

## THE NEED FOR A REORIENTATED PATHOLOGY\*

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As sincere students of Homœopathy, we subscribe to the object of medicine in general viz. to restore the sick to health. As some great person has remarked, we may even with genuine humility restrict ourselves to this object viz., "to cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always."

In setting out to achieve this object and also to widen the academic field in Homœopathy, we seek to learn and assimilate all the advancements made in knowledge by both modern medicine and other allied sciences. Pathology is one such subject which contributes to a better understanding of disease including the sick tissues and sick organism. Some of the eminent Homœopaths including the masters like Kent have condemned pathology but what they have condemned was the study of gross pathology and the tendency especially to take it as the basis for treatment. But pathology in the real and wider sense includes all the functional and organic changes occurring in disease and the study of true pathology as against gross pathology can only contribute to a better understanding of disease. This is why Dr. Dunham wrote clearly—

"Clearly, then, Physiology and Pathology are quite indispensable to the physician, and they speak with little thought who affirm that these sciences are of no value to the Homœopathist and are disregarded by him. They are the sciences respectively of healthy and morbid phenomena. He cannot take the first step in the study of disease or of *Materia Medica* save by their aid. But he restricts them to their legitimate function. Pathology is for him not a guide in Therapeutics, but an instrument which he uses in studying those phenomena which are to be respectively the subject and the agents of his therapeutic operation."

\* Reprinted from the Souvenir, published on the occasion of the West Bengal Homœopathic Practitioners' Conference (3rd Session) at Krishnagar.

"The Pathology, restricted to its proper sphere, is an indispensable auxiliary to the study of the subject of Therapeutics. It may be further subservient in enabling the physician to group the symptoms of a case in such a way as more readily to marshal and retain them in memory. Nor is generalisation of this kind at all repugnant to the letter or spirit of Hahnemann's method or of homœopathic science." ...

Dr. Farrington also emphasises:—

"We include all the symptoms that we can observe. Then what have we? A mass of symptoms seeming to have no connection at all. They come from a human organism that is all order and perfection, and all the parts of which work in perfect harmony. When even one of these parts is out of order, there must be a certain clue to string these effects together and picture a form of disease; and when you get this form of disease, what have you? A Pathological state. I hope that no diploma will be granted to any man in this class, who does not study pathology. When you have the changes in toto that this substance has made on the system, you have the pathology of the case. You have the totality of the effects on the system."

We take the symptomatology in preference to the gross pathology as the criterion for the selection of the remedy and our experience tells us emphatically that the similimum selected on the basis of the totality of the symptoms is able to relieve different conditions with differing pathology. To give an example, I have treated and relieved with *Chelidonium* three cases of abdominal pain, with pain in the right hypochondriac region extending to the inferior angle of right scapula, relieved by taking food or warm milk. On investigation, one of them was found to be a case of Cholecystitis, another a case of hepatitis and the third turned out to be a duodenal ulcer. Our modern colleagues are greatly puzzled as to how the same remedy is able to cure conditions with differing underlying pathologies and also how the same condition with the same underlying pathology is amenable to different

remedies. We can only say the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

In homœopathy, we plumb for the strange, rare and peculiar symptoms. These are usually the symptoms which the patient omits to mention considering them as insignificant or which he may hide for fear of being ridiculed. However, these are the signs that more often than not lead us to the correct remedy. No examples are needed to illustrate this. In the present state of knowledge we are not able to explain the basis or significance of most of these symptoms except to say that they reflect the individuality of the patient. This statement is more an interpretation or inference than an explanation. But the advance of pathology is able not only to explain to the modern physician the basis and significance of the individual peculiar symptoms but is also able to inform us of the real significance of our symptoms. I shall quote some examples. There is a sensation "while drinking, patient feels that one half of the cup is broken." This sensation looks like a bizarre one but it is known that the paralysis of the mandibular branch of 5th Cranial Nerve (Trigeminal) can give rise to such a sensation.

