

THE HAHNEMANNIAN GLEANINGS

Vol. XLVII

SEPTEMBER 1980

No. 9

EDITORIAL

THE LOGIC OF HOMOEOPATHY

Most of us regard Homoeopathy as a specific mode of drug therapy. Indeed, so. But it has something more than merely prescribing drugs for the disease. The law of similars has an universal application. Take for instance, the working of the human mind. Every new experience it has, it relates to something similar that has occurred in the past and through association converts it into an understanding. An experience which fails to result in an understanding baffles the mind and produces a sense of insecurity. Similar experiences thus form a basis for curing ignorance, which is the worst form of disease. It is not an uncommon experience for a physician to get attracted by an emotional episode in the life situation of the patient during the interview because of a similar happening in his own life and the two together make a symbiosis at that moment of time blotting out from the case record that particular event. Hahnemann records in the *Organon of Medicine* many similar examples. All these confer to Homoeopathy an universal expression.

Since Homoeopathy is the essence of all human experience it gets reflected in every discipline. A natural corollary of it is the fact, that the knowledge belonging to any discipline contributes to the understanding of the correlations it has to a phenomenon from another discipline. A complementary relationship thus established helps the collective wisdom to grow.

Unfortunately, the modern education trains the human mind to toe the line of unitary pattern. Like a horse with the blinkers, a modern student of science charges straight ahead totally unmindful of what his fellow brother working in another field is contributing concomitantly. The inter-relationship between the different disciplines is lost in the process resulting in severe fragmentation of knowledge making each branch a watertight compartment. Even the same discipline has branched off into the various specializations as in medicine, where a specialist in cardiac disorders seldom claims knowledge of a problem belonging to the ear, nose and throat. The mental operations have tended to become more and more analytical and information oriented. They impose restraints on observations being made of a field in its totality.

Hahnemann was a keen student of logic. He inducted into the therapy he propounded both analysis and synthesis in the concepts of individualization and totality. He was as affirmative with the deductive method of reasoning as with the inductive method. He pooled into the therapeutic system he discovered all his knowledge coming from the various disciplines in which he was adept. He approached to study a patient in his totality through a multi-disciplinary angle, correlating the facts he observed with the vast experience he had behind him. But for his knowledge of chemistry, most of the mercury salts would not have found their way into the homoeopathic materia medica. If it were not for his acquaintance with Lord Bacon, the chronic miasms would not have seen light. The concept of vital force owes its existence to his deep insight into philosophy. His reference to dynamis is a direct outcome of his knowledge of the physical sciences. His experiences in life and living permitted him to take a good look at the diversities of human behaviour and helped him to perceive the role played by the mind in diseases long before a Franz Alexander presented it to the medical world as psychosomatic medicine.

Times have changed since the days of Hahnemann. The truth that knowledge is universal has gone to the background. The parts have separated from the whole and have lost their contacts with the source. Scientists are becoming more and more conservative and are increasingly opting for the position of monarchs of all that they survey. Yet they respect generals as having the capacity to rule over the particulars. Have they verified what those generals belong to? Do they have something in common that holds together the different disciplines? Unless one finds the right answers to these questions knowledge is likely to stagnate and get crushed under its own dead weight.

Homoeopaths fight over the induction of pathology into their therapeutic field since they firmly believe that it is alien to the principles of Homoeopathy. If only they cease to be the frogs in the well and choose to read meaningfully the progress made in the allied fields, they can enrich their own science by incorporating into it, those experiences which do not contravene the fundamental tenets of the system they identify with. The advocates of Homoeopathy fail to recognize the logic of inducting time element into their study of a patient and the drug. A study in totality implies taking into account all the dimensions available to man. Time constitutes an important dimension. No disease or drug study becomes comprehensible unless the expressions are studied from an evolutionary point of view. The cause and the effect, the miasmatic history and the present complaints, the diagnosis and the prognosis, dynamis and change are all accepted concepts in Homoeopathy and they are all expressions of time. Yet, it is the time element that fails to find expression when the drugs are matched for the disease since, none of the materia medica of Homoeopathy give a record of the manner in which the expressions evolved during the drug provings. Which were the expressions that preceded and which followed is an enigma for a student of logic when

he studies the materia medica. It was not a deliberate omission on the part of Hahnemann or any of his followers. But the value of time element as an important dimension for perceiving the totality had not been experienced then as much as it is felt now. Pathology as a discipline introduced in the medical field relatively later has made an elaborate study of the disease process and the precise mechanisms underlying the various expressions in a systematic, objective and from an evolutionary point of view. It is for the homoeopaths to examine the evidence recorded by pathology and judge whether it could be logically employed as an effective standard to compare the data recorded in the materia medica and restore the time element that is missing in it; whether to take help of the knowledge belonging to an allied discipline to enrich their own? Scientific thinking demands elimination of sentimental barriers erected by self-love to which most of us are susceptible. Science makes friends only with reason. Reason demands that our thought process is logical.

Pathology is not the only bugbear that frightens a homoeopathic physician. The much fancied claim he makes of studying the mind of the patient without respect for the study of psychology as a discipline; the claim he puts forward that he regards only the uncommon symptoms of the disease to perceive his patient without adequate knowledge of the common symptoms recorded in the books of medicine; his assertion that the chronic miasms are transmitted from one generation to the other with little knowledge of the genetics; his confidence that he practised scientifically without even a nodding acquaintance with logic are issues that need re-examination. No curriculum which ignores these issues is capable of producing a standard homoeopathic physician. No practice can become meaningful which fails to logically relate the results with the action. No research is worth the name when it is blinded to the concept of collective wisdom.

The views and opinions expressed by the authors of articles published in this journal are not necessarily those of the editor and publishers.

A CORRECTION

We regret that through inadvertence the name of writer of the Editorial in August 1980 issue has been mentioned in the Table of Contents as Dr. J. N. Kanjilal in place of Dr. S. Karnad, the present editor.