

CHRONIC BRONCHITIS

DR. S. M. RAHMAN, B.A. B.T., M.B.H., DACCA

All Text-books on Practice of Medicine (both Homœopathic and Allopathic) teach that certain chronic affections of the Respiratory System have got unfavourable prognosis. Chronic Catarrhal Bronchitis, Bronchiectasis, Pulmonary Tuberculosis, Asthma, maltreated Pneumonia, are some of the diseases which fall within this category. In the Allopathic Text-Books of Medicine almost invariably do we find that in so far as these are concerned remedial measures are recommended for palliation as the ultimate prognosis is not good. According to them, in some cases the dry climate like that of Egypt is the best that can be recommended to the patient as a last resort, if the medical treatment does not arrest the progress of the disease. Nor do we find a brighter picture of help held up in the Text-Books of Homœopathic Practice.

In the beginning of my practice these books which were my guides to the study of diseases, to the understanding of their nature and of their prognosis, naturally led me to think that Homœopathy had very little to offer as help towards the cure of these obstinate respiratory affections. I used to recommend the patients to the care of experienced practitioners of Modern Medicine, who were expected to work miracles with their wonder drugs. Their failure in the long run convinced me that, although Modern Medicine suggested remedies and ancilliary measures, it could not claim to be able to help the patient permanently out of the trouble.

This led me to turn to our own resources. Dr. Hahnemann's Masterpiece 'Organon of Medicine' showed me the royal road, but that royal road to success in the treatment of chronic diseases is not easy of access. It is our lack of comprehension, our laziness, above all, to work hard to find out the clue to the cure that is to blame. As I again took up seriously the study of the Organon of Medicine, I became

painfully aware of my haphazard study and shallowness on all previous occasions. Now something quite novel and different from what I had been accustomed to think about disease and its cure struck me. Of course I had already known that, in Homœopathy, patients are not treated according to the names of diseases. Now the Organon gave a new meaning to this disregard of classification of diseases. As a very careful observer Hahnemann understood clearly that what are generally known as diseases are but the effects of something that has gone wrong elsewhere; therefore he is not primarily concerned with the so-called diseases, because with him the diseased Vital Force is at the root of all subjective and objective symptoms. If the Vital Principle can be restored to its original state of well-being, Diseases, be they ever so dangerous and obstinate, must vanish under careful and judicious Homœopathic treatment. So, by the proper understanding of the condition of the Vitality of the patient, are we really able to form the best prognosis and accordingly formulate our plan of treatment.

Certain cases in my own practice have clearly shown the truth of the above. The text-books alone can not guide us in forming the accurate prognosis of all cases. Mr. M. R. aged 35, came under my treatment for chronic catarrhal bronchitis. He was tall and slim and narrow-chested. His father had been of delicate health, died at 63 of Bronchitis and had suffered before his death from occasional Bronchial Catarrhs and once vomited blood. His history showed him to be a man of tubercular diathesis. One of Mr. M. R.'s step-sisters died at 50 of Tuberculosis.

During the early years of life Mr. M. R. suffered from boils, abscesses, itching eruptions of all sorts, dry, fatty and eczematous, until the 12th year of his life. At 14, he fell a victim to Malaria, which continually kept him bed-ridden for one and a half years; Quinine oral and in injections failed to cure him. Then one Village Homœopath gave him one or two doses of some unknown Homœopathic remedy, which ended his long and tedious sufferings. Then

he was vaccinated for the second time. The scratched spot became so angry and pustulous that he had to stop the painful inflammatory suppuration with some external ointment, but following this he began to feel a sort of goneness and sinking sensation in the heart. Though improved by tonics and Kabiraji medicines, he has been feeling his heart weak since that time.

Then followed a lurid period of his life, during which he suffered from Gonorrhœa three times. The last attack of Gonorrhœa occurred 4 months before the Bronchitis. Homœopathic medicines under the treatment of his family physician having failed, he cured himself with a course of Cibazol. But even in the absence of the local urinary symptoms, he had never felt well.

After four or five months of the above Gonorrhœal injection, he was attacked with Bronchitis almost insidiously as a result of his unguarded exposure to the damp wet weather of the spring. The family Homœopath failed and the Allopathic Treatment with Penicillin, Sulphadiazine and Cough Mixtures helped to lower the temperature and relieve the lung-congestion and bronchial catarrh considerably; but then the symptoms became stationary and refused to improve. The patient became anxious and worried about his health, because his cough and expectoration were still giving the greatest torment and distress.

I was then called in. I want to relate the case a little more elaborately, because it is interesting and proves Hahnemann's Law and Hering's Direction of Cure.

