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HOMOEOPATHY

A three year old child was whining restlessly wanting various objects which he immediately threw away then cried because he could not have them. One cheek red and hot the other pale and cold. Five drops of tasteless liquid and within minutes the child was calm and peaceful. A 22 year old asthmatic with a history of child eczema whose attacks start at 2 a.m. fears death. Five drops of tasteless liquid three times daily and within days he is on the road to recovery. A nervous woman, sensitive, apprehensive, melancholic, sighing deeply, many operations, never well since the death of a grandchild fifteen years previously. Five drops of tincture and within minutes she could feel a release of tensions that plagued her for years. An old dog partially paralysed in the hind legs restored to normal function within a week after daily doses of yet another tincture.

Nothing spectacular in the above incidents, especially in this day and age of powerful chemical tranquilizers, mood elevators, sedatives and stimulants. Nothing spectacular unless you realise that in each case the relief of symptoms was due to an infinitesimal dose of a harmless substance especially selected along proven lines and properly prepared, a system of therapeutics called Homoeopathy.

How are those remedies selected and prepared? To answer this, we must return to the year 1790 when Samuel Hahnemann, a very highly respected physician in Leipzig, Germany, while translating Cullen's "Materia Medica" noticed the great similarity between the effects of Extract of Cinchona Bark when taken in material doses on the body, and the symptoms of Malaria, the very condition for which Cinchona was given as a remedy. Six years later after numerous experiments Hahnemann published an essay "On a New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Properties of Drugs."

In this essay Hahnemann promulgates his conclusions thus: "Every powerful medicinal substance produces in the human body a peculiar kind of disease, the more powerful the medicine the more powerful and violent the disease." We should imitate nature, which sometimes cures a chronic disease by superadding another and employ in the disease we wish to cure that medicine which is able to produce another and very similar artificial disease and the former will be cured "similia similibus."

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By this time he had determined the effects of many substances on the human body and psyche, by a process termed "proving."

Since Drug Proving is the platform on which Homoeopathy is enabled to stand head and shoulders over other forms of medication it would be better to quote here Dr. Julia Green in her talks on this subject to laymen, which were reprinted in "The Journal of the American Institution of Homoeopathy."

"In order to discover how drugs can express their power to help in the curative process, they have been given to healthy people to make them sick (it

should be noted here that Homoeopathic remedies are always tested on people not on animals, for only humans can fully relate the mental and emotional as well as the physical effects that a drug has on them.) to express their sick making power, those well people who take drugs to make them sick are "provers" of drugs. (The term drug, is here used as any substance proven homoeopathically, whether animal, vegetable or mineral in origin). The resulting symptom pictures are provings of those drugs:-

"The physician director of the proving gives the drugs in repeated doses to each member of a group of provers. In the group are men, women and children, many ages and many temperaments. They are as nearly healthy people as can be found. They do not know what they are taking and they do not communicate with each other during the proving. Nearly all of the group receive the drug to be proved. A very few receive blanks to be used as controls. Each prover is instructed to observe carefully every bit of change from normal and to report such changes to the director regularly."

"The director writes what the prover reports in the prover's own language. Finally he makes lists of all symptoms reported and arranges them according to their mental and physical aspects. He notes then those symptoms felt most strongly by the largest numbers of provers and gives them the highest rank in the proving. Generally there are three or four groups coming through. He gives the sensitive provers a chance to bring out the finer nervous symptoms not felt by the more phlegmatic provers.

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"When all symptoms are reported and no more are experienced the proving is over. This may take many weeks. The director then arranges the symptoms according to the patty of the body affected eg. mind, head, throat, stomach, abdomen etc. There are also groups about sleep, dreams, nerves, weather, fever, sensations, etc., from the innermost to the outermost.

"All this constitutes a materia medica of the drug proved. Multiply it by the many hundreds of drugs and we have a Homoeopathic materia medica which is in the language of the people and not in the medical language. It is the language of human sickness, not of pathology or tissue change. "Proving" have been repeated in order to show that repetition brings out nothing new. Once well made, the proving of a drug stands forever."

When a patient presents himself to a Homoeopath for treatment, regardless of the complaint, the practitioner must try to match the patient's symptoms with those described by the provers of the remedy. In Homoeopathic prescribing matching symptoms to a remedy is a much more detailed matter than might first be realised. For the Homoeopathic practitioners find that minute differences between symptoms are of the greatest importance since they indicate the need for totally different remedies. Homoeopaths therefore question their patients in great detail and pay attention to factors which are usually ignored or considered unimportant by other schools of healing. For example in one text there

are thirty eight different listings for coughs, each with its own indication of a remedy or remedies. If the cough is worse in the morning, one remedy is indicated, if the cough is worse in the evening a different remedy is indicated, if better lying down, or if better sitting up still another is the more appropriate remedy. Still other listings go into detail regarding the nature of the cough, its location in the body, whether chronic or acute, whether dry, barking, hard or hoarse, paroxysmal or periodical and so on through many other distinctions, each with its own indicated remedy or remedies.

