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PSORA—THE REAL CRUX IN HOMOEOPATHY

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The real crux in Homœopathy is Hahnemann's Psora theory. Considerable agitation on this matter has taken place since Hahnemann's days. There are physicians in the new school, who despite their good percentage of right scoring in medicine, are inclined either to disbelieve or misunderstand the Psora theory as propounded by Hahnemann. Some people discard it as the senile day dream of an octogenarian, some others misunderstand in their own different ways. But the delectable ridicule comes from those that try to reorient Hahnemann's Psora theory, as if it is in mould to be changed and shaped according to one's own sweet will. We may at best discover the hidden links in Hahnemann's reasoning and re-explain the unchangeable, eternally-fixed truth, with a new light added to it. You may call it dogmatism ; call it or not, this is diamond truth that knows no change. You would rather separate Hahnemann's head from his trunk than distort his maxims or discard them completely.

A similar occasion arises in the clever discourse of Dr. Koppikar, published in the August '48 Number of *The Homœopathic Recorder*.* The board of editors have given first priority to this essay and rightly, too, in my opinion, as the subject is one of the basic ones in Homœopathy ; and Dr. Koppikar has disavowed Hahnemann in an ingeni-

* S. P. Koppikar, M.D., B.H.M.S. : Psora, *The Homœopathic Recorder*, LXIV : 2 (Aug., 1948), p. 27.

ous way, which though it looks brilliant on the first sight, re-opens the old matter only.

Hahnemann says, "I spent twelve years in investigating the source of this incredibly large number of chronic affections, in ascertaining and collecting certain proofs of this great truth, which had remained unknown to all former or contemporary observers and in discovering at the same time the principal anti-psoric remedies" (*Organon*, 6th ed., p. 167, footnotes), which speaks of the tremendous task laboriously accomplished in the course of twelve years in discovering the real cause of so many chronic diseases. Can all these years of uphill efforts prove futile at last? Dr. Koppikar also takes note of this phenomenon in his second paragraph.

It is not unfortunate that Hahnemann laid the sole emphasis on Itch in defining the nature and origin of Psora. Like a historian he traced the origin of Psora down to the age of Moses, about 3550 years ago, and quotes Calmet, saying "Leprosy is similar to an inveterate Itch with violent itching", and himself remarks, "The ancients also mention the peculiar characteristic voluptuous itching which attended itch then as now, while after the scratching a painful burning follows; among others Plato, who calls the itch Glykypikron, while Cicero marks the *Dulcedo* of scabies" (*Chronic Diseases*, p. 36, footnote, C. Ringer & Co. ed.). He traces the different transforming stages of the Itch-miasm through different centuries, which sometimes appeared as itch or scabies, sometimes as leprosy proper, some other times as erysipelas. The transformation made no difference, as the essential nature of the Itch-miasm was maintained in all the outbreaks, and, like broad daylight, the Itch showed itself equivalent to Psora. Apart from his scholarly investigation, Hahnemann approached the subject as a scientist-bacteriologist, too. Dr. Koppikar rightly quotes Hahnemann, "These exceedingly small animals are a kind of mite." In the mode of propagation of the Asiatic cholera, published in his *Lesser Writings*,

Hahnemann describes comma bacilli as "excessively minute, invisible, living creatures, so inimical to human life". In the *Chronic Diseases*, p. 99, footnote, he observes "Psora... which causes its germs to develop," and the same work, p. 75, footnote, records, "chronic-miasms are disease parasites and infectious", and the parasitic nature of acute eruptive diseases also. Though any suitable microscope was not available in the days of Hahnemann, yet he has looked upon miasms as bacterial contents. And whatever the bacterial nature of different cutaneous eruptions may be, the peculiar nature of the said affections from "a few vesicles" on the skin to the most horrible leprosy is essentially the same. Homœopaths of all climes and ages have noticed the peculiar transforming character of cutaneous eruptions, the one leading to the other, and we are thoroughly convinced when Hahnemann uses "Itch" as a synonym for "Psora."

