

New Factors in the Twentieth-Century Disease Pattern

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Dr. Aubrey Westlake directed the following remarks to a meeting of British Homeopaths, and they are reprinted here with the kind permission of The British Homeopathic Journal, from Volume LIV, #3. He begins by acknowledging that he is himself not a member of the Faculty of Homeopathy, but takes as his rationale the belief that it is often true that the spectator sees most of the game, and maybe it is possible for a sympathetic outsider to see the trend of things better than those directly concerned.

Dr. Westlake uses many terms unfamiliar to United States readers, or for that matter, to laymen in Great Britain; the article is reprinted here for its particular contribution in areas beginning to be of concern to the inquiries into maintaining the health of the whole human.

— Editor



The main characteristic of these times in which we live is speed in all its various forms, especially the speed of change. This is happening in every aspect of life, and medicine is no exception. But I wonder whether we really appreciate the changes that have and are taking place, changes so profound and revolutionary that we are confronted with a state of affairs which, quite literally, has never before existed in the history of mankind.

These changes have been so rapid and in a sense so imperceptible that for those of us who can go back to the beginning of this century it is difficult to realize what has in fact happened and even more difficult to adjust ourselves to the new conditions and circumstances with which we are confronted. Yet it is of the utmost importance that we grasp the position and take steps to deal with it before it is too late.

In 1962 I was in correspondence with a research worker in America and this statement of his I think sums up the situation: "Up to the time that fall-out radiation, pesticides, chemicals in foods, sodium fluoride and industrial wastes in water started to enter the bodies of patients, doctors and others who had been using chiropractic and osteopathic methods, Homeopathy, natural healing methods, nutritional supplements, mineral therapy, herbal therapy, etc., were making excellent progress in the correction of ill-health. Today these techniques are useless if the high environmental toxins are all ignored in therapy planning. At no time in human history has such a period existed. Unless these toxins are neutralized constantly in the patient, it is just about impossible to obtain successful healing results with the formerly successful methods. Until the problem of the toxic environment is understood and corrected it is impossible to heal and cure in modern times."¹

Strong words, but we must remember that he is speaking of the state of affairs in America where the toxic environment is present to a much greater degree than in this country. Admittedly things are not too bad here *at present*, but as your President pointed out in his Presidential Address the menace is upon us and it is only a question of time, as the toxic factors are increasing day by day, by leaps and bounds. Indeed a new word to describe the situation is suggested by Dr. Borbely of the Medicolegal Institute in Zurich, when he calls for a new "paratoxic" look at disease. He is quoted as saying "The traditional definition of poisoning is no longer adequate to enable us to cope with the environment. To understand the aetiological significance of 10,000 substances with biological effects (250 in cigarette smoke alone) we must cover not only diseases they cause but those to which they contribute. . . . Today's practical clinicians must understand the complex action of the toxic environment."²

Let us examine rapidly in more detail what is happening at the present time and the nature of the paratoxic environment in which we live at the present time.

What immediately comes to mind is the menace from atomic fall-out. But this menace has been so thoroughly and extensively publicized and the hazards are so well known to all of us that I will pass it over and come instead to another aspect of atomic energy—one we know very little about but which will assume increasing importance—this is the so-called "peaceful use", a use for which we may well have to pay a terrible price in the future, for atomic wastes, as you know, are being discharged into the rivers and the seas. Lewis Herber, author of *Our Synthetic Environment*, commenting on this, had this to say: "the daily volume of effluent is immense and the flow continues. The

radio isotopes are picked up, concentrated, and circulated in increasing amounts by key organisms in the vicinity of the nuclear reactors. Algae, for example, can concentrate radio-potassium in amounts as much as one million times greater than river water, and fish can concentrate strontium 90 as much as 1,000 times. The smaller number of long-lived radio isotopes are carried farther into major food chains that involve millions of people."³ Here, indeed, is food for thought.

