

ETIOLOGY IN HOMŒOPATHY.

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

"We are like minnows in the creek trying to fathom the depths
of the Ocean beyond."—*Plint*—Theism.

The theory of causality is as old as the Universe. Everything that exists does so because of its cause. None can conceive of an effect without having a simultaneous conception of its cause. This concept of causality is a very comprehensive term & includes in its connotation more ideas than one, but our present discourse of thought precludes its other side-issues and we are here concerned mainly with its material (empiric) and dynamic aspects.

Now, from the standpoint of materialism, rather I should say, empiricism which is only a refined and tasteful substitute, cause may be defined to be the invariable and unconditional antecedent of which the effect is but the natural consequence; in other words, the effect is only a transformation of the cause under certain circumstances, in space and time. What existed as cause, now presents before our eyes as effect in an altered form; and in this transformation of cause into effect, various laws of the several physical Sciences come into play, viz., the law of Definite proportions, the Law of Chemical Affinity, the Laws of Heat, Light and Electricity; the Law of Conservation of Energy, and so forth. Though this School of thought often refers to some 'power' or 'force', existing in the effect and arising out of the Chemical combination or mechanical modification of the various causal ingredients, yet the champions of this theory never acknowledge the separate existence, *per se*, of any 'power', 'force' or 'dynamis', which is beyond the jurisdiction of their five senses or allied aids—the only means of acquiring knowledge worth the name or worth having. They argue—"what can not be sensed can have no existence." This regrettable perversion of modern 'Scientific' mentality has been best described by Carlyle in his Essay on Signs of the Times, and I may be excused to reproduce his forceful statement. He says—"The science of the age is physical, chemical,

physiological; in all shapes mechanical. Nay, our whole Metaphysics itself, from Locke's time downwards, has been physical; not a spiritual philosophy, but a material one. This condition of the two great departments of knowledge,—its outward, cultivated exclusively on mechanical principles; the inward, finally abandoned, because, cultivated on such principles, it is found to yield no result,—sufficiently indicates the intellectual bias of our time, its all-pervading disposition towards that line of enquiry. In fact, an inward persuasion has long been diffusing itself, and now and then even comes to utterance, "That, what can not be investigated and understood mechanically, can not be investigated and understood at all." In the eyes of these 'scientific' people, thus materially or empirically ingrained, and, as a result thereof, entirely void of perception—the only mode of true vision, namely, seeing with the understanding, the real nature of disease can never flash its picture, but it remains, as it should do, ever and eternally unknown. They only see and are satisfied with the external and the ultimate and take up the disease-effects to be the actual disease itself, as, in fact, nothing else can be sensed with their five senses, even with the most refined aid of the various up-to-date instruments and appliances. Out of this mistaken notion of disease, there arises the absurd and grotesque idea of the self-same patient suffering at one and the same time from various so-called 'diseases' which are not actually so many diseases but in reality the results, effects, 'ultimates, sensible embodiments in the organism of one and the same disease that has dominated the vital force and deranged its normal activities. With the adherents of such a misconception of disease, the causal idea thereof can not but be of an allied nature. They trace causality to the inflowing into the system, through one or more of its openings, something *material* alleged to contain the disease-germ or disease-poison of an injurious and infectious nature, and definitely attribute it to this *matter* thus inflowed, conveniently forgetting, as however they can not, consistently with their system of thought, do otherwise, that it has no causative power, no creative influence, no propelling force, its natural state being that of inertia, rest, quietude and silence. And here again, as in their conception of disease, they

land us in an absolutely impossible situation; the alleged cause *essentially* void of 'force' or 'power' is still said to contain the 'power' or 'force' to induce a morbid change in the economy, to derange its sensations and functions, and finally to produce the organic changes which they, however, designate, no doubt in keeping with their conception, as so many 'diseases' existing *pari passu* in the same system. Thus in brief is the fallacious theory of the Dominant School based on false premises and leading to most contradictory conclusions. We have thought it desirable to enter into this preliminary discourse of their stand-point so that, our point of view, which we are now going to study, will be, by contrast, more lucid and clear, and its supreme excellence and unique merits more perfectly brought to light.