Hahnemann's chronic miasms have nothing to do with suppressions for their chronicity. All the cutaneous eruptions, save and except the acute eruptive diseases like small-pox, measles etc., are chronic from the very commencement of their infective life, and the vital principle can not extricate itself from their evil influences, be it in latent or active form, in a patient's life-time without the aid of anti-psoric remedies furnished by the most humane art of Homœopathy. Similarly, Syçosis and Syphilis are chronic miasms from the beginning of their infection and never depend upon suppressions for their chronicity, as they last a patient's whole life time in their original seat if unattended to. Only suppression drives them inwards to fall upon newer and newer organs and create newer and newer troubles in the human organism to the detriment of the patient's health. Further, when suppressed they affect newer and newer organs only because they are chronic in nature from the beginning. A disease is chronic which increases ever and ever in the human organism, the vital principle not being able to extricate itself from

it without the aid of human art (*Org.*, 6th ed., secs. 78, 79). So Dr. Koppikar's remark, "Gonorrhoea and Syphilis become chronic only if their early manifestations are... suppressed (para 17), is going against the findings of more than a century of homœopathic investigations and is like placing the carriage before the horse. Hahnemann laid as much emphasis on the chronic nature of the three miasms as on their suppressions. We may subdue an emphasis to suit our own purpose; but Hahnemann must be studied in his own real context.

Hahnemann was fully aware of all forms of suppressions and artificial diseases. Of drug disease created by the anti-pathic treatment he speaks at length in the *Organon*. In the *Chronic Diseases*, p. 30, footnote, he says,

Not unfrequently phthisis passes over into insanity, dried up ulcer into dropsy or apoplexy; intermittent fever into asthma; affections of the abdomen into pains in the joints or paralysis; pains in the limbs into hæmorrhages etc.; and it was not difficult to discover that the latter diseases must also have their foundations in the original malady and can only be a part of a far greater whole.

Further, to Hahnemann absence of seminal discharges in youths, accompanying subdued sexual pleasure, was as dangerous as excessive pollutions. In the *Chronic Diseases*, p. 121, footnote 2, we find, "With healthy chaste young men, pollutions naturally only take place every twelve or fourteen days, without any attending troubles, and they are followed by cheerfulness and a feeling of strength and serenity." About diseases following mental onslaughts like "anxiety, worry, vexation, wrongs and the frequent occurrences of great fear and fright" which naturally lead to suspension of moral and emotional balance in the human mind, and in many instances to oppressed and suppressed feelings, about such conditions Hahnemann has dealt at length in secs. 210-230 of his monumental work, *Organon of Medicine*. Many similar instances may be cited. That he did not lay emphasis on the "other suppressions", as alleged by Dr. Koppikar, is not real. But he looked at the subject from a different angle of vision from

Dr. Koppikar's, as is evident from the above. He was fortunate enough to strike at the root of the evil, Psora, the hydra-headed monster, the mother of the limitless woes of mankind, which when awake is the real cause of newer and newer affections of the human organism (save, of course, the typical nonvenereal ones). Therefore the other (non-venereal) suppressions were not of any special import to Hahnemann. They were only the offsprings of Psora, since such a suppression to be transformed into newer and newer maladies must have Psora in the back-ground. When the most prolific mother has been caught hold of, what use of bothering about the miniature babies? Hahnemann did not deem it logical to place the "other suppressions", as Dr. Koppikar puts it, on an equal footing with the hydra-headed monster.

To a careful mind that goes through his two masterly theoretical works on medicine, *Organon of Medicine* and *The Chronic Diseases*, the following clinical factors shine in bold outlines:

A. NATURAL DISEASES:

- (a) *Acute*—if left alone developing and passing off after a short while or taking away the patient, but leaving no after-effect.
- (b) *Chronic*—(1) Psora, (2) Syphilis, (3) Sycosis, the three principal chronic diseases, and the cause of all others, to which innumerable names are given, and which are never self-curable by the vital principle alone.

B. *Drug diseases* by antipathic treatment causing manifold harms to mankind, but never transforming into newer and newer diseases as in the case of Psora.

C. *Mental and emotional diseases* from non-physical causes.

These three major divisions are divided and subdivided again in their various aspects, with Hahnemann's unparalleled elucidations upon them. Their classifying process is evidently based upon the scientific recognition

of the distinct geniuses of the existing groups of diseases. Hahnemann never made them one but kept them quite apart from each other, as they themselves are because of their characteristic affections and manifestations. But Dr. Koppikar bungles and mismanages the whole affair. He puts all the divisions under one head, mixes them up and treats all suppressions on an equal footing. Drug diseases like mercurial and lead poisoning, suppressions of feelings and passions, and even venereal suppressions are placed on the pedestal of Psora, giving them the one name, Psora. He seems to draw much inspiration from Freud, who, however much revered in world opinion, has nothing to do with Homœopathy. If Freud's psycho-analysis becomes the sole clue to diseases, the whole of medical science would be out-of-date, which of course has not been the case up to this moment.

