

HOMOEOPATHIC EDUCATION : SOME REFLECTIONS

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EDUCATION AND ITS AIM

Education helps a man to grow into a complete human being. So the primary aim of education is to enable the person concerned to adjust perfectly to the environment. Apart from this a man needs some professional education also, so that he is able to render some service to the society in which he lives. The aim of professional education is twofold: (a) to provide necessary knowledge about a particular sphere and (b) to enable the man to apply this knowledge in practical life. Thus knowledge and training are the main aims of professional education. So a man who is undergoing homoeopathic education should acquire full knowledge about Homoeopathy and he should be competent enough to apply this knowledge in 'curing' the sick.

PREVAILING SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN HOMOEOPATHY

(1) *Syllabus*: The syllabus should be such as to enable the students to acquire the twofold aims mentioned above. But if we examine the present syllabus we shall see there is, as if, an attempt to follow the M.B.B.S. syllabus with the addition of the *Organon* and homoeopathic materia medica. *Organon of Medicine* being an abstract subject having philosophical basis most of the students are unable to grasp it fully. They are to devote most of their time in subjects like anatomy, physiology, pathology, practice of medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, surgery, ophthalmology etc. They get good marks on these subjects and somehow manage to pass in the *Organon* and homoeopathic materia medica with the help of keynotes and made easy.

The result is that most of the students even after passing their examination cannot realise the basic principles and philosophy of Homoeopathy. I have heard many homoeopaths who have good results in their final examination to confess that they have not really been able to understand the *Organon of Medicine* properly. These homoeopaths turn into neo-homoeopaths in their actual practice and they find no harm in (i) prescribing more than one medicine simultaneously and alternately, (ii) giving potentised medicines and mother tinctures at a time, (iii) using external applications, massages, injections, tonics and many other modern techniques.

(2) *Non-availability of efficient teachers*: In most of the homoeopathic colleges with the exception of a few dedicated and efficient teachers, most of the teachers are not properly qualified and competent to teach his particular subject. Moreover, in almost all colleges part-time allopathic teachers are appointed to teach the subjects like anatomy, surgery, physiology, pathology, practice of medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology etc. Such teachers are least concerned and conversant about the principles of Homoeopathy. They give

lectures only to finish the syllabus caring little how much and in what way the students of Homoeopathy need to grasp the subject.

Most teachers of materia medica finish their lectures in enumerating the symptoms of a particular drug. They cannot realise that a student can have a clear picture of a particular homoeopathic medicine only when the teacher can place before them the 'genius and personality' of a drug.

(3) *Lack of practical training*: Many homoeopathic colleges have no attached hospital. The students get no opportunity to prepare bedside case-taking and observation under the guidance of good and efficient teacher. Internship is not compulsory as in many colleges there is no facility for outdoor treatment. Even where outdoor service is available the college authorities select two or three students from each batch for conducting the outdoor service. Other students do not get any chance to have this outdoor experience.

So, the majority of students after getting their degree or diploma go for private practice without any practical training. They feel very much helpless when they are to tackle patients in their real practice. Then they approach an elder practitioner in the field to have some practical experience. But generally they are not welcomed by their seniors until and unless they can supply them a good number of cases with full fees. The young homoeopaths then feel frustrated. But he must earn his livelihood. So he starts practising Allopathy and Homoeopathy side by side and becomes a mongrel. It would be rather shocking to note that a good percentage of the total population of homoeopathic physicians in our country either practise mongrelism or what they practise in the name of Homoeopathy is not Homoeopathy at all!

(4) *Lack of uniformity in awarding degree and diploma*: At present the degree and diploma awarded in Homoeopathy varies from State to State along with the period of teaching. This will be evident from the following table:

State	Nature of Diploma or Degree	Duration of course
Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar and Orissa	D.H.M.S.	4 years
Kerala	D.H.M.	4 ..
Madhya Pradesh	D.H.B.	2 ..
Maharashtra	D.H.B.	3 ..
"	L.C.E.H.	4 ..
Mysore	D.H.B.	3 ..
Uttar Pradesh	B.M.S.	4 ..
" "	G.H.M.S. (degree)	5 ..
West Bengal	D.M.S.	4 ..
" "	B.M.S. (degree)	5 ..
Delhi	D.H.S.	4 ..

So we see that as many as eight diplomas and two degrees are awarded throughout the country. This is very unlike in the other systems of medicine resulting in lack of unity and coherence in the progress of Homoeopathy.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

(1) A central syllabus committee should be there to prepare a uniform and graded syllabus for diploma, degree and post graduate level. The members of the committee should be the principals of different colleges, representatives of different associations and other eminent homoeopaths headed by the Adviser to Homoeopathy. The syllabus should include all the existing subjects with primary emphasis on detailed and comprehensive study of the *Organon of Medicine* and homoeopathic philosophy. The aim of the syllabus should be to enable the pupils to realise the distinctive approach of Homoeopathy. In fact, the revival of Hahnemannian Homoeopathy is the crying need of the day.

(2) Teachers should be selected through State Public Service Commission. Selection of teachers privately by college authorities should be stopped. The minimum educational qualifications of teachers should be graduation along with degree or diploma in Homoeopathy with at least 50% of marks. Allopathic teachers teaching in homoeopathic institutions should be trained in the basic principles of Homoeopathy. At the same time homoeopathic teachers teaching subjects other than materia medica and organon should receive necessary training in the particular subject. Such training may be arranged through the National Institute of Homoeopathy. In-service training in the form of refresher courses may also be arranged by the same Institute from time to time during vacations.

(3) Regular practical classes in each and every subject should be held from the first year class. Even theoretical classes should be conducted with sufficient number of audio-visual aids like charts, maps, pictures, instruments etc. The colleges having no attached hospital and outdoor dispensary should not be given affiliation. The colleges which are already affiliated without attached hospital and outdoor dispensary should be given a time limit within which the college authorities should arrange outdoor and indoor facilities for the students. Necessary funds may be provided for the purpose.

There should be regular bedside practice in small batches of students guided by a teacher. Internship should be made compulsory in each and every homoeopathic college. The period of internship should be at least one year.

(4) There should be a uniform pattern in awarding diploma and degrees. In fact, homoeopathic education should be graded in three levels: (a) diploma course (three or four years); (b) degree course (two years) and post-graduate course (two years). Each and every State should follow this uniform pattern with uniform syllabus.

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1980, pp. 360-61). First of all, the page number referred to by him is not 220 but 230. Mr. Kaliah has lifted the sentence out of context from the *Philosophy*. A careful study of the whole passage leaves one without doubt that in atmospheric reaction, Secale is hot. The complete sentence reads: "He must individualize things widely dissimilar in one way, yet similar in other ways. Take for instance, the two remedies, Secale and Arsenicum, they both are chilly, but the patient wants all the covers off and wants the cold air in Secale, and he wants all things hot in Arsenicum....." Kent makes a subtle distinction between atmospