

## HAHNEMANN ORATION

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*"Similia similibus curentur."*

Like magic, foreshadowing clear perception and reason, it speaks mysteriously at first in the myths of past ages: "The wound will be closed through the spear which tore it open." Thus Amfortas' wound is healed, and thus Telephos' sore can only heal when touched with the rust from the spear which produced it.

Hippocrates was the first to transform magic to experience and knowledge: "Through the like disease is produced, and through application of the like it is cured." Already the clearly perceiving mind of the Greeks recognizes the wider implications of the law of similars, valid also in the realm of the psychè. Thus Aristotle sees the aim of tragedy with its representation of human passions and their consequences, similar to those of the spectator, as effecting a mental cure-catharsis, purification.

The three principal figures of medical thought, Hippocrates, representing Antiquity, Paracelsus, representative of the Middle Ages, and Hahnemann, standing for our age, all pronounce the law of similars as the guiding principle of treatment. However, it was Hahnemann who first established upon this principle a theory of medicine, a new method of drug research, a new, comprehensive and vast materia medica, a revolutionary method of drug preparation, integrating all these elements into a new system of medical treatment. Never before, never since, has one single physician performed anything equalling such a feat.

The year 1796 is the birth year of Homœopathy, in which Hahnemann first formulated the law of similars. It was the same year in which Jenner, proceeding empirically, performed the first vaccination, thus opening the field of vaccine therapy. To this method, which is based upon the homœopathic principle, humanity owes to a great extent the prevention of the deadliest epidemics. As beneficial as the application of the simile principle appears in preventive medicine, as beneficial and of universal importance it proves in the treatment of actual disease.

Ultimately there are three methods which form the basis of medicine. One, called by Hahnemann antipathic or palliative, based upon the contrarium principle, makes use of the primary physiological effect of a drug. Here a symptom is treated by enforcing a functional change, in order to achieve symptomatic relief. Midway between this method and the homœopathic method stands the method of substitution, through which the body is supplied with its own substances, in which it is deficient. Here we can logically include the antibiotics, since they substitute for the antibodies which the organism should produce as defence against infections.

The third method, based upon the simile principle and most extensively represented by Homœopathy, is the actual curative method in the strict sense. Through a stroke of genius Hahnemann found the way to stimulate through the specific effect of the simile the defensive cell processes, thus achieving true autonomic cure in the reactive after effect. The simile principle represents therefore the centre and core of preventive as well as curative medicine. No wonder then, that we can discover this principle to be the actual source of curative effect in all those methods which are based upon stimulation of the natural forces of healing.

In the field of Physiotherapy, particularly in Hydro and Balneotherapy, the curative mechanism consists in the provocation of the reaction of the body. A double phasic reaction is the rule in all physical procedures, starting with aggravation, followed by amelioration. Hippocrates formulated already the homœopathic rule for Hydrotherapy: "Cold water produces warmth and warm water cools." In a similar way radiation treatment follows in many respects the homœopathic principle.

Dietetics belongs essentially into the field of substitutive treatment and nursing. Only the ancient and often very effective treatment through fasting is actual therapeutic. The effect of a fast consists in the dissimilation of waste products and pathological deposits in the body, which are first attacked, and act when reaching the bloodstream as autogenous stimuli, producing primary aggravations and secondary curative reactions, as we see in the course of homœopathic treatment.

Treatment by mechanical manipulation represents a therapy of graded stimulation. Here, as well as in the related field of chiropractic, the simile principle is operative. In the latter method a dislocation is at first increased, in the same way as during the resetting of a dislocated joint, in order to achieve through the rebound effect a normal position and a reactive stimulation of nerves and tissues.

In the ancient, and often astonishingly successful treatment of acupuncture, the needle produces a specific irritation, according to the place of its insertion, which provokes through the secondary reaction a curative effect.

Psychotherapy, this young and very important branch of medicine, has a truly curative method also the simile principle as its underlying mechanism. The essence of its effect is the confrontation of the individual with his own subconscious Ego. This profound experience initiates—*similia similibus*—a therapeutic change in the personality. The stimulus of the conscious probing into the depths of the subconscious, which reaches the sore spots, often produces pronounced initial aggravations, followed by amelioration. The laws of compensatory reaction, the conception of a purposeful determination of the psychic processes represent a common ground with Homœopathy. The conceptions of suppression and complex formation, the recurrence of old complaints and the alternation of symptoms as well as the basic totality approach are the same conceptions as those expressed by Hahnemann in his theory of chronic disease only with a different terminology on the organic level.

The Law of Similars thus comprehends as a transcendent principle of cure all truly curative methods which are necessarily based on support and direction of the *vis medicatrix* nature.

