

Dr. G. Dirghangi has expressed his astonishment mixed with a bit of anger why the names of the above mentioned doctors and also of Dr. Late L. M. Pal were not mentioned in my editorial—"Present Position of Homœopathy in the U.S.A." which was published in the August issue of our Journal.

No question of gain or loss is involved in this omission. Dr. N. M. Chowdhury is sufficiently known to me and is no doubt a respected colleague of mine, but I did not know from which college he received his M.D. degree. Drs. Late R. C. Nag, K. K. Roy and L. M. Pal were not personally known to me and I had not at all been in touch with any of them. It was principally due to this fact that no mention of their names had been made in my said editorial.

I wish and hope this explanation will now remove all unpalatable misapprehension from the minds of Drs. Bhatia and Dirghangi.

S. C. G.

WONDERS OF HOMŒOPATHY

ANILBARAN ROY, PONDICHERRY.

Homœopathy acts so often as a charm or a miracle that it cannot be reasonably explained away as an accident or a mere case of nature-cure or faith-cure. I shall narrate here a few cases from my own experience. During my student days I used to distribute homœopathic medicines as there was no doctor in our native village. Whenever I visited my village during the vacations, I had a busy time, and the villagers had great faith in my medicines which were only twelve medicines in a small box. Once during the Puja vacation, the Bagdis of our village had illicitly distilled wine and were drinking it hilariously. Nearby a girl of nine years was lying suffering from high malarial fever. She was very thirsty and was constantly asking for water. Her father, a veteran drunkard, made her drink

that strong wine to her heart's content. After sometime the girl developed convulsions her whole body was being curved as a bow. An allopathic doctor happened to be in the village and he declared that the girl could not possibly live for more than twelve hours. He went away leaving for her a bottle of medicine. The uncle of the girl came to me and implored me to give some medicine; I flatly refused to take up such a serious case and asked him to administer the medicine left by the doctor. He said that they were not going to use that medicine; they had no hope of the life of the girl, but they would be satisfied if I gave her some medicine. I could not resist and selected *Nux vomica* 30. It acted really like a miracle; all the symptoms subsided in such a manner that I could not believe my eyes; The patient was quite exhausted, her body was cold and pulse very weak. So I concluded that it was the last stage and that she was going to die. But it proved to be a case of complete cure by one dose. A relative of mine had a virulent attack of blood dysentery; A medical graduate was treating her: the dysentery was controlled by Emetine injection, but the patient developed hiccough which could not be stopped. The doctor gave up the case as hopeless; she was visibly sinking minute by minute. I left her side and went to lie down waiting for the news of her passing away. A friend of mine insisted that I should get up and do something for her. What could I do? An idea came to my mind. It was a dewy night and I kept some water outside for a short time; then in that water I put a drop of *Cuprum asceticum* and administered it to the patient. The hiccough stopped immediately and the patient was rescued from the very jaws of death. A chronic case of jaundice given up by allopathic doctors was completely cured by me in 15 days by the use of *Mercurius solubilis*.

The efficacy of homœopathic medicines is now generally accepted; still it cannot flourish as it should as its fundamental principles have not yet been scientifically

explained. Hahnemann got them by a sort of intuition, they practically proved to be valid, but he himself could not give any satisfactory explanation. He was deeply religious man and accepted the truths of Homœopathy as a sort of divine revelation for the benefit of mankind. One cardinal difficulty in understanding Homœopathic principles is the use of infinitesimal doses. Hahnemann found by experience that the medicinal power of a substance increases almost *ad infinitum* by subdivision. He supposed matter to be infinitely divisible, saying in the fifth edition of the *Organon* (1838): "A substance divided into ever so many parts must still always contain in its smallest conceivable parts *somewhat* of this substance, and the smallest conceivable part does not cease to be *some* of this substance and cannot possibly become nothing." That ought to have been a sufficient explanation, but nineteenth century Science raised a doubt which is well expressed thus in one of the old standard books on Homœopathy:

"The relation of science to us, however, is at first sight very encouraging. No one can have followed the researches of the last thirty years, and considered the sizes dealt with in thermal and luminous undulations, and in the molecules and atoms of matter, without feeling that infinitesimals of a most minute character are acquiring undoubted place and reality in the world of being. All the works of the universe, all the actions of life, are seen to be carried on by these tiny existences: in their little microcosm forces of all kinds play, and in them begin all changes whether normal or morbid. It seems at first sight, I say, that we are only following in the same track when we present our drugs in a state of the finest molecular subdivision, when we seek to counteract abnormal motions of the ultimate particles of matter by vibrations as minute as their own.