And there are other forms of radiation, the less obvious menace of which we are just beginning to realize. X-rays for example, both for diagnosis and treatment, are being used much more cautiously and circumspectly, and well they may be, as a study in America of radiation exposure in childhood leukemia showed that "children whose mothers had experienced X-ray radiation prior to their conception had a risk of leukemia 1-6 times or 60% more than that of other children, . . . and a history of intra-uterine plus preconception radiation exposure carried a 90% larger risk."⁴ As a further commentary, in September last year the *Practitioner* published a symposium on rheumatic diseases, and in the article on ankylosing spondylitis the author roundly condemns the use of radiotherapy in treatment as causing more deaths than the disease, in fact it is, to quote him, "twice as deadly".⁵

The second menace is from the group of chemicals widely used in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, known as insecticides, pesticides and herbicides, and to a lesser degree artificial fertilizers. Their dire and devastating effect on an unsuspecting world is recounted with veridical realism in Rachel Carson's famous book *Silent Spring*, a book which I hope if you have not read you will certainly do so.

Insecticides fall into two main groups, the chlorinated hydrocarbons and the organic phosphorus compounds. DDT is the best known and most widespread of the hydrocarbons, but in ascending order of toxicity we have chlordane, heptachlor, dieldrin, aldrin and finally and most toxic of them all—endrin. The use of the last two is now banned, but many farmers and horticulturists have been stockpiling against the ban.

We have yet to learn the full impact of even one of these, as for instance DDT, on human health. What we do know is that owing to the fact that it is stored in the fat of the body every human being, animal and bird throughout the world has DDT in the fatty tissues to a greater or lesser extent except, it was thought, in the remotest parts still uncontaminated by civilization. But even this is no longer true, as DDT has now been discovered in the bodies of penguins and seals in the Antarctic. "These creatures spend their entire lives in the Antarctic, feeding on shrimps, crabs and occasional fish. There can be no question of their having strayed into areas where DDT is in use. . . . So presumably the pesticide was washed from the land into rivers and then into the sea . . . taken by the tides, . . . or alternately the seals and penguins had been eating fish already contaminated nearer civilization."⁶ No wonder there is said to be "grave concern", as this is the least toxic of the chlorinated hydrocarbons.

The average amount of DDT in the fat of Americans at the present time is estimated to be between 5-3 to 7-4 ppm; and apropos of this, you have probably heard the story of the cannibal chief who forbade his tribe to eat Americans on the grounds that they had too much DDT in their fat to be wholesome food for self-respecting cannibals who valued their health.

In order to obtain a more precise assessment of this menace to humans, patients undergoing abdominal operations in New Zealand during the next four and a half years are asked if they will allow a small piece of fat to be cut out, so that it can be examined "to find out the amount of insecticide absorbed, to determine trends in absorption, and to assess any differences in proportion to the use of the insecticides in different areas".⁷

The second main group, the organic phosphorus compounds, are some of the most poisonous substances in the world, of which Malathion and Parathion are examples. These are used extensively by horticulturists and particularly fruit growers. These substances attack the nervous system and produce lasting physical damage to nerve tissue.

The main points which emerge from the use of these and which are of interest and importance to us as doctors are:

1. Once the soil is contaminated with these chemicals, some of which may persist for as long as ten years, vegetables grown on such soils also become toxic, e.g. carrots.
2. A build-up of chemicals takes place as they are successively absorbed or eaten by plants and animals. There is the famous case of Clear Water in the USA, where DDD added to the lake water in one part in 70M became concentrated in the last of the chain—the water fowl—at 1,000 parts per M; needless to say these birds all died. What would have been the concentration in a human being who had eaten one of these birds?
3. All these chemical poisons get washed down into the streams and rivers and continue their deadly work where, although in low concentration, they get into the water supplies for human consumption with effects which no one knows at present.
4. Perhaps most important for the future, though very little indeed is known about it, is the interaction between freely mixing chemicals, an interaction which presumably is building up the whole time. According to Rachel Carson, "this is deeply disturbing the officials of the US Public Health Service, who have expressed the fear that the production of harmful substances from comparatively innocuous substances may be taking place on a wide scale. The reactions may be between two or more chemicals, or between chemicals and radioactive wastes which are being discharged into our rivers in ever increasing volume. Under the impact of ionizing radiation some rearrangement of atoms may easily occur, changing the nature of the chemicals in a way which is not only unpredictable, but beyond control."⁸ This incidentally may be the fundamental scientific reason against putting sodium fluoride into water supplies.