We, Homœopaths, start on a fundamentally different basis which is quite in accord with the actual order of things in the universe. To make the matter clear, we have to discuss these points—(a) our conception of man, (b) our conception of disease, and (c) our conception of causality. Let me take up these *seriatim* :

(a) Our conception of man : By man, we do not mean a mere chemical compound, his sensations and functions arising as a result thereof, as also the vital force. Our conception of man is that of an indwelling, reason-gifted spirit which you may call by the name of 'Ego', 'Self' or 'Soul', as you like, and the vital force as a power subordinate to it but co-existent with the life of the body, unlike the Ego or the Soul which survives its dissolution into the elements it came from. Thus, the vital force which pervades the body through and through, throbbing with every nerve—motor or sensory, and pulsating with every cell and capillary however small and microscopic, is not a mere by-product of physical laws and chemical affinity, but a separate force, a dominant power that rules the body from centre to circumference and has absolute control over it, the Soul or the Ego being in too high a stratum spiritually to be interested in such matters or to be touched by the usual affections of the body due to derangement of the vital force in the manner and by causes to be hereafter discussed. We here take the liberty to call the vital force as the vice-gerent (not vice-regent, be it noted, which is a different concept altogether)

of the Soul. When we are in health, this vital force enjoys absolute freedom, all its activities are quite free and unhampered, as in fact health means complete freedom. When we enjoy perfect health, we do not, so to speak, feel our bodily existence at all. We go on with our sensation and function in such a normal way that their workings are not felt at all. Whenever there is any check, impediment, hindrance or obstacle to this freedom of our sensations and functions, our attention is at once diverted to it, and the intensity of our feeling, usually painful, is according to the nature and volume of the obstacle in question. Now comes this question, 'why this normal and free activity of the vital force is hampered at all?' Originally, it was, of course excluding the effects of heredity, quite free in its movements. What, then, led to its subsequent *partial* loss of freedom (we do not say *complete*, for that would mean death)? The solution of these problems at once takes us to our discussion of the second point noted before viz.,—

(b) Our conception of disease: The vital force is *partially* deprived of its free movements and activities, because of the derangement of its powers. It is no longer in its original state which was the state of complete freedom. It has now been *diseased*. It has lost its unhampered power of action, and it has now to work under certain impediments and checks which, in spite of its best endeavours, it is unable to overcome by its own unaided efforts. This impediment, this obstruction, this obstacle to the free and normal activities of the vital force is what we mean by *disease*, and the so-called 'diseases' of the dominant School viz., various kinds of fevers, enlargement of liver and spleen, ovarian and uterine troubles, renal and cystic complanits, palpitation of the heart and blood pressure, head-ache and stomach-ache (dyspepsia), and so forth, are either disease-effects, or more outward sensible symbols of the disease, helping the physician in his diagnosis and prescription, and these outward and sensible manifestations are never intended by Nature herself to be taken as so many 'diseases' for separate or conjoint treatment, locally by outward application or generally by internal administration.

To put it briefly, then, disease is derangement of the vital force, and is of two kinds—acute and chronic. Now, let me explain, in

passing, the nature and peculiarity of acute and chronic diseases, unlike our Allopathic confreres, we attach very little importance to time to distinguish acute from chronic diseases. A disease of a day's duration may even be chronic, while that continuing for a week or month may still be acute, and mere duration is of little consequence to make out the distinction. The actual difference is this: an *acute* disease is one that has an inherent tendency to run out its course, has got a period of prodrome, of progress, and of decline, and, unless complicated by one or more of the chronic miasms, and provided the patient is kept under strict hygienic rules, will in all probability leave the organism after the expiry of the stage of decline, though the patient, after the course of the acute disease is run over, may not be the same man as he or she was before the attack, so far as his or her physical and mental strength and stamina are concerned. But this is a different question altogether—weakness is one thing and disease, another. The former may be overcome by regulation of diet, exercise, etc., but the latter requires adequate physicking before it is removed. Acute disease then is self-healing—it has a natural proneness and aptitude to heal itself, provided other circumstances do not stand in the way. We may cite small-pox as a perfect type of 'acute disease'. But our *chronic* diseases are not of this nature—they have got no inherent tendency, no natural proneness, no innate aptitude to heal themselves, like acute diseases, they too have got a period of prodrome, but the period of progress is not only indefinite, they have no declining stage at all, unless under the action and influence of suitable and appropriate remedies. If not duly and properly treated with appropriate medicine, these will gradually sap the foundation of the entire organism, finally bringing about its decay and death. There is another peculiarity; the main causes of these chronic diseases do not come from without, but lie deep within the very organism itself and do not allow the diseases to run out their course, as in acute ones. These internal enemies are quite hidden within the organism, and, from their safe seclusion, are always ready with deadly weapons to attack and ruin the very organism itself, though therein they live, move and have their being. These subtle