"From Science as such, then—science unconnected with Medicine we receive countenance for our infinitesimals so far, that up to about the twelfth centesimal dilution we can depend upon the presence of some particles, however

few, or small of the original drug. But the very support which it gives us up to this point turns into opposition when we go beyond it ; for if every test finds less and less response as we mount higher in the scale of dilution, it implies that there is a progressive diminution in the quantity and energy of the matter present, and that we must at last get to an end of it. At the 12th dilution we are a good way off from the 30th, and there is a great gulf between us and the 200th. How are we to bridge it over ? How fill up the yawning void ? Now at this point come in the theories of "dynamisation" which have attracted so much attention in the homœopathic controversy, much more, indeed, than their intrinsic importance deserves. They imply that the processes of trituration and succussion with which our attenuations are made more than compensate for the reduction of the mass of the medicinal substance, that they actually develop power, and this to an infinite extent, so that the higher dilutions are more potent as medicines than the lower, the 30th than the 3rd, the 200th than the 30th, and so, *ad infinitum*. By some of Hahnemann's followers, who are more imaginative than philosophical, this dynamisation has been supposed to result from a transference of the whole thing from the realm of matter to that of spirit. I can only say that I know nothing of such conceptions as applied to natural things ; they are to me alike uncongenial and unintelligible. Others, with a more just idea of the matter in hand, have endeavoured to apply to it the doctrine of the correlation of force, and have agreed that the energy put forth by the triturator or succusser must be converted into increased force on the part of the drug so treated. But they have not shown, on the one hand, that it may not be accounted for by the heat and electricity developed in the process, and on the other, that the power of drugs to affect the organism is a "force" in the sense that heat and electricity and such like are forces, so that it has equivalence and correlation with other modes of motion. It seems rather to be a fixed and inalienable

property peculiar to each substance possessing it. The same objection holds good to the hypothesis advanced by my friend Dr. A. Allan, that the energy of the drug is transferred to the vehicle, so that although no particles of the original substance remain therein the medicinal force is not lost."

This sceptic attitude of Homœopaths themselves makes it difficult for the system to gain ground. Hahnemann himself had no such difficulty as he took a spiritual view of the universe which however was not warranted by the science of his day. But since then science itself has considerably changed its outlook ; it no longer regards a mechanical view of the world as the ultimate truth. It tends to the view that after all Spirit and not Matter may be the ultimate reality, and if this view be accepted then there would be nothing unreasonable to suppose that the qualities inherent in a material body may not be absolutely dependent on its material structure, the spiritual energy behind it may manifest itself more powerfully in a different combination. This changed outlook of science has very well been presented by the distinguished British scientist, A.S. Eddington. Thus he writes in *Science and the Unseen World* :

"Perhaps the most essential change is that we are no longer tempted to condemn the spiritual aspects of our nature as illusory because of their lack of concreteness. We have travelled far from the standpoint which identifies the real with the concrete. Even the older philosophy found it necessary to admit exceptions ; for example, time must be admitted to be real, although no one could attribute to it a concrete nature. Nowadays time might be taken as typical of the kind of stuff of which we imagine the physical world to be built. Physics has no direct concern with that feeling of 'becoming' in our consciousness which we regard as inherently belonging to the nature of time, and it treats time merely as a symbol ; but equally matter and all else

that is in the physical world have been reduced to a shadowy symbolism.

"We all share the strange delusion that a lump of matter is something whose general nature is easily comprehensible whereas the nature of the human spirit is unfathomable. But consider how our supposed acquaintance with the lump of matter is attained. Some influence emanating from it plays on the extremity of a nerve, starting a series of physical and chemical changes which are propagated along the nerve to a brain cell; there a mystery happens, and an image or sensation arises in the mind which cannot purport to resemble the stimulus which excites it. Everything known about the material world must in one way or another have been inferred from these stimuli transmitted along the nerves. It is an astonishing feat of deciphering that we should be able to infer an orderly scheme of natural knowledge from such indirect communication. But clearly there is one kind of knowledge which cannot pass through such channels, namely knowledge of the intrinsic nature of that which lies at the far end of the line of communication. The inferred knowledge is a skeleton frame, the entities which build the frame being of undisclosed nature. For that reason they are described by symbols, as the symbol x in algebra stands for an unknown quantity.

