

## HOMOEOPATHY IN BRITAIN

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It is estimated that adherents of Homœopathy in Britain number over two million. This system of medicine has always been popular in Britain and scarcely a household throughout the country during the last generation but possessed its homœopathic medicine chest with perhaps a dozen of the simplest remedies such as Aconite, Arnica, Belladonna, Cimicifuga, etc., which experience had proved were of inestimable value in simple injuries and infections of childhood.

This is not to say that there is now no opposition. On the contrary, though there is now no ostracism of the Homœopathic physician, which was so common in the early years of last century, the law is still not accepted by the orthodox school of medicine and is only practised by a minority of the profession. Nevertheless, its practice is perhaps more firmly established than ever it was since the introduction of the National Health Service in 1948.

In 1943 The Faculty of Homœopathy was founded as the successor to the British Homœopathic Society, itself dating from 1844 (one year after the death of Hahnemann). The Faculty, which was incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1950, is now authorised to grant, after examination, the Diploma of Homœopathy to doctors qualified to practice medicine in Great Britain. Members of the Faculty number over 200 and many other doctors, not members, practice Homœopathy throughout Great Britain. Homœopathic doctors are admitted to the National Health Service on equal terms with their fellows and homœopathic drugs can be prescribed and dispensed through the State service. Homœopathic Physicians are accepted as members of the British Medical Association and the Royal Society of Medicine. The legal status of homœopathy is further clarified by the Faculty of Homœopathy Act which is enclosed.

The chief Homœopathic Hospitals throughout the country, though taken over by the State, are allowed to continue their practice of Homœopathic methods as heretofore, many of their physicians have been granted Consultant rank under the Scheme and homœopathic patients have now the right to request consultations with such Specialists in their own homes and, wherever possible, to be admitted to the nearest Homœopathic Hospital for treatment.

The four chief Homœopathic Hospitals in Britain are in London, Bristol, Glasgow and Liverpool. London and Glasgow are centres of homœopathic teaching and research in their areas.

The Royal London Homœopathic Hospital has the honour to have as its Patrons Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester. On November 2nd, 1949 this Hospital celebrated the centenary of its foundation, when a brilliant gathering numbering about 500 in the Great Hall of the British Medical Association was welcomed by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester. With a full complement of 200 beds this general hospital, with special departments covering the whole range of medical and surgical practice, draws its patients from all over Southern England and has an Out-patient attendance in a single year of over one hundred thousand. Here, too, is housed the Post-Graduate School and courses of lectures and demonstrations are given throughout the year to students from home and abroad. The Senior Teacher in the school is Sir Jolin Weir, G.C.V.O., Physician to Her Majesty The Queen and other teachers are drawn from the fifteen members of the medical staff. The whole of the responsibility for teaching is now in the hands of The Homœopathic Research and Educational Trust, a body set up in 1945 for the purpose of financing and controlling teaching and research in Britain. Provings, which are the symptoms produced by administering drugs to healthy

people, form the basis of all homœopathic practice and under the auspices of the Trust a provings unit has been set up at The Royal London Homœopathic Hospital for the purpose of proving new drugs and of reprovings others.

In Glasgow, at the Boyd Institute, research on electro-physical phenomena in its relation to homœopathic potencies is being constantly carried on. When this work is completed it may be possible to offer scientific evidence, apart from results, of the nature and value of Homœopathic drugs and dilutions.

Many of the members of The Faculty of Homœopathy are also members of the International Homœopathic League which, before the war, met yearly in one or other of the countries of Europe. The first meeting after the war was held in London in 1947, in Paris in 1948 and in Lyons in 1949. In 1950 the Council of the League met in London, when a three day Congress was held in conjunction with the Faculty of Homœopathy under the Presidentship of Sir John Weir. To this Congress delegates came from all over the world, from India, from U.S.A., from Brazil, as well as from most of the countries of Europe. Provings made in countries abroad were compared and confirmed and an exchange of views on all matters appertaining to Homœopathy took place. Great Britain is honoured to welcome to its shores representatives of World Homœopathy and it is hoped that in the future many students from abroad will come to finish their education in its Post-Graduate Schools and Hospitals. Already since the war a number of students have come from India and Pakistan.

In Britain, Homœopathic Education is post-graduate, there is no attempt to teach the basic sciences in homœopathic colleges. Instead, doctors qualify in the Universities and Medical Schools just like their fellows and only then begin the study of Homœopathy as a separate method of therapeutics.

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