Dr. Koppikar defines Psora as "an obstruction in the normal curative defense mechanism of the body and the clogging of the eliminative and curative processes leading to a condition where the disease spreads from less important to more important organs, from without inwards, and from the circumference to the centre," and affirms "it has nothing to do with itch as such unless it is suppressed, producing that condition in the body where more vital organs are affected." In another place Dr. Koppikar proposes to treat itch, barber's itch, fungus as local diseases, and advises us to apply external applications, which must not cause any harm to the interior. We would be happy if there would be any congruity between his assertions. Hahnemann never dreamt that any of his followers, to whatever age he might belong, would propose to treat itch locally. The itch-miasm comprises two-thirds of Hahnemann's *Chronic Diseases*, as Psora has more numerous and more terrific effects than Sycosis and Syphilis. Nay, these last two miasms can affect newer and newer organs only in the psoric background. Psora, "the most ancient, most universal, most destructive and yet most misapprehended

chronic miasmatic disease... the mother of all the thousands of various (acute and) chronic (non-venereal) diseases, etc.", may be manifest either in purulent ulcerative processes, or in a "few vesicles," only, on fingers, or it may go latent within because of antipathic suppressions or of its own accord, or the hydra-headed monster may develop into millionfold woes of mankind. It is as dangerous to suppress an itch as a leprosy. This fundamental truth about Hahnemann's chronic disease has been challenged by Dr. Koppikar. If Hahnemann lived in these days, he would surely dub external treatment of the internal itch-miasm, be it acarus itch or barber's or be it fungus, as a "spurious" method. Dr. Koppikar has become original indeed in this sphere, but this singular originality makes poles of differences between an established truth about Homœopathy and his recent personal findings mentioned above. We can borrow morphine and the hypodermic syringe from our brothers of the opposite school as much as we can borrow from them cibazol or penicillin ointment. In the vein of an English poet of the nineteenth century I would rather say to Hahnemann, "Bright star, would I were stead-fast as thou art." Any way, let the treatment go by its name. Let Dr. Koppikar establish a parallel Pathy to Homœopathy, but let him not inflict ravages on the person of the divine mother, Homœopathy.

Dr. Koppikar has rightly differentiated the realistic method of Hahnemann from the metaphysical approach of Kent. But Dr. Kent only tried to give as much new meaning to Hahnemann as Dr. Koppikar himself. To our mind Dr. Kent is complete and simple enough in his own sphere; and even his mystic "Simple Substance" appears before our eyes as crystal. Dr. Koppikar would have been more convincing if he himself would be less metaphysical than is apparent from his generalisation, "Gonorrhœa and Syphilis are also essentially psoric", despite the provisional "because"!

The itch is a mite and we can not but acknowledge it.

Hahnemann looked at the itch-miasm like all other miasms from the bacterial point of view. The "invisible, spirit-like (conceptual) infection" of the miasm depends as much upon the microscopic, invisible entities as upon their non-chemical, non-physical, but, biological-dynamic action against the vital principle and an immediate instinctive reaction from it. The itch infection, to Hahnemann, is never local, but internal, constitutional (as in the case of all other miasms, acute or chronic) and so can never be treated locally in the hand of a true homœopath. The only exception where Hahnemann directed us to oppose local methods to an internal malady is in the case of warts. But I am confident, if Hahnemann lived in our day, he would have taken back the said lines from his text. For in thousands of clinical cases it is being daily verified by homœopaths all over the world that, while *Thuja*, *Causticum*, *Medorrhinum*, etc., are failing in lower attenuations, the higher and the highest (10M, 50M, CM, DM, etc.) in repeated doses are working miracles in cases of warts, tumours, and such other growths. If Hahnemann could have sharpened his weapons more and more by higher and the highest attenuations, he could have achieved the desired effect by internal medication alone. The vital principle, weakened by previous illness or mental aberrations, or unhygienic living (and consequently in the lower tides of power) is more susceptible to any miasm, acute or chronic, be it itch or anything else. From this it does not necessarily follow that the acarus itch is a local disease, as claimed by Dr. Koppikar. Hahnemann laid the real emphasis on the weakened state of the vital principle prior to its dynamic infection by the said miasm. He speaks of the prepared soil only before the bacterial dynamic seed is thrown about. It is unfortunate that a thinker of Dr. Koppikar's calibre should misunderstand him.