On Examination, I found the patient's lungs still congested and his Bronchial tubes full of sticky yellowish-green sputum, which he raised with great difficulty. He coughed severely and expectorated 3 to 4 ounces of sputum. He was completely bed-ridden, weakened, emaciated and short of breath. His chest was wheezy and full of râles, especially when he coughed. I gave him a few Placebo-powders, as my intention was to watch him carefully after

I had taken down the full history of his case. Next day at noon when I visited him, I found him feverish, his temperature having risen to 99°F. On closer observation finer symptoms emerged. He wanted to keep his palms on cool places, and a cold-water-bottle upon his stomach. He said he had a sort of burning sensation in the abdomen, and a cold application was very ingratiating and soothing. He was thirsty and wanted cool drinks. He covered his chest with a light wrapper, and on my having asked him about its reason he said he was afraid of another exposure to the wind blowing from outside. He washed his hands, face and head frequently with cold water, as this gave him some relief. His cough and expectoration were worse towards evening and after dusk.

On the basis of these finer symptoms, I decided upon Phosphorus which I gave him in the 30th potency, one dose dry on the tongue and several sac lac powders to be taken thrice daily. Wonderfully enough, the patient gradually rallied till he was on his feet in a week's time. His fever had gone; he felt strong and relished his food, but he coughed and expectorated as before and appeared to have gone into Tuberculosis. His past history was so complicated that I did not know what remedy I should select. His hereditary tendencies led me to prescribe a dose of Tuberculinum 200, and to repeat it in the IM potency in a fortnight, after which I waited for about 3 weeks in all, but no appreciable improvement was visible. Thinking that latent Gonorrhœal poison has got the affinity for all mucous membranes, I then gave Medorrhinum 200 and followed it with the IM potency, but without any remarkable effect, except that he was a little better in general health.

At last after much reflection, I decided upon Natrum Sulp., because it was the spring season and the exciting cause of the disease was exposure to damp wet weather. Besides he had suffered from Gonorrhœal infection not once, but thrice. Natrum Sulp. repeated in various potencies at last hit the main spring of his vital force and he was

on his way to recovery. His cough and expectoration began to subside as the patient began to put on new flesh, but a fresh trouble gripped him and took away his rest and peace for more than two months. On the upper part of his left palm, a small itching patch appeared at first and then gradually changed into a severe type of distressing spongy eczema discharging honey-like serum constantly. It is interesting to note that with the discharging of the eczema his cough and expectoration vanished entirely. Graphites, Sepia and Sulphur were of no avail. Again I resorted to Natrum Sulp. 200 which cured his eczema palmaris permanently. In a month or so it was followed by a very painful abscess in his inguinal region which also yielded, though tardily, to Homœopathic medication but 2 or 3 months later a very acute inflammatory suppuration took place in the right knee-joint and its surrounding tissues. It appeared to be a surgical case, but no surgeon was at hand. This time again Homœopathy proved itself of a great blessing: Hepar Sulp. and Silicea tided him through this dangerous Osteomyelitis.

Still he was not out of the woods. As the winter season came, he was attacked with a severe kind of fatty eruptions all over the body, which were very painful and distressful and suppurated and formed crusts. Nightly aggravation and great sensitiveness were the main points on which Hepar Sulp. 30 was prescribed and the result was that the eruptions dried up in three or four days, leaving intense itching behind. Psorinum 200 relieved the itching and other troubles very quickly. After this, a course of constitutional treatment with Sulphur and Tuberculinum in various potencies effected wonderful improvement in his health and it is now about 8 years, since he has been enjoying quite good health.

I would relate another case of an insidious attack of Bronchitis, which also responded very beautifully to the minute doses of Homœopathic medicine. Mrs. H. Khatoon aged about 29 years, of medium built and irritable tempera-

ment and in the seventh month of pregnancy was a victim to a very severe cough at night which took away her rest and sleep for more than a fortnight. During the day-time she was absolutely free from cough and expectoration, but as soon as the night came, her cough became worse. After much coughing she expectorated thick and sticky mucus in large quantities. Lying down aggravated her cough. She had a very obstinate constipation. Averse to movement and exertion. Better from bathing and cool open air. Sepia in the 30th and the 200th potency proved ineffective and Sulphur 200 was then prescribed because the patient complained of great burning of soles at night. There being no change for the better, I consulted the Repertory and from a clue in it I studied Conium in the Materia Medica and found it corresponded very accurately with the characteristics of her cough. Conium in the 200th potency and repeated at a fortnight's interval completely cured her of her distressful Bronchitis.

Mrs. Khodeza aged about 25 years, of medium built and dark complexion, very much emaciated and anemic and sickly, came under my treatment for Chronic Bronchitis, after having suffered from it for more than a year. She had been already treated allopathically with Penicillin and mixtures and had received occasional relief from the congestions of the lungs and the bronchi, but the cough and expectoration had never entirely left: it came back again and again, either on bathing in cold water or on exposure to cold winds.