"The mind as a central receiving station reads the dots and dashes of the incoming nerve-signals. By frequent repetition of their call-signals the various transmitting stations of the outside world become familiar. We begin to feel quite a homely acquaintance with 2LO and £XX. But a broadcasting station is not like its call signal; there is no commensurability in their nature. So too the chairs and tables around us which broadcast to us incessantly those signals which affect our sight and touch cannot in their nature be like unto the signals or to the sensations which the signals awake at the end of their journey.

"Penetrating as deeply as we can by the methods of physical investigation into the nature of a human being we reach only symbolic description. Far from attempting to dogmatise as to the nature of the reality thus symbolised, physics most strongly insists that its methods do not penetrate behind the symbolism. Surely then that mental and spiritual nature of ourselves, known in our minds by an intimate contact transcending the methods of physics, supplies just that interpretation of the symbols which science is admittedly unable to give. It is just because we have a real and not merely a symbolic knowledge of our own nature that our nature seems so mysterious; we reject as inadequate that merely symbolic description which is good enough for dealing with chairs and tables and physical agencies that affect us only by remote communication."

This is the ancient spiritual knowledge of Indian Vedanta coming back to humanity from the side of Physical Science. Knowledge by identity is the only true knowledge; I know myself directly and thereby I know the whole world as it is that self which has become the world and all that is in it, *tasmin vijñate sarvam vijñatam*. It is only when we reach the bedrock of reality in the Spirit that we begin to have a true understanding of ourselves and the mysterious world in which we live, move and have our being. The spiritual conception of the world we find well depicted in the Gita, a recognised authority on the Vedanta. The action of the infinitesimal doses of Homœopathy ceases to be inexplicable when we accept this view of matter and the material world. "The modes of Nature are all qualitative in their essence and are called for that reason its *gunas* or *qualities*. In any spiritual conception of the universe this must be so, because the connecting medium between spirit and matter must be psyche or soul-power and the primary action psychological and qualitative, not physical and quantitative; for quality is the immaterial, the more spiritual element in all the action of the universal Energy, her prior dynamics. The pre-

dominance of physical Science has accustomed us to a different view of Nature, because there the first thing that strikes us is the importance of the quantitative aspect of her workings and her dependence for the creation of forms on quantitative combinations and dispositions. And yet even there the discovery that matter is rather substance or act of energy than energy a motive-power of self-existent material substance or an inherent power acting in matter has led to some revival of an older reading of universal Nature. The analysis of the ancient Indian thinkers allowed for the quantitative action of Nature, *matra*; but that it regarded as proper to its more objective and formally executive working, while the innately ideative executive power which disposes things according to the quality of their being and energy, *guna*, *swabhava*, is the primary determinant and underlies all the outer quantitative dispositions. In the basis of the physical world this is not apparent only because there the underlying ideative spirit, the Mahat Brahman, is overlaid and hidden up by the movement of matter and material energy. But even in the physical world the miraculous varying results of different combinations and quantities of elements otherwise identical with each other admits of no conceivable explanation if there is not a superior power of variative quality of which these material dispositions are only the convenient mechanical devices. Or, let us say at once, there must be a secret ideative capacity of the universal energy, *vijnana*—even if we suppose that energy and its instrumental idea, *buddhi*, to be themselves mechanical in their nature—which fixes the mathematics and decides the resultants of their outer dispositions: it is the omnipotent idea in the spirit which invents and makes use of these devices. And in the vital and mental existence quality at once openly appears as the primary power and amount of energy is only a secondary factor. But in fact the mental, the vital, the physical existence are all subject to the limitations of quality, all are governed by its determinations, even though that truth

seems more and more obscured as we descend the scale of existence. Only the Spirit, which by the power of its idea-being and its idea-force called *mahat* and *vijnana* fixes these conditions, is not determined, not subject to the limitations either of quality or quantity because its immeasurable and indeterminable infinity is superior to the modes which it develops and uses for its creation." (*Essays on the Gita*, Second series, chap. XIV—Sri Aurobindo)

The whole qualitative action of Nature is infinitely intricate in its detail and variety. Out of the electric charges dispersed in the primitive chaos ninety-two different kinds of matter—ninety-two chemical elements—have been built. The building is a work of evolution and science knows little or nothing of its history. The great mystery is how out of identical electric charges such fundamentally different substances have been built up. "At root the diversity of the ninety-two elements reflects the diversity of the integers from one to ninety-two; because the chemical characteristics of element No. 11 (sodium) arise from the fact that it has the power at low temperatures of gathering round it eleven negative electric particles; those of No. 12 (magnesium) from its power of gathering twelve particles, and so on" (Eddington). What is it that fixes this mathematics and decides the resultants of these outer dispositions? Science cannot answer this question, but the spiritual philosophy of India found the answer long ago, as has been shown by Sri Aurobindo. This miracle is accomplished by "a secret ideative capacity of the universal energy, *vijnana*." *It is this secret capacity that makes the infinitesimal doses of Homœopathy so effective.*

