chronic diseases presented similar features, *e.g.*, Syphilis with Chancre; Sycosis with fig-warts; and Psora with itch-vesicles. He established the contagious nature of chronic diseases during one phase of their development in the human organism. Their transmissibility through successive generations was established through Hahnemann's marvellous collection of facts from the earliest possible recorded history. From these observations he could label the chronic diseases as also of miasmatic nature with the same conception of miasm which he attached to acute diseases. Thus the concluding line of the Sec. 72 of the 4th Edition of Organon, is of momentous importance. But because of his realistic and utterly scienti-

fic trend of mind he did not fail to notice the differential points between acute and chronic diseases. He had to make a tremendous change in the conception of diseases while studying the problem of chronic ones. He formerly held that "the physician has only to remove the whole of the symptoms in order, at the same time, to abrogate and annihilate the internal change, that is to say, the morbid derangement of the vital force—consequently the totality of the disease, the disease itself (Sec. 17)..... it follows undeniably that the sum of all the symptoms in each individual case of the disease must be the sole indication, the sole guide to direct us in the choice of a remedy. And what we find him writing in his book on "Chronic Diseases": "It was a continually repeated fact that the non-venereal chronic diseases, after being time and again removed homœopathically by the remedies fully proved up to the present time, always returned in a more or less varied form and with new symptoms or reappeared annually with an increase of complaints. This gave me the first clue that the homœopathic physician with such a chronic case, yea in all cases of chronic disease, has not only to combat the disease presented before his eyes, and must not view and treat it as if it were a well-defined disease, to be speedily and permanently destroyed or healed by ordinary homœopathic remedies, but that he has always to encounter only some separate fragment of a more deep-seated disease..... They must therefore all have for their origin and foundation constant chronic miasms, whereby their *parasitical existence* in the human organism is enabled to continually rise and grow."

Thus we find that the difference between an acute and a chronic disease, implies something more than the time-duration of the illness. In this connection it is well to bear in mind Clarke's remarks regarding the particular meaning attached to the word "chronic" by Hahnemann in the phrase "Chronic diseases". Hahnemann did not use it in the ordinary sense of "long-lasting"; he meant a disease

which was due to a poison (or miasm) which had a *chronic evolution*. Syphilis is a chronic disease, in his sense whether the manifestations are acute or whether they are long-lasting. Psora is a chronic disease in the same way though sometimes its manifestations are intensely acute. Another difference between an acute and chronic disease is that the acute naturally ends in complete recovery or in death; whereas a chronic disease continues to act in varying or alternating ways throughout life unless it is cured by proper treatment". Hahnemann's classification of diseases into acute and chronic, is from first to last one of *practical* import.

For further justification of the parasitic nature of miasms of disease I quote, below, a foot-note on page 35 of Hahnemann's "Chronic Diseases":

"Or have these various, acute, *half-spiritual* miasms the peculiar characteristic that—after they have penetrated the vital force in the first moment of contagion and then, like parasites, have quickly grown up within it and have usually developed themselves by their peculiar fever, after producing their fruit (the mature cutaneous eruption which is again capable of producing its miasma) they again die out and leave the living organism again free to recover?

"On the other hand, are not the chronic miasmatic *disease-parasites* which continue to live as long as the man seized by them is alive, and which have their fruit in the eruption originally produced by them (itch-pustule, chancre and fig-wart, which, in turn, are capable of infecting others) and which do not die off of themselves like the acute miasmas, but can only be exterminated and annihilated by a counter-infection; by means of the potency of a medicinal disease quite similar to it and stronger, so that the patient is delivered from them and recovers his health."

Thus we come to realise the full significance and implication of the Hahnemannian dictum that all diseases whether acute or chronic, are caused by infection with an acute or chronic miasm.

For further investigations into the nature of chronic miasms and chronic diseases space forbids us to continue here. It will be discussed in succeeding editorial remarks.

