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SOME REMARKS ON CANCER

Why does Cancer loom as a gaunt and terrifying spectre?—the most difficult, one had almost said hopeless, proposition which confronts us?—till we are positively ashamed. In despair we hand it over to the surgeon and let him take the responsibility: and in these days he does ultra-conscientious work, removing tissues far and wide and, as he hopes, all the glands that might possibly be infected, and—it recurs: recurs quite often, quite quickly and in a variety of foci. After such experiences, one's most difficult and responsible problem is, what advice to give in regard to operation. In inoperable cases one is relieved of responsibility. But in early cases, knowing that if they are for removal, the sooner the better, how far are we justified in attempting to treat the patient with remedies that can, and do, modify the evil and prolong life, and which, even in the most advanced stages, may give euthanasia.

A couple of years ago we watched for months the effect of a certain injection into the tumour, which killed the cancerous mass in a few hours. We saw that, even while it was sloughing out, the surrounding healthy tissues were drawing in, with rapid healing to the resultant ulcer: the patient's whole aspect changing for the better meanwhile. One fondly imagined a solution of the cancer problem! But, alas, as always, after-history proved that CANCER IS NOT A LOCAL

DISEASE, but is, or is based on, chronic systemic intoxication ; and that, as Hahnemann maintains, the destruction of the local manifestation may only mean that the disease, no longer "hushed and calmed" by the superficial lesion in which it has "ultimated", "breaks forth anew and increases to a fearful height"; proving again that cancer is more than a mere shapeless mass that can be safely eradicated :—for, in every case of the above series except one, and in most of them quite rapidly, fatal recurrences occurred.

Radium, again ; that marvellous cancer-curer—as it issues from the Pressman's pen !—kills living tissues exposed to it, and can kill cancer. Radium, used with infinite care and knowledge, would be ideal—if cancer were a local disease. It has caused local cancer : it kills local cancer : but the evidence has yet to be adduced that it can cure a patient of cancer. And, oh ! the after-horrors of radium treatment as we have seen it !—possibly maladministered ? A poignant tragedy of to-day has just been told us. One of the most charming of men had spent a very large sum on the radium treatment which "had cured cancer in his throat". But "a dose too many had destroyed his larynx", and this, in a frightful state, had now to be removed by operation. He was at the limit of his resources and "had to go into the public ward of his hospital." . . . Happily he died.

Such are not "cures" as envisaged by Hahnemann, who says : "*The highest aim of healing is the speedy, gentle, permanent restoration to health, or alleviation and obliteration of disease, in its entire extent, in the shortest, most reliable and safest manner, according to clearly intelligible reasons.*"

Had we only gone back to Hahnemann and worked on his lines "producing" them, one is gradually coming to see that we might have attained immeasurably greater success in the treatment of chronic diseases : might possibly have solved, ere now, the major problem of cancer : i.e. not how to destroy it, but how to so stimulate the reactive powers of the patient

that, having no further use for the metastasis, it shall atrophy;—perhaps even, re-absorb and disappear. Dr. William Koch of Detroit, in his amazing booklet *Natural Immunity*, suggests—even proves this possibility. That is the ideal. • Can we perhaps envisage it—the possible etiology, with the possible solution of the cancer problem ?

All chronic diseases, for Hahnemann (after years of brooding and study), were *chronic parasitic infections*. These, once introduced, and after a first brief period of incubation, during which, unobserved, they permeated the whole organism; and after a second brief period of intense warfare, during which the tainted organism fought furiously to burn them out by means of fever, and to cast them forth on the surface where, if not destroyed, they would be less menacing to life, became again latent: but survived to perish only with the host . . . unless combated and overcome by a remedy of analogous symptoms (homœopathic) to the original acute malady.

Latent disease, as we all know, may be extraordinarily quiescent and quite unsuspected. The patient may not be ill, and yet is never well: until, as Hahnemann points out, shock, misery, trauma—mental or physical, lowers resistance; when things begin to happen.

And here it is significant that not only is trauma now generally recognized as the localizing agent of cancer: but shock, bereavement, overwork, anxiety have all been brought forward as exciting or contributing causes. How? By lowering resistance and thus giving the latent enemy his opportunity. Were there no latent enemy skulking in the stronghold of life, all these things would be comparatively innocuous and easily recovered from—once the occasion had passed.

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Let us pause to ask, *Is cancer a disease?* Someone points out a curious and suggestive fact, that *the body never reacts to cancer*. In its early stages there are no symptoms: no pain,

no fever; nothing to suggest impending tragedy. Instead of the ill-health one would expect, the victim may be even more than usually well, when—a lump is accidentally discovered—say in the breast. One has so often been told, "No, I am very well: I *did* have rheumatism, but I do not have it now." And one can find absolutely nothing on which to base a homœopathic prescription. This is our great difficulty in the treatment of early cancer. Later, it is the secondary, often mechanical symptoms that cause the suffering incident to the disease. These begin with the shock of the discovery and the mental unrest and torment of its well-known possibilities. As growth increases, pressure on nerves accounts for the sharp pains, and later on there is the discomfort and terror of ever-advancing glandular involvement. Only at last comes the breaking down of the abnormal tissue growth, and its infection with pyogenic organisms.