Knee-chest position ameliorates: It is now realised that both the sinuses and the bronchial passages are much better drained in this position.

Fainting after a hot bath is common with patients in hypotension, because the hot bath tends to lower the blood pressure still further.

More such examples can be cited but the object is to draw attention of the readers to the fact that many of the so-called rare and peculiar symptoms will be satisfactorily and fully explained with the advance of knowledge of pathology. Such explanations by the science of pathology will open up more new areas of knowledge but it must be emphasised that even this will be mostly in the field of gross pathology. There is a virgin field of pathology—I may call it vital pathology or dynamic pathology or true pathology for the sake of convenience—whose existence is yet to be recognised, let alone explored. A person in life undergoes numerous stresses and strains and then because he is either unable to resist them or adjust himself, he falls ill. What exact role these

various stresses and strains, indiscretions, and breaking of the various laws of nature, deliberate or unintentional, had on health, how far and to what extent and how these have contributed to his illness is something that needs careful investigation. Let us take a case. A lady aged 62 developed paralysis of right side. The history was that about one year back her eldest son married a girl against the wishes of the mother and quit the house and never cared to return home. The mother was full of indignation and became ill. She also became very irritable and quarrelsome. She was found to have developed hypertension. One day she got an attack of left sided hemiplegia due to intracranial hæmorrhage. She had been treated with various sedatives, Rawolfia and other drugs, with no relief. We put her on Staphysagria, to which she responded very well with all-round improvement. Her blood pressure came down to 160/95 from 220/110. The paralysis has rapidly improved and she is now over 75% better. Her irritability has gone.

Now the modern physician prescribes ignoring the origin of the hypertension, viz. the vexation, indignation and grief. But we give very great importance to it. Now if the same patient had developed these symptoms after some other emotional disturbance, say a fright, some other appropriate remedy would be prescribed. What is the difference in the *true* pathology between a blood pressure caused after an indignation and that caused after a fright is a matter for study of serious students.

I have recently reported a serious case of Nephritis which was practically moribund when seen first, which was cured by Ferr. ars. The peculiarity of the case was that every time the patient took the smallest bit of sour food or the smallest piece of fruit, there would result Oliguria, with general anasarca and the urine would become loaded with albumin, RBCs and casts. What was the pathological significance connecting fruit and sour foods with nephritis, our new pathology will have to explain. Again there was a case of a patient suffering from an intracranial tumour who presented the classical clinical picture. This patient showed an immediate and profound symptomatological improvement after a dose of Nat. sul. given on the basis of the fact that the whole clinical picture had evolved after a slight head injury. This case gives

rise to many questions. If the tumour was existent long before, as must have been the case, why did the clinical picture appear only after the head injury? How did the dose of Nat. sul. produce clinical improvement in 24 hours? How did it ameliorate the symptoms which were most probably due to the pressure caused by the tumour, for it could not have produced such a sudden reduction in the size of the tumour? Let us take a case of peptic ulcer. The patient comes to us in great pain. We select the medicine carefully and give it. The pain is quickly relieved and the relief continues for weeks. What happened? Did the medicine relieve the spasm of the muscles around the ulcer? Did it reduce the acidity of the Gastric juice? Did it produce analgesia? Or did it relieve the emotional tension that is so often in the background of ulcer cases? Frankly, we do not know. But it is time we started investigating to find out the answers to all these questions. Such questions arise; a science of pathology in order to be complete must fully and clearly provide the explanation to all such enquiries.

#### Summary

I have tried to draw attention of serious students of Homœopathy to certain aspects of pathology. The science of pathology as it exists today is unable to take a comprehensive view or explain the various nuances of symptomatology which every Homœopath considers significant and important. But even accepting the modern definition of pathology it must be able to explain all these symptoms. We Homœopaths particularly will have to ensure that a new science of pathology is evolved—one that not merely explains the various gross morbid influences and resulting gross tissue changes but also those finer influences and the finer individualistic changes produced in sick people which the modern pathology has failed to grasp.

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