

A CASE HISTORY AS CONTRIBUTION TO HOMOEOPATHIC METHODOLOGY

DR. W. KLUNKER, M.D., L.I.H.

Samuel Hahnemann treated several thousands of patients and wrote several thousands of pages, but he published only two case histories!

On the other hand, wide circles within modern Homoeopathy insist on publishing a great number of homoeopathic cures for statistics, in order to prove the effectiveness of the remedies and the applicability of the law of similars.

The explanation of this paradox is not a historic one: Homoeopathy in the time of Hahnemann was in no less a defensive position than at present. The explanation is, rather, that Hahnemann's concept of Homoeopathy was thoroughly and essentially different from the concept held by a large number of his modern followers.

Hahnemann himself was conscious of having founded the medical art of healing as a *science*, whereas the medicine before him was—and after him remained—only an *ars conjecturalis*, a guessing art. In contrast to a guessing art in medicine, Homoeopathy is based on an *a priori* (drug proving and law of similars) and, as a scientific art of healing, *can expect with certainty in every individual case that the patient will be cured, if the conditions are met*. Therefore, a successful homoeopathic cure doesn't prove homoeopathic principles *a posteriori* (which would be nonsense), but only the rightness of the conditions. On the other hand, an unsuccessful case doesn't disprove homoeopathic principles, but indicates the incorrectness of the conditions. In the same way, the emission of light after flicking the switch, doesn't prove the laws of electricity (pre-supposed here, like the laws of Homoeopathy), but only the right conditions. Consequently, a lack of light doesn't disprove the laws of electricity, but indicates incorrect conditions, a short-circuit for instance. *So Hahnemann himself knew how ridiculous it would be to prove Homoeopathy by experience (cases, statistics)*. Those of his followers, however, who insist on statistics and publishing case histories, have not essentially understood Homoeopathy; they look upon it as a guessing art, according to classic medicine. This tendency is turning out to be the most fatal error in the actual history of Homoeopathy. For instead of considering Homoeopathy as science *a priori*, they treat it officially as pure empiric medicine *a posteriori*, with all the false and disastrous implications—for instance, having to prove the efficiency of its remedies in disease entities.

I am publishing here a case history, with the exclusive intention (a) of drawing emphatically the attention of homoeopaths to the essential difference between Hahnemannian Homoeopathy and the guessing art, (b) of demonstrating how the conditions of a scientific, i.e. mathematically certain,

cure of an individual patient must be realized. My intention is purely methodological.

The patient, a sixty year old woman, consulted on the 28th of August, 1974. She had suffered for four years of an obstinate, tormentingly itching dermatosis. The treatments of specialists, and hospital treatment, brought about transient relief only. A strict raw-food diet gave a two months' remission, but failed the second time.

On examination, the skin of the trunk and upper extremities presented especially excoriated seropapular efflorescences, with few eczematoid alterations. It was the polymorphous type of prurigo chronica. Prurigo nodularis Hyde and drug exanthema could be excluded.

The homoeopathic treatment had to be based on the totality of the carefully gathered symptoms of the patient. Among them, the most peculiar (*Organon*, par. 153) were the following (in the order of their value):

- (1) The patient doesn't tolerate *pointed objects* directed at her (needles, pencils, or corners of the bedclothes).
- (2) A very bothersome *sensation of dryness* and
- (3) Of *burning* on the fingertips, which she must constantly relieve by oiling and cooling.
- (4) The slightest and most harmless noises are intolerable.
- (5) She is extremely aggravated by the least, mental exertion.
- (6) Loss of sleep aggravates her general state extremely.
- (7) Lack of vital heat, so that she must dress herself very warmly, even in summer.

REPERTORISATION

Symptom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Kent's <i>Repertory</i>								
page No.	79	985	1094	79	41	1402	1366	
Nux vomica	—	—	—	3	3	3	3	4/12
Silica	3*	2	2	3	3	—	3	6/16

* Third degree by P. Schmidt

The repertorisation results in *Silica* in the first, *Nux vomica* in the second place. As recommended by our Master, Dr. Pierre Schmidt, I opened the case with the vegetable *similimum*, *Nux vomica*.