Apropos of this you probably remember the mysterious affair at Smarden in Kent, where a farm close to a small factory manufacturing various pesticides for spraying, the entire herd of 37 cows gradually died; the cause of death could not be ascertained but was thought to be by slow poisoning. The Ministry veterinary surgeon said he would help if he could be told what poison to look for. This problem was finally solved not by the analytical chemists but by a team from the De La Warr Laboratories using radiesthetic

methods who diagnosed fluoroacetate. This was subsequently confirmed by a special biochemical analysis. We are told, and I quote, that "Fluoroacetate in the form of fluoroacetamide has been sold in Great Britain for a number of years, farmers using it for spraying broad beans, brassicas, sugar beat and strawberries. Neither washing or boiling removes the fluoroacetamide if the crop is harvested too early after spraying. The amount permitted to spray one acre of these edible crops will kill 75,000 dogs."⁹

The whole shocking and indeed frightening story can be read in the April 1964 number of the *Journal of the Soil Association*, written by Mr. Good, the vet on the spot. But let me just add this, that in the end the contamination was found to be so bad that the actual soil of the farm was packed in oil drums—2,200 tons of it—and dumped in the Bay of Biscay.

The third menace is all the chemicals added to our food and drink. The list stands at about 1,500 and these are either additives or form artificial substitutes for the real thing, or are substitutes for substitutes until everything is ersatz from start to finish.

These substances include adulterants, additives, colouring matter—the dyes, artificial flavours, preservatives, antioxidants to prevent fats becoming rancid, emulsifiers which break up fats, stabilizers to prevent creams from reverting to fats or oils, as in mayonnaise, sweeteners, tenderizers and so on ad lib. Little is known about most of these substances, but some are definitely disease producing and some are even carcinogenic substances.

There are also, in addition, all the drugs used in factory farming to make it possible to keep animals or birds in "overcrowded, infectious and unhealthy conditions", such as penicillin and other antibiotics; or the use of hormones and other synthetic estrogens to make animals put on rapid weight—mostly water; so that, to quote Dr. Sinclair, "The roast beef of old England may have come from a stall-fed creature that is given estrogens and aureomycin during its period of growth, then receives tranquillizers to ensure a docile journey to slaughter, just before which it is given intravenous antibiotics so that the meat will keep in cold storage and become tenderer during this period. Residues of all these may be in the meat."¹⁰

Truly it can be said that it is not possible to live today, and certainly not to eat or drink, without being poisoned to a greater or lesser degree.

The fourth menace is from what at first sight appear to be only legitimate and beneficial, viz. our expanding and increasing use of modern synthetic drugs. But I imagine that all of us as practising physicians have come up against the side effects, and indeed the direct effects, of many of the modern wonder drugs. I remember the patient of a medical colleague who was having 10 different powerful drugs from a Harley Street specialist, the various drugs had been added one by one to deal with the adverse effects of the previous drug. He complained of feeling like death, and no wonder. The first thing was to take him off the lot, which alone made him feel better! To which this quotation from Hahnemann is an apt commentary, and even more true today: "To render (through ignorance) incurable the vast majority of all diseases, viz. those of a chronic character, by continually weakening and tormenting the debilitated patient, already suffering

without that from his disease, and by adding new destructive drug diseases, this clearly seems to be the unhallowed main business of the old school of medicine (allopathy)."¹¹

But I think it is gradually becoming recognized by the profession that things are far from satisfactory, a view apparently endorsed by the *Practitioner* in its January 1965 number which was devoted almost entirely to a symposium on "Drug toxicity". The *Medical News* headed a review of this number with the caption: "Drug toxicity review a 'must' for doctors" and went on to say "Lay readers would be horrified to realize that almost no group of medicines is free from potential risk of doing grave damage. And nervous subjects might ask themselves whether dangerous drugs do not exact a greater toll on human life than do road accidents. Even medical readers would like to know the extent of the menace, and not one of the score of contributors . . . attempts to estimate the annual death rate from drug toxicity."¹² A pretty damning indictment, but not without justification. What a relief to turn to Homeopathy.