B. K. S

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## BROKEN DOWN CONSTITUTIONS ARSENICUM ALBUM

BY NEMO

No series of articles on broken down constitutions would be complete without mention of *Arsenic*, that most virulent of poisons and most potent of healers. It is a remedy which is frequently indicated and which can do wonderful work when the symptoms agree. All the well-known effects of arsenic poisoning, the terrible anguish, the suffering and the hopelessness, are brought out in the provings. Kent says that *Arsenic* impresses the whole economy and disturbs all the functions. Clark quotes Teste as saying that it acts better on vegetarians than on meat-eaters, and that it strengthens the muscles of limbs and the breathing apparatus.

Being a heavy element, the action of *Arsenic* is primarily anti-syphilitic, but is also antipsoric. It can palliate sycotic conditions, particularly where asthma is present, but it is not sufficiently similar or homœopathic to sycosis to effect a lasting cure.

Dr. Roberts puts *Arsenic* in a group with *Phosphorus*, *Silica* and *Sulphur*—all very powerful remedies. It has been called the twin brother of *Phosphorus*, to which remedy it is complementary.

*Arsenic* is nearly always administered in the form of the oxide, *Arsenicum album* or white arsenic, chemical formula  $As_2O_3$ . The iodide of *Arsenic* or *Arsenicum iodatum*  $AsI_3$

reasons that we never thought for a single moment that Homoeopathy would meet such a sad and dramatic transformation in America so soon. May, Hahnemann give us sufficient strength to bear the shock of this happening.

S. C. G.

### THEORY OF CHRONIC DISEASES

(Continued)

Our study of diseases has served to follow the sequence of Hahnemann's thoughts which led him to classify diseases into acute and chronic types. He spent twelve years, while at Coethen, in observing the nature of origin, course and terminations of chronic diseases and after shifting analysis and generalisation came to hit upon three causative disease-factors, *viz.*, Psoric, Syphilitic and Sycotic miasms which he termed as Chronic Miasms. Though he was, all along against all attempts to speculate about the causative factors of all diseases that human flesh is heir to, he, according to some, committed the same error of speculating over the causes of chronic diseases. There might be some justification in the charge levelled against him, but it will be evident from further study, that his observations on the nature of chronic diseases are something more than merely fixing the etiological factors of that type of diseases.

The implications of the Psora theory of diseases, (as will be evident from an unbiased study of the Hahnemann's master work, 'Chronic Diseases') have been ably summarised by Dudgeon, which are as follows :—

1. That seven-eighth of all chronic non-venereal diseases are the result of an infection with a skin disease that have been driven off by external treatment.
2. That the skin disease is identical with that which we call the itch, although it presents itself under many forms.
3. That practically every chronic non-venereal disease is scabies or a degeneration of it.

4. That none of these seven-eighths of chronic diseases are curable without a certain set of remedies which were unknown or unused before Hahnemann and therefore no chronic diseases were cured before the announcement of this doctrine in 1828, and that they have been readily curable since that time.

5. The itch is curable with these internal remedies and that the treatment with external remedies is fraught with danger.

Now, these observations of Hahnemann were accepted by a few as a momentous discovery; while the majority of his followers or practically the whole group of the orthodox school, discarded them as products of his senility, having no organic connection with his essential and epoch-making discovery of the Law of Similars. While both sides erred in their excesses and one-sided views, there was and is still a third party which seems to take a balanced view of the whole subject and hold the following opinion: "If one reads this discussion through with an open mind, then he notes, in contrast to the tense sequential speech of *Organon*, many repetitions which do not serve to explain the theory farther. Although one does not have the impression of a loquacious senilis, there is the ring of incompletely formulated mental sequences. Only in a type of summary has Hahnemann finished these thoughts and then, capricious as he was, attributed itch as the cause of psora and therewith the majority of chronic diseases. He gave the most unimportant aspect of the entire psora theory an excessive accent and there was and still is the danger that the good is cast away with the bad, that is, in this instance that theoretically and practically important thoughts on the relations of chronic diseases remain unconsidered." (*Text-book of Homœopathic Materia Medica* by O. Leaser, Ph.D., M.D.).

