

Etiology in Homœopathy.

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DR. C. ROY, M. A., CALCUTTA.

(ii) *The concept of Chronic Miasm.* It has been said that the poetic genius is a Divine inspiration. A poet's knowledge is due more to revelation, inspiration and intuition than to actual acquisition, and this truth will be fully corroborated if we go through the writings of any great poet. Though the theory of Chronic Miasms was conceived and propounded by Hahnemann long after

"Sweetest Sheakespeare, Fancy's child,

Warbled his native wood-notes wild,"

yet the poetic inspiration of the "Fancy's child" could strike the Key-note of this theory when he wrote :

"The Miasms are the maggots that are born within the brain." This poetic expression of the origin of the miasms requires a little explanation. By locating the birth of the miasms in the brain, the poet means to say that our mind which is essentially a cognitive energy having emotional susceptibilitis and volitional tendencies is primarily responsible for their origin. We think, we feel, we will, and action is but the external manifestation of the internal volition. A concrete example will clear the matter. A ripe mango hangs within reach from a tree on the road-side. It comes to the notice of a boy who first definitely knows it to be a ripe mango (thinking); then his previous experience of the taste of a ripe mango rouses in him a pleasurable sensation in anticipation (feeling); then he decides to snatch it away for appropriation (willing). As soon as this decision (volition) is made, the hand with the help of motor nerves at once transforms the decision into action by pulling it down.

Now, as in the physical world all movements are in the direction of least resistance, so in the mental world all movements are in the direction of the objects of our love and affec-

tion. The boy would never have stolen the fruit, if he had not inwardly cherished the pleasure of enjoying it. His *Motive of action* then is *pleasure*, and though during the processes of thinking, feeling and willing, a higher power viz., the power of reasoning comes in and tries to dissuade him from the action on principles of morality and religion, his motive power (enjoyment of pleasure) preponderates and overcomes "the feeble voice of God" within, and leads him to the deed.

This is *mostly* the position to-day, and life may be said to illustrate *almost* a continuous hankering after some sort of pleasure; and this deplorable and degraded standard of modern society has been very pithily and forcefully expressed in the following lines which I think will recompense being quoted :

"Whate'er the motive, pleasure is the mark :
 For her the black assassin draws his sword ;
 For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp ;
 For her the saint abstains, the miser starves ;
 The Stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorns ;
 For her affliction's daughters grief indulge,
 And find or hope a luxury in tears ;—
 For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy"—*Young*.

But why so ? because the mind has lost its original purity and simplicity, and is now governed and controlled by extraneous influences (miasmatic taints) detrimental to its wellbeing and welfare. It is now unable to follow the dictates of conscience though given in time, and rather prefers to listen to the enchanting syren songs that lure it to its further fall. We have used the word "*mind*" here as the *exponent of the vital force*, as we are only aware of the activities of the latter by and through this invisible organ.

Thus we see that our mind of to-day (and for the matter of that, our vital force) is entirely bonded with certain evil powers that do not permit it to think, feel, will and act as it should do. It is so much under their influences that it has almost forgot its Divine origin, and it now even takes pleasure to be in the company and control of these evil geniuses that

ride roughshod over it and torment it like a nightmare. But like the foolish dog in the *Fables* with a collar in the neck, we seem ignorant of our bondage, or are rather proud of it, and consider the naive simplicity, veracity and catholicity of a stray neighbour, who may be comparatively free from these satanic toils and snares, as quite unbecoming and unsuitable for this "civilised" and "scientific" age of ours. Nay, he is usually called a "fool" because he is not only himself artless in his thought and speech, manners and actions, but also takes others to be so, even when these latter are deliberately trying to conceal their real entities in the masks of their assumed "civil" and "scientific" selves.

There is an old adage,—"Face is the mirror of the heart." I should like to say,—"Face is the mirror of the mind", though at bottom both the expressions convey the same idea. Try however frantically we may, we can never conceal our mind, but it is sure to have its picture flashed in the face. The face will appear calm and quiet, or agitated and tormented, according as peace and harmony, or war and discord reigns within and these are some of the implications of this facial reflection.

- (a) All external expressions are but the manifestations of internal workings.
- (b) It is one of Nature's plans, to maintain the effulgent equilibrium of her internal economy, to throw out as much of the internal venom and gloom as she possibly can.
- (c) Honesty or wickedness, virtue or vice, cannot possibly have a better means of natural expression, and consequent appreciation or depreciation.

Our system of medicine is inseparably connected with morality, and in fact the Chronic Miasms that are the main causes of all human sufferings (the so-called immediate causes being only of the nature of a sounding board) owe their origin to our unpardonable defaults in morality. We regret our moral deflection commenced even in our first parents, as said before. Before their fall, they had no false modesty, no special privacy, no thought of concealment at all. But after it, they are a different being altogether. There is no need of further

details, as these are known to all, but what I want to impress is the infinite power every Divine Law is backed with. As soon as a Law is broken, the transgressor is followed with such a tremendous force that the very inner chambers of his heart throb and palpitate, shake and quake even in the solitude. The delinquent is not the same man inwardly he was before the breach of the Law, but a world of anxiety and an enormous amount of fear upset the equilibrium of his mind, and disturb the smooth and even tenor of his life. The ripple of discord thus raised continues to be fanned by further transgressions until the inner accord and harmony is almost entirely replaced. Under such a state of things, the vital force is unable to supply the various organs including the mind with the normal powers of sensations and functions. Itself being distuned and deranged, it can at most supply only a modicum amount of morbid energy to the various units and organs of the body, and these latter, being tainted and poisoned at the spring, will only emit fire and brimstone in thier turn. The currents of our thoughts, feelings and sentiments as well as our volitional tendencies all get spoiled and polluted, and we begin to take pleasure in all sorts of unnatural thoughts, undesirable feelings, unseemly sentiments and immoral acts. Ill-feeling, envy, malice, and hatred take the place of fellow-felling, friendship, brotherhood and love. The very fountain of life being thus soiled, the very source of harmony being thus distuned, the very crucible of beauty being thus destroyed, we can easily imagine what the consequences may be. There is disorder in the mental as well as in the physical sphere, and if not actual dementia or insanity, the mind has its frequent deviations and aberrations, and the body gets gradually filled with various disease-effects and ultimates.