Homœopathy is the science of careful individualisation, not of sweeping generalisations. What is true of one patient is the opposite in another. One patient is relieved in

diarrhoea, another in constipation, one in fasting, another in gluttony. It is very, very unsafe and against all homœopathic principles to say that the elimination of all toxins through the various discharges of the body is a prerequisite condition for successful treatment. Think of a case of tuberculosis. The instinctive, unimaginative vital principle is struggling hard to excrete through all the organs all the toxins in circulation. There is the night sweat, the diarrhoea, the excessive mucopurulent discharges from the site of affection which all come in such a violent manner that, instead of doing any good to the patient they imperil his life. Nature's instinctive elimination of toxins designed to relieve the patient here is doing more harm than good. In cholera, also, the toxins are eliminated through alvine discharges. Do you want to imitate this method of blind Nature in all cases of disease or in all cases of individual suffering and hasten your wretched patient to his grave? In typhoid, too, this elimination process is ever frightful. Dr. Allen in his *Fevers*, p. 554, notes, "Danger lurks in diarrhoea, especially in purgation". He quotes Jahr (same page) as saying, "I have not yet lost a single patient, in whom, up to the time of the crisis, the bowels remained costive, inactive". Dr. Hering, the father of Homœopathy, also remarks, "I said the same more than twenty years ago, and can repeat it now: even in the third week the non-appearance of a stool is significant. The same applies in child-bed".

Hahnemann's magnanimous genius has proved the Psora theory from facts and figures, from books and experiences. If any one wants to alter or discard it, he must in the same manner prove his proposition from facts and figures. How wonderfully exploring and factual are Hahnemann's foot notes? In one of these he throws the challenge to the non-believers:

... so long as the doubters of this Psora doctrine can not show me any other source which is at least as probable for a (non-venereal) ailment, which despite of favourable external conditions, correct diet, good morality and vigorous bodily constitution never-the-less increases every

year, . . . ; so long as I have on my side an over-powering analogous probability, i.e., 100 to 1, that also the individual cases of chronic disease, which show a like progression, probably also are, yea, must be, of a Psoric nature, although the patient can not or will not remember a preceding infection !

Therefore the residuary work that is yet to be done in this respect, after all that Hahnemann has done, is to determine precisely the differences in the nature of the manifestations of the three distinct miasms, Psora, Syphilis and Sycosis, and to regroup symptoms accordingly, under their proper head. For instance, Hahnemann placed baldness and polypus under the heading of Psora. But to our mind this seems improper as baldness is more a manifestation of Syphilis, and polypus of Sycosis, than of Psora proper. Dr. J. H. Allen's work on chronic miasms has been a step further in this direction ; yet there is more to be done, or else one overcautious disciple of Hahnemann may slyly glance at the three-fourths-hairless, shining head of his Master, and discern how much of Psora or Syphilis is there ! Really ; judging from his own criterion, "Psora-free" Hahnemann's smooth head presents a problem before us, his followers in this aesthet world.

Other peculiar problems may crop up in like manner before the individual followers of Hahnemann, Hahnemann says, and Dr. Koppikar also quotes him properly, "The miasma of the other common Gonorrhoea seems not to penetrate the whole organism, but only to *locally* stimulate the urinary organs". This may lead to the misconception that Hahnemann kept the "common Gonorrhoea" apart from the fig-wart Gonorrhoea, for being treated locally with medicinal douches and other external appliances. But this is obviated from the assertion of Hahnemann, "And very little reflection will suffice to convince us that no external malady (not occasioned by some important injury without) can arise, persist, or even grow worse without some internal cause, without the co-operation of the whole organism, which must consequently be in a diseased state. . . . *No eruption on the lips, no whitlow*

