

A contribution to the discussion :

T.B. and society

-- B.K. Sinha.

The writer wishes to unite with other participants in understanding and taking the necessary steps leading to the elimination of T.B. Although significant strides in medical science has underlined the fact that almost every body has a chance of winning the battle of life and health against T.B., yet it continues to take a heavy toll of men in productive age. The situation is worse in countries like India.

Technical and scientific mastery over the disease and people succumbing to it, often helplessly, is a reality of our social life. This phenomenon, like every thing that exist in nature is a unity of opposites. All things contain two contradictory aspects and have contradictory, mutually exclusive, opposite tendencies, constantly struggling against and getting transformed into each other, leading to the dissolution of the phenomenon i.e., resolution of the contradiction and transformation thereby of the phenomenon itself.

We must therefore ask the question: why do people succumb to T.B., in a situation in which it is claimed that the drugs have been discovered to eliminate the disease ? Is the claim unreal ? Is the treatment and drugs with which to eliminate the disease do not reach those who succumb to it ? or, are there inadequacies which are being ignored ?.

Let us go into these questions further. The claim of mastery over the disease presupposes that the causes leading to the disease are fully understood and that all of them are accounted for in the treatment leading to its cure. But bodily process are understood in a number of narrowly defined and distinct terms like biochemistry, neurophysiology etc. and no unifying theory has been put forward in medicine that interrelates all these ways of looking at human organism. Besides, the very instruments we use can impose a limitation on the kind of information we can obtain. Moreover, with the advances in science, unknowability has become a factor in complex computation. In view of all this it may not be scientific enough for a scientist to point physical cause of the disease.

On the other hand, there is growing awareness to define health as a state of physical, mental and emotional well being rather than a mere absence of disease and infirmity. It means that any thing that disturbs the harmonious functioning of physical, mental and emotional functioning of life should be considered as a cause of disease. It is therefore easy to see that the greatest source of such imbalance lies in the relation

that men enter into with other men in the society in the process of production and exchange of material and spiritual values necessary for man's existence and growth. It is this relationship which is at the roots of the needy and the sick not getting the treatment and cure : the reality of our social life.

Various aspects of the reality of our social life have been sufficiently debated and described from various angles providing quite a lot of information. Some of them is given below:

- Most of the people are forced by the circumstances to live in extreme poverty.
- Govt., policies concerning handicrafts and small scale industry is such that most of them must keep consumption or wages at the lowest failing which they must go bankrupt.
- The percentage of Govt., expenditure on public health and other services of public utility has been declining. It means that fewer and fewer people are in a position of availing these facilities. It means that those able to avail these facilities must have links with the rich and the powerful or must have sufficient means to bribe the authorities.

The other part, services from the private institutions and professionals are prohibitively costly and ruinous to the people.

- Taxes by the provincial as well as the Central Govt. has been increasing and the ratio of direct tax to the indirect tax has been decreasing. It means that the poorer ones are more heavily taxed forcing them further deep in poverty and want.
- Drug manufacturing companies are extremely exploitative and profit oriented and go to any length for profit including the advertisement and sale of useless and harmful drugs at exorbitant price.

And in this the Govt., often lets them do what they want.

If we look more closely then we find that all these aspects of the reality are interrelated and that they together serve the interests of those who control the means of production either through individual ownership or through the Govt. This ought to give rise to another question : is it possible that the claim that science has advanced to such an extent that a disease called T.B., has been conquered and therefore no one need succumb to it is put forward to serve this very interest ? It seems to be so. Otherwise, the reality of the disease having been conquered and the disease taking its toll cannot exist side by side.

This drives us to a conclusion that on the one hand we should look into the very claim critically, i.e., whether or not the claim of having discovered the remedies for cure of T.B., is correct; and on the other hand look for an alternative system of cure which will not suffer from the same antimony i.e., which all can get if they so desire. Another conclusion underlines the need of

waging a struggle against the social reality in which people succumb to such disease which are thought to be curable.

This should also be kept in mind that any single work of the above outlined can achieve its objective in isolation from the rest; all the three must go together to give the desired result.

