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HOMŒOPATHISTS AND HOMŒOPATHY

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On all sides the cry is going up that Homœopathy is going out of existence; that it is squashed by allopathic manoeuvres. So it is in many ways, and various factors could probably be cited as contributory causes for its decline. There has never been decadence of Homœopathy itself, only stagnation, largely due to the complacency of its exponents and practitioners, who mistook the starting point for the winning post!

While I had lunch with a young eye, ear, nose and throat specialist friend in London, I mentioned that I was attending the Convention of the Faculty for Homœopathy at the Royal London Homœopathic Hospital. This young man then expressed himself very frankly about Homœopathy and its status in England. He told the writer that the British Medical Association will never recognize Homœopathy as belonging to the category of scientific medicine, permit it to be taught in the medical schools of Great Britain, or see it raised to the status of a medical specialty. There was a certain degree of tolerance on account of the British Royal Family's interest in and patronage of it!

Now, after contacting doctors from different lands, the writer has come to the conclusion that this young F.R.C.S. was probably perfectly right. Why should orthodox medicine recognize something that may jeopardize its teachings

and practices of two thousand years or more? One could hardly credit international medicine with such foolishness. Here and there in the world there have been and are instances of toleration, but, after long study and observation, this writer has come to the conclusion that this toleration is actually one of the biggest dangers to the continued existence of Homœopathy.

The writer has sat in conventions and listened to speakers who made great efforts to show how much Homœopathy agrees with orthodox concepts. Should the emphasis not rather be on how much orthodox medicine stumbles into homœopathic principles and concepts these days after almost two centuries? Remember Hahnemann's teachings about infection; about prophylaxis; the totality of the symptoms of the patient; the psychosomatic approach; the allergies, etc., etc.? Things were not called by the same names, but they are all there in his writings. The whole history of Homœopathy and the history of the life of its founder make these pseudo-homœopathists but cowardly diplomats. They have not even the pride to know when they are not wanted at the party; that they are only tolerated for the sake of not creating a scene. This cajoling on the part of these people is tantamount to saying, "Pardon me, Sir! I sincerely hope you will not be offended if I should use some Homœopathy in my practice."

In her presidential address to the British Faculty, as published in the October, 1951, issue of the *British Homœopathic Journal*, Dr. Margery Blackie quotes Dr. Skinner as follows: "Homœopathy being but in its infancy, it wants men of independent courage who can stand upon their feet regardless of outside organization and fearless of numbers. With such men to nurse her, she is independent of allopathy and all its conservative rights and privileges, government grants, etc. Homœopathy being but a young shoot of the noble and eternal tree of life and truth, it has to be made strong by opposition, . . . by contacts with strong and warlike elements."

Does the above quotation not perhaps contain the real and essential requirement for the revival of Homœopathy? What a pity that we do not now seem to have men and women of the calibre that could match up to the situation. Most modern homœopaths seem to suffer from a sneaking inferiority complex!

Teaching institutions complain that they do not get sufficient interested students. Have these institutions, instead of bewailing their lack of students, considered what they really have to offer students, excepting fragmentary and disconnected lectures on philosophy and materia medica? This writer would almost stake his life on it that very few students who attended one of these courses will really be able to give an intelligent explanation of what Homœopathy is and how and where it differs from and with orthodox medicine.

Why not have a properly integrated course of at least two years' duration at a clinic or hospital where Homœopathy can be seen in action; and where students can be thoroughly indoctrinated with the practical aspects of this art of healing; where they can at least learn how to take their cases properly and learn to select the remedy? Under such conditions they should also be able to witness the amazing rapidity and power of the indicated remedy in acute diseases, as well as see for themselves some of the most intractable chronic diseases, or generally known surgical conditions, masterfully handled from beginning to end. Miserably little success can be expected where students are not also given the proof of what Homœopathy can do. The writer well remembers the time when he personally thought a 6x potency very high!

Could these institutions have the temerity to expect students to exchange these poorly-organized teachings with practically no clinical proofs or statistics for their well-integrated studies at properly organized institutions? And now, is it not foolish and ridiculous to expect students to study Homœopathy in a few short lectures, when those of

us, who know a little of the subject, realize only too well the prodigiousness of the task to master the art, science, materia medica, and philosophy, as well as numerous corollaries of Homœopathy? Do these tyros appreciate, for instance, the potency of these simple-looking drugs, and the tremendous responsibility that should accompany their prescription?

This writer is practically positive that he will fail 95% of the students of these institutions with the first question on some of the more salient points of Homœopathy. Take a simple question like the following for examination and see what answers you will get: "You have a case that is hypersensitive to impressions, faint-hearted, and of a yielding disposition. The case had pneumonia some time ago and was left with a chronic cough, which is much worse from lying down. The expectoration is bloody, yellow, lumpy, purulent, and contains granules like shot with very offensive smell. There are stitches in the chest, frequent sore throats and lingering colds. There are bad night-sweats, worse towards the morning. The patient is extremely sensitive to cold, and better from warmth, in summer, and in damp, warm weather. X-rays show extensive tuberculous infiltration of the right lung. What is the obvious remedy and why will you *not* use it?"

