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EDITORIAL

HAHNEMANNIAN CONCEPTION OF MENTAL DISEASES AND THEIR LINE OF TREATMENT

Hahnemann considers mental diseases as one-sided diseases of the chronic type affecting the whole psychosomatic entity where the brunt of derangement has been shifted on the mental aspect of the human organism after the physical disturbances have been suppressed by un-homœopathic treatment or through some other natural causes. (cf. Organon, 6th Edition, Sec. 215-216).

The mind and body are not two absolutely separate entities but they form an indivisible whole, inseparable in fact but distinguishable by mind for facilitation of comprehension. As drug-provings show that the actions of a drug manifest themselves more or less concomitantly through body and mind so that in every fully proved drug picture there are corporeal symptoms along with alterations of thoughts, feelings, affections and volitions, intellect, memory etc.—so in natural diseases the physical disturbances are often found associated with their mental counterparts. There is no absolute gap between mind and body. Illness has been defined by F. Mohr as “a living event taking place in a living organism which is itself alive only by virtue of the fact that in it, psychic and somatic are

united in a unity." In other words an illness is the result of biological as well as of psychological events. Certain stresses are thereby set up that discharge themselves along the various peripheral nerves leading to development of somatic symptoms or centrally in the mind leading to changes in the patient's personality. In some cases one outlet is choked and the main outburst takes place through the other outlet. Thus in extreme cases we notice purely physical diseases i.e. without any subjective symptoms or purely mental cases i.e. without any concomittant physical changes. So in the treatment of mental diseases we should always be careful to take the past history and should try to detect the physical symptoms which preceded (may be long ago) and try to get the full picture of the disease comprising physical and mental symptoms on the totality of which a 'similimum' remedy is to be found.

In these cases the patient is to be handled with utmost care, sympathy and strict attention to remove those obstacles which stand in the way of physical recovery. Here Hahnemann anticipated the modern psycho-somatic conception of diseases. (cf. Sec. 217-218 Organon. 6th Edition)

There is another condition where the mental aspect is primarily deranged and these disturbances finding the body slightly yielding to the altered psychological conditions maintain the body in a disturbed condition and continue the psycho-pathological state of the patient. Here the cause of mental derangement is purely psychogenic and here is the scope for application of psychological therapeutics and comparatively recently discovered psycho-analytical methods of Freud, Yung and Adler (though the actual details of these procedures were not known to Hahnemann but he anticipated the utility of those therapeutic methods). Hahnemann clearly writes in his Organon that the patient is to be very carefully encouraged to regain self-confidence, to remould his life in the path of rectitude where there had been moral lapses. The physician

to the patient should not only be his prescriber but also his friend, philosopher and guide to help the patient to resolve his complexes and revert to healthy growth and development in general. Very often the cause of mental derangement lies in the failure on the part of the patient to adjust himself to the situation he finds himself in and through this defect further inroads of unsocial, immoral instincts which lay hitherto dormant in his sub-conscious mind take place in the surface consciousness. These lead to all the turmoils, dissociations and disintegrations of personality to render a man misfit in the world of factual reality.

Under no circumstances violent and torturesome methods are to be taken recourse to for curbing the vagaries of an insane mind. During Hahnemann's time mental cases were reckoned as cursed cases, often possessed by evil spirits and thus all the oppressive methods which the ingenuity of medical men could devise were applied to the patients in the lunatic assylum.

The credit of adopting humane methods in the management of insane persons certainly goes to Hahnemann. And he through his phenomenal genius and clear intuition anticipated the broad principles of psycho-therapeutic methods which are necessary in some cases along with medicinal treatment; and also differentiated those cases which called for only psychological therapeutics.

Considerations of the above-mentioned facts enable us to discern why the failures in the treatment of mental cases occur either with the homœopathic remedies only or with the recently discovered methods of Freud, Yung and Adler. Where there is some underlying corporeal disturbance or a latent chronic miasmatic infection behind the symptoms of an insane mere psychological treatment will be quite inadequate. On the other hand where the cause is more psychological mere administration of homœopathic remedies will be ineffective as well. (cf. Organon, 6th Edition: Sec. 219-230).

The judicious discrimination of cases and the adoption of one method in preference to the other or a judicious combination of the psychological and remedial methods as complementary to each other, will bring about a greater percentage of cure of mental cases.

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THE PROBLEM CHILD*

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Though it is true that every child presents a problem to its parents, some are so much worse than the general run that they are singled out and get top priority in their class. These children are too frequently the first, and often the last, to be born to their parents. They may not be wilfully spoiled, but too much attention has always been given. If not ill they are taken for checkups, their diet discussed, planned, and life so regulated that the mother has little time left for anything else. Gone are the days of nurse-maid and governess. The whole house is revolving about the health and habits of little Willie or Mary; thus they become top priority and, if the child has any brains at all, he soon recognizes and acts upon this exalted state.

Stir into this explosive mixture a few quarts of inherited psora and a little touch of the other two miasms and we have a real problem, not only child but father and mother as well. When Willie or Mary is ill everything else at home stops and they have reached their zenith. But for them it works in a downward direction. They sense the fear and insecurity in their parents and become fearful or sickness-conscious themselves. A child loves to exhibit a

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