adversaries are more than a match for the organism to overcome by its own unaided efforts, and if not duly assailed and destroyed with the help and assistance of a stronger ally—an appropriate remedy of a suitable potency, they are sure to overcome it and make a prey of it in the long run. These internal foes are Psora, Syphilis, and Sycosis. Their remote origin, rapid growth and extensive development throughout the big family of mankind will be fully dealt with in our discussion of the third point noted before viz., our conception of causality.

(c) Our conception of causality. The concept of causality in our science is inseparably connected with some other allied concepts which require to be fully explained before we can understand it at all. These are :—(i) the concept of Substance, (ii) the concept of Chronic Miasm, and (iii) the concept of Susceptibility.* The real meaning and significance of causality depending entirely on the clear, full and perfect understanding of these concepts, it is necessary that we should first explain and elucidate, as clearly as possible, the meaning and significance of each of these latter. We therefore take them up one by one.

First, (i) *the concept of Substance*. Now, let us see what substance really is. There was a heated discussion on the subject even in the very ancient times, and in this respect, Indian thought and Indian solution of the problem were the best and most consistent that reflection and reason could arrive at. Our present object in view and space allowed forbidding, we regret we cannot enter into a thorough discussion of the problem of substance that engaged the acute attention of the various conflicting Schools of Indian thought and philosophy, from the gross materialism of the Charvakas to the most refined pantheism (Vedantism) of Sankaracharyya, and that pervaded the ancient Grecian atmosphere through and through, finding its most potent embodiment in the exquisite utterances and oral teachings of that martyr of a sage, Socrates, who, for his simplicity, love of learning and burning desire to regenerate his people, had to sacrifice his life by drinking the fatal hemlock. Indeed, such has ever been the world's appreciative reward for those noble souls who dedicated their lives for its advancement and amelioration, purification and regeneration. Such

exactly was the fate of the founder of Christianity. The founder of Islam and the founder of Homœopathy had almost a similar fate: though not actually poisoned or put to the cross, they had to go through a life long trial of tortures and tribulations at the hands of their very countrymen whose spiritual regeneration and physical well being were the only objects of their thought by day and their dreams by night.

• Returning now from this digression to our main subject, we find the same problem of simple substance was, after Socrates, taken up by Plato, the greatest of his disciples, and then by the famous founder of that peculiar Nicomachean Logic, Aristotle, each discussing the matter from his own standpoint. Since then many a thinker throughout the world have attempted to explain and elucidate the inscrutable nature of simple substance in their own peculiar way but for our present purposes, we shall consider here only the theistic—rather the pantheistic view according to which *a substance is a universal individualised—an idea realised in the concrete*. The concrete is what it is by reason of the moulding influence of the Idea or Substance. Substance, to be a substance, must be *in* the objects of which it is the essence, and not outside them. The Real or Substantial is not something beyond but inside the things which derive their reality from it. Without it, a thing has no meaning and no being. Thus, Substance, Form, Idea or Reality is not beyond the concrete and the individual; it is implicated in the very nature of the things of sense which acquire a meaning by reference to it. *The substance is, so to speak, the formative principle of things*. The substance is thus the actual, while the matter is but the potential: the former, operating in nature as a universal principle, moulds the latter according to its requirements and gives it the reality which it can possibly attain. *A concrete substance is thus the merging of potentiality in actuality*. Each concrete substance then has got an inner formative principle that moulds it and gives it the shape and size it is capable of having. From the apparently lifeless block of Silica to the beautiful living organism of man, that is, from the very lowest to the highest order of existence, everything in this universe is sustained and kept in its place by the influence and working of this indwelling formative

