

# THE HAHNEMANNIAN GLEANINGS

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## EDITORIAL

### HOMOEOPATHY AND PROPHYLAXIS

Maharashtra's State Minister for Health, Dr. Smt. Lalita Rao has ambitiously declared to rule out polio from the State within the next two years and has appealed to the medical profession to co-operate in her task. Will homoeopaths and Homoeopathy be of any assistance in the programme?

The fundamental question that comes up for consideration is whether Homoeopathy has prophylactic medicines of proven value.

Vaccines are used to stimulate the body defence mechanism even when the active disease is not present. This stimulation produces an abundance or superabundance of specific antibody for a state of immunity against a particular disease.

There are, it is believed, instances of drugs exerting a similar prophylactic effect. Accepted examples are Belladonna against scarlet fever, Thuja and Ant. tart. against smallpox; similarly, the use of Arnica and Phosphorus before an operation to lessen shock and chloroform sickness. There is a good deal of clinical evidences in support of this. Many of us may also vouch for many more that has helped in practice.

According to the homoeopathic principles, the disease condition originates at the dynamic level presenting vague and generalised feeling of unwellbeing. The origins of many diseased conditions can be traced at this level. But their further progress depends upon the natural history of the disease and the miasmatic group to which the patient belongs. Functional symptoms appear later on the scene, which often guide to the selection of the remedy. One more stage is now recognised and that is postdynamic but prefunctional where there are no definite signs and symptoms. But the disease is simmering below the surface. These can be detected by more sophisticated and accurate techniques (post Hahnemannian), viz. mammography, pap tests, bio assays, hormonal estimation etc. What is important is that the signs and symptoms are not the only expressions of the disease, but various other internal changes that are responsible to point to a disease condition. How much effective these tests are for homoeopathic prescribing is yet to be seen.

A homoeopathic drug can alter a man's state of health, according to the doctrine of analogy; the drug can also prevent this change of health. It is true that drugs organic or inorganic have a prophylactic action to the protein stimulus like vaccine. But there are very few instances of their prophylactic virtues and these are not generally acknowledged. Prevention is, in the nature of things difficult to prove. Immense number of cases are required to establish the preventive power of any agent. Vaccination against smallpox and inoculation against typhoid are both homoeopathic procedures. Organised research is beyond the limitations of any one individual. To ascertain the influence of drugs on body resistance, laboratory work is desirable and essential, but when there is a good deal of clinical evidence which may convince the unprejudiced.

One must understand that the drugs produce disease conditions (idiopathic) rather than concrete diseases (natural). A drug unless taken in massive or super-physiologic doses does not produce the sequence of symptoms shown in disease say, enteric fever. Drug provings are essentially the one which initiates process and carry the disease in certain stages of their evolution. To bring about the replica of a named disease running a definite course, series of drugs will be necessary. Manifestation of the same disease in patients vary widely. Several remedies will be required to produce the replica. There is seldom, therefore, a single remedy as preventive for a disease, just as seldom there is one drug that cures a disease. The yardstick of modern medicine to produce one effective prophylactic may not be possible, or useful.

The government has offered to develop these systems of medicine. Our duty, therefore, is to derive the maximum help from government and force them to put their offer in action by allowing the organised research either at the laboratory level or at the clinical level so that the outcome of this research can be utilised for the larger benefit at low cost, and that too without any side-effects.

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