It is to be noted that soon after the publication of the book on "Chronic diseases" serious objections to the conclusions arrived at by Hahnemann, were taken and venti-

lated through the press and platform by many of the rank and file of the followers of Hahnemann and not to talk of the practitioners of the old school. "It is particularly painful" writes Haehl, the celebrated biographer of Hahnemann, "that the man to whom Hahnemann had dedicated the work (the book on Chronic Diseases), Baron Ernst Georg Von Brunnow, was from the beginning and in ever increasing intensity antagonistic to the views represented in the book and especially to the high dilutions and the infrequent doses with their effect after weeks and months. In this divergence of opinion, which was brought to light by the "Chronic Diseases" lies without doubt the first, deep-seated reason for the split which occurred shortly afterwards. Brunnow writes in reference to the work:

"Hahnemann's complete isolation from doctors with different views and the hitherto almost unconditional loyalty and veneration of most of his adherents are probably the chief factors responsible for the way in which this man of genius pushed his theories to extremes.... This was most obvious in his work on "Chronic Diseases", where he declared psora to be the sole source of all chronic maladies with the single exceptions of those from Syphilis and Sycosis and where he proceeded to diminish medicinal doses to an extent hitherto unknown."

Taking Von Brunnow, as the representative of those who differed from Hahnemann as regards his conclusions about the nature of chronic diseases we note that their charges against Hahnemann resolved into the following items *viz.*, (1) notwithstanding the correctness of the facts as observed by Hahnemann, he could be accused of undue generalisation when he traced all the diseases (excepting those of Syphilitic and Sycotic origin) to one causative factor, which he termed as Psora; (2) confusion or want of clarity with regard to the precise connotation and denotation of the term Psora; (3) identification of scabies with itch-eruptions as mentioned by Hahnemann; (4) Hahnemann's uncertain opinion regarding the part played by



*Acarius Scabii* or *Sarcoptes hominii* (itch-mite) in the causation of all vesicular or pustular skin eruptions; (5) the dogmatic assertion, by Hahnemann, regarding the development of all chronic diseases due to suppression of skin eruptions by treatment with unhomeopathic medicines or otherwise; and lastly (6) Hahnemann's wholesale condemnation of all local and external treatment of all diseases in general or skin diseases in particular.

For our convenience we will take up the No. (2) item first. All the different conceptions or misunderstandings about Psora rest upon confused ideas regarding the precise connotation and denotation of the term "Psora". Every Student of Logic knows that most terms have at the same time two meanings, of which one is called their "Denotation," and the other their "Connotation." The denotation of a term consists of the thing or things to which it applies, while the connotation of a term consists of the attribute or collection of attributes which it implies. Thus a term denotes things and connotes attributes; e.g., the term 'Man' denotes all things to which the term is applicable i.e., to "all men", while it connotes the attributes, "animality" and "rationality" implied by it, and possessed in common by all men. Again, the term, "the Sun" has for its denotation one individual thing only, while its connotation consists of the attributes possessed by that individual thing, and implied by the term. It is also to be borne in mind that the denotation and the connotation of a term vary inversely.

Different logicians have recognised different divisions of terms of which we refer to two types of divisions which appear to be relevant for our purpose. Some, like Jevons divide terms into Univocal and Equivocal. According to them terms are said to be *univocal* when they can suggest to the mind no more than one single definite meaning. They are called *equivocal* or *ambiguous* when they have two or more meanings. For example, according to this scheme of division, Man, Cat, Steam-engine etc. are uni-

vocal, because they can be used only in one sense ; while Sound, Pound, Pulse etc., are equivocal or ambiguous, because they possess more than one meaning.