Homoeopathy seems to offer the solution. It not provides a frame work for looking into the claim critically, i.e., whether or not the remedy for T.B., has been discovered leading to its elimination but it holds the promise of making the remedy universally available in terms of cost. And what's more, it can be a tool in the hands of the people struggling against the exploiters by freeing the people and the contry's economy from the chains of exploitation to a great extent. As manufacture of these drugs does not require such technology in which monopoly can be established leading to super profit and monopolistic exploitation.

But it is not only on these ground that this system of treatment is being recommended. Important though these grounds are, but in the context of treatment, its recommendation rests primarily on its effectiveness in practice. Many case can be cited to demonstrate the effectiveness of this treatmen but I cite only two examples :

1. Mrs. S.K.Suman Khonkar, 40 year old, from Sonegaon Wardha, came to Dr. Bhongade with following complaints:

Buring in throat, dry cough, amelioration with cold application, feverish, rigour of chill, recurrent coryza, pain in chest, both apex, more in left with pain in back, left side at the region of scapula, stitching and ulcerative pain, agg. slight cold, sour food, slight air current, amel. salt water gargling, tea, lying down, hot application, pain in chest aggravating while coughing, weakness with trembling of whole body agg. at morning, amel. after eating; Rhumatic trouble, pain in lumber region, at circumscribed spot, both sides, more in the left side, aggr. during sleep, touch, changing sides, amel. hot application; spasm and rhumatic pain in legs, agg. sitting, during sleep; amel. hot application. Burning pain in soles, eyes, cracks in soles;

Thirst : more than normal.

Sleep : disturbed easily, sleepless for 2 hrs. after 2-3 am.

dreams : fearful, weeping during sleep. History of profuse menses, presently having early menses after 3 weeks lasting for 4 days, clots, intermingled with red blood.

Lukeria : milky and thick, after loop insertion.

Had suffered from T.B two times, both lungs were affected.

Uncle too had T.B.

Children very succiptible to cold and coryza, lasting for long.

Physian's observation : lean and thin, slow.

Temp. 98.5; Pulse 88 ; B.P. 110 - 60.

Weight : 41 Kg. on 11.9.'81.

She came to the Doctor on 9.10.'80

Treatment : Phosphorus 200 1 dose .

Blood and Sputam tests on 14.10.'80 indicated :

Blood : H.B. 59
P. 51
L. 46
E. 3
T.L.C. 9600

Sputam : A.F.B. Positive.

Treatment : 18.10.'80. Phosphorus 200 1 dose
1 . 11. " "
26.11. Complained loose motion
Alces 200 3 doses.
30.11. Aggravation of cough, sleepless after
3 - 4 am., no remarkable change
Phosphorus 1 m 1 dose
13.12 More cough, harshness, pain in chest,
tickling in throat.
Rumex 200 1 dose.
16.12 " "
17.12 Constipation, ineffectual urging
Nux Vomica 200 6 doses
30.12 Cough aggravated, tickling in throat,
pain in abdomen and chest
Phosphorus 1m. 1 dose
15.1.'81. Cough reduced. Pain in left leg,
constipation, ulcerative in vagina,
sensitive to cloth
Phosphorus 1m 1 dose
13.3. Teeth ache, cough
Phosphorus 1m 1 dose
1 . 7. Feels better
Phosphorus 1m 1 dose.
18.7. Cough agg. tickling in throat
Kali carb. 200.
11.8. Kali carb. 200.
20.8. Feels better, back ache, cough day time
Supphur 200
19.9. Alround improvement
Sulphur 1m 1 dose.
Improvement continues.

The patient is cured.

Blood and sputam test were done in the meantime, on 16.4.'81

Blood : H.B. 56
P. 56
L. 41 Sputam : A.F.B. Negative
E. 3
T.L.C. 11200

Even after the cure, the patient was given globles for
some more time.