Life is purity, and purity is health. So long we are pure in thinking, feeling and willing, we enjoy a perfect health, for body, as we have already said, is but the vehicle of our mind—nay the latter is but the formative principle of the former. Hence the pure and chaste life of the ancient was responsible

for their freedom from miasmatic influences to a very great extent. We therefore find very little traces of the virulency of the chronic miasms in the philosophic life of the ancient Aryans, in the pure and athletic life of ancient Greece and Rome, in the religious life of the Israelites, Egyptians and Babylonians, and later in the life of penance and mortification of the Buddhists, though indeed all these peoples had a conception of what Hahnemann has called Psora as an eruptive disease—a kind of pruritus, but never, as a basic miasm—the parent of all diseases. Moreover, in ancient times, especially in India, the people had implicit faith in their reigning sovereigns whom they regarded as incarnations of Divine Spirit, and whom they followed, almost literally, even in their dry details of life; and these ruling princes were universally of such a high and noble character that they considered their subjects even dearer than their nearest and dearest relatives, and in fact were a physical embodiment of all the cardinal virtues taught in treatises on Morality and Religion. Really, the people were so enamoured of their patriotic chief that they almost forgot their separate existence and merged their individualities in them. This admirable and most beneficent inter-relation and inter-dependence of the sovereign and the people has been very nicely expressed by Vishnusarma in his Hitopodhsha, Vighraha, where he says—

“The people are the lotus-leaves, their monarch is the sun—
 When he doth sink beneath the waves, they vanish every one.
 When he doth rise, they rise again with bud and blossom rife.
 To bask awhile in his warm smile, who is their lord and
 life”—

(Arnold's translation)

Thus, like the sun in purity and nobility, in grandeur and beneficence, the monarch was always an ideal object of imitation to his subjects who, with such a moral and religious luminary to guide their course, never deviated in their conduct, nor erred in their dealings, but like the magnetic needle were always true to themselves and to others. Hence it is easy to

observe that the life as these ancients lived was too pure and transparent to distune and disturb the symphonious harmony of the vital substance and thereby to generate and spread the Chronic Miasms of the virulent nature and type the present-day people throughout the world are suffering from and groaning under. Not that we mean to say that the people in the early ages of the world were entirely free from these Miasms but that these pests of humanity did not then develop to the extent as they have now done, so much so that the passions and inclinations of "reason-gifted" human beings require, like those of ferocious wild animals, to be curbed and controlled to-day by the Police and the State; and faced with such a dreadfully fallen state of society, that high-priest of political philosophy, Burke, had to write in his *French Revolution*.

"Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants. Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body as well as in the individuals *the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection.*" (The italics are ours).

Alas! What a deplorable state of society we are in! To curb our passions and propensities, we require the help of "the baton" or "the bayonet"!! what further testimony does anybody require of the completeness of our moral degradation, due to perfect bondage of the Miasms with the life-force? Even the lower animals can be depended on for the proper use of their passions and propensities, because they follow *Instinct* quite instinctively; and instincts being natural provisions for the conduct of life, they are more infallible than reason in securing their ends, and in this behalf we have the testimony of Somerville;

"Let cavillers deny
That brutes have Reason ; sure 'tis something more,
'Tis Heaven directs, and stratagems inspire,
Beyond the short extent of human thought."

Pope also writes—

"Say, where full Instinct is th'unerring guide,
What Pope or Council can they need beside ?"

Thus, it is clear that the lower animals, though guided by "blind" Instincts, are conducting their lives much better than the highest of His creations on earth are able to do with their "rational" impulses. Hente it is that inspite of legions of doctors and quacks of the orthodox school as well as of the indigenous medicine, with their dispensaries or "dens," the unhappy human family, with the original curse on its back, is getting more and more unhappy, and we dare say so long the "moral leprosy" of the human race is not cured, its physical ailments will never have an end.

The empiric school of medicine pays scanty regard to the wonderful effects of heredity and rebirth on the spread and propegation of the Miasmatic influences, as these are things that cannot be sensed, though they are quite in accord with the order of things in the universe. If the results of our deeds and doings do not reflect and redound on us and our progeny, who on earth shall care to lead a good life at all? The very thought that the consequences of our mis-deeds will not only torment us here and hereafter, but also visit and torture our innocent offspring cannot but goad us to mend our ways, and thus avert all these calamities to us and to our children as far as possible. But the orthodox school will scarcely think with Schelling that—

"Our deeds follow us from afar

And what we have been makes us what we are."

Unless therefore proper attention be paid to educate our mind and improve and elevate the standard of our life up to the scale set up by Nature, mere improvement in the science and art of medicine, of any school whatsoever, will be of very little avail in reducing and palliating human sufferings and diseases, far less removing and curing them.

(to be continued)