There is another division of terms into—Concrete and Abstract. A concrete term is the name of a thing while an abstract term is the name of an attribute (or collection of attributes) considered by itself, e.g., the terms, Man, Book, College, Triangle are concrete, because they denote things ; while the terms Humanity, Triangularity, Whiteness, Virtue, Courage etc. are abstract, because they signify attributes. By a "thing" we mean whatever is regarded as possessing attributes. A thing always possesses attributes and attributes always exist in things. They cannot exist apart from each other. But it is possible to think of an attribute apart from the thing which possesses it, and an abstract term is the name of such an attribute. Another thing to be kept in mind is that Concrete and Abstract Terms often go in pairs thus : Man—Humanity, Animal—Animality, Miser—Miserliness etc. It should not be thought, however, that an abstract term exists for each concrete or vice versa.

Before we enter into the thick of the fight over the sense of the word 'Psora', in which Hahnemann used it—let us follow the canons of logic to find out whether this word is a term, equivocal or univocal and Concrete or Abstract—or in which sense Hahnemann used it. This will render lot of controversies useless and besides the point and will, consequently, pave the way for the right understanding of the word, Psora. On consulting "Funk and Wagnall's New Standard Dictionary of the English Language" we find that 'Psora' means—(1) The itch or some similar skin disease ; as well as, (2) the itch-mite (Sarcoptes Scabiei). The derivation is Latin and Greek, but it is rather Hebraic in origin, coming through the Greek and Latin, the original word being Tsorat—which means : A groove, a fault ; a pollution ; a stigma ; often applied to leprous manifestations and to the great plagues. (Vide pp. 200-201.

'Principles and Art of Cure by Homœopathy by H. A. Roberts, M.D.). This reference leads us to the conclusion that the word Psora may be taken both as an Univocal or Equivocal ; as well as both a concrete and an Abstract term. Hence all this confusion about the precise connotation and denotation of the word Psora. Haehl, also remarks that Psora, as a common expression, widely known in Hahnemann's time, was the general term for a whole series of skin troubles of the most varied kinds, well-known from the very earliest times. It was in this wider sense that contemporaries (*e.g.* Antenreith, Schönstein, etc.) used the word generally at the end of the eighteenth and in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, although at the same time they applied it in the narrower sense to itch proper. Hahnemann did not therefore coin this expression, but rather by his use of it showed his association with his contemporaries. Like them he used the word in a wider sense, in spite of the fact that like them, he knew the cause of itch—the itch-mite (*Acarius Scabiei* or *Sarcoptes hominis*), its destruction by external remedies (embrocation, baths, 'flowers of Sulphur' lotions etc.) and the digging out of the mite from its burrows under the skin. But he associated another term *viz.*, 'miasm' with psora and talked and wrote about "psoric miasm". Now, "miasm" is another term of dubious significance with regard to its connotation and denotation. We have seen, in our previous articles, how Hahnemann came to invest the term with a special conception so that his sense of the term 'miasm' is almost similar to what we mean by "parasites or bacteria," which are, according to the modern Bacteriology, associated etiologically with various diseased conditions. Now, bacteria or parasites are univocal and concrete terms ; so it stands to reason that when Hahnemann wrote about psoric miasm (or as a matter of fact, about all miasms, chronic or acute) he meant something definite and concrete—and not something abstract or metaphysical. The word 'Miasm' stands for a causative agent with regard to a diseased-con-

dition; it is never the disease itself. As for example, Tubercle bacilli can never be synonymous with the diseased condition which goes by the name of tuberculosis; or spirochaeta pallida is not identical with syphilis. When we talk about Psoric Miasm, Psoric miasm can never be equated with the diseased condition produced by it. But this is the point where Hahnemann's followers have made some confusion and overlooking of this primary confusion, like the primary psoric malady, is the mother of all later confusions, misunderstanding and upholding of diametrically opposite views regarding what Hahnemann meant by the word Psora or what one ought to mean by this much-debated term.