Hahnemann's bold attempt towards synthesis not only in therapeutics but also in general pathology, through his conception of Psora, can only be understood if we do not look upon a patient's disease as an isolated event, but in context with all his previous diseases, and if we consider and learn to treat them as an entity, as the patient's personal life disease. The modern concept of focal infection, if broadly enough conceived as com-

prising all bacterial infection (with the exception of venereal disease) which leave a residual, from time to time erupting, focus in the body, provides us from the etiological angle with a new understanding of Hahnemann's all-pervading Psora miasm as the main source of chronic disease.

The unitarian concept of every disease as a psychosomatic process was not only for the first time clearly apprehended by Hahnemann, but he was the first and is still the only one to transform this theoretical approach into a practical method of drug treatment, which includes the psyche.

From the processes and reactions which occur in the course of disease and its homœopathic treatment, Hahnemann derived in his *Organon* generalizations and basic rules through which the healing art of medicine became for the first time a science in the sense of the natural sciences. For the first time there was created a "biologic", a logic of life processes, and not without reason could Hahnemann call his principal work *Organon*, parallel to the *Organon* of Aristotle which laid down the fundamentals of logic, and Bacon's, which became the basis for the inductive method of the natural sciences.

However, Hahnemann's boldly searching and observing genius went farther and carried him with his discovery of the effect of immaterial drug preparations to the borders of the unknown. The fact of the action of high potencies may prove at the same time the existence of another level of the physical world. Hahnemann's *Dynamis* is identical with Aristotle's *Entelechy* and Paracelsus' *Archaeus*, a conception reaffirmed by modern Neovitalism. With a revolutionary breakthrough through the barriers of present-day knowledge, we here may be entering the realm of other energies, the energies of the "vis formativa", of the forces of formation.

The Simile Principle, as a general principle of life, reaches far beyond the field of health and disease, encompassing with life itself also its manifestations in history, and thus also the history of our time, which is dangerously threatened by the released forces of physical nature, the atom. In his inimitable phrasing, Sir Winston Churchill pointed the way how this danger of destruction may be ultimately prevented by itself, and his

thought is thoroughly in accordance with the principle of the simile, when he says : "Through a process of sublime irony the world may reach a point where safety will be the sturdy child of fear and survival the twin brother of annihilation."

Thus the danger of destruction turns into the way towards peace. In the spirit of the homœopathic Law in its most general application, the voice of the great statesman of our time meets with the voice of the ancient sage Laotse, who perceives the meaning of disease as liberation from all disease :

"The elect is free from suffering,  
Because he suffers his suffering,  
He is freed from suffering."

Freedom from suffering achieved in a true and lasting way, this is the goal of Homœopathy, this was the goal of its great founder, Christian Frederick Samuel Hahnemann.

Finally, let us also remember all those who have followed the teachings of Hahnemann, thus keeping it alive against all attacks, all those who have further developed it, and also the many laymen who have given it invaluable support. At this moment we gather in a city which through the generosity of one of its citizens, a layman, has become a centre of Homœopathy and today receives us with gracious hospitality.

Wandering through the streets of this lovely capital of Suabia, we see with admiration how the primary effect of destruction has immediately aroused the secondary reaction of curative reconstruction in truly homœopathic fashion, reminding us of Giordano Bruno's in the deepest sense homœopathic expression of reversal of effect : "Is not the extreme of destruction the beginning of creation ?" However, it is with sadness that we at the same time consider the irretrievable loss of human lives and works of man, which have fallen victim to the unchained forces of violence. And again still another deeper meaning of the principle of Homœopathy comes to our mind : When we think of the effect of the homœopathic remedy which gently supports nature as its servant, instead of suppressing it with force, and for this very reason achieves the most beneficial effect with the mildest stimulus of the small homœopathic dose

—do we not recognize in this phenomenon the greater principle of non-violence ?

How violence with necessity destroys everything and finally itself, the history of our days has demonstrated, when violence and force in their most brutal embodiment could rise to leadership of a whole country, to drown the world in an ocean of tears and blood. May we on this way, when representatives of many nations bow their head before a great genius of this country, the word of one of Hahnemann's greatest disciples, Constantine Hering, illuminate the path of all true followers of Hahnemann, the word he gave to our science as its motto, in which we can hear the very heart throb of Homœopathy :

“The mild power is great”.

—*The British Homœopathic Journal, April '56*

## AMERICAN HOMŒOPATHY

A Study Of The Times, the Personalities And The Development  
Of Homœopathy In The United States.\*

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To present a comprehensive, detailed historical analysis of American Homœopathy in four short instalments is manifestly impossible. We shall be able only to skim the surface and hope to explore the depths at some later time. In the first place, although it is comparatively easy to list the outstanding personalities who shaped its course, it is quite another matter to select the individuals for our biographical study. It becomes apparent immediately that much of the credit for its rapid spread is due to countless faithful, inspired, but lesser known doctors and laymen whose courage and persistence helped to push the frontiers of Homœopathy to all corners of the United