

SCIENTIFICITY OF HOMŒOPATHY

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The first and foremost charge levelled against Homœopathy by the so-called modern medicine, is that "it is not yet fitted to be labelled as a scientific system of medicine". Science is a system of knowledge built upon a basis of observation and experiment and compacted by reflection on data thus supplied. Science is verifiable, communicable, impersonal, unemotional knowledge; but all the fields of science are not on the same level. We hold science so much in respect because it is supposed to deal with truth and truth is associated with reality in our mind. Our knowledge is based on experience. If we analyse our experience of the universe, it discloses that there is not a single creation, but a triple—material, vital and mental; it may be regarded as a composite of three worlds, as aspects of the actual. So there are different orders of truth corresponding to different orders of existence. The constitution of our mind does not permit us to comprehend the whole reality all at once. Still we aspire after precision and exactitude of knowledge—and this we achieve only at the cost of comprehensiveness and wholeness. For example, the living organism exists in ways in which it may legitimately be so regarded as a system of matter and energy conforming to physical and chemical conditions. It exists so if abstraction from its other and dominant phases is made under the guidance of conceptions of a mechanistic order. Excessive concentration of attention in applying such conceptions gives rise to the abstract view called "materialism". But materialism furnishes no account of facts of life or of consciousness. These belong to other orders, which what lives and knows, presents truth both in reality and for adequate knowledge. It is only in terms of conceptions belonging to those orders that what is living and conscious can even be described. The more abstract the conception, the more completely are eliminated those details that are for the purpose of the moment irrelevant. It is by this kind of concentration

with its consequential exclusion of other aspects, that exactness in reasoning and measurement is made possible for us who cannot do everything all at once. Thus we acquire systematised and precise knowledge about any particular department of experience—which is another name for “Science”. Talking in the language of mathematics different co-ordinates are used for fixing different orders of thinking. As for example, the adjustment of the terms in which its conceptions of the physical sciences (viz., chemistry, physics etc.) are to be expressed must accordingly depend largely on the balance and the measuring-rod. Truth in Literature, Music or Art, consists not in order of quantity but in order of quality (idea of value) that depends on other orders of thinking. Biological truth belongs to another different order. The doctrines of evolution, of heredity and of growth appear to necessitate the recognition of *ends* in operations, as distinguished from external causes; ends, the operation of which is of such character that difficulties about action at a distance disappear and that the ends themselves take external shape in the force of phenomena as a whole which has no existence outside its members and the material in which it expresses conserves itself, maintaining unbroken the identity of the organism through its course from its conception to its death, notwithstanding metabolism and constant change in material.

The human organism presents different aspects in our experience. As each order of reality requires different sets of conceptions to express itself there should be no question about the priority of one order over the other. It is only that order is to be taken into account which is most relevant for our purposes as medical men. Hahnemann's idea of a physician was one who would cure the sick.

The study of diseases belong to the vital plane, though the human being combines in himself, the mental and physical as well. So Homœopathy, Hahnemann's discovery, studies the human organism from the standpoint of life; and as such, the field of action for Homœopathy is the vital plane. Our attempt to judge the scientific validity of Homœopathy by the standard of conceptions relevant to the physical sciences, is thus, to

commit the philosophical crime of "confusion of categories" It is a particular attitude of mind, a particular line of correct thinking and a particular method of handling facts, that constitute science, whatever may be the content of a particular department of human knowledge. Though sciences are different, the truths realised by human knowledge are relative, the approaches to the study of different sciences are distinctive, the correct method of arriving at truth is common to all—that is what is known as the *scientific method*. This method is based on correct observation of facts, and then their classification, induction, ratiocination, deduction, discovery of laws and experimental verifications. The degree of "scientificity" of a particular department of knowledge depends on the discovery of the most comprehensive laws operative in the phenomena concerning that particular subject—because so soon as a field of enquiry yields knowledge susceptible of exact formulation it is called *Science*. The scientificity of Homœopathy should be assessed by the above-mentioned standards and not on 'approved modern lines' which are nothing but the standards and methods used in respect of physical sciences. And what is Homœopathy but an individualistic method of drug-treatment, arrived at inductively, definitely based on a distinctive biological outlook, philosophically sound and open to experimental proof?