The net result of all these main toxic factors, and many others I have neither time nor space to mention, can be summarized in the following quotation from *Our Synthetic Environment* by Lewis Herber. "Modern man is undoing the work of organic evolution, replacing a complex environment with a simpler one. He is disassembling the biotic pyramid that has supported human life for countless millennia. Almost all the manifold relationships on which man's food plants and domestic animals depend for health are being replaced by more elementary relationships, and the biosphere is slowly being restored to a stage in which it will only be able to support a simpler form of life. It is not within the realm of fantasy to suggest that if the breakdown of the soil cosmos continues unabated, if plant and animal health continue to deteriorate, if insect infestations multiply, and if chemical controls become increasingly lethal, many of the preconditions for advanced life will be irreparably damaged and the earth will prove to be incapable of supporting a viable, healthy human species."¹³

This "simplification" can be said for our purposes to be manifesting in two main ways, in the breakdown in quality, and in the mechanism necessary to maintain that quality.

The first is seen in a bastardization, or aberration to use McDonagh's term, of the main building material of organic life—protein—whereby protein tends to lose its quality. To quote from my book, "If this quality falls below for long periods of time, which is the case today, then the protein becomes inferior, in an energy sense, and the vicious circle of disease, so ubiquitous in these times, becomes the order of the day; a vicious circle which can only be broken on the physical level by a restoration of quality protein, restored by a right attitude, intention and action to soil, plant, animal and man."

The second, the maintenance of quality, is concerned with the serious interference with the even destruction of the enzyme systems of the body upon which all vital processes depend.

We have failed to realize the true seriousness of the situation and have been lulled into a false sense of security because we have to deal, not with the acute effects of these toxic factors—which are comparatively rare, but with the long-term chronic effects. These effects are, at present, almost totally unknown and most will only manifest after a long period of time, say 20-30 years; but we have a portent of what we may expect in the ever increasing incidence of lung cancer.

Apart from all **this**, the full toxic effects of which, as I have said, we shall not experience for some years to come, the overall picture would still be complicated, as in addition to the interference by a man-made paratoxic environment we have also to contend with what I may call natural disease factors coming down from the past. These factors we are just beginning to recognize and understand, though Hahnemann gave us the clue 150 years ago. He postulated, as you all know, what he called the miasmatic theory of chronic disease. According to him there were three states or conditions which he called "miasms" lying at the foot of all chronic disease—the miasms of syphilis, sycosis and psora.

Medical orthodoxy with its increasingly materialistic outlook has completely ignored this fertile idea and unfortunately it would appear (here let me quote from my article "The Future of Homeopathy") "that even homeopaths have never really understood Hahnemann's teaching on miasms, those potent and ever present causes of chronic disease. This is largely due to the fact that the conception of a miasm has been muddled with 'parasitic infection by micro-organism', so that the term 'parasitic infection' is substituted for 'miasm'—this is probably due to the fact that Hahnemann, in defining a miasm, used the term 'semi-vital parasitic organism of a peculiar nature'.

"I am not denying that he may, with his astonishing intuitive insight, have foreseen the microbic cause of disease long before the coming of bacteriology, but I am convinced that he, in fact, meant something much more profound, which only now, with our modern knowledge and the help of radiesthesia, can be defined. By a 'miasm', I think he meant a non-physical entity, or as we would now say, an etheric entity, which has the power or potency to produce aberrations or imbalances of the protein of the body. (See McDonagh's Unitary Theory of Disease.) Such miasms appear to be inherited and are passed on etherically from one generation to another, i.e. they become racial miasms."¹⁴

Here is Hahnemann's own description of a miasmatic state, and in the light of our modern radiesthetic work it appears to be a completely accurate description. He says: "it persists more or less latent, spreading its parasitical ramifications through the whole organism, unaffected by the best diet and hygienic conditions and the robustest constitution: tainting life activities and reactions; blasting health; more or less suppressed, or changing form under treatment, only to reappear, always in new and menacing forms, to the end of life."

But besides the hereditary or racial miasm there is a second form, what we have called the acquired miasms. These acquired forms one collects in one's lifetime and they are usually derived from infectious illnesses, particularly those of childhood. The main ones leaving a miasm behind are measles, whooping cough, chickenpox, mumps, also vaccination and influenza.

