

## HOMŒOPATHY IN TREATMENT OF DISEASES OF MODERN AGE DUE TO NERVOUS STRAIN

DR. B. K. SIRCAR, M.B., D.M.S.

*Chairman, The Homœopathic Pharmacopœia Committee,  
Government of India.*

Civilisation today seems to be passing through one of its periodic crisis. The old order is yielding place to new with confused potentialities. Standards, aims and institutions which were generally accepted even a generation ago are now challenged and changed. Everything seems to be in a melting pot. Any one who thinks a bit deeply about the modern age becomes vividly conscious of its restlessness and uncertainty, its dissatisfaction, disappointment and frustration with the existing socio-economic and political conditions and its hankering for a new and better order which is yet to come. It seems the age of Socrates again: our moral life is threatened and our intellectual life is quickened and enlarged by the disintegration of ancient customs and beliefs. The passage from agriculture to industry, from the village to the town, and from town to the city, has elevated science, debased art, liberated thought, ended monarchy and aristocracy, generated democracy and socialism, emancipated women due to economic freedom, disrupted marriages and family life with late marriages or enforced celibacy, broken down the old moral code, exalted excitement above content; taken from us many of our cherished religious beliefs and given us in exchange a mechanical, materialistic and utilitarian philosophy of life. We are living in an age of paradox; we are starving in the midst of plenty; we are getting educated but not growing in wisdom; we talk of liberty, equality and fraternity but suffer from conditions which are exactly the opposite to what is envisaged through these slogans. A majority amongst us lives a dog's life while a minority does not know what to do with their wealth, how to utilise their leisure or how to find out the aim and purpose of life on this earth. We talk of

civilisation but seem to live in an age of economic barbarism. We plead for peace and prepare for war. We live but we seem to have forgotten the art of living. In the midst of material affluence we are heading towards spiritual bankruptcy. In short, we have come to a state when according to our "Vishnu Puran", "society reaches a stage when property alone confers rank; wealth becomes the only source of virtue, passion the sole bond of union between husband and wife, falsehood the source of success in life, sex the only means of enjoyment and outer trappings are confused with inner religion" (Radhakrishnan).

Under these circumstances maladjustments reign supreme in every sphere of life. Strained economic conditions, insecurity of fixed income, risk of unemployment, fierce competition unbridled lust for power and wealth, nepotism and corruption on the part of the people who count, throw an average man out of gear. The balance between head and heart is lost; conflicts between ideals and stark reality loom large before many eyes; fear, anxiety, frustration, failure and excessive stress and strain of modern life, and in consequence breakdown of defence mechanism of normal mentation, pave the way for psycho-neurotic conditions, e.g. anxiety, neurosis, neurasthenia, psychasthenia, and hysteria, and if not, to serious conditions of psychoses e.g. manic-depressive state, melancholia, schizophrenia, paranoia etc.

Modern development in the field of psychology has notably helped to explain not only the mechanism of symptom-production, both in case of mental and physical disease-conditions, but also the inter-relation between body and mind in health and illness; so much so that a new vista for psycho-somatic medicine has opened before the modern medical man. We are realising the Hahnemannian (Founder of Homœopathy) view that the human organism is an indivisible whole and its division into body and mind is wholly arbitrary and unjustifiable, cf. Sec. 15 of the Organon, the sixth edition: xx "The organism is indeed the material instrument of the life but it is not conceivable without the animation imparted to it by the instinctively perceiving and regulating dynamis (just as the vital force is not conceivable without the organism). Consequently the two together constitute a

unity, although in thought our mind separates this unity into two distinct conceptions for the sake of easy comprehension."

Progress in psychological knowledge has related two broad psychological types of men (e.g. Introvert & Extrovert) to the dominance of the parasympathetic and sympathetic branches of the autonomous nervous system (popularly known as Vagotonics and sympatheticotonics). It has helped us to understand more clearly how emotions, stress and strain of life etc. make us react quickly and effectively to environmental changes and adapt us to altered circumstances. This mechanism or whole process of adaptation is made clear to us through the knowledge how stress and strain or emotional disturbances acting through the cerebral cortex take three possible ways via hypothalamus, viz. (1) Hypothalamus-pituitary—to other glands and organs, but specially ACTH-Adrenal Cortex; (2) another way is hypothalamus-sympathetic-adrenal medulla (adrenalin)—to other tissues, organs and glands, specially to anterior Pituitary-increased ACTH secretion-adrenal cortex; (3) the third possible way is hypothalamus-parasympathetic-insulin etc.—peripheral actions of cortical hormones elected. This whole process is known as "Adaptation Syndrome."

