

# THE HAHNEMANNIAN GLEANINGS

*with which is incorporated*

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## EDITORIAL

### REASONS FOR ORTHODOX DISAPPROVAL OF HOMŒOPATHY

Our readers must have gone through, with interest, the editorial remarks of the Journal of the Indian Medical Association and my rejoinder to that. We can draw some morals over the issue—why the orthodox medical men disapprove Homœopathy more with passion and less with unbiased scientific attitude of mind. Herein we like to jot down some of the reasons as they appear to us from such controversies both here and abroad.

The first and foremost reason for the non-acceptance of the Homœopathic system of medicine may be summed up in three words: habit, authority and professionalism. For centuries, since the days of the great Roman Galen, orthodox medicoes are in the habit of following the 'Law of contraries' as the only law to be followed in therapeutics; of accepting "materialism" as their sole guiding philosophy in matters medical; and of accepting the physico-chemical method of study as the sole, relevant approach to the study of man in health and disease. If any system of treatment upholds a school of thought which is not only at variance but diametrically opposite to the school of thought followed by the orthodox—it is no wonder that the natural

conservative inertia of human mind attempts to reject the new thought with all the means, at its disposal, fair or foul. For years, the highest medical authorities have held an opinion or view—never mind, whether rightly or wrongly;—and who will venture to question a recognised authority? Certainly not the members of the profession to which the authority belongs. Next comes the question of trade unionism and guild mentality, which makes it resent all rebellion from within and all competition or criticism from without.

The second reason is that of vested interests. Even a cursory glance at the history of origin and spread of Homœopathy, enables one to find out that the opposition to this new therapeutic system was not scientific but rather of commercial nature on the part of the apothecaries who were afraid of losing their trade-profits.

The third reason for disapproval of Homœopathy, put forward by the orthodoxy is to the effect that they do not believe in the efficacy of Homœopathy as they have never witnessed cure of diseases with Homœopathic art of healing. In this syllogism the premises are true, but the conclusion is unsound. It is quite true that the orthodox section has never observed such phenomena as described and asserted by the Homœopaths. But this is because they have never given Homœopathy a trial. "Homœopathy, as it should be practised, is not easy. Indeed, it has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried."

The fourth reason is held to be the most weighty against Homœopathy. The orthodoxy denounces Homœopathy as this is found to be practised by a majority of men who, can be technically styled as quacks *i.e.*, who practise the art of Homœopathy without knowing the science of it. Well, this fact is deplorable, but not at all surprising under the existing circumstances. The very fact that the method is unrecognised by the State and lies outside the pale of orthodoxy is a sufficient invitation to the petty adventurers

and charlatans who hang upon the society, ever ready and eager to take advantage of human suffering. The number of those who fail to obtain relief from the orthodox system of treatment is considerable. As Homœopathy is unorthodox, not possessing the seal of the state approval, no standards of competence are legally imposed upon the teachers and practitioners of this healing art. A large potential clientele, a desperate need of help for the suffering humanity, and no questions asked as to knowledge, character and ability! These are the ideal conditions for the practice of charlatanism. What wonder, then, if certain unscrupulous people have taken advantage of the opportunities thus offered? What wonder, then, if certain people who practise homœopathy, know little more of the system than its name? But because some unorthodox practitioners are charlatans, it does not logically follow that all must be. I repeat and assert that it does not logically follow; but alas, as the history of almost any professional group clearly demonstrates, orthodox opinion would always very much like to follow. That is one of the reasons, why, in this particular case, the unwarranted assumption that the whole business is mere quackery is widely accepted, inspite of all evidence to the contrary. The best method of eradicating quackery in homœopathic practice is not the suppression of an intrinsically sound method, but proper education for, and control of its professors and practitioners.

The last reason for disapproval of Homœopathy is more of a psychological nature. However much we may vaunt of our scientific attitude of mind we put our faith on a Scientific Law—not on its own merit but on the degree of intelligibility of the theory on which is based that particular law. Homœopathy is based on a Law which, at first, appears to be paradoxical and just contrary to common expectation. Hence even a scientific mind does not feel enthusiastic to support such a Law which is decried as being merely an 'Empirical Law.' The unprejudiced mind, the keen analytical intellect, and intellectual morality—the

necessary requisites of a scientific spirit—are found wanting when they are weighed in the balance of factual reality. Medicine is primarily an art. In the history of human effort, effective arts have always preceded correct explanatory hypothesis. Hahnemann's explanation of the "modus operandi" of the infinitesimals may be as incorrect as were the eighteenth and nineteenth-century explanations of the efficacy of lime-juice in cases of scurvy. Nevertheless scurvy was cured by lime-juice and Hahnemann's homœopathy actually works. In our attempt to throw the dirty water of the bath-tub let us not throw the baby out as well.

Let us bear in mind the following golden motto in life:

"Be not the first by whom the new is tried  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

B..K. S.

#### STATE RECOGNITION OF HOMŒOPATHY IN U.K.

Towards the end of July 1950 His Majesty the King gave his assent to a Bill which had been passed through both Houses of Parliament incorporating by Act of Parliament the British Faculty of Homœopathy. This is an unique event, in so far as no other medical body in the country has this distinction of Incorporation by Act of Parliament.

Its importance lies chiefly in the fact that Homœopathy is recognised by Statute and that its practice and teaching at the Royal London Homœopathic Hospital, are to all intents and purposes assured for all time. It means, for instance, that any future Government or Minister of Health would not be able to forbid the Royal London Homœopathic Hospital from carrying out its special functions through the activities of the Faculty, without bringing before both Houses of Parliament an Annuling Bill, which would meet with such opposition that its passage would not be at all likely.

—Editorial, "Health thorough Homœopathy" Nov. 1950.