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## HOMŒOPATHY IN RELATION TO OUR NATIONAL HEALTH

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Homœopathy came into existence as an answer to the chaotic condition which existed in the medical profession in early 18th century. Medicine at that time had not been systematised as an integrated therapeutic method. The methods of experiment, observation and deduction, were absent particularly in the field of therapeutics, Anatomy had developed to a certain extent. Physiology had progressed, but the science and art of Pathology was yet to be studied in detail. The action of drugs had not been studied systematically and were used empirically and their effects noted in the sick persons and collected from cases of poisoning only. Theories regarding diseases and their treatment were based mostly on individual experience, and different schools had sprung up with individual personalities as their head. Samuel Hahnemann, a profound scholar, an erudite physician and an accepted scientist of Germany, revolted against this chaos in therapeutics. He objected to the then existing state of affairs in medicine, particularly in three main fields :—

1. Inadequacy of the knowledge of diseases.
2. Insufficient evidence of the action of drugs, and the

3. Poly-pharmacy and use of drugs in heroic doses. Other methods of treatment were in vogue which were very often more painful than the disease itself.

The law of Homœopathy are much too well known to be repeated, but the main points which his epoch-making book known as the "Organon of Medicine" elaborated and which, peculiarly enough, were in advance of some notions of general science as it has progressed even today. In this book we have evidence of (1) the beginnings of preventive medicine, (2) the convertibility of matter and energy, (3) nomenclature of diseased conditions based on a rational and clinical idea, (4) the elements of the beginning of the development of experimental pharmacology, and last of all, (5) the study of the diseased person as a whole. The idea of diseases not having an entitative existence was mooted for the first time. It would be out of place to go into details of the sections of the "Organon" that prove the aforementioned contentions. But one can't but mention two sections which would show the scientific nature of the discovery of Hahnemann.

#### Section 4

"He is at the same time a preserver of health when he knows the causes that disturb health, that produce and maintain disease, and when he knows how to remove them from healthy persons."

#### Section 15

"Hence the affection of that morbidly altered, spirit-like dynamis (vital force) animating our body, and residing unseen in its interior, and the complex of externally perceptible symptoms caused by that power in the organism, and representing the actual disease, constitute a whole—one and the same. Although the organism as material instrument serves for the purpose of life, still this organism is as inconceivable without animation derived from the instinctive feeling and controlling force, as the vital force without the organism; consequently both constitute a unit

although our reason in its process of thought separates this unit into two ideas for the convenience or comprehension."

Years that have followed have seen the gradual developments of Homœopathy and its remarkable success when applied in the treatment of the sick by persons thoroughly conversant with the system has made it definitely a system taken to by a large number of people all over the world within the short period of 150 years. But the opposition to its full recognition and utilisation by the States all over the world, peculiarly, enough, have been not scientific but economic. From the time of Hahnemann the unholy combination of the medical profession and the pharmaceutical concerns have been its chief obstacle.

One of its main advantages is its simplicity of application as also the small cost of medicines. As such it is admirably suited to a country like ours whose full resources are yet to be developed.

It has been proved that the State Health Insurance Schemes that are coming over in the factories, on a contributory basis from sources—the State, the employer and the employee, will not be able to meet the demands of the Insured under all circumstances. The fight goes on between the Indian Medical Association, the State Health Insurance people and the Government of India and the Health Department of the Government of West Bengal, over the cost of medicine and also the method of supply of these medicines, simply because the physicians feel that the emoluments granted to them will not be sufficient to meet the cost of medicines which should be, according to them, really efficacious in all sorts of diseases. If that is so in a sector, where money is available from three sources what should be the condition of medical aid of the population whose average per capita income is so low? It is here that modern medicine will fail because of its phenomenal costs of medicine if not for anything else. We will never be able to fulfil demands of medical aid through

modern medicine and Ayurveda ; Homœopathy alone can save and meet the situation.

That this is so is proved by the finding of the Homœopathic Enquiry Committee wherein it was found that there are about 3,50,000 homœopathic practitioners all over India. Unfortunately out of this only 3,000 have had some sort of training in some homœopathic institutions. As in every subject, Homœopathy has its limitations. Acts of omission by homœopathic practitioners in cases where other methods of therapy may be necessary, endanger life or may cause permanent invalidism and consequent loss of national wealth. It was the apathy of the past rulers of our country that was responsible for this state of affairs. Every village all over India, except in some of its southern and western, parts, has its amateur homœopaths who do a lot of good according to their thought. But this could be better served if they were really trained up. Unfortunately, inspite of popular demand our present national Government is also keeping up this apathy. It is after a fight for long years that some help has been promised in the first 5-years plan. In the meantime an enormous contradiction continues in the homœopathic profession. Homœopathic Boards and Faculties have been constituted in West Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Travancore-Cochin, U.P. and C.P. But there are as yet no properly equipped institutions which impart fullfledged training to the pupils. There exist only four affiliated institutions in West Bengal and one (National Homœopathic College, Lucknow) affiliated to the U.P. Homœopathic Board. About 800 students are studying Homœopathy under the West Bengal Homœopathic State Faculty. But the standards desired by the West Bengal Faculty has not been as yet achieved. West Bengal, which is practically the birth place of Homœopathy in India and supplies the whole of India with trained Homœopaths, needs at the present moment at least one institution which should be capable of imparting medical education in the homœopathic atmosphere according to the

standard envisaged by the Boards of Homœopathy all over India. Unfortunately a few local followers of the lay homœopathic practitioners who make an income out of teaching institutions of homœopathy, are standing in the way of such efforts of standardisation of homœopathic education and profession. They go so far even as to say that methods of science are not necessary in the study and teaching of Homœopathy.

Our need in the homœopathic profession for our country are in brief.—

(1) Properly equipped Homœopathic Institutions with efficient homœopathic personnel.

(2) Researches to correlate science and homœopathy.

(3) Methods of standardisation and manufacture of homœopathic mother tinctures and potentised drugs.

Homœopathy does offer a tremendous scope in the field of preventive medicine also, Results in this line obtained from collected information for private sources are highly gratifying. But scientific statistical analysis with regard to the degree of efficiency and uniformity of methods are necessary if it is to be utilised along with the other methods of protection, isolation, notification, quarantine and disinfection. Physicians properly equipped in homœopathic training are capable of tackling all aspects of the therapeutic field of medicine. Even in the surgical field of medical profession Homœopathy offers a rational system of therapeutics as a pre-operative, and post-operative method of treatment.

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