

JUST WHAT IS HOMŒOPATHY?

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Among the initiated, it is usually stated that a homœopathic physician is one who adds to his general knowledge of the healing arts, the additional knowledge of prescribing remedies according to the Law of Similars. In other words, such a physician is a specialist in materia medica and drug usage.

Some, ignorant of our system of medicine, have accused us of everything from the use of charms through the whole gamut of hypnosis and suggestion, although now both the latter are fully accepted in general medical, obstetrical and dental practice. Actually the homœopathic physician differs from his fellows only in being a bit better trained in the use of drugs. Our license to practice, our State Board examinations, our colleges, do not differ in one iota from those of other physicians. Then, you may ask, "Why a separate school?"

We who have the duty of preserving Homœopathy for the future, do not ask for separate schools. We had hoped, just prior to World War I when we were asked by the A.M.A. to go along with their grading of our schools, that we would be permitted to continue to keep Homœopathy in the curricula and add it to what was being taught at all the other schools. We thought they would be fair and include courses in materia medica and homœopathic pharmacology in their studies. What a rude awakening was in store for us, since the courses stipulated did not allow for any undergraduate teaching of the Law of Similars and today those interested may only learn through postgraduate courses and preceptorships.

It may interest some of you to know that in Brazil, for instance, no pharmacist may graduate until he has been thoroughly trained in the preparation and dispensing of homœopathic drugs. Gradually this law is being applied to the medical colleges so that in time all physicians will have a knowledge of the art and may utilize it if they so desire. The newly-elected president of the 1962 session of the Pan American Homœopathic Medical Congress which is slated for Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and San Paulo is not only a physician but also a Senator so we continue to have our proponents in the proper high places.

When I was a student at the old New York Homœopathic Medical College, my professors, who were specialists in Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics, Orthopedics, Otorhinolaryngology and the other specialties, all continued to use Homœopathy as a supplement in the treatment of their patients. I can honestly state that I learned as much from them as I did in lectures on materia medica itself. It is also of interest to learn that the newly formed Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons contained about 18% of surgeons from

our colleges and 23% of the physicians, although our total compared to the rest of the medical colleges was only 3% of the faculties. Does this not seem of importance to you? The answer is that these men had a BETTER background than their fellows. It is as simple as that!

In the years between 1796 and 1843 there lived, first in Germany and later in France, a man who if alive today might well be acclaimed as the greatest physician in the world. This man was Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann who described the art of curing disease by the administration of drugs which in material doses produced similar symptoms in well persons to those observed in sick patients he wished to cure. This method of testing drugs on healthy humans he called "proving" and no one can deny it is far superior to the use of laboratory animals which differ in many respects in their response to the same drugs. Hahnemann was not only an outstanding physician, but an accomplished linguist and chemist. Besides his good qualities, he was noted for a violent temper which would brook of no criticism. Perhaps it was that fault of his which prevented the general acceptance of Homœopathy by all the physicians of that time. It is a matter of record that the hatred of its sponsor kept many from espousing the cause of Homœopathy, despite the fact that they saw wonderful results compared to the polypharmacy of the era.

Those of us who have been in practice for more than a quarter of a century will remember countless remedies that were introduced as "miracle cures," yet are today unknown to the vast majority of physicians. This led to therapeutic nihilism by many who refused to swallow the exaggerated claims made for these nostrums which frequently passed into oblivion after a year or two of use. The work of recent years, especially in the fields of colloidal chemistry and atomic physics, has drawn scientists closer to the fold of Homœopathy. Human nature being what it is often prevents some of these men from giving credit where it is due.

A survey of the *J.A.M.A.* reveals such articles as "The Bi-Phasic Action of Adrenalin" wherein the authors, in a half-dozen pages, strove to prove that in a dose of 1 : 1,000 adrenalin is a vaso-constrictor, while in a dilution of 1 : 1,000,000 it becomes a vaso-dilator. Any tyro in Homœopathy would have known that, as well as the fact that the same applies to almost every known drug.

The use of cow-pox vaccine is not absolutely homœopathic although many have made such a claim for it. There are those who insist that desensitization in allergy is pure Homœopathy, whereas it actually is Isopathy, the use of the same rather than the similar remedy. When we get away from the hypodermic needle and use the potentized pollens, we are closer to the practice of Homœopathy. Many patients have come to me following a series of injections of dust or pollens without permanent relief. Yet after a series of pellets running from 6x, through 12x, 30x, 200th and finally 10M potencies, they have had more lasting relief at a lower cost, without

danger of infection due to repeated injections. With the prevalence of hepatitis so high, we must consider this point. We still feel that this method is more Isopathy than Homœopathy, but is heading in the right direction.

On the other hand, I have treated children and adults afflicted with asthma, hay fever or eczema for whom, following a study of the totality of symptoms, I prescribed *Calcarea* or *Sulphur* or (in a more recent case of a lady afflicted with asthma for 18 years) *Ipecac* with a resulting cure.

In a recent article in the *J.A.M.A.* of May 7, 1960, Vol. 175, No. 1, a group of science students, under the leadership of T. D. Luckey, Ph.D., Professor of Biochemistry, University of Missouri Medical Center, presented an article entitled, "Hormologosis in Pharmacology." The gist of this article was that, according to work published in Germany in 1888 by H. Schultz, "poisonous substances had a stimulatory effect when given in small doses." This we have always known as the Arndt-Schultz law and many articles have appeared in the homœopathic literature regarding it. Instead of crediting Homœopathy (which this is beyond all doubt), the authors have invented a new term, hormologosis, by which they explain the phenomenon of small doses stimulating while large doses poison. In spite of the numerous articles which appeared in the *J.A.I.H.* on this subject, none were given in the list of references. This again only serves to illustrate the smallness of mind one meets whenever the question of Homœopathy comes up before some groups of so-called "regular" physicians.

No one today, in the light of modern scientific knowledge, dares to sneer at the power of the infinitesimal. As students, we were told that anything beyond the 28x could not be physically demonstrated. Colloidal chemists have given us a new view of our potencies. Instead of drugs becoming "weaker" by dilution with *Saccharum lactis*, the constant dispersion of particles of milk sugar coats each with minute quantities of the drug, making for more potent action, hence "stronger." Perhaps that may explain why those of us who give a single dose of 10M get results that others may perceive only after weeks of repeated dosage with the 3x or 6x.

This is not intended to be a course in Homœopathy. Due to the large number of non-homœopathic physicians expected at this 110th annual session of the Homœopathic Medical Society of the State of New York, we have planned a short introduction to explain what Homœopathy is and what we expect from it. The others to follow will bring this out more clearly. If we may leave only one point with our separated brothers, let it be this: Much in Homœopathy is priceless. Approach it with an open mind and help us preserve its teachings for generations to come.

—*Jourl. of the Am. Inst. of Homœopathy, Jan.-Feb., '61*