

PROGRESS OF HOMOEOPATHY —SOME REFLECTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays everybody talks about the progress of Homoeopathy. This is evident from the long queue of students before the homoeopathic colleges for admission. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to mention that the country in which Homoeopathy is most rapidly developing in the eastern hemisphere, if not in the whole world, is our India.

REAL PROGRESS

(a) *In governmental level*: The Central Government has already accepted in principle the need for the development of Indian systems of medicine and Homoeopathy. It has already appointed homoeopathic physicians under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) for the treatment of the Central Government employees and their families. The scheme is gradually expanding and the homoeopathic dispensaries so far functioning in most of the big cities throughout the country have claimed a lot of reputations among the beneficiaries. National Institute of Homoeopathy has already been functioning for training the personnel and undergoing researches in various fields of Homoeopathy.

The State Governments are also not lagging behind. They have been gradually realizing the potentialities of homoeopathic system of medicine in rural health care effectively. Some States like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal etc. are creating more and more employment opportunities in public health centres.

(b) *Private level*: People are gradually being enlightened about the effectiveness of this system of medicine. At first they thought that Homoeopathy is good only for children as it has no side effects. But now they are gradually realizing that Homoeopathy is a complete system of treatment capable of curing both acute and chronic diseases permanently without creating any hazardous side effects. The cheapness of this system of treatment is an added attraction to them.

(c) *Organizational level*: Previously there were dozens of small associations of homoeopathic physicians throughout the country which were more busy with quarrelling among themselves than doing something positive for the upliftment of Homoeopathy as a whole. But some of our leaders with their constant and untiring efforts have at last been able to bring most of the small organisations to a common platform under the banner 'Homoeopathic Medical Association of India' (HMAI).

So from the above facts we have every reason to be elated that Homoeo-

pathy is making a steady progress in our country. But our happiness will turn into a nightmare if we sincerely reflect upon the following trends.

VICIOUS TRENDS

(1) *Frustration among young homoeopaths*: A young man enters a homoeopathic institution with a high and cherished hope that he is going to undertake a very noble profession. But when he comes out after four or five years of training he does not feel confident to go in the world all alone. He feels helpless and incompetent to earn his livelihood in the competitive world. This lack of confidence is due to the fact that he has not received the necessary practical training to handle a particular diseased condition all by himself.

He then approaches an elder practitioner in the field to gain some practical experience. But generally he gets a very cold reception from the seniors unless he is able to supply them with sufficient number of cases with full fees.

This frustration turns the young and aspiring homoeopath into a mongrel and he thus goes on inflicting suicidal blows not only to his own career but also to the system of Homoeopathy as a whole.

(2) *Neo-homoeopaths*: Ours is the age of modernisation. In the field of Homoeopathy also this urge for modernisation is not lacking. Many homoeopaths of today are reluctant to follow the tenets of our master Hahnemann and Kent as back dated. To them the world has changed a lot since the good old days of Father Homoeopathy. So they see no harm in taking recourse to such 'modern techniques' as (i) simultaneous prescriptions (ii) using homoeopathic injections and modern specific preparations discovered by the 'modern' pharmacists (iii) using potentised medicines and mother tinctures simultaneously to attack the disease in dynamic as well as physical plane!

Once I was shocked to meet a 'reputed homoeopath' with a very high consultation fee. When in attending a chronic case he made a list of symptoms in his 'Case taking register' and for each symptom he gave a different medicine for example, (a) for headache Nat. mur. (b) for eczema Graphites (c) for lumbago>movement Rhus tox. (d) constipation Bryonia. He gave two doses of each medicine noted above in 200 potency, numbered the doses 1 to 8 and instructed the patient to take each powder serially every 4 hours! He explained to me that he is following this 'theory' because in the given medicine one must be the similimum which will act and the others will remain inactive! Simultaneous prescription of Nux vom. at night and Sulphur in the morning is a routine practice to many such neo-homoeopaths.

(3) *Modern homoeopathic researches*: Nowadays what is going on in the name of homoeopathic researches is appearing in the pages of various homoeopathic journals. How far a study of transverse and longitudinal sections of a medicinal plant will help to develop the genius and personality of a particular drug? Similarly how is it possible to undertake 'homoeopathic drug proving' on animals like albino rats etc.?

(4) *Flooding of market with homoeopathic shortcuts*: There is sudden

spurt of publication of various keynotes dealing with specific therapy. These keynotes find a ready market among the frustrated young homoeopaths who are allured to purchase these books on 'homoeopathy simplified' caring little for the homoeopathic text books and classics. This is no less a dangerous trend to destroy the progress of Homoeopathy.

(5) *Changing role of homoeopathic pharmacists*: Sensing the gradual fading away of Hahnemannian Homoeopathy from the country the pharmacists have run into a keen competition among themselves in the invention of specific tonics for particular organs, combination tablets for each disease, injections and other specialised preparations with beautiful packings and literature. The 'progressive' neo-homoeopaths who are reluctant and often incompetent to take recourse to the strenuous job of homoeopathic case taking and repertorisation, are finding easy means to thrive on these 'recent discoveries' of the modern homoeopathic pharmacists.

Hahnemannian Homoeopathy is in death bed in most of the Western countries presumably due to the fascination for modernisation. In India, too, we shall have to face the same fate unless some positive steps are taken in time by the leaders in the field to stop these unhealthy trends. Of course it is true that there can be no magic wand to stop them instantaneously. But an all out effort with sincerity and dedication on the part of our leaders and policy makers and the true Hahnemannians can restore Homoeopathy to its natural path of progress.