This writer charges a large number of so-called homœopaths with blatant ignorance, criminal carelessness, and no small degree of self-ostentation about the few "lucky shots" in their prescribing. Only too frequently one notices cases quoted from records where the practitioner got no results on account of obvious mistakes in the remedy selection. No wonder that they cannot demand from their orthodox colleagues due respect, or even their chagrin! What greater contribution to contempt than boastfulness of the ignorant. Again let us quote Dr. Skinner through Dr. Blackie: "Let us announce to the world what we can do, if we do it!"

Now to answer those who believe that Homœopathy should be taught as a medical specialty. Apart from the fact that the mere nature of Homœopathy makes it eminently suitable for general practice, specialism implies at least two to three years post-graduate study at an institution that has above average standing. The question is: Can London with its "pathological orientation" or America with its lethargy and rush methods organize such outstanding institutions that they will weather the storm of criticisms of the regular schools by the sheer excellence of their curricula and teaching staffs and clinical and research facilities? If this can be accomplished, the writer believes that it should be possible to turn out a sort of superior type of general practitioner, who would be able to carry the torch of Homœopathy wherever he may settle. Believe it or not, it is not difficult at all for a man who knows Homœopathy to create an impression and thereafter to hold his own, no matter what may be contrived and schemed against him. He only needs to handle his first few acute cases brilliantly; cure a few cases of acute tonsillitis and appendicitis, and help old Mrs. Grundy with her rheumatism, and they will all club together to be his most willing advertisers. Real curative work is so rare these days that it almost appears as a miracle to the laity. And real and lasting cures should not be very difficult to a man who had the right Homœopathic training!

In the days when there was much opposition to Homœopathy, it waxed powerful everywhere. It meant something to have been an homœopathist. Extremely brilliant results were obtained. It became patronized by the best in society, including royalty. Statistics were furnished by homœopathic hospitals which proved beyond any doubt its superior results in all classes of disease, from the most fatally acute to the most chronic, including insanity. Homœopathy scored these honors through outstanding exponents by its merits and results. Physicians and laity were eagerly proving ever more new remedies.

How does this compare with to-day's laxity and half-hearted efforts?

Recently the writer had a letter from an Indian homœopathist with which he included a copy of a letter from the Indian Ministry of Health, and in which a spokesman for that body suggests that it appears illogical that different systems of medicine should exist as permanent parallel entities, and also that Homœopathy, Unani and Ayurveda may complement modern medicine, but that, in view of its continued progress in the world, it must remain the ultimate system of treatment for the sick.

This would appear quite logical and reasonable if we did not have prior experience of this very kind of thing elsewhere. Now, if the Indian homœopathists should accept such a compromise, then in the not too far distant future India will have only a few old people in practice and no young men coming forward to replace them. Have we not seen this in the United States, at one time the world's repository of homœopathic knowledge and learning? If Americans do not wake up and re-organize with a vengeance, the word "Homœopathy" may be deleted from American medical dictionaries within fifty years time. It is already with great sacrifice that Messrs. Ehrhart and Karl of Chicago keep up reprints of Kent's Repertory, a great book that should be thoroughly revised and brought up-to-date.

Why all homœopathic associations of the few remaining schools and hospitals are not completely served is a real farce. The name of Hahnemann and his system are only retained to ridicule the life-work of a great medical reformer and benefactor of mankind, because none of these institutions propagate or practice his art or teachings.

America is not at present running one single course of instruction worthy of serious consideration by prospective students, although this writer thinks back respectfully and fondly to his memorable association with the various teachers of the American Foundation for Homœopathy,

who, notwithstanding great financial difficulties and personal sacrifice, try to keep alive a spark of true Hahnemannian Homœopathy in North America! It would appear that, instead of minor individual efforts by small non-influential groups, America and Great Britain, as the leading medical countries of the modern world, should each organize curricula of post-graduate instruction at well-known universities or hospitals, lasting at least two full academic years, and so set an ideal standard that will become internationally recognized for its excellence. A Fellowship in the Royal College of Physicians or of the American College is indicative of excellence and high medical attainment anywhere in the civilized world. Is it really impossible to do something similar for Homœopathy, if we put all our sincerity and will into the effort? Surely such a type of qualification in Homœopathy should carry due weight and do away with much of the miserable misrepresentation of this finest of therapeutic sciences!

—*The Homœopathic Recorder, April, 1953*

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS*

DR. B. K. SARKAR, M.B., D.M.S., CALCUTTA

DR. SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN, HONOURED GUESTS,
DR. JAICHAND AND FRIENDS :

It is with great diffidence that I accepted the high honour of presiding over the third session of this august gathering held under the auspices of the All India Institute of Homœopathy. If I fail to prove myself worthy of the occasion the responsibility of selecting me for this office is certainly yours. Let us invoke the blessings of God and our immortal master Hahnemann to bestow on us necessary strength,

* The All India Homœopathic Congress, Third Session at New Delhi, dated 27-11-53.