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The 10th of April every year marks a red-letter day for homœopaths all over the world, for on this day was born the Master, Samuel Hahnemann, a genius of the highest calibre and a humanitarian of noblest order. If homœopathy is a divine blessing, which indeed it is to suffering humanity, we shall for ever remember with gratitude him who introduced it to this world.

The life of the founder is too well-known to all ardent students of homœopathy and therefore hardly requires any repetition. Several eminent men have written on the various aspects of Hahnemann's life, his genius and discoveries, but I shall take this opportunity to emphasise one or two aspects.

It is a well-known fact that Hahnemann was born in an age of superstition and traditional out-look. Traditional thought and blind adherence to authority were the order of the day. None dared to think or act independently or to question existing beliefs. Logic and independent reasoning were out of question. In such an age when reason slavishly bowed down before dogma, Hahnemann felt entirely out of tune; but very soon he courageously broke the bonds which confined thinking so that his mind was liberated to think freely and logically.

In his search to discover a true system of treatment, he experimented with China for among the hundreds of unreliable and harmful remedies, China alone was then known to have a reliable and specific effect in ague. His original mind decided to experiment with drugs on his own healthy body and thanks to this idea, homœopathy has born. When, as a result, he recognised that similar medicines could cure similar diseases and he realised further that the real effects of medicines were not known, for the true language of the drugs was yet undiscovered, he faced the task of building up entirely a new materia medica, a pure materia medica, a materia medica which expressed the pure language of nature. Any ordinary

person would have been aghast at such a tremendous task, but not Hahnemann. He went about systematically and proved remedies one after the other, and it is a tribute to his great tenacity, industry and sacrifice that he proved perhaps more remedies than any one else in the whole of the homœopathic field. It is also a credit to him keen observation, that the indications of the remedies proved by him are still considered the most reliable, as mentioned by Dr. Margaret Tyler somewhere.

A further testimony to his keen observation can also be found in the history of homœopathy. When he gradually reduced the doses of medicine, he found that this brought about a reduction in the medicinal aggravation. He decreased the doses further and further till he came to the absolutely minimum of one drop or one grain of the medicine. Routine commonsense would have dictated to any one that this is probably the lowest limit to which a person could go in reducing the dose but not to Hahnemann. His logical mind felt that if 5 drops had a better effect than 10 and one drop gave more relief than five, naturally there is no reason why half a drop should not have a better result than one, and one tenth of a drop should not act better than half a drop. Following this logic, he diluted the medicine and then discovered that the so-called minute doses of medicines actually became much more powerful than could be imagined.

It is also a wonder to the modern homœopathic student that whereas we are not sometimes able to perceive any great difference between the action of potencies, such as 30, 200 or 1000, Hahnemann was able to perceive clearly that the third dilution acted better than the first and 6th dilution acted better than 3rd. Truly, it required tremendous powers of observation and perception to distinguish such fine difference between the action of such doses of medicines.

It is true that he was a genius and a scientist and yet a careful study of his life gives us the impression that he had a spirit of enthusiasm in him which led him on further and further. Some degree of thought will also lead us to the conclusion that apart from his abilities and scientific attitude, the enormous sincerity of the man and the intense desire to help suffering humanity as evidence by the great sacrifices he made and diffi-

culties he underwent, probably gave him much clearer perception than all other scientists. Though pure materialists may not agree with such ideas, it is indeed a fact that when a person subordinate or subjugates his ego, and his personal prejudices and cuts down selfishness to the barest minimum or eliminates it altogether and devotes himself to his task honestly and sincerely, his senses seem to become more acute, he becomes more inspired, and his power of thinking, insight and intuition become much more absolute. No other possible explanation seems to fit in to account for Hahnemann's breath taking discoveries.

One point is worth mentioning. A few of our colleagues in their enthusiastic admiration for Homœopathy and Hahnemann go to extreme limits of fanaticism, to the extent of believing that Homœopathy is so perfect that no further research is necessary since no further progress is possible. They also sincerely believe that there is nothing good outside homœopathy. While such zeal and loyalty are commendable, yet they have a negative aspect. We should not allow them to prejudice us even in our favour or to rob us of objectivity in outlook. No science in this world is perfect and that applies to homœopathy too. So there is scope however small for further improvement, for further modification. Our respect, admiration or reverence need not and should not interfere with our own freedom of thought and freedom to draw conclusions from our own careful observation and experiences. Hahnemann had adopted as his motto "Aude Sapere" which translated means "Dare to be wise". He wished that others should also experiment on the lines indicated by him and base their conclusions on their experiences. He expected such courage from us. Dr. Burnett has mentioned that all medical progress was not interred with Hahnemann. Dr. Clarke has stated that more often than not Hahnemann's negative dicta were wrong. Yet Burnett and Clarke, master Homœopaths themselves, were some of the best followers of Hahnemann and have advanced homœopathy quite a lot.

So we also have to develop a critical and scientific attitude, adopting all that is proved correct by experience, and rejecting all that is false and is unconfirmed by experience.

The 10th April every year is the day when we, the homœopaths of the world, pay our tributes and respects to the Master, whose discoveries are a source of eternal wonder, for even a 150 years after his discoveries have been made, the tremendous advancement of science has not been able to offer any valid explanation as to the nature of the energy resident in the homœopathic potencies.

But if we imagine that by paying our respects to the master, we have done our duty, then we are sadly mistaken. The greatest and most sincere tribute that we can pay to any person is to carry on his work towards the ideals which he cherished. If we are indebted to Hahnemann for the gift of homœopathy and for the gift of the numerous remedies, and for the gift of the potentised doses, then it becomes our duty to repay our debt to him and to his other numerous followers by advancing in our own small way, within our own small ambit, the science of homœopathy, by enlarging the *Materia medica*, by defining the uses of the remedies and by propagating the science of homœopathy further. The peculiar circumstances ruling in the world have fortunately or otherwise put the burden of advancing homœopathy into the hands of our country, for our country has perhaps the largest number of homœopaths in the world today. So, the homœopaths of our country should now wake up from the long slumber and devise ways and means of advancing homœopathy on the proper lines. Due to various circumstances, homœopathy in India has so far flourished by the skill and devotion of the numerous untrained and self-trained homœopaths, but now that things are taking a better shape and since numerous colleges have been established and status has been accorded to the homœopaths, it is time for us to devise ways of advancing homœopathy on scientific lines in an organised manner. This would be the proper way to celebrate Hahnemann's birthday and pay tributes to this great genius.