Her present symptoms were: She felt feverish day and night, but her temperature seemed to rise slightly during the night. She coughed morning and evening with expectoration of gelatinous mucus rather stringy or ropy in character. She felt better from warmth and rest. She had no taste for food, though she could eat her fill. She desired acidulated drinks. Her stool was not satisfactory every day. Though she had regular monthly courses, her menstruation was short and painful and the discharge con-

sisted of blackish clots. Mentally, very depressed and melancholy, but peevish and easily irritated.

The past history revealed that she had suffered from the suppuration of the femoral bone, which was cured by surgical intervention; but since then she had hip-joint deformity, and as a result she had to walk limpingly. Besides, her husband who was now about 48 years of age had had gonorrhoea when he was 25.

I decided upon Kali Bichromicum, which I therefore gave in the 30th potency, according to the plussing method recommended in the 6th edition of the Organon, one dose to be taken every morning till improvement continued or aggravation set in. The cough and the fever vanished in a week and the medicine was stopped. These symptoms did not come back even after three weeks' waiting. She menstruated and the study of her symptoms again led me to prescribe Pulsatilla 200, one dose and to repeat it later in the 1M potency, with continued improvement. I then gave her a dose of Thuja 200, and watched her again for more than two months, but her cough and expectoration never returned.

Some more cases of such Chronic Bronchitis treated successfully and homœopathically may be mentioned, but I think it is needless to add more, for my object in describing the above cases is to show that we should not be discouraged by the prognosis given in the ordinary text-books. From the above treated cases it may appear that the relief obtained from the Homœopathic treatment is very slow and tardy. In some cases it is, of course, so but in the majority of cases the cure follows rapidly when the remedy can be applied rightly. But the so-called Modern Medicine gives temporary palliation of some symptoms, without touching Bronchitis at all, and allows it to progress slowly till all hopes of recovery vanish for ever. I shall briefly mention here a case of Chronic Bronchitis treated by the brilliant allopaths in order to show the failure of Modern Medicine.

Mr. A. Mannan, B.A., aged 30, had since his childhood a tendency to be affected with occasional cold from the slightest exposure in the winter season. In 1952, he suffered from Dysentery for 15 or 16 days and as this complaint subsided his lungs became congested, he coughed very severely and would expectorate a little phlegm with great difficulty. His temperature rose high and along with it there was great breathing difficulty at night. Penicillin and cough mixtures resulted in the cessation of all symptoms for about a week and then again fever and other symptoms of lung-congestions and asthmatic breathing at night came back. Again relief was obtained with Penicillin and other Allopathic medicines, but the troubles began to appear again and again in spite of this kind of treatment continued for over a year. In March, 1953, he was again taken down with fever. His chest was x'rayed at the Government Free Chest Clinic and the Head of the Clinic declared his lungs to be abnormal and advised him to take Cod-Liver Oil, B.G. Phos and full rest for some months. By this time his fever increased so much that he consulted one of the most renowned Allopaths of Dacca who diagnosed it to be a case of Typhoid and sent him to Hospital. In the hospital, however, the diagnosis of Typhoid transpired to be wrong and the patient recovered in a few days after injections of Coramine and Penicillin. After this he continued well for two or three months but then again the old bronchial catarrh and lung-congestion recurred with greater intensity. He took Calcium and Penicillin Injections which relieved him again.

The patient became disappointed and sought the help of another more enthusiastic Allopath who ordered a thorough examination of his stool, urine, sputum, blood, and the x'raying of his lungs. Nothing abnormal was found in the urine, sputum, blood and the lungs. Some mucus in the stool led him to diagnose the trouble to be due to Chronic Dysentery. He was treated for this and for a while he improved considerably in health, but with

the approach of the winter he was again down with fever, cough and asthmatic breathing. His chest was again x-rayed in the hospital and nothing abnormal was found, so as to diagnose it to be a case of Tubercular infiltration. A course of Deurecillin helped him to be well for some time. This was the treatment he received from the hands of the practitioners of Modern Medicine till he came under my treatment only 3 months back.

On carefully studying his symptoms, I prescribed him Sulphur 200 one dose and waited for 3 weeks, during which time he improved much, his cough and expectoration became less and his fever entirely vanished. Then there was no progress and Sulphur 1M was given with rapid improvement for more than a month, but suddenly from an exposure (he was attending his office regularly and no rigid restrictions regarding diet were imposed) he developed some fever with cough and breathing difficulty, which, however, was mitigated with Bryonia 30. I then prescribed Sulphur 30 one dose, which has kept the patient well for more than a month. Since he is continuing well I do not give any medicine. I have kept him under my close observation.

The last few years' experience has shown me and convinced me how extravagant the claims of Modern Medicine are in the treatment of the majority of chronic diseases. We should hold very strongly to our own system and always work hard to understand and master it so as to apply it successfully for the good of humanity.