can occur without previous and simultaneous internal ill health" (*Organon*, 6th ed., sec., 189). And Hahnemann never advises us to treat the said acute "common Gonorrhoea" locally, but suggests "parsley juice, *Cannabis* or *Cantharides*" in the "higher and highest dynamization." In differentiating the "common Gonorrhoea" from the more pervading, more deep-acting, and more frightful figwart gonorrhoea, which from the beginning is chronic and in-eradicable by the vital principle alone, producing newer and newer affections when in combination with Psora, Hahnemann probably had before him the acute cystitis or urethritis of modern Pathology. He rightly observed that this "common Gonorrhoea" is rather semi-chronic than chronic, and has not the other constitutional effects of sycotic gonorrhoea. But when suppressed this "common Gonorrhoea," like all other miasms acute or chronic, goes inwards and combines with Psora which—and which alone—produces newer and newer ailments, according to the nature and degree of the provocation present, to the effect that a secondary gonorrhoea remains. What else than anti-psoric remedies can cure this dyscrasia named secondary gonorrhoea?

But Dr. Koppikar tries to establish Psora as a synonym for suppressions. All suppressions—suppressions of Psora, Syphilis and Sycosis, of acute diseases, eruptive or not, of drug diseases like mercurial or lead poisoning are treated by him as Psora. But, as stated above, Psora has no reference to suppressions; it is the original Itch-miasm, suppressed or not; it is the chronic malady growing within the human organism and culminating in its fruition upon the skin; it is that which remained as such in the beginning and remains so in the end. If not annihilated by homœopathic treatment, or if treated allopathically, it recedes after some time and goes inwards, latent and slumbering or awake and pernicious, as the case may be; and when awake, internally invades newer and newer organs, produces newer and newer maladies, alone or in combina-

tion with other suppressions, acute or chronic maladies (which again provoke it to arise from the slumbering state). So, according to Hahnemann, Psora has as much a primordial existence as human beings or wild animals or the green vegetation. It is a seed, a disease miasma rather, as distinct from its mishandling in the human hand; it is the seed, out of which a mighty tree grows. But Dr. Koppikar not only treats the manifestations of suppressed Psora as Psora proper, not only treats the tree as the seed, but considers the other suppressed conditions also as one with Psora. It is not only like treating a mango-tree as a mango-seed, but also like treating other trees also as a mango-seed. So Dr. Koppikar's arguments suffer from a two-fold fallacy.

It is a plausible theory that all miasms, natural or artificial, from the very inception of their dynamically infective life cause a plague spot on the organism whence emanate all the power and focus of disease against the vital principle. A miasm remains there as if a seed, and breaks forth under favourable circumstances against the vital principle which, in its reaction of defense, causes the symptoms to come to light. The more does the seed break forth into newer and newer off-shoots and branches and foliage, and the stronger the resistance offered by the vital principle, the more manifest do the symptoms become. But all seeds are not alike, as all trees are not one. They differ exclusively from each other in character, nature, and manifestation. Similarly, when suppressed they take back their manifestations and recede inward; but no two are alike in suppressions as also in manifestations. Every disease has its own peculiar plague-spot as its own peculiar manifestation. Therefore it is not enough to say that the "clogging of the defense mechanism and the curative process" of the vital principle in every disease is to be regarded as Psora. Every disease, natural or artificial, in its suppression or clogging of the vital principle differs from

cine. One may require *Sulphur*, another *Syphilinum*, a third *Mercurius*, and so forth. We can not generalise—much less in the way of Dr. Koppikar—on the data of all the 400 millions of Chinese nationals that all human beings are flat-nosed. Homœopathy is a science of discrimination and careful individualisation, and not of sweeping generalisations, I repeat.

Any way, we must think and think anew to prove or disprove a theory, or discover a new, in our eternal search for Truth; else we are not human beings. I can not close this subject without sincere thanks to Dr. Koppikar, who is after all a brother physician and a brother country-man of mine, and who has striven hard to build a new theory of his own, be it building in the air or on a solid foundation.

—*The Homœopathic Recorder*, June, 1949

SAMUEL HAHNEMANN

*In commemoration of the bicentenary of his birth,
April 10, 1755*

DR. KARL KÖNIG, M.D. (VIENNA)

In the usual books on the history of medicine, Hahnemann has either no place or a very obsolete one. He is generally mentioned in connection with John Brown, Ernst Stahl, Franz Anton Mesmer and Friedrich Hoffmann. Each of them had a special theory upon which their diagnosis and treatment were based, and Hahnemann is still regarded as one of those theorists and extremists.

Guthrie writes: "Samuel Hahnemann was the originator of homœopathy, a system of medical treatment which is usually associated in our minds with the use of drugs in infinitesimal doses. The chief principle of