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And now for a possible etiology of malignant disease, as it unfolds itself to the imagination, and which is, in Dr. Koch's teaching (and Hahnemann's), Nature's heroic attempt to localize, even to combat, the real malady.

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Let us start with *chronic measles** or *chronic diphtheria*, as two of the possible underlying, or real disease-conditions; because these two, at least, judging by the effects of their nosodes (already seen in a very few cases of cancer), may presumably, according to this new theory of cancer production, be basic.

You see that "*Vaccinosis*" (Burnett's chronic condition supervening, in some cases, on vaccination), so far as one has read and observed, tends rather to the production or perpetuation of skin and nerve lesions. *Chronic Typhoid*, as has been

* This seems to be recognized among the poor in Scotland, where in the Out-patient departments a mother will say, "I don't know what's wrong with him, but I think it's the dregs of the measles"

shown, may lead to suppurations, in which the original organism flourishes. Chronic *streptococcal* infections, after scarlet fever, tonsillitis (especially in the young), are apt to ultimate in chorea, then rheumatism, with, too often, damaged heart—damaged for life; and even in that deadly “septic endocarditis”. We will venture then, to start with other acute diseases, never really recovered from, taking *measles* and *diphtheria*, as two of the possible underlying latent conditions which may favour the formation of malignant tumours.*

And now the individual—one of millions who take no hurt, gets a “nasty” blow on the breast. This means a few ruptured vessels, a swelling, some tenderness, possibly a bruising. Instantly the preparations for repair are set in motion; an increased blood-supply; a leucocytosis; and in, say, a week’s time the injury is repaired, and the damage cleared away.

But, instead, the induration persists. WHY? Because here, in the suggestive phraseology of Hahnemann, the latent disease “ultimates”:—just as latent typhoid, even after half a century† of apparent inaction, may ultimate in a compound fracture, which refuses to mend, and in whose pus the typhoid organism is discovered. *Damaged tissues may evidently provide a nidus for germs or virus.* These, causing irritation, may induce a continuous effort at repair in an abnormal blood supply to the damaged part. Of which abnormal blood supply the irritated cells take advantage with rank growth at the expense of surrounding tissues; and, by exercising undue pressure on adjacent parts, in time cause atrophy of all surrounding structures, including nerves and involving skin. The nutritional and structural balance of the area is upset: a vicious circle is established. Here you have, surely, all the elements of malignancy?

* And not only malignant tumours: for a most refractory “rheumatoid” case at last shows signs of definite improvement, on *Morbillinum*.

† See *Homoeopathy*, December 1938, p. 371.

Still later, a few cells, carried off in the enlarged veins (always in evidence in these cases) or drained away by the lymphatics, may impinge elsewhere, especially where blocked off in glands, carrying with them the disease elements, besides ingrafting themselves where they do not belong, to establish secondary infections: spreading over wider and wider areas, upsetting everywhere the normal healthy balance of nutrition and pressure. Truly, a systemic revolution, inevitably leading, where *abnormal stimulation, over-nutrition, disastrous pressure and intoxication* have gone too far, to local death. At this period, with the resulting opening up of ulceration, pyogenic organisms enter the field. Finally, with the blood-stream, and the lymphatic system alike poisoned and disease-bearing, pain, suffering, offensiveness and exhaustion supervene, and the patient dies.

Here, then, is the theory:—*Latent chronic disease. Trauma. Abnormal irritation. Consequent abnormal nutrition. Abnormal, rank, short-lived growth. Implantation. Destruction. Ulceration. Extending dissolution. Death.*

Here are a few quotations, to the point, from Hahnemann's *Chronic Diseases*. But we will venture to make them more easily grasped by substituting for his term *Psora*, "*infection*". *Psora* was used by him, as he makes clear, to denote deep-seated, non-venereal chronic disease; once acute and infective, now latent. He calls it hydra-headed, because, on it, as he maintained, so many intractable chronic conditions are based.

He says:—"The internal '*infection*' may continue slumbering in the organism for years . . . without becoming developed into a permanent chronic disease."

"Then a trivial cause . . . some severe injury—shock, wound, large burn, fracturing a leg or arm . . . and some one of the infective chronic diseases breaks forth and increases to a fearful height." . . . "The deep-seated latent disturbance which has broken out, and is the mother of such

chronic secondary affections." Elsewhere he instances misery, etc. as causal . . .

"Reason of non-recovery . . . it is the deep-seated infection, slumbering in the inmost recesses of the organism, which the robustest constitution would have been insufficient to expel, unless aided by the efforts of art."

"The chronic infection continues in the organism, and even develops itself from year to year unless it is extinguished and thoroughly cured by art."