Similar lists have been compiled in homoeopathic texts for every type of symptom known. Under many of the symptom/listings there is a choice of remedies, sometimes a rather substantial list is given from which to choose. How is the choice made? Here we come to another of the principles of Homoeopathic prescribing, namely the "Totality of Symptoms."

"Totality of Symptoms."

A patient has ordinarily more than one symptom but the homoeopathic practitioner may also notice for example an abnormal colour of the face, pimples, or other eruption on the skin, and questioning may disclose symptoms of intestinal irregularity, digestive disturbances of some nature and possibly several other matters in which there is a deviation from the normal, but which did not trouble the patient enough for him to mention anything about them. Now for each of the secondary symptoms the careful prescriber will find the exact listing that corresponds to the manner in which that symptom operates in the particular case under consideration and note the list of remedies indicated for each of the listings. From all the lists thus selected, the remedy that is indicated the greatest number of times receives primary consideration in the selection. The point here is that the symptom of which the patient complains, in this case the cough, is only one factor in the total picture – and the Homoeopath gets his best results by treating the patient rather than the symptom. Remember, the Homoeopath is not interested in simply palliating or relieving the pain or symptom, he is interested in the cause which is at the back of the patients' problems.

Even the most carefully selected remedy will not be effective if it has not been prepared properly. The method of preparing it properly is termed "potentising". When Hahnemann discovered the principle of "Like cures like" he then started experiments to ascertain the quantity of drug necessary to effect a cure. He began by lowering the dose and was quite surprised to find that after he had reached a certain level the effect of a drug increased and kept increasing with each dilution, but it was a dilution with a difference. One part of the active ingredient was placed in 9 parts of an inert substance (sugar of milk), this was ground in a pestle and mortar for a set period of time, the resultant mixture was now designated a potency of 1X. One part of this mixture was now added to 9 parts of sugar of milk and again ground.

This was designated a potency of 2X and so on through to 3X and 6X. 3X potency contain 1/1000th part of the original quantity of substance. The whole process is called "Potentising", 3X and 6X potencies being the two most commonly used potencies throughout the world. However, there are many Homoeopaths who use much higher potencies with great success. Naive opponents triumphantly reject Homoeopathy because small doses

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success. Naive opponents triumphantly reject Homoeopathy because small doses appear to them obviously absurd. It does not occur to them that we must have compelling clinical reasons for it. They are also loath to investigate so their superiority complex leads them to condemnation without investigation and breeds childish boastful contempt. It is remarkable that these same people accept the value of trace elements which are required by the body in far less quantity than a 3X dilution. They will also accept medical journal reports in which the great difference is noted in the effects of drugs depending on the quantity used — a fact long recognised by the homoeopathic school and the very basis of its efficacy. Thus a solution of adrenalin 1 part to 1,000 (3X mind you) was found to act as a blood vessel constrictor whereas a solution of 1 part per 1,000,000 (6X) acted as a vaso dilator or expander. Also it has been noted that whereas large doses of a poison may kill, a moderate dose of it may merely inhibit, a minute dose of the same may actually stimulate a certain function.

It should be emphasized here that the manufacture of the Homoeopathic remedies is of major importance. There can be no short cut to success, it is too individualistic to be exploited commercially, so drug manufacturers are uninterested. Because of the grinding of these substances is such slow work very few companies are prepared to tie up machinery for long periods for so little return. Consequently, there are very few reliable Homoeopathic Pharmacies throughout the world.

Homoeopathy has a positive approach. Its goal is not merely the curing of disease but increasing the health level. It holds that germs are often the concomitants or else the results, rather than the cause of an illness and so puts the emphasis on increasing the patient's inner vital resistance rather than trying to protect him from germs.

Homoeopathic medication is neither habit forming nor does it entail any harmful side effects. It does not complicate matters for the surgeon the way medication by anticoagulants etc. often does. Further, homeopathy is not exclusive but tolerant. Many who practice it are surgeons. It is a school that grants that at times osteopathy or chiropractic or other forms of therapy may be indicated. It uses the various diagnostic methods as circumstances require and recognises that on occasion the palliative use of "miracle drugs" may be necessary. They favour the use of natural, unrefined foods where practical and the practitioner takes his patient into his confidence. He

foods where practical and the practitioner takes his patient into his confidence. He even makes provision for his patient to treat his own minor ills and to help himself in an emergency.