On the other hand, recent advances in the study of psychology have shown that mental health depends upon the maintenance of a state of equilibrium between the conscious and unconscious. Normally these work in harmony and the individual adapts himself to the environment. The experience and stress of every day life, with its tussle between desires and primitive impulses and their gratification, inevitably give rise to a mental conflict which is a condition of normal mentation manifested by the formulation of a satisfactory solution. Freud regarded the nature of the conflicting form as having predominantly a sexual basis but further researches revealed other factors accompanied with emotional tension and involving much waste of energy. Most are solved successfully on the conscious level, are finally disposed of and give rise to no symptoms. This happens when the Id, Ego and Super-Ego (according to psycho-analytic terminology) work harmoniously. Unfortunately for various reasons, inherent or acquired, many people are unable to deal with the conflicts in this manner and devise various methods. e.g. Repression, Reaction for-

mation, Projection, Introjection, Regression, Sublimation, Isolation, Undoing, Reversal, Turning against self, Intellectualisation etc.—to maintain the state of equilibrium of mental health and to ward off Anxiety, Fears, etc. It is when these defence mechanisms are inadequate, psychopathological conditions appear to which we give various nosological labels e.g. Anxiety Neurosis, Neurasthenia, Psychasthenia, Hysteria etc. etc.

Thus from physiological and psychological studies we find that many apparently physical symptoms are produced through primary psychogenic conflicts which result from maladjustment of the patients to the problems of life, physical or social, which confront them. Freud clearly established that so-called hysterical conversion symptoms are compromises effected between the demands of the impulses or desires and the demands of the conscience. Thus a symptom, a symbolic substitute for the forbidden wish, gave in partly to the impulse (which appears but in a disguised form) and partly to the prohibition (which is responsible for the modification of the original wish). Again, we can link the chain of sequential events thus: Specific unconscious emotion conflict—alteration in autonomous nervous system activity—alteration in the function of the organ—morphologic or structural pathologic change in a person who is constitutionally or otherwise predisposed. In other words, symptoms in neurosis are due to disturbance in the vegetative nervous system; they are not substitute expressions for emotions but rather the result of the physiologic concomitants of emotional expressions. Organic illness may result, at least partially, from chronic neurotic conflicts. Thus we find that Hahnemann anticipated the truth that alteration in sensation and function, due to psychogenic causes lead to structural changes. So long the modern medicine took the structural changes as in the case of diseases which require treatment, whereas Hahnemann regarded the pathological (i.e. structural) changes as the end result of the diseases; and according to him, the object of treatment is the sum total of altered sensations and functions of the living body plus the psychopathological conditions. In broad perspective Hahnemann apprehended about two hundred years ago what is slowly dawning in the minds of the

orthodox school, so called allopathic medicine. Of course, credit should be given to their researches for filling up details.

We are in the midst of a very widespread epidemic, a pandemic of nervousness, anxiety, depression, tiredness, sleeplessness etc. with their somatic concomitants. And here Homœopathy steps in to study the patient as a whole and treats him as a psycho-somatic whole instead of drugging him with sleeping tablets, tranquilisers, stimulants, anti-depressants etc. Psycho-analysis, conditioned reflex re-education, hypnosis may be taken recourse to as auxiliary resources but Homœopathic medicines should be used as specified for individual sick persons, because it is Homœopathy which takes into cognisance the subjective symptoms along with the pathological ultimates. The correct approach of Homœopathic treatment is vindicated as we have come to know that many functional disturbances of digestion and respiration, which are so common, are recognised today as expressions of neurosis and of anxiety and one must add to these vasomotor disturbances, many allergic phenomena and a vast range of functional disturbances.

Apart from effect of mental conflicts and its consequential effects one cannot help speculating on the results of repressing or suppressing the normal expressions of emotions which we are apt to commit out of deference to our modern social convention. We all know that laughing or weeping can give some relief of emotional tension; but being angry with one's stomach, worrying with one's Gall-bladder, grieving with one's uterus, being frightened with one's heart, gives no relief; the result is a state of permanent tension which can be the cause of chronic dysfunction. The somatic dysfunction is a waste or dissipation of that emotional energy or vital force. Emotional energy which should be directed towards the normal goals of self-preservation, reproduction, creative activity, is diverted into a vicious circle, or rather a closed circuit and the ultimate consequence is tissue change and organic disease. As for example, some cases of bronchial asthma have been traced to inhibition of crying. Is this perhaps the real Truth behind the doctrine of suppression of symptoms so pointedly brought to the notice of medical profession by Hahnemann? If an eczema, a rhinorrhœa, a menorrhagia, is of emotional

origin, then curing (?) the rash, drying up the nasal catarrh, suppressing the menses will only end in a metastasis to another bodily system or organ. Apparently it is possible that any emotion will find some somatic channel for physiological expression. In other words, where eruptions, secretions, discharges, have a psychological factor which maintain them, then drying up the secretion will do no more than precipitate a metastasis, a vicaration elsewhere. And here Homœopathy guides us through the right path to the desired goal.

