

THE RELATION OF HOMEOPATHY TO PATHOLOGY

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Ever since the promulgation of the law of Similia, as the only true method of cure, there has been a cleavage more or less wide between the pathological wing of our school, led by men like Hughes and the symptomatologists, the latter taking their cue from Hahnemann's later and latest utterances.

The distinction between these factions has always lain in the appreciation of the *Materia Medica* as handed down to us by the master and his successors. Personally Hahnemann, in his later years, denounced the deductions of the pathologists and eclectics, and Lippe in this country followed closely in his footsteps. Hering seemed to occupy a middle ground, his labors towards the enrichment of our available knowledge have been rich in results; his greatest error consisted in the admission of many clinical symptoms and failing to make a clear distinction between pathogenetic and clinical origins. He seems, at times, to have been unduly credulous.

A modality may be, and often is, of necessity clinical, but a clinical symptom should never be admitted as such to the scheme of any remedy. Almost every such symptom is already a deduction from a premise and to continue this process ad infinitum can only lead to the vilest empiricism and greatest uncertainty. It is no argument to say that many symptoms of the Chronic Diseases have been attained from the sick, for a careful reading of that great work will convince any one that no true clinical symptom is contained in its pathogeneses, but that they are confined to the prefaces. The doubtful ones of the text are very evidently gleaned as provings, during the administration of remedies to the sick; this process all of us have seen and know it to be most reliable, for at such times the vital force is hypersensitive and its oscillations quickly respond to those of a synchronal remedy, producing the finer symptoms not otherwise obtainable. The accurate outlining of curative action is clearly beyond the scope of the finite mind. Hahnemann despaired of curing extreme varicose conditions, ulcers, veins, etc., but the powers of *Vipera*, *Hamamelis* and *Fluoric acid* were unknown to him. We now cure these things just as certainly as we do many others of more apparent promise; this is one of the crowning glories of homeopathy; the application of these remedies to aneurismal conditions of the cardiac or cerebral regions is not yet demonstrated but constitutes the next step and is clearly foreshadowed in their provings. In the venous sphere the highest potencies, at long intervals, have yielded most brilliant results; in aneurismal dilatation a like precedent is indicated.

The deduction that *Hypericum* must prove useful in tetanus of a certain type has borne abundant fruit, and now every practitioner of large experience recognises its power. Latterly the bacteriologists tell us that tetanus bacilli cannot live in a highly oxygenated medium; now the volatile oil of *Hypericum* is a terbene, one of the oxygenated oils. This is cited merely to show what is constantly happening; indicated remedies attain a certain celebrity; presently the pathologist or bacteriologist discovers in part why this is so, and lo! a specific is born. What memories throng my mind at the sound of that conjuring word. I see the numberless host of syphilitics with dropped teeth and hair, chins running with slaver, their nights rendered hideous by periosteal pains, tottering into mental imbecility, all because Mercury is specific for syphilis; I look again and see jaundiced, sallow, wan faces with potbellies from ague cake or swollen livers, shivering with every cool breath of air or drenched with sweat from the least exertion; they urinate blood or pass lenteric stools so great is their debility, all because Quinine is specific for chills and fever. Take a last look and behold a vast host of sodden stupid faces, note how they walk, as if in dreamland, but always with bowed heads and stooping shoulders; their shifting glances reveal their cunning, lying dispositions, all because Morphine is specific for pain.

Kind friends, such are some of the gross effects of specific treatment. Under its benign sway

the diagnosis carries the remedy, which will take you back to health or some other place; we even have a new school of specificists that has shifted the matter upon the other shoulder and prescribes for conditions and clinical symptoms. Patients do not count particularly, but immediate palliation must be had at all costs; as for doses the rankest allopath is not in it, they literally follow the old saw:

" I purge, I puke, I sweat 'em,
And if they die I let 'em."

in another but more dangerous form.

You will pardon this digression, but out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh; the thought therefore remains that pathology bears little relation to homeopathy and that of the post hoc type. Pathology has confirmed much that pathogenesis teaches, but has seldom been the initiative of a true cure; by the very nature of things this must be so, not because the Organon intimates as much, but because of the multiplex forms of every disease which must of necessity be met by many remedies.

DISCUSSION

J. A. Kirkpatrick, M.D.:

One of the fortunate things for Homeopathy is the cellular pathology, of Virchow and modern writers. Modern pathologists are not content to look upon a case in the gross or in a large way. They take the microscope and examine the constitution of the diseased cell and chemically analyse the changes in the cell-substance as far as that can be done, but after all they cannot reach the infinite, there is a point beyond their highest powers and that point and all beyond it, they are forced to acknowledge as the unknowable. They come to that which no microscope can see and the only communication with the living cell is not through the microscope but through the sensory nervous system. Homeopathy with its drug provings is the only way to rationally reach that living cell and in their observation, the pathologists have drifted in the direction of our school, at least to the extent of furnishing something of a scientific explanation for its workings.

H. C. Allen, M. D.:

I cannot quite agree with Dr. Boger in regard to the injury which Hering has inflicted upon our school by the use and recording of clinical symptoms. The cold, sweaty feet of *Calcarea carbonica*, so useful as an indication of that remedy and one that has been verified a thousand times, was a clinical symptom. It was never developed in the proving. The wing-like expansion of the alae nasi of *Lycopodium* has never been produced in a proving, but it has led the careful observer again and again to that remedy and cured his patient. And then again Hering is everywhere careful to state in his books, which symptoms are clinical and which are not, so that there need be no confusion. A clinical symptom when it has been verified a number of times, for anything I can see to the contrary, is to all intents and purposes as good as the best proved symptom in the world.

C. M. Boger, M.D.:

The only point of difference, seems to be on the subject of clinical symptoms and that I regard as important. Hering does not say clearly in any place, which are and which are not clinical, nor which are pathogenetic, nor does he say how many times each one has been verified.

In regard to *Lycopodium* and the symptom of the wing-like motion of the alae nasi, that symptom is clearly foreshadowed in the proving. It is an alternate action. No remedy shows so clearly as *Lycopodium*, opposite effects, action and reaction; for instance, in the same patient, we may have muscular exhaustion and muscular contraction, one immediately after the other. It is true that we can avail ourselves of clinical symptoms, but it is not the proper way to build up our materia medica. Some of the best clinical symptoms that we have are from domestic practice.

At least two thirds of the remedies of the allopathic school, are founded upon old wives' tales and recommendations of the aborigines. Cinchona was obtained from the Peruvian Indians and so of the best preparations that they have.