Yet with all these commendable features it cannot be said that homoeopathy has reduced the treatment of disease to a certainty, as Hahnemann optimistically hoped it would. Since it is guided to some extent by the feelings of the patient, its effectiveness is effected by the ability of the patient to evaluate his own symptoms and as is true in every school of medicine much depends on the conscientiousness of the individual doctor and his interest in his patients. The skill and knowledge required is immense. Dr. Stuart Close, a prominent homoeopathic physician and teacher, writing in his book "Lectures on Homoeopathic Philosophy" states that his bad prescriptions outnumbered his good prescriptions. Nevertheless the results obtained from the correct use of homoeopathic remedies is excellent, so much so that people, in fact very prominent ones, have accepted it. In Great Britain homoeopathic physicians have the same standing as allopathic ones in the National Health Scheme.

BERNARD LYLE

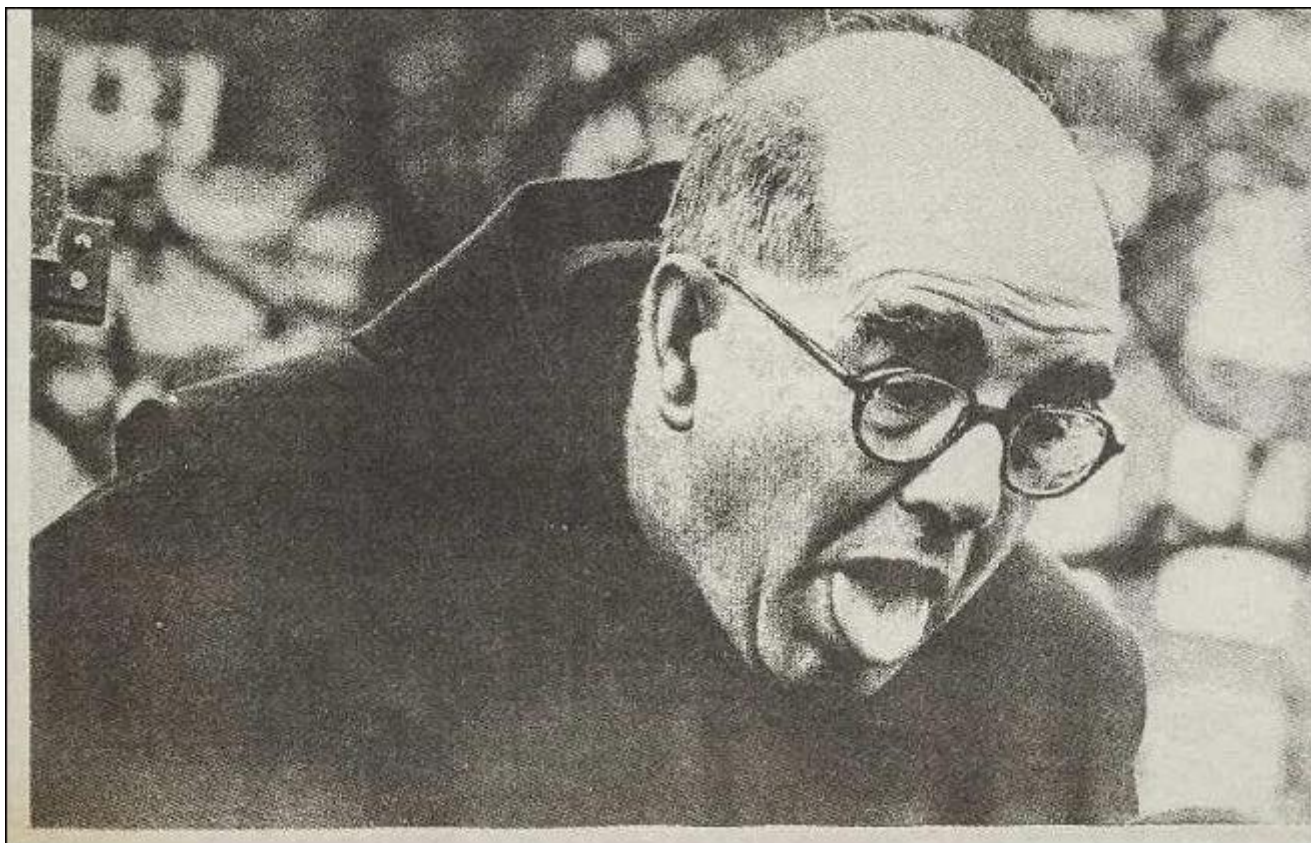
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