We will quote from Hahnemann's own writings in his book on 'Chronic Diseases' to justify our contention that Hahnemann developed a fixed conception regarding Psora but his followers betray some mental confusion, on their part, as to whether Psora implies the causative factor (or agent) or the diseased condition produced by some agent of miasmatic nature:

(1) Referring to all chronic diseases of mankind, he writes in page 9 (Chronic Disease)—"They (*i.e.* diseases) must therefore all have for their origin and foundation constant chronic miasms, whereby their parasitical existence in the human organism is enabled to continually rise and grow.

(2) The chronic disease which lies at the foundation of the eruption of itch, *i.e.*, the Psora. (pp. 9. *ibid*).

(3) But that the original malady sought for must be also of a miasmatic, Chronic nature etc. etc. (pp. 6. *ibid*).

(4) .....against this malady which may be called by the general name of Psora; *i.e.*, against the internal itch disease with or without its attendant eruption on the skin. (pp. 7. *ibid*).

(5) .....the Psora, this fundamental disease of so many chronic maladies etc. (pp. 8. *ibid*).

(6) Psora is that most ancient, most universal, most destructive and yet most misapprehended chronic miasmatic disease etc. etc. (pp. 9. *ibid*).

(7) Psora is the oldest miasmatic chronic disease known to us.....*Psora or the itch disease* is besides this the oldest and most hydra-headed of all the Chronic miasmatic diseases. (pp. 9. *ibid*).

(8) It was thus that Psora became the most universal mother of chronic diseases. (pp. 13. *ibid*).

(9) .....Thus Psora is among all diseases the one which is most misapprehended, and, therefore, has been medically treated in the worst and most injurious manner. (pp. 14. *ibid*).

The above extracts prove, beyond doubt that Hahnemann meant by the word "Psora"—the primary, primitive or original malady or diseased condition. He never confused the disease-process with its causative agent and herein lies his second momentous discovery *i.e.*, chronic diseases owe their origin to some living beings, miasms as he called them and parasites or bacteria, as they are termed in modern Bacteriology. With the development of microscopy and the science of Bacteriology what is clear day-light, now, was shrouded with darkness during Hahnemann's time. Nobody, now-a-days, confuses Tetanus, the particular diseased-condition, with the Tetanus bacilli, the causative agents thereof. But it was possible to confuse and equate Psora with Psoric miasm during Hahnemann's time—when all the clarity of vision and lucidity of expression on the part of the Master, failed to clear up the mist of ignorance, confusion, doubt, dogmatism and intolerance from the minds of his less-gifted contemporaries and followers. It is a tragedy as has always been the case in human history, that the followers and disciples very often fail to keep pace with the onward march of their Master in his adventurous and unchartered path in pursuit of truth. Often they fall by the wayside, cling to some conceptions, once upheld by the Master but later transcended by him with fuller and more

comprehensive realisation of truth and due to their failure to reconcile the lesser truth with the greater truth they fall foul of the Master and of one another—thus giving rise to various sects and sub-sects within one fold. Such is what happened in the Homœopathic school of thought. When the Master discovered the Law of Similars and demonstrated superior therapeutic efficacy by following this Law, a section of progressive minds, already discontented with the then state of affairs in the field of medicine, gathered round him and proclaimed their allegiance to him. As the Master developed his ideas regarding the science and art of Homœopathy to higher and higher degrees of subtlety and depth; they proved too much for his own followers—and not to speak of the opposing rival schools of medical thought. If, for instance, we take into account the history of evolutionary growth in the Master's ideas regarding the conception of Life-force, we find that all through the first four editions of Organon there is no mention of "vital force" but only the words like "organism", "body", "state of health" are used. But in the fifth edition, throughout the work "vital force" is often substituted for those terms. And in the sixth (posthumous) edition of organon we find in section 29 the occurrence of the words, such as vital energy of the principle of life. What do they show? Hahnemann starting from the ideas about Life, current in his time, arrived at a clearer conception of Life as an immaterial (which he expressed as spiritual) supra sensible entity having a force or energy of its own (as distinct from mechanical and chemico-physical energies) which he labelled as the "Dynamis". By this time he came to realise that Life like matter and mind, is a substance, entity, though belonging to a particular plane or order of existence (as distinct from the mental and material planes of existence). But the study of the history of Homœopathy shows that most of his followers could not grasp this higher realisation of his regarding Life, Mind and Matter. It is no wonder that Hughes a possessor of