principle, this simple substance. Our body is but the product and vehicle of our Thought, the external manifestation of the internal actuality. Hence it is that the body cannot but reflect the actual condition of the principle within. The disease is within—the disorder is in the vital principle. The body which is but a sensible manifestation of the substance within, simply shows by signs and symbols whatever change there appears in the normal workings of the latter. The body by itself can have no disease, as disease means want of order, want of freedom; and these attributes cannot be referred to anything other than a simple substance. Even the popular conception of disease completely corroborates this idea. It says—"I am ill, I have a headache, I have got diarrhoea, etc.," and what does this 'I' refer to? Certainly not to the external physical shape called 'body,' but to that internal essence that dwells within it, animates it and keeps it in existence. To put it in another way, disease is not in the physical, material plane, but far beyond that; itself being of the nature of simple substance, it affects the very simple substance—the internal spiritual force that pervades the body, as *all action and reaction postulate similarity, if not identity, of the plane or stratum* serving as the background for such action and reaction. Hence, anything in a physical or material plane can never act or reach on another in a spiritual plane. Now, it will be clear why the orthodox School of medicine speaks of the body being diseased, and not the spiritual vital force within, as all the alleged sick-making causes being material entities are only in the material plane and cannot, consistently with the postulates and axioms of the physical sciences, affect anything in a higher stratum.

So far we have shown *generally* that both the vital force, and the disease that deranges its normal activities are simple substances. Now, let us *specifically* deal with some of the most prominent attributes of simple substance that have immediate reference to our point of view.

1. *Cohesion and Adaptation.* There are two worlds—the world of thought or simple substance, and the world of gross matter, and the admirable adaptation in the material world is due to this simple substance. All order, harmony and beauty in nature owe their origin to it, and they so exist because their maintaining cause

continues to be inflowd in them. The death of organic bodies and the decay and dissolution of the inorganic mean nothing but their separation from the simple substance that brought them into existence, gave them a nice shape or body and allowed them to run their course in the most methodical and harmonious way, so much so that though the individual interests of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms are quite different from one another, they never clash and conflict, far less collide, though all of them are eternally after the fulfilment of their own interests. This beautiful cosmos out of chaos, this unity in variety, would have never been possible at all but for the indwelling fulfilment of the simple substance. Now, look to our body. What is it? Is it not a wonderful adaptation of individual parts for the beauty, harmony and excellence of the whole? Each bone, each tissue, each cell, has got its own individual place in the economy, and individual function to perform, but the aggregate and joint functions of all the bones, tissues and cells never come into conflict or collide with one another; rather, the actions and functions of all are done in such a beautiful and harmonious way that they merge their individual differences in the universal good of the whole system and its complete harmony. All this is possible,—this harmonious welding together of individual parts, this orderly method of sensations and functions of each and all the numerous individual organs, this nice adaptability of one organ for the easiest functioning of another—all this is possible, simply because of the indwelling essence whence this order, harmony, beauty and adaptability flow. Thus, in brief, is one of the attributes of simple substance: That it holds together the individual parts of concrete substances in the most beautiful and harmonious manner, enabling each of such parts to go on with its peculiar functions without ever clashing or colliding with those of other parts, but all together maintaining the harmony and beauty of the whole.

2. *Pervasion.* A simple substance pervades a concrete material body through and through: it is present in all its parts however small and microscopic. Let me illustrate this principle by examples. Let us take a block of Silica. A block of Silica would not have been so but for the indwelling or, more properly, the pervading existence of the simple substance within. Had it not been so, the minute

