

WELCOME ADDRESS*

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Our distinguished guest, Dr. Jacobo Gringauz, ladies & gentlemen,

It is my honoured privilege to welcome you heartily on behalf of Executive Committee and members of the Homœopathic Association Delhi (Regd.) and the Homœopathic profession of this place. In this welcome I am sure the 300,000 and more Homœopaths of India would like to be associated. To-day is a red letter day in the history of Homœopathy in this country as we have gathered to welcome a distinguished foreign Homœopath visitor who is honouring us by his presence. In the last 30 years we have had this pleasure only twice before when Dr. Pierre Schmidt of Geneva, who was subsequently to be my teacher, visited this country for personal reasons. We are indeed most grateful to you, sir, for having so generously spared us much of your precious time from your tight schedule here.

I might take this opportunity to acquaint you with the history of homœopathy in this sub-continent. The earliest record we have is of the Homœopathic treatment in Northern India of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Dr. J. M. Honigberger, M.D. probably in the thirties of the last century, Dr. Honigberger was a direct pupil of Samuel Hahnemann and this amazing globe trotter travelled extensively in various parts of Europe, Middle East and India during the second quarter of the last century. About the middle of the 19th century there are records of Homœopathic practitioners in Bengal (in East India) most especially in its capital of Calcutta. However, by and large the earliest Homœopaths were mostly from among laymen who had gained conviction from personal experience at a time when it was a matter of ridicule to express homœopathic principles and to practise with apparently insignificant sweet pills. It was

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impossible for a medicine to be sweet was the age old impression. And everything the Homœopathy stood for was so unconventional. But thanks to the failure of Allopathy, Homœopathy flourished on those failures. The successes of those homœopaths received great ovation and commendation from public at large and won their gratitude. Many on being disgusted with Allopathy which declared them incurable cases turned to search for their own remedies in homœopathic *Materia Medica*. Their successes in their own cases encouraged them to use their knowledge gained at home for the benefit of others. Slowly and gradually the number of such people grew until it became almost a fashion to practise homœopathy as a hobby or a second source of income like the insurance profession. Opportunists began to exploit the well earned and well deserved public admiration for homœopathy. The rapid growth of the large number of so called Homœopaths was a clear index of the great popularity of the Science. But unfortunately this popularity reached the verge of vulgarity because its practice also fell in the hands of people with little merit. It began to be associated with quackery, although right from Master Hahnemann down to the present day genuine and pure homœopaths, none decried the knowledge of basic medicine. In fact that knowledge was declared most essential in sorting out the uncommon symptoms from the common ones and the selection of potency besides prescribing correct diet, giving prognosis, avoiding complications and also for advising regarding general management. This fundamental aspect of Homœopathic Science has been completely ignored. The plain language of the Homœopathic *Materia Medica* which was an asset also became at once a source of weakness.

The attitude of the dominant school on the whole remained hostile and indifferent. Their disbelief was based on the age old prejudices against all the new and unconventional conceptions and treatment of diseases that Homœopathy offered. The successes of the lay homœopaths with no or just a little basic knowledge of Medicine where they with all their knowledge of diseases had failed made them only stubborn, mute and jealous. The apparently innocent instruments with which those cures

were wrought had their share in adding to their scepticism. For a long time they remained doubting and unconvinced. Homœopathy to them conveyed nothing except quackery. The two terms were synonyms according to them and a qualified homœopath was (and even now is for many) a contradiction in terms.

Therefore, it was a welcome day when such a renowned and esteemed physician as Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar, M.D., D.L., C.I.E. Vice-President of the British Medical Association, Bengal Branch, became the first qualified physician to get converted to Homœopathy. This was around 1865. Babu Rajendra Dutt who effected this conversion was a real missionary in the cause of Homœopathy. He also got Dr. Tonierre, a Homœopath from France, to practice in Calcutta. Therefore, except for the practice of Homœopathy by Dr. Honigberger during his stay in North-West India, Bengal became the first real home of Homœopathy here.

There, therefore, are on the scene three kinds of Homœopaths in this country at the present time:—

(1) Those that graduated in Allopathic system of medicines and then subsequently because of some personal experience on themselves or their family or on some patients started the study of Homœopathy and got converted to it.

(2) Those that studied in purely Homœopathic Institutions of good or reasonable standard.

(3) Those that took to its practice without any substantial medical training, but became good prescribers by study and experience.

As outlined above this third category has been and still is the largest in number. However, this was no fault of the profession but of the authorities that did not make any provision for the ever increasing public demand. The redeeming feature is that with the present regulation of practice this category will become extinct with this generation.

This state of affairs was agitating the minds of the enlightened members of the profession and as long ago as in 1936, Dr. K. G. Saxena, who now has the honour of being the Hony. Homœopathic physician to the President of India, along with some colleagues persuaded and got passed a bill in the Central Legislature inspite of strong opposition from the British backed

Government benches. Nothing much came of it immediately. In 1946 the efforts were renewed and a deputation led by the late Dr. Diwan Jai Chand, my father, met the then Health Minister in the interim cabinet, Raja Ghazanfar Ali. Meanwhile Bengal had taken a great lead forward by instituting the first faculty of Homœopathy in India in 1943. After independence of India in 1947, the Homœopaths redoubled their efforts to get proper Governmental recognition. In 1948 a Homœopathic Enquiry Committee was set up by the Government of India to scrutinise the claim of Homœopathy to be a scientific system and if so to suggest ways and means for its further growth on proper lines. This committee after due investigation declared Homœopathy to be a scientific system. During the last decade or so one State after the other passed bills on Homœopathy and set up machinery to regulate its practice so that for future quackery could be weeded out from its ranks.

In this country our experience leads us to favour the undergraduate type of Homœopathic institutions i.e. separate institutions where all the basic medical subjects as well as Homœopathy is taught. In addition there can be postgraduate courses for the allopathic graduates.

In spite of all these handicaps India can boast of 300,000 and more whole time Homœopaths and the fact that they can sustain themselves is enough to show how large a clientele must be taking recourse to Homœopathic treatment. Therefore, even though Germany gave birth to Homœopathy and U.S.A. nourished it, but it seems that the golden chapter of its history will be written in Latin America and India, and the sparks kindled by Dr. Honigberger in India and I believe, Dr. Muir among others in Latin America will become an ever widening conflagration. From what we have read or heard of Homœopathy in your great country our interest is greatly stimulated and we are all eagerly looking forward to hear more about it from your goodself. I earnestly desire and hope that this little contact will be a prelude to many more opportunities of such meetings.

With these words I welcome you, Sir, once again to this old

historical city of Delhi where it can be truly said that every brick has a history of its own. The political dramas that were enacted here if recited today, will sound stranger than fiction. I hope that out of your multifarious engagements you will be spared sometime to see the places of interest.

SOUTH AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS

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2. Damp residence and damp climatic areas especially near standing water such as river banks, tanks, dams are to be avoided when disease occurs.

3. For increasing the bodily heat and reducing the influence of hydrogen ions on the tissue fluids—Natum Sulph, Nux and Ipecac alternately in low potency are very helpful. For nervous symptoms Atropine Sulph 6x, Apis and Antimony have proved valuable. Other remedies which also act on Von Grauvogl's principles are Nitric Acid, Spigelia, Calc. Carb, Thuja, Arsenic etc. These drugs can be used according to symptoms shown by the animal.

Nosode prepared from the vaccine or from the morbid eye secretion can prove useful as preventive and curative homœopathic remedy and some of the Indian firms are requested to bring such products in the market.

The nosode prepared for distemper in dogs is gaining popularity among veterinarians in the field.