such a keen analytic mind but unfortunately gifted with far less intuitive nature, refused or rather failed to follow Hahnemann in this rarefied atmosphere and thought Hahnemann's later ideas about Life-principle, dynamisation of drugs and theories of Psora, Syphilis and Sycosis as chronic miasmatic diseases—as vain hypotheses, and idle speculations indicative of senility or 'loquacitas senilis'. He could not grasp what Hahnemann arrived at without microscope and other modern scientific paraphernalia. His (or of the group following him) failure to grasp the full implications of the term "miasm" led to a total misconception of Hahnemann's theory of Chronic Diseases. The failure to take the term 'miasm' in univocal and concrete sense (Cf. bacteria) and also to take the term 'psora' in the univocal and abstract sense—is the mother of all confusions and misunderstandings. If we can grasp the Hahnemannian conception of disease as the deranged condition of the vital principle brought on by some causative agent whether living or non-living—we should have no difficulty in grasping the true significance of Psora which is only a name for a primitive diseased condition.

If we can grasp the latest conception of Hahnemann about the Life-principle, there should be no difficulty to follow up his theories of chronic diseases and dynamisation of drugs. Vital-force is the force of the mysterious substantive-entity called the Life-principle. There are causes belonging to two categories—material and efficient—implied in the production of disease, which is nothing but an altered state of the Life-principle. According to Hahnemann, as a practical physician we are more concerned with the material cause of diseases, which is the altered Life-principle. The knowledge of the efficient cause of disease may not be directly required or indispensable for the treatment of the diseased condition—nevertheless this knowledge is also useful to the physician from other aspects or points of view. Hahnemann's latest discovery in the field of medicine consisted in (1) the discovery of miasms

(i.e. living beings) as the efficient cause of some of the acute diseases and all of the chronic diseases (excepting those due to drugs, trauma or other occupational factors); and (2) in the determination of successive stages in the evolution of diseases, both acute and chronic. Hahnemann always held the opinion that once the diseased-condition is brought about by some exogenous or endogenous factors acting as efficient causes, actual treatment of the case needs tackling of the material cause though the knowledge of the obstacles to recovery in each case and of how to remove them is also essential and indispensable for the true physician who "understands how to treat judiciously and rationally, and who aspires to be a true practitioner of the healing art". True to his dictum, after discovering the nature of efficient cause of chronic diseases he left them there and delved deep into the subject of material cause of chronic disorders i.e. the altered force of the Life-principle in all its complexity and totality. The description of the efficient causes i.e. miasms which he gave, perfectly tallies with the modern description of bacteria in general. Beyond hinting about the 'contagium vivum' he did not proceed further as the time was not ripe for further investigations and researches along that line. He, who runs, may read in between the lines of the book on "Chronic Disease" and cannot get away from the conclusion that Hahnemann's miasms anticipated bacteria or parasites (i.e. living organisms, visible or invisible to the naked eye) of modern bacteriology. If we say—Psora is a chronic miasmatic diseased-condition—everything is all right. But if we think—Psora is a chronic miasm—confusion starts, material cause is made synonymous with the efficient cause and everything gets jumbled up and great injustice is done to the phenomenal genius and high-grade intuition of our Master, Samuel Hahnemann.