"Has cancer of the womb any other origin except such 'infection'?"

"Have different varieties of cancer of the breast any other cause than such 'infection'?"

Such infection is for him "a hydra-headed monster, pregnant with disease."

"The local infection is a secondary vicarious symptom of an internal disease".

"Chronic infections (semivital morbid infections of a parasitical nature) can only be neutralized and annihilated by a more powerful remedy producing analogous effects: it is only by these that the patient can be freed from their effects."

He speaks of "external vicarious symptoms of an internal disease affecting the whole organism." . . .

REITERATIONS, REFLECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Hahnemann says: "It is an easy matter to doubt things which are not before us in visible forms; but this proves nothing; according to the old rule, proving is the business of those who deny, *negantis est probare*."

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"All chronic non-venereal diseases that can neither be cured by regular diet nor favourable circumstances . . . originate in psora" (i.e. in a once-acute, now latent and chronic infection).

* * * * *

"The infection by means of one of the three known

chronic miasms is generally the work of a moment : but the complete development of the disease consequent upon such an infection, throughout the whole organism, requires more time. Not until several days have elapsed, during which the miasmatic disease has completed its internal development, does kind Nature cause that disease to ultimate in some local symptom which receives the internal disease into itself, as it were, and hushes and calms it. The vital forces enjoy a sort of protection in this local symptom, which is formed upon one of the least dangerous parts of the external skin."

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For months the Medical Press has been publishing letters on the "origin of cancer". Alas! they lead—nowhere!

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A once-acute, now chronic disease, often unsuspected, may ultimate in arteries—even in the aorta, and favour the formation of a perfect rockery of "china" plagues to line that most unlikely spot. (We saw the extreme of such a case "on the table" recently).

Is there any reason why other acute diseases, besides the venereal diseases, should not live on, in latent state. From that which we know, we should endeavour to deduce: and to envisage that which we are not yet in a position to prove.

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As one of our doctors points out, "There is no vital reaction to cancer *per se*: and therefore no symptoms to treat from the homeopathic view-point."

In the early stages of, say, breast cancer, a lump is accidentally discovered. There have been no symptoms. The patient often looks, and feels remarkably well. It is only when distress incident on the discovery, and when mechanical and destructive processes supervene, that there are symptoms: and prescribing for the effects of ultimates is not prescribing for the disease: it is merely palliation, not cure, since it has no relation

ficent callus, now, rough and irregular, would more or less surround the shaft; in the midst of which a *sequestrum* might remain, only to be expelled by suppurative processes, establishing a sinus. Various chronic diseases determine varieties of this disastrous process.

But, feed in gradually the indicated homœopathic remedy of the basic ill-health (tuberculosis, for instance) and we see stimulation to better efforts for repair: or rather, Nature's beneficent purposes no longer perverted and frustrated.

What if there were a latent chronic disease engendered by measles—by diphtheria—by any or all of the acute diseases—each of which could block repair when damage accrues to certain tissues.

Might not this explain what has been called *diathesis*?

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It is recent rapidly growing experience with the "nosodes" of past acute disease, used for the various conditions that constitute "Old Chronics", that has made one meditate and discuss their possible use in the treatment of cancer.

—*British Homœopathic Journal*, Jany. '39.

BACK VOLUMES

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to the real, underlying condition. Hence we perceive the importance of prescribing the nosode of the primary acute infection that lies at the root of this threatening and torturing condition.

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Consider, for a moment, INJURY AND REPAIR. How healthy Nature always mends and obliterates; or at the worst, endeavours to make the best of things. She may not be able to perfectly set a broken bone, but she will mend it, where this is possible, and make it strong. Take simple fracture of bone: here the process of repair is absolutely dramatic. Blood and lymph are instantly poured out; there is a leucocytosis. Granulation tissue is formed in the clot by proliferation of *fibroblasts*. The special white cells multiply and swarm to the spot. The *osteoblasts*, to enclose the fracture, and to fill with temporary bone that part of the medullary canal, till it is splinted most perfectly, with an internal rod to strengthen and keep it still; while pain, that guardian angel, gives instant warning should any movement endanger the reparative mechanism. Then, true bone is formed to knit the fractured surfaces. This perfected, the *osteoclasts* get to work, and quietly and imperceptibly remove the scaffolding and restore the medullary canal. And, provided that the position of the fragments was good and maintained, and provided that the patient was in normal health, after a reasonable time nothing remains to betray, even to X-ray, that there had been once such a painful and disabling organic tragedy.

But supposing that the patient had been carrying about a latent, unsuspected, chronic affection, the result might have been different. The very preparations for repair, would have afforded a nidus in which disease could thrive: and "bone-buds" and "bone-eaters", multiplying in an abnormal blood supply due to the irritation of the disease, would take advantage thereof, in irregularity and unbalance. Bone would thicken here, and thin out there. What should be a bene-