

## Chapter Three

# Specific Illnesses, Ailments and Other Physical Problems

### Cancer

I do not know why the doctors speak of cancer as inevitable. There are so many people who carry gall-stones in the bladder for so many years without any development of cancer. It is evident that it is a dangerous illness, not easily curable — but we cannot say positively either that she will not survive. There is no such thing as an incurable illness in reality — for what the doctors call such is only an illness for which they have not yet been able to discover a physical remedy. X has one force on her side, her faith and her will to survive for the sadhana; on the other side is a kind of destiny of the body which is strong but not absolutely insurmountable. Her faith must be left intact — and we must send force to help her. That is all that we can say at present. If she can by her faith draw down and open to such a force as will counteract the adverse physical forces in her body, then she will survive.

\*

Of course it [*cancer*] can [*be cured by Yoga*], but on condition of faith or openness or both. Even a mental suggestion can cure cancer — with luck, of course, as is shown by the case of the woman operated on unsuccessfully for cancer, but the doctors lied and told her it had succeeded. Result, cancer symptoms all ceased and she died many years afterwards of another illness altogether.

### Tuberculosis

T.B. is the result of a strong psychic-vital depression. Sex cannot

directly cause T.B. though it may be a factor in bringing about a fall of the vital forces and a withdrawal of the psychic supporting forces leading to T.B. The lack of vitality which easily comes as a result of modern civilisation is therefore a very strong contributing cause. Moderns have not the solid nervous system and the natural (as opposed to the artificial and morbid) zest of life that their ancestors had. But I don't know about the soldiers — the hideous trench war with all its ghastly circumstances and surroundings was, I imagine, far more difficult to bear than the open air marching and fighting of the Napoleonic times.

### **Fever**

Fever is of course more often than not a struggle of the body to fight out impurities that have got in, but sometimes the remedy is as bad if not worse than the disease. It is the same with the mind difficulties — an illness sometimes results in a throwing out of some impurities but it can also do more harm than good.

### **Influenza**

The first thing to do is to keep throughout a perfect equanimity and not to allow thoughts of disturbed anxiety or depression to enter you. It is quite natural after this severe attack of influenza that there should be weakness and some fluctuations in the progress to recovery. What you have to do is to remain calm and confident and not worry or be restless — be perfectly quiet and prepared to rest as long as rest is needed. There is nothing to be anxious about; rest, and the health and strength will come.

### **Head Cold**

What you describe [*a "loaded" head with sluggish thinking and mechanical thoughts*] happens very usually during a cold in the head, as ordinarily one depends upon the brain cells for the transmission of the mental thought. When the mind is not so dependent on the brain cells, then their obscuration by the cold

does not interfere with clear seeing and thinking and one is not thrown back in the mechanical mind.

### **Weak Vision**

Finally about your eyes. The wearing of glasses does inevitably confirm any weakness in the eyes, so we would not recommend you to resort to them for a strain which can surely be remedied in other ways.

\*

It is better to take the sun-treatment (for the eyes) if you give up your spectacles. It is not a treatment in the ordinary sense, as there are no medicines, but a use of certain natural forces and physical observations to correct the impaired mechanism of the eye.

\*

You will have to be careful about your eyes. Reading by night (too much) is inadvisable. There are two suggestions of the sun-treatment man which I have found to be not without foundation. First, one should blink freely in looking at things or reading and not fix the eyes or stare. Second, palming gives a very useful rest — palming means keeping the hands crossed over the closed eyes (without pressing on the eyes) so as to shut out all light.

### **Glaucoma**

We cannot take the responsibility of advising against operation. Glaucoma is supposed to bring inevitable blindness — there is no known successful medical treatment — the operation is considered the only chance of avoiding the natural result of the illness. So they must be left free to undergo it if there is no way out.

### **Stammering**

I don't think stammering has anything to do with insufficient

lung-power nor is it usually caused by malformation of the vocal organ — it is commonly a nervous (physico-nervous) impediment and is perfectly curable. I can't say that I know of any especial device for it — people have used various kinds of devices to get over it, but behind them all will-power and a patient discipline of the utterance are indispensable.

### **Menstrual Problems**

The attack you had on the body must, from the description, have been a crisis of the circulation due to the period you are passing through, the turning of the age when the menstruation is preparing to cease but has not yet ceased altogether. It is a very uncomfortable period because of the irregularities and these things can happen — they cease when this period of life is over. Some pass through it very easily with only the irregularities of the flow and an occasional trouble of this kind; others have more difficulty. If there is then no sexual movement in the nature or none of any intensity, then things go more smoothly.

### **Constipation**

Constipation is not determined by food; it is due to an inertia in the physical — get off the inertia and the constipation goes.

### **Sciatica**

Sciatica is something more than nervous — it affects the movement of the muscles through the nerves. It can be got rid of at once, however, if you can manage to direct the Force on it.

\*

There is no outer means. Sciatica is a thing which yields only to inner concentrated force or else it goes away of itself and comes of itself. Outer means at best can only be palliatives.

\*

If you cannot get rid of the sciatica by inner means, the medical remedy (not for curing it, but for keeping free as long as possible) is not to fatigue yourself. It comes for periods which may last for weeks, then suddenly goes. If you remain quiet physically and are not too active, it may not come for a long time. But that of course means an inactive life, physically incapable. It is what I meant by eternising the sciatica — and the inertia also.

\*

The inertia is there because there was always in your outer being a great force of *tamas* and it is this that is being used by the resistance. There was also a deficiency of steady will-power in the outer mind which makes it more difficult for the Force to come down than for the Knowledge. When you are entirely open the Force can act on the sciatica and it lessens or disappears, but with the consciousness blocked by the inertia these difficulties come in the way.

\*

If you can cure by withdrawing [*from work*] so much the better. The sciatica has often tried to fall on the Mother and on myself — we have always found that it cannot resist the Force quietly and persistently applied. Other illnesses can resist, but sciatica being entirely *tamasic* cannot. The application of Force does not yet, probably, come natural to you, so it brings a sense of struggle not of quiet domination, hence the restlessness etc.

### Growing Taller

It is rather difficult to grow taller when once the period of growth is over. It may come in the period of material transformation at the end of the Yoga — but that is far off and I don't think there are any means by which it can be done otherwise.

### Bearing the Heat

Dry heat is supposed to be less bad for the general health than

damp heat. There is however usually less need of food and therefore less appetite. From the point of view of Yoga if one can keep a certain quiet in the material body, “peace in the cells”, the heat is easier to bear.