Up to 1806 Hahnemann had affirmed nothing more about the minute doses he had been led to employ, than that they hardly lost any of the efficacy of the medicines, while they robbed them of power to injure. But as he went on attenuating the more potent drugs employed, and as he applied the same process to substances comparatively or absolutely inert, he seemed to find a real development of

power to be brought about. While the physical and chemical qualities disappeared, such as odour and colour, alkalescence or acidity ; while all actively poisonous properties were lost—the medicines gained a penetrating energy as curative agents hitherto unknown to him, and a much wider range of action. This great discovery of Homœopathy agrees fundamentally with the spiritual philosophy of the Vedanta. According to the latter, it is the Divine Himself who constitutes the essence of all things that exist in the world. Thus the Lord says in the Gita : “Know me to be the eternal seed of all existences, O son of Pritha.”—(7/10). “And whatever is the seed of all existences, that am I, O Arjuna ; nothing moving or unmoving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without me.” Thus the essential quality of all things is divine and therefore a beneficent power ; if things act as poisons, it is because the essence has not yet found a suitable medium to manifest itself undiminished and undeformed. And all things, however apparently inert, have latent powers of good as the Divine is the essence of all. Homœopathy has opened an infinite field for medicine, and whatever be the reason or justification for the existence of such evils as disease in the world, the very fact that there are innumerable remedies lying scattered everywhere undoubtedly proves that the power that is governing the world is working for the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

The other difficulty of Homœopathy is that no satisfactory explanation has yet been found of its specific principle known as, “*Similia Similibus Curanter*.” Hahnemann realised this difficulty. He advanced a theory to explain the great therapeutic law, but it was more a case of drawing an analogy than of giving an explanation. But as Dr. B. K. Sarkar has clearly shown, the Homœopathic principle fulfils all the conditions of a scientific law, and it is justified by the methods of Induction, Deduction and Verification. Even Physics has laws for which no satisfactory explanation has been found, so on that score Homœopathy

cannot be called unscientific. But to maintain its scientific character, it must not cease its search for a reasonable explanation of its fundamental law that when a drug produces effects similar to the symptoms of any disease, it can cure that disease. Some Homœopaths have pushed further the search for explanation. Thus H. W. F. writes in his article *Amazing Homœopathy*: "One of the most astounding things in Homœopathy is the way in which the symptom-picture of a patient can be matched even down to small details by the symptoms-picture of a remedy—the symptoms brought out by the provings....How can such a close resemblance exist? What is the basis of it?....This remarkable resemblance of symptoms is not due to coincidence. It occurs too frequently and too exactly to be accidental. If we cannot fathom the way in which it works, we can but accept the fact as a gift of providence and use it for the benefit of humanity."

But if the ultimate Reality be one, *ekamevaditīyam*, as the Vedānta says and as has been confirmed by modern Science from the other side asserting that there is one energy at the basis of the constitution of the Universe, which, considering only its phenomenal aspects, Science regards as an electro-magnetic force, then what is surprising is not the similarities that we find in the world but rather the differences and the infinite varieties that have arisen from the One Reality, call it Spirit, call it electro-magnetic energy. We have seen how spiritual philosophy explains the *modus operandi* of this variation, of this unity in diversity which constitutes the nature of the created universe—it is the *vijnana* or creative idea which takes delight in creating infinite variations in the substance of the One Reality. Viewed in this way, similarity of symptoms on which Homœopathy is based ceases to be a problem at all, such similarities are quite natural and to be expected as the ultimate force or Power is one. What has to be explained is how a disease is cured by a drug which is not the cause of the disease but produces similar