29.8.74: *Nux vomica* Q18.

13.9.74: Skin no change; itching worse; patient very disappointed.

Nux vomica continued.

21.10.74: Further aggravation; S.L.

5.11.74: Status idem; *Silica* XM.

- 28.11.74: Clear amelioration; S.L.
 17.12.74: Much less itching, no new eruptions; S.L.
 Dec. 74 -Mar. 75: Bronchitis, Cystitis, ribs fractured. Several acute remedies. Skin aggravated again.
 14.3.75: *Silica* XM.
 24.4.75: Constant amelioration; S.L.
 11.6.75: Skin nearly healthy; no further amelioration; *Silica* CM.
 29.7.75: Skin without manifestations, no itching; S.L.
 29.9.75: Skin healthy; S.L.
 18.11.75: Idem; no treatment.
 6.4.77: Some eruptions and itching; *Silica* XM.
 4.5.77: Skin healthy; no treatment. No relapse till now (November, 1977).

This case clearly demonstrates Homoeopathy to be a truly scientific medicine, i.e. a method of healing patients *with certainty, if the conditions agree*. These conditions are:

- (1) The materia medica, containing the complete phenomena of drug experimentation on the healthy man. I say 'phenomena,' not their distortion and transformation by any pharmacological theories. These phenomena must be made available by a complete repertory.
- (2) The totality of the phenomena of the patient (not of his 'disease') as well as these phenomena of the sick not distorted by any theories of pathology.
- (3) The choice of that remedy (*similimum*) the phenomenology of which corresponds as exactly as possible with the patient's phenomenology.

As the above case shows, there was no curative effect after having given *Nux vomica*. And the reason for it was that *Nux vomica* missed some of the essential characteristics of the patient. The condition (3) was not fulfilled and therefore had no effect. After having administered *Silica*, amelioration immediately set in (without the patient's knowing the change of remedy). Hahnemann knew what he was talking about when he called Homoeopathy a mathematical art of cure!

Today, frightened off by the toxic and often useless effects of classical chemical therapy, people are turning towards an alternative medicine. Therefore the odds seem to be in favor of our taking the place of the old empirical non-scientific medicine (in spite of its scientific appearance). But there is a dangerous trend within Homoeopathy: to shirk the standards of the Hahnemannian methodology in favor of a diluted and shortened proceeding. According to the three conditions of a scientific cure, there are three such evasions:

- (1) From the details of a complete materia medica and its repertory to a reduced and clinically generalized materia medica or indication lists.
- (2) From the interrogation of the patient and evaluation of his charac-

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immunogenetic systems they result in. All one needs to remember at this juncture is the warning Hahnemann gives in the footnote of §1 in the *Organon of Medicine* (a warning even though he issued, he himself could not resist the temptation of trampling it by writing a long exposition on how homoeopathic remedies act in the subsequent aphorisms of the same work) in our anxiety to give homoeopathic therapeutics a modern scientific look.

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teristic individual symptoms to the symptomatology and diagnosis of the disease.

(3) From the law of similars to arbitrary choices of any potentized remedies, which are incorrectly named homoeopathic.

What such a proceeding doesn't reflect is that Homoeopathy without these three conditions ceases to be scientific, and becomes what medicine before Hahnemann was: pure guess-work. So the most important evolution in the history of medicine is inexcusably abandoned. But the exponents of this kind of Homoeopathy are pleased to denounce the Hahnemannian method as old-fashioned, puristic, intolerant, arrogant, and usurping of the truth. I do not intend to dwell upon their ignorance of the essential difference between scientific Homoeopathy and guesswork. But I do contend that after Hahnemann, patients have the right to a cure by certainty, not by the hazard of chance.

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INTERMENSTRUAL PAIN—ONOSMODIUM

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PROGNOSIS

Improvement set in within two minutes. Slight relapse after half an hour as the patient walked about. Repeated a second teaspoon after which she was perfectly normal and active.

REFERENCES

1. Kent, J. T.: *Repertory of Homoeopathic Materia Medica*, p. 734.
 2. Boericke, Wm.: *Pocket Manual of Homoeopathic Materia Medica*, p. 484.
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