In conclusion, we may assert that a miasm is not the disease e.g. Tubercle bacillus is not the diseased condition which goes by the name of Tuberculosis ; Spirochaeta Pallida



is not synonymous with Syphilis, the diseased condition associated with it. But it is a wonder of wonders that a great personality and one of the ablest exponent of Hahnemannian philosophy and Homœopathy, like Dr. Kent has committed this grave and unpardonable error of confusing miasm with disease or rather identifying miasm with disease. Chapters and verses can be quoted at random from any part of his immortal work "Lectures on Homœopathic Philosophy to show how this confusion runs rampant from cover to cover of this book. To quote but a few: on page 144 of the said book he writes—"There are three of these chronic miasms that belong to the human family—psora, syphilis and sycosis etc." Here he describes Psora as a miasm. We find him writing on one page later—Psora is the underlying cause, and is the primitive or primary disorder of the human race. This state expresses itself in the forms of the varying chronic diseases or chronic manifestations." Here he identifies Psora with disease. On page 149, line 21 and 22, he writes "...there was an underlying chronic disease, a chronic miasm, which had a tendency to progress and to end only with the life of the patient." Also on page 154, lines 11-12, he writes "The three chronic miasms psora, syphilis and sycosis are all contagious." But we have quoted previously, extracts from Hahnemann's own writings in his book on "Chronic diseases"—to show that whenever and wherever he had referred to Psora he described it as a *chronic miasmatic disease* and nowhere he did describe it as a *chronic miasm*. Aphorisms from the 5th and the 6th Edition of Organon can be quoted to support the view. And it must be apparent to any casual reader of this article what a gulf of difference with its far-reaching implications and consequences is there between these two types of expressions. But the greatest misunderstanding about the precise nature of and the rôle played by the miasms or bacteria has been brought about by statements of Dr. Kent in his same book, e.g. on page 23 he writes: "He who considers disease results to be the

disease itself and expects to do away with these as disease, is insane. . . . *The bacteria are results of disease.* They are the outcome of disease, are present wherever the disease is, and by the microscope it has been discovered that every pathological result has its corresponding bacteria. The old school considers these the cause, but we will be able to show that disease cause is much more subtle than anything that can be shown by a microscope." I am constrained to remark that nothing more confusing and misleading from the truth can be conceived than what is written in those few lines. It is highly surprising that Dr. Kent could publish this in the twentieth century what was long exploded by Spallanzani as early as the middle of the eighteenth century. For Spallanzani established once for all by verifiable experiments that life only can beget life *i.e.* the living beings are reproduced through living beings and not through inanimate and dead matter. Perhaps, influenced by the Swedenborgian philosophy the clear vision of Dr. Kent was blurred and he held a biased opinion regarding the rôle of bacteria in the production of diseases.

Now, one pertinent question may be asked, here, as to why Hahnemann, instead of being hailed as the father of bacteriology, was further discredited by all and sundry after the discoveries and researches of Pasteur and Koch in the field of bacteriology? A bit of medical history would supply the answer. Eighteenth century medicine was dominated by fancies and speculations and loathsome and torturesome therapeutic practices. Theories about the etiology of diseases were about as many as there were men professing medicine. The whole medical world was tired of vain hypotheses and was casting its weary look in search of some definite, tangible, demonstrable and verifiable proofs for its assertions. The discovery of specific microorganisms for specific diseases seemed to take them to the promised land of scientific medicine for which they aspired so long. Hahnemann appeared on the scene towards the last decade of the 18th century and sought to bring about