It is an interesting fact that if a patient develops say syphilis, gonorrhoea or tuberculosis in the clinical and pathological form and is treated and completely cured, in the sense that all clinical and pathological tests are negative, and if then the patient is investigated by radiesthetic technique, it will be found in almost all cases that the miasmatic counterpart is still there; and this persists and can be passed on to succeeding generations, as well as giving rise to various forms of chronic disease in the later life of the individual, which apparently have no relationship to the original disease. Even if this miasmatic state is recognized, no satisfactory treatment has been known; the condition, as

Hahnemann sensed, being so very deep and so very basic. For although he himself worked at the problem for many years he did not discover the answer, except very partially, nor could he, as the knowledge and the remedies in his day did not in fact exist. It is only in very recent times that this knowledge has been forthcoming.

I might say in passing that in the psychological or mental cases one has treated radiesthetic diagnosis has revealed a Tb miasm in the background, and it has only been when this has been eliminated that the patient has the possibility of becoming psychologically normal. Similarly most of the allergies have this Tb miasmatic background. On the other hand a great deal of mental deficiency and retardation and antisocial behaviour is due to the syphilitic miasm.

Here then in brief outline are some of the new factors in the twentieth-century disease pattern. A pattern which has come partly from the past, but to an increasing extent, at the present time, from our ubiquitous and most universal toxic environment.

What is to be done about it? It is certain that modern medicine at present does not begin to understand either the real nature or the extent of the menace; and even if it did, has no simple and ready means of diagnosing these subtle causes, nor of the treating them except symptomatically.

Modern medicine indeed has no real answer to the problem of chronic disease apart from salvaging operations by surgery, or attempted holding operations by treating symptoms with modern synthetic drugs. The net result of this is that while modern medicine has and does indeed save life, it can do little for the chronically sick and its attempts are largely shots in the dark, as most of the time it has not a clue as to the basic causative factors.

If we go outside the orthodox field we are not much better off, as treatment is still largely treatment of diseased parts, i.e. fragmentary, and the approach is still from the point of view of disease, i.e. pathology. Even in Homeopathy, although theoretically the approach is to the whole man in his totality, so often for one reason or another, treatment becomes sidetracked into symptomatology; but at least there is one great advantage, that the remedies, if they do no good, at least do no harm.

It has become increasingly clear to me that we need to find a new approach—I say “new”, but in fact it is very old. This approach should include the following four points:

1. That it should be from the standpoint of health rather than disease. As McDonagh has said, “Disease must be approached through the front door of health.” Health can here be defined as a state of dynamic balance on all planes and not only the physical.
2. A method of more exact fundamental diagnosis, i.e. a method of ascertaining the degree or amount of departure or deviation from the norm (which is health) and what has caused that departure or deviation.
3. A unitary conception in which one finds the basic cause or causes affecting the whole, and explores, if desired, its effects on the parts.
4. Remedies, i.e. treatment, which will deal fundamentally with the deviation from the norm and restore the balance, i.e. dynamic equilibrium and harmony, which is health.

Having explored this new approach for the last 12 years, I am now satisfied its best expression up to date is to be found in the use of radiesthesia in conjunction with McDonagh’s Unitary Theory for diagnosis, and radiesthetically directed Homeopathy for treatment, though it need not necessarily be confined to Homeopathy but can include all

therapeutic agencies. The technique used is that worked out by Dr. George Laurence which I have described in detail in the December 1964 number of the *Journal of the British Society of Dowsters* under the title of "The Laurence Technique of Psionic Diagnosis and Treatment", to which I would refer any of you who may be interested.

I do not know how many of you are familiar with radiesthesia, but put very simply it is the use of the faculty which has traditionally been used for finding water, dowsing, for medical purposes, i.e. dowsing or divining for disease, or more accurately ascertaining the degree of departure from health. This approach to medicine is a comparatively recent development in the last 30 or 40 years. The dowsing technique when applied to medicine has developed in two main directions—the radiesthetic, using the minimum of apparatus, and the radionic in which elaborate apparatus is used, employing what is called "rates" for both diagnosis and treatment. But whatever the technique or the apparatus, the whole procedure is dependent on the functioning of the radiesthetic faculty. This faculty is possessed by far more persons than is generally supposed and can be developed and trained by appropriate methods until considerable skill and accuracy is attained. I have discussed the whole subject at considerable length in the chapter in my book *The Pattern of Health* entitled "The Radiesthetic Faculty".