2. The other example is from Mozari, a village in Amravati District. Ratnamala Tat Shelke, 38 year old, came to Dr. Gumble with following complaints :

extreme weakness, cough, white sticky but easy expectoration, aggravation of cough after delivery and in the summer, burning during urination, urine yellow, worms in stool, unsatisfactory motion, loss of appetite, continuous feverishness, thirst, sweat on chest, face and head, regular 5 day menses.

Had been treated for T.B. before.

Physician's observation : lean and thin, slow.

Treatment : 26.5.'84. Nitrum sulph 200 3 doses

1 .6. Rhustox 30 4 times daily for 2 days

3 .6. feels better
Tuberculinum 200 3 doses

29.6. Improvement continues
Tuberculinum 200

14.7. Complains of cold, loose motion
Nitrum sulph 1m. 3 doses

30.8. Complains subsided
Tuberculinum 1m. 3 doses

30.11. feels much better. put on weight, cough,
feverishness, weakness reduced.
Nitrum sulph 1000 3 doses.

Blood test shows the reduction of Eosinophilia
and increase of Hemoglobin

The patient is almost cured but the treatment is continuing.

There are many more case histories of treatment that can be cited for the proof of effectiveness of this treatment. But the difficulty is that pathological tests have not been done and therefore the kind of proof that is demanded from them is not available. And the reason for this lack of pathological test is that homoeopaths following the logic of homoeopathy do not believe in pathological tests.

Moreover, these two case histories will reveal the difference of medicines given to patients.

The reason is that homoeopathy does not believe in entities called disease (S). It treats patients' totality of symptoms rather than a small group of them which give rise to such entities. After all, they merely represent an arbitrary selection of certain manifestations of illness that appear together with a certain degree of frequency. Prescribing in homoeopathy is solely based on actual observation of the effects of homoeopathic medicines on healthy persons. Such observations define the range of the action of the medicines and provide all the information needed to help select a proper remedy for an individual patient. But this does not mean that the suitable medicine for the symptoms categorised as T.B. could be any one from some 2000 odd proved medicines listed in Materia Medica.

Paradoxical though it may sound, but there are nearly 20 medicines from which the most suitable medicines for most patients can be selected depending on peculiarity of symptoms in individual cases.

Then there is a nosode, Tuberculinum, which is found to be helpful in many cases when there is a history of infection either in the individual patient or in his parents. Although routine prescribing of the nosodes along isopathic lines is not considered to be good homoeopathic practice, it can be of great help. It can be used not only to break up the lingering effects of the disease, but also to reach deep into the constitutional pattern of a patient and clear a chronic miasm that may have been implanted long before through exposure. It builds body resistance against the disease.

Homoeopathic treatment holds a great promise for the sufferers and those interested in removing the causes of suffering but all this lies buried in the heaps of abuse and ridicule against homoeopathy. It is true that advocates of homoeopathy and homoeopaths themselves provided some basis for it, and did almost nothing to counter and expose the abuse and ridicule, most of which is motivated not by science but by counter-science. But neither evidence nor logic has been put forward to refute the basic premises of homoeopathy. On the contrary, fresh insights have been gathered from laboratory experiments to uphold the effectiveness of the system and cure.

Science is defined as "the cognition of necessity". Its prime task, therefore, is to investigate and analyse the needs of the society and to pave the way for its fulfillment. The significance of a scientific discovery depends solely upon its importance to society in the context of its needs, and the society's awareness towards its needs. But the social needs and its awareness often depends on the recognition of the class in power. It is they who decide what constitutes social needs and use the resources under their command to fulfill it. If their policies produce such results which are contrary to the social needs then it reflects a stage of development of the society in which the ruling class in existence, its ideas and theories, its 'science' cannot lead the society in its forward march. This precisely is the situation in which we live. In such a situation, the essence of science consists in taking the theory forward by basing itself firmly on such experience, Such data obtained in practice which articulate and meet the social need in a better way but are not considered 'scientific' enough by the ruling 'science' of the day. It is a task that society will have to take up. My submission is that homoeopathy should be examined in this context, I hope, M.F.C. will come forward in doing the needful.

OoO

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