a revolution in the medical world with his new ideas about Life-force, diseases and drug-therapy. His discovery of acute and chronic miasms proved a hard nut for his contemporaries to crack, though conception of some diseases, at least, due to miasmatic (bacterial) infection was just dawning on them. But his ideas about miasms (in a wider sense), infection, a symptomatic latency of infection, idiosyncrasies and hypersensitiveness on the part of patients—all seemed a failure to make an impression on his contemporaries as he could not substantiate his claims by experimental verifications which alone seemed to catch their imagination so fast. His semi-scientific and semi-philosophical conception of miasms was laughed at by his contemporaries. So when they got something tangible through the efforts of microbe-hunters, not only did they throw overboard his theory about disease-productions but along with that tried to reject his most rational and humane form of drug-therapy. So when Pasteur and Koch (coming about half-a-century later) proved to the hilt the relation (not necessarily causal in the strictly logical sense of the term) of specific micro-organisms with specific diseases the whole medical world thought they had found the missing link so long sought after. But in their zeal for new discoveries they forgot that it was the common fate of all new scientific facts to be exploited prematurely in practice. Not content to wait for fuller knowledge, men hastily drew conclusions from imperfect data and not unoften they take long years to realise their mistake and retrace their path. In the eager quest for the specific bacterial causes of the various diseases the principles of logic have not always been followed and applied and particularly that principle known as the Law of Causation which teaches that every effect has a number of causes, of which the specific cause is only the proximate or most nearly related in the preceding series. It also teaches that the specific cause may be modified in its action on the subject by collateral causes or conditions affecting both the subjects by collateral causes of conditions

affecting both the subject and the antecedent causes, so that no specific cause can be said to act unconditionally. It follows that micro-organisms, as causes of individual disease, have a very different kind of importance from that which is commonly assigned to them. They are reduced in rank to an equality with constitution, heredity, predisposition and environment. Since the micro-organism is only one of the many causes of disease, the curative remedy for the concrete, resulting disease in the individual must correspond to the combined effects of the various causes. As the individual case of every disease vary in their causes and conditions and consequently in their symptoms or effects, there can be no general specific remedy for a disease. Thus bacteriology can never serve as a basis for reliable and efficient therapeutics for an individual. The old school is slowly but surely realising the futility of the slogan "kill the bacteria and cure the disease". That the pendulum is swinging back to its original position is corroborated by the following writings of Sir H. Rolleston in his masterly introduction to "the British Encyclopædia of Medical Practice" (May 1936) :

"In considering the cause of disease attention should be, but is not always sufficiently, paid to both the (a) 'soil' or the constitution of the patient and (b) the seed, such as germs or worms. Until the second half of the last century the conceptions of diathesis (a persisting morbid tendency) and of constitution (the make-up of the body) with its hereditary and acquired liabilities to reaction, were the commonplaces of every day in practice. But when bacteriological investigation proved that many diseases were directly caused by, and could not develop in the absence of specific germs, the somewhat intangible factors of diathesis and constitution, thus contracted with visible micro-organisms, became overshadowed and *until recently neglected.*"

Thus it is our considered opinion that Hahnemann used the terms "Psora" and "Miasm" with their respective

definite connotation and denotation. His followers—immediate and remote—misunderstood him and though, somehow, that the acceptance of the existence of bacteria and of their causal relation with the diseased conditions would jeopardise the validity of the Law of Similars and the very basis of Homœopathy—its orientation and outlook. Dr. J. H. Allen (author of Chronic Miasms) and Dr. J. T. Kent—however brilliant their exposition of the fundamental tenets of Homœopathy—have begged the very question they sought out to answer. As Homœopathy, especially in India, is mostly in the hands of lay homœopaths who have a natural tendency to avoid scientific technicalities Dr. Kent's writings have a special appeal to their minds and keep their eyes and minds away from the original writings of our Master. Our readers are hereby earnestly requested to consult the works of Stuart Close, G. Boerick, McGavack, Lin Byodd, O. Leeser, Wheeler etc. and to judge for themselves the validity of our presentation of this highly controversial subject.

We have paved the way to walk through the meandering tracks of the Psora theory, which we hope to do in our future dissertations.

B. K. S.

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