The significance and importance to these modern times of this faculty is very great as it is going to make it possible to deal with the menacing situation I have outlined in the first part of this paper, with competence and an assurance which would otherwise be impossible. For we have come to a point where we must be capable, if necessary, of going beyond the material and physical into supersensory realms and obtaining supersensory knowledge if we are to understand the new patterns of disease which are arising and, what is more important, how to restore the patterns of health which lie behind.

"I like to think of this faculty as a sort of half-way house between our ordinary physical senses and our to-be-developed occult senses, a faculty which has been specially given by Divine Providence at this time to cope with the difficult and dangerous stage in human progress and development which lies immediately ahead."¹⁵

The great step forward in technique which has been achieved over the usually vague and indefinite psychic findings is that measurement has been introduced. Thus it is now possible to measure the amount or degree of distortion or imbalance of the physical-etheric pattern. This, as you will appreciate, introduces into the supersensory the concept of "pointer readings", a concept on which all modern science is based.

The result of this is all important for the actual application of radiesthesia; for example, as I pointed out in my article "The Future of Homeopathy", it is of great help and value in Homeopathy in the following ways, though I should make it quite clear that I am well aware that the great exponents of Homeopathy have always intuitively been able to arrive directly at the right answer.

1. It is possible to ascertain the *similimum*, by which I mean the remedy or remedies which will rectify or balance the deviation from the norm. This is not usually and certainly not necessarily a single remedy, but a complex of remedies which exactly match the multiple imbalances and correct them.
2. The ever difficult problem of potency can also be solved, as by the radiesthetic technique it is possible to ascertain the exact potencies which are required and to change them as and when required. In the same way the necessary number of doses

and the time intervals can be ascertained, as well as the total length of the particular course of treatment.

3. And most important, the actual effect of the remedies can be followed and any necessary adjustments made. Thus the course of the treatment can continuously be kept under intelligent observation and control and there can be exact knowledge of all that is going on.

Thus we have something of great potential value in our therapeutic work, something which fulfils the fourfold criteria of the new approach to health and disease which I formulated earlier on. For we have at our disposal a technique for dealing with intangibles, of ascertaining states and conditions which, as they may exist on other planes than the material, can be detected in no other way. This is particularly true of those cases where the abnormal state can be detected before it actually manifests on the material plane in a pathological lesion. It is for example possible to detect a pre-cancerous condition long before there is an actual tumour, at which pre-stage it is eminently treatable. This is true preventive medicine.

There is, however, one very important point which I should like to draw attention to. That is that, unlike research workers in the field of material science who can remain largely detached from their experiments—what Eddington called “the detached onlooker”, workers in the radiesthetic and allied fields, especially those dealing with healing, are of necessity personally involved—they are so to speak a part of their experimentation.

In ordinary scientific work the character of the experimenter, his single-mindedness and integrity, does not as a general rule affect his experiment or its results. But in work with supersensible forces it matters very much what he is in himself, and the motives, conscious or unconscious, which underlie his activities. This aspect is going to become of increasing importance in the future. Not only will it matter what we think, but it will matter what we *are*, morally and spiritually, if we are going to find truth in these realms.

In essence all radiesthetic work is the asking of questions. But the great difficulty, as all of us who have done this work know full well, is, in fact, to ask the right questions, i.e. the true and relevant questions.

To be able to do this demands in the first place actual factual knowledge of the subject being investigated. This means the full use of one’s intellectual powers and abilities, and is the correct use of intellectual knowledge, which provides a reservoir of facts and information from which the intellect can gather material to formulate the right question.

Secondly one must have the ability to reflect and the time to do so, so that drawing on one’s wealth of experience one can give proper consideration to thinking out any given problem and formulating it. The possession of the radiesthetic faculty is no excuse and indeed no substitute, as many imagine, for poverty of facts or intellectual laziness.

Thirdly, and I say this with diffidence, but great sincerity, as I believe it to be profoundly true, it *does* make a difference if one’s approach to all these problems is a Christian one.

In the difficult times ahead we shall need not only a new approach to health and wholeness, but a new attitude, an attitude of increasing awareness of the spiritual world which lies behind the material world of sense data; only so shall we be able to deal with the vast paratoxic environment which is developing and begin to understand the true nature and needs of man.