

IS HOMŒOPATHY PROGRESSIVE ?

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A charge against Homœopathy is often made to the effect that it is not a progressive science like its rival, the so-called modern scientific medicine. But this can easily be argued out if we analyse the ideas involved in the conception of progress.

PROGRESS MAY BE OF TWO KINDS

(a) *Adaptive progress* with a secure basis in an unalterable fundamental principle and constant change only in the circumstances and machinery of its application to suit fresh ideas and fresh needs. Take the case of a steam engine—the locomotive first invented by Stephens and James Watt, is not the same as the modern stream-lined locomotive but the basic principle on which both the machineries are constructed is the same as that discovered by the former. There is progress but it is an advancement dependent on the basic principle. It may be that more generalised basic principles are discovered but they include the previous principles and comprise wider generalisation extending the sphere of their applications. Einstein's relativistic principles have not totally falsified those of Newton's but they are certainly wider generalisations which have rendered Newton's principles a particular application of them in a pragmatically restricted way.

Or (b) The progress may be radical with no long-secure basis but instead a constant root-questioning of the practical foundations and even the central principle of the subject concerned.

The so-called modern scientific medicine, as for instance has resolved itself into a constant series of radical progressions which are more often *changes* than progress. This series seems to follow always a typical course, viz., (a) first, a theory and a period of enthusiastic effort and battle to establish the theory and to put it to practice ; (b) next, a partial victory and achievement and a brief era of possession ; and (c) then disillusionment,

observance of defects in the theory and practice and the birth of a new principle and consequent practice.

Theories are now the less valuable in the progress of any science. But in biological science—and medicine is certainly a department of human biology—unfortunately it too frequently happens that in the search for cause, the completed cycle of events is not studied or is too complex to study completely and theories grow up like mushrooms and the mode of therapeutic practices changes as the fashions of the society. This generally passes for progress and advance but it is nothing but radical changes without having a secure fundamental basis.

Whereas the Homœopathic doctrines of a century and half ago, are as fresh, intelligible and of pragmatic value to a modern medical student as they were to men contemporary with their discovery and first publications. Of course the Homœopathic practice of today is not the same as was during Hahnemann's time with the discovery and use of high, higher and highest potencies of remedies, both old and new, the discovery of a multitude of nosodes and the discovery and use of bacterial products derived from the bacteriological knowledge of present days (cf. Patterson's Bowel Nosodes), the use of new electro-magnetic techniques (cf. Byod's Emanometric tests) in the selection and potency determination of Homœopathic remedies and greater emphasis on the ætiological factor of disease conditions, factors of suppression and on the use of antidotal remedies against various strong, suppressive and undesirable side-effects of modern medicine of the orthodox school. Still the basic principle of Homœopathy remains what was discovered by Hahnemann.

So it is held that Homœopathy admits of an adaptive progress and not that of radical variety.

Still it cannot be gainsaid that Homœopathy vegetates, Homœopathy stagnates and is just showing faint signs of awakening from its age-long slumber! Following the lead of Master Hahnemann, Bœnninghausen, Jahr, Hering and their contemporaries poured their life-blood to spread the dynamic spirit of this new healing art throughout the four corners of the world. Their zeal inspired the mind and spirit of those

who were open in mind, receptive to new and newer truths and agile enough to carry the torch of Homœopathy in the marathon race of human efforts to fight against death, disease and incapacities. The torch continued to burn brighter till it reached the hands of Kent and his giant colleagues. Kentian age in the American homœopathic history can be likened to the great Periclean age of the ancient Greece. After him came a period of stagnation and vegetation inspite of the individual efforts of Boger, Roberts and a few others of their ilk. The dynamic spirit of Homœopathy began to wane ; nothing of real importance was discovered in its field, drug-proving came practically to a standstill, progressive vision was clouded and Homœopathy seemed to lose ground in competition with her rival, the orthodox school of medicine which is popularly known as the Allopathic School.

Homœopathy took a wrong turn in the West. American Homœopathy is being slowly strangled out as separate Homœopathic institutions died out one by one due to more than one reason and Homœopathy came to be taught as an elective course in the still existing Homœopathic institutions cf. Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia and New York Medical School. When Homœopathy was thus crowded out is it not inevitable that it will fall on lean days, fail to attract new, good students and its field for teaching and practice will become contracted? Though we are disheartened to note the present and sad plight of Homœopathy in America we find a silver streak lining in the dark clouds in the attempts of the American foundation for Homœopathy and of Brazil and Mexico to give a fresh lease of life to the decadent spirit of Homœopathy. But to our mind their attempt is not bold enough in America as they still dream of starting and spreading only a post-graduate Homœopathic training course. Times without number we have discussed about the merits and demerits of having exclusively under-graduate or exclusively post-graduate course of Homœopathic training. Suffice it to say that both the under-graduate and post-graduate course of Homœopathic training are *sine qua non* of successful rejuvenation of Homœopathic training and practice.

In our country though right start was made by establishing under-graduate course of training in Homœopathy, and especially in Calcutta, the home of Homœopathy, it is going to defeat its own purpose as the whole attempt is half-hearted and envisaged, so far, no scheme for upgrading teaching institutions and standardisation of those institutions. Now it cannot be said that the Govt. of the country is altogether apathetic to the progress and development of Homœopathy. The Central Govt. have constituted a Homœopathic Advisory Committee, Homœopathic Research and Technical Sub-Committee, an office of the Homœopathic adviser and a permanent Homœopathic Pharmacopœia Committee and the greatest tragedy in the homœopathic history of our country is that an opportunity has arrived at last but we have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The blame might be laid on the doors of the Government, the Homœopathic profession or the public at large but that is a poor consolation when a stark reality stares us in the face. We weep, we wail and we gnash our teeth for want of men and money! But these two elements are inter-dependent. Proper men never suffer from money; and adequate finances makes available, in most cases, for the purpose, required talents. The most difficult part of a thing is to make a start and begin the beginning. Once the ice is broken both the elements will not turn out to be a scare as is first thought of. But who is to bell the cats when neither cats nor bells are wanting?

So long we do not start properly equipped Homœopathic Hospitals with different departments for treating disease—conditions to which distinctive names can be applied with some justification (viz., Tuberculosis, Cancer, specific Infectious Diseases etc.), research works relating to various mooted points of Homœopathy, newer drug provings and properly equipped licentiate, graduate and post-graduate courses of Homœopathic training—we would fail to hold our own in every field of medicine and attract public attention and sympathy, however loudly we may sing Hallelujah to our Master Hahnemann in season

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new angle, which was for the first time inductively and objectively established only 153 years ago, in the long 3000 years' history of Medicine, counting from Arsculapius.

That is why, we in India, define a Homœopath as a physician having knowledge in all the branches of medical science, thoroughly understanding and accepting the basic principles of the Organon, and sincerely and honestly putting them into practice.—J. N. K.

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and out of season and however great might be the therapeutic successes of individual Homœopathic practitioners.

The sleeping Leviathan of the Homœopathic profession is slowly but surely awakening! The inception of the W. Bengal State Homœopathic Practitioner's Conference is pregnant with great potentialities! Followers of Homœopathy, awake, arise and stop not till the goal is reached!

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