conceptual atoms making up the block would have never cohered together but have separated and fallen asunder, making it impossible for such a block to exist. It is because the simple substance pervades each and all the atoms of the block that cohere at all and the block exists. Now, this principle of pervasion has an important bearing on our theory of medicine and of potentiation. For medicinal purposes, we potentiate, say, a grain of Silica, having a number of small atoms. From what has been already said it is no doubt clear and quite evident that the visible, sensible, material atoms *per se* can have no power or potency but for the indwelling simple substance that pervades them, and in the act of potentiation we do not potentiate the actual, visible, material atoms themselves but their inherent power or potency due to the indwelling simple substance pervading them. Now, it is obvious that this process of potentiation, that is, increasing the degrees of power, or raising the plane of potency to a higher level, is possible at all because the medicinal substance to be potentiated, *essentially* possesses the power however low the original level, or intensity may be. Had there been no such innate power at all, no amount of rubbing, triturating, shaking or concussing would result in the production of the least show of power, not to speak of the actuality thereof. This is exactly the case in the natural production of conflagration in forests in a stormy weather. The branches of living trees (not necessarily *dead and dry*) coming in frequent and forcible contact with each other give birth to such a dreadful fire as consumes the forest to a great extent, illustrating the principle of potentiation in the natural world, and showing how enormously increased the inherent power is by dynamisation. Ignition by friction of steel with a flint is also a common example of natural potentiation.

Thus, by the process of potentiation, we simply rouse the inherent power sleeping as it were in its dormant state but capable of *infinite* elevation and expansion, itself being of the nature of a simple substance. Hence it is that there is *no limit* to our potentiation. Had the medicinal substance been incapable of such infinite elevation and expansion, that is, had it not been a simple substance, there would have certainly been a limit to our potentiating process —there would have been “a thus far, and no further.” But that

is not the case. We are quite at liberty to develop the medicinal virtues of our remedies to the extent of our requirements, and to raise the limit of our potency as high as we like. This process of potentisation, let me repeat—as repetition often helps the understanding, is possible at all because the simple substance *pervades* the concrete material object through and through. Now, what is true of Silica is true of other objects. Among others, let me take up the human organism for a further verification of the principle of pervasion.

It goes without saying that the skeleton of our body is made up of a very large number of bones, admirably joined together by ligaments and tendons, and covered over with a tough fibrous membrane called the periosteum which serves the purpose of their outer coating. Then, throughout the whole skeleton there are innumerable glands, muscles, nerves, veins, arteries, capillaries, tissues and cells, all arranged in a harmonious way and protected first by the corium and then by the cuticle from any sudden external injury. Each of the above, while having an individual and separate existence of its own with an individual and separate function, is so wonderfully joined together with all the rest that whenever there is even the slightest injury to any of the cells, e. g., a tiny thorn pricked in the sole, all the rest of the body feels it in sympathy and directs its entire energy to remove the thorn and heal up the injured cell, if possible (and the need of medication comes in only after the failure of this attempt.) Now, the body has got a legion of cells, and only one of them has been injured; still the injury resounds and reverberates through the whole system, like an electric shock. How is this possible at all? It is possible because each of the individual cells, while maintaining its individuality, is closely and inseparably connected with all the rest, because of the *pervasion* of the simple substance, the vital force, through each and all of them. As said before, this vital force so pervades the organism that it throbs with every cell of it, however small and microscopic. The necessary implication of this pervasion of the vital force are these: (a) The organism, though made up of so many parts, is still a complete and perfect whole; (b) A disease, truly speaking, is not an affection of any of the parts forming the organism but *pervades* the entire

organism itself ; and (c) our curative agents, to be curative, must be capable of working in the same plane as that of the simple vital force they are intended to cure, i. e., they themselves must be reduced to simple substances.

3. *Formation and construction.* The simple substance is essentially formative and constructive. This wonderful world, with its universal order, harmony and beauty, is the creation of the Primary Simple Substance, or to put it in another way, the hardiwork of God—our common father. This noble sentiment has been so nobly expressed in the following lines that I am tempted to quote them :

“Thou art, O God, *the life and light,*
Of all this wondrous world we see ;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflexions caught from Thee.
Where'er we turn, Thy glories shine,
All things fair and bright are Thine.”

(The italics are ours.)

Thus, all the simple concrete objects of the universe have derived their “life and light” from God, the Primary Source of all life and existence, and all its constant wear and tear is being constantly repaired by the formative and constructive Principle within. Likewise, our vital substance—the formative and constructive principle within, is always after the repair of all wear and tear that our body may sustain during the ordinary course of its existence, and after the removal of all lesion and injury—natural or mechanical, that it may have during such a course. But occasionally there comes a time when the vital force is unable, owing to reasons to be hereafter elaborated, either to repair this wear and tear or to remove this lesion and injury. The nand then only the question of medical help comes in.