effects or symptoms. Up to this time this question remains unsolved, but we think recent research into Biocatalysts which is helping to explain Life Processes may throw some light on this problem also. In an article, *Enzymes in Action*, David Simon writes: "Absolutely essential to life itself is the work of minute quantities of the complex chemical compounds called enzymes. They set the pace of all biological changes, whether of creation or decay. They are involved in photosynthesis, the process by which plants build food out of carbon dioxide and sunlight.... Though their exact nature and function are far from completely understood, enzymes are known to belong to the broad general class of chemical substances called catalysts.... Like other catalysts, they have the remarkable ability to speed chemical reactions without being themselves affected in the process. As a result, they can be used over and over again. But as distinguished from other kinds of catalysts, enzymes—or biocatalysts—are produced in living cells and are essential elements in all the processes of growth and decay.... This catalytic action of enzymes is the key to their importance, for by facilitating rapid chemical changes, enzymes make possible the constant replacement and renewal processes characteristic of all living organisms. Physiologists have shown that the true picture of the body is one of dynamic change and interplay, rather than of static balance. Thus, millions of the red blood cells in the human body die every second, and the organism is continually calling up reserves to keep the total count the same. As a result, the entire red-cell population is renewed several times a year."

Our body is ultimately made up of countless millions of minute organisms, called cells, and of the fluid in which they live. Sir Robert McCarrison writes: "Picture to yourselves these multitudes of cells; cells of many kinds—blood-cells, bone-cells, teeth-cells, muscle--cells, gland-cells, nerve-cells, skin-cells—each one of them a living, actively working unit of the body; each intent on its own job, each

with a structure peculiar to its kind ; each fixed in its own place in the body.... Picture these myriads busy-as bees in a hive forming themselves into the different parts of the body ; growing, multiplying and thus increasing the size of their own parts of the body and of the body as a whole ; ceasing to grow when the limits of growth set by heredity is reached. Their wisdom is amazing and their ways wonderful to see. Nowadays we can see them ; for we can culture them outside the body in suitable nutrient fluids and watch them under the microscope. I shall never forget the first time I thus saw them. I had made cultures of cells from a certain gland, and as I watched them, for hours at a time, growing, multiplying, working, I seemed, in imagination, to hear a busy murmuring amongst them as though they were saying : "We must form ourselves into our gland, we must, we must, we must." Carrol tells us that when he has cultured blood-cells, whose duty it is to carry oxygen to all parts of the body, they actually formed for themselves vessels in which to flow. They seemed to *know* that without the vessels in which to flow they could not get on with their job. So they set about making them from the materials provided in the nutrient fluid surrounding them. Think of the wonder, the beauty, the order, the wisdom and the purposefulness of it all.

This "wisdom" of the minutest organisms is explained when we remember that behind all these there is a creative consciousness, the *vijnana*. But as there are creative and preservative organisms, there are also destructive ones, and it is these which are the ultimate causes, or at least the agents of disease and ill-health. And it follows that the treatment of disease must aim at killing, eliminating or paralysing these germs. Allopathy and other systems work by killing them directly as in the cure of malaria with quinine or atebine, or by making them ineffective as in the "Antibiotic" treatment of tuberculosis. Homœopathy works by "bewildering" them. To illustrate our point we quote here from the article on Enzyme research mentioned

above: "Perhaps the most far reaching result of enzyme research in the field of medicine is its contribution to our understanding of substances like sulfanilamide, which curb disease and destroy bacteria. The potency of sulfanilamide depends on a fortunate coincidence; the chemical structure resembles that of para-aminobenzoic acid (PAB), a member of the vitamin B family. In fact the resemblance is so close that the germs which require the PAB in order to manufacture their own essential enzymes successfully, 'mistake' the drug for the needed vitamin and 'eat' the deceptive poison. As a result, deprived of their vitamins, the bacteria are unable to produce enzymes and shortly die." Homœopathic medicines do not act as poisons even on these minute organisms, but they bewilder them by their similarity with the cause of the disease, and that bewilderment is sufficient to kill them or make them quite ineffective. It follows that there is not one homœo. medicine which must be chosen for any particular case, any one of many similar drugs can serve the purpose, and if one fails, the others can be tried; and that is what is actually done in homœopathic practice.

All students of Homœopathy should do well if they study the "Gita" as interpreted by Sir Aurobindo.

THE INFINITESIMAL DOSE

By DR. G. R. MITCHELL, L.R.C.P. & S. (EDIN.); L.R.F.P.S. (GLAS.)

It has been a fortunate circumstance that, since the birth of homœopathy, each generation of doctors has produced a sufficient number unwilling to allow their judgment to be influenced by purely theoretical considerations. The sceptical attitude of the profession has always been attributed by the homœopath to prejudice, and by the allopath to scientific discrimination; and in each of these views there can be found a certain degree of truth. Blind loyalty to the orthodox has—particularly in the past—been stronger in medicine than in any other science, and the extreme hostility displayed during the 19th century was quite certainly