Homœopathic Materia Medica abounds in such relevant facts and Homœopathic Repertory presents many rubrics which refers to some of the roots of neurosis; Anxiety, Fear, Fright, Anger, Resentment, Grief, Depression, -Despair, and Mortification etc. We can also profitably refer to rubrics concerning the effects of emotions—Somatic manifestations of the psychological disturbances. For example, one patient may show his irritation in the form of pruritus, another person shows his inability to bear the burden of responsibility by complaining of backache, while a third tries to swallow his pride and gets dyspepsia.

Here below is given a list of drugs under some rubrics in Kent's Repertory, as illustrations:—

1. Ailments from Fright: Aconite, Ignatia, Lycopod, Nat mur,

Opium, Phos. acid, Phosphorus, Pulsatilla & Silicea.

Aconite: reacts to fright by screaming.

Ignatia: is hysterical.

Lycopod: is dyspeptic.

Nat mur: is melancholic, aggravation for attempt at consolation.

Opium goes numb with fear.

Phos. acid cannot get to sleep.

Phosphorus: wants company.

Pulsatilla can hardly stop crying.

Silicea: develops headache—as one of the main features of Reaction to Fright.

2. Ailments from Anger:

Aconite: Cannot get off to sleep, tossing and turning and unable to work the anger off.

Chamomilla: angry baby during teething, also for the results

of anger in later years, in second childhood, with the familiar neurosis arising from failure to adjust to the problems of senility.

Colocynth: Anger rebounds in the form of colicky pains in abdomen.

Nux vom: suffers from muscular tension, cannot relax, with typical occipital headache.

Staphisagria: cannot and will not give full vent to the anger and his restlessness is an expression of frustration.

3. Ailments from grief:

Aurum: Grieved to the verge of suicide; often has neurodermatis.

Causticum: develops rheumatism or rheumatoid arthritis.

Cocculus: sick with grief.

Ignatia: hysterical.

Lachesis: Jealous.

Nat mur: Cannot cry.

Phos acid: Prostrated by weakness.

Staphisagria: poor memory, perhaps in an effort to forget the grief.

4. Ailments from mortification:

Chamomilla: exemplifies the angry childish reaction, failing to see the insult in proportion.

Colocynth: tries to swallow the insult, but gets colic in the process.

Ignatia: full of paradoxes.

Nat mur: Tendency to respiratory catarrh, persistent unpleasant haunting and tormenting thoughts.

Palladium: Typical of wounded pride.

Phos acid: Taciturn, unwilling to discuss the matter.

Staphisagria: another introvert, with a tendency to headache, which may be a manifestation of the inability to get it out of the mind.

5. Fear: Phosphorus, Ars alb, Coffea, Aurum met, Opium.

6. Anxiety: Acon, Arg nit, Ars, Ars iod, Aurum, Bell, Calc c, Calc p, Calc s, Camphor, Cann ind, Carbo veg, Caust, China, Con, Digit, Iodium, Kali ars, Kali carb, Kali phos, Lyco,

- Mezer, Nat ars, Nat c, Nit acid, Phos, Psorin, Puls, Rhus t., Secale, Sulph, Verat.
7. Resentment: Nux vom, Stramonium.
  8. Restlessness- anxious: Ars, Kali ars, Kali carb, Nat ars, Nat carb, Tarentula.
  9. Sadness: Long list of medicines given by Kent, for mental depression.
  10. Despair:—Ars, Aurum, Calc, Coffea, Hell, Ignatia, Psorin.

Thus we find that Homœopathic Materia Medica presents many drugs which cover the root symptoms of neurosis, neurasthenia, anxiety neurosis, Psychasthenia, Hysteria as well as psychotic conditions—which are the Curse of the Modern Age.

---

#### EDITORIAL

*(Continued from page 246)*

material pathology, rather material pathology shall ever remain subservient to Homœopathy e.g., as an auxiliary guide in management of a case, or in assessing the material progress of the case under Homœopathic therapeutics, or in the matter of endeavouring to explain and correlate the phenomena of Symptoms, and so on.

(2) We should remember further that we can never afford to vulgarise true homœopathic therapeutics, only on the ground that it is more difficult to acquire than organic pathological homœopathy. True homœopathic therapeutics, based on strict individualization shall ever remain far superior to the crude form of Homœopathy for the simple reason that, the former is far more infallible curative therapeutics than the latter.

J. N. Kanjilal

---