4. *Time, space and weight.* Time, space and weight cannot be predicated of a simple substance, as it partakes of the nature of the infinite : in other words, it is neither limited in time nor in space ; neither has it any weight at all. Thus, our vital principle has no time-limit—days, months and years have no duration for it, far less any limitation, whereas these latter have any meaning only with

reference to our body. Similarly, it is not confined to any particular place in the body, but co-exists and pervades the whole of it. We cannot say, the vital force resides in the brain, preferably in the cerebrum—the highest and noblest of all the organs, and not in the nostrils and the anus, as these latter always evacuate foul matter. But it should be remembered that the brain as well as the nostrils and the anus are going on with their functions because the vital principle is there in each case, and each of them would at once cease functioning as soon as it is away, i. e., in death. Nor has it any weight at all; in other words, the weight of the body is not increased because of the indwelling vital substance. In case of need, it may be verified by comparing the weight of an animal at the point of death, and immediately after death ensues. Having no weight, a simple substance is not subject to any increase or decrease, production or reduction, expansion or contraction—of course from the standpoint of *quantity*, though it is subject to all such processes, under certain circumstances, from the standpoint of *quality*, that is, so far as its degrees of refinement are concerned, or to speak in another way, so far as its degrees of dissociation from its attachment to the world of matter are concerned. Now, to speak from our point of view, the sixth potency of Silica has not the same degree of refinement, the same degree of dissociation from the world of matter as the 30th which again has not the same quality of purification, the same standard of elevation as the 200th which latter again in its turn is at a great qualitative and dynamic distance from the 1000th and so on *ad infinitum*. Let us shift our venue to the human family. What was the simple vital substance of Ratnakar doing? The man in the street will answer it;—leading the most despicable and detestable life of a nocturnal waylayer, robbing and plundering, even by killing, in case of need, the innocent and unwary passers-by, wherewith to support himself and his family. Do you think it is the same simple vital substance of Ratnakar indwelling the physical frame of that first and greatest of India's lyric poets, Valmiki, hidden deep within the ant-hill but plunged in the unfathomable depths of divine meditation and contemplation? No, certainly not. The simple vital substance of Ratnakar has undergone a world of *qualitative change* (not

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quantitative, be it noted), has attained a great deal of purification and refinement, has been able to dissociate itself to a very great extent (but *not completely*, for that would mean the merging of the human in the Divine Soul, and consequent annihilation of the human frame) from its attachment to the world of matter that is always acting as an obstacle to its spiritual progress; in other words, the indwelling vital principle of Valmiki though maintaining its identity with that of Ratnakar, has raised itself to such an Olympian spiritual height that we cannot recognise the identity any longer. Just as our remedies are capable of potentiation by *outward physical means* viz., rubbing, triturating, shaking or succussing, so the human vital substance is likewise capable of potentiation, i. e., spiritual elevation, by *inward mental means* viz., concentration, contemplation and meditation.

Thus, we see that a simple substance, though maintaining its identity, is still subject to changes, qualitative changes, changes so far as its order, government and constitution are concerned. Just as it is capable of such a qualitative change for its elevation and refinement, as for instance, from the crude medicinal substance of Silica to its high, higher and highest potencies or from the attached and beclouded spirit of Ratnakar to the free and shining soul of Valmiki, so also this simple vital substance is subject to some disorder and derangement in its very government and constitution. This constitutional disorder of the vital force, this qualitative degradation of its essence, this waning of its original effulgence, is due to its own default—is the result of its own misguided energy. This derangement of the vital substance, this want of complete co-operation and co-ordination, this want of absolute unity in variety, this want of perfect accord and harmony in its very essence that is primarily responsible for all its subsequent ailments and allied sufferings, owed its origin, alas! and subsequent slow but steady growth and development to the disobedience of our first parents. This want of perfect accord and harmony in the inner essence of our vital substance has been given the peculiar name of Psora by Hahnemann, the founder of this truly scientific—*nay philosophic* system of medicine. We have now come to the borderland of our second concept viz., the concept of chronic miasm and we reserve the comprehensive treatment of this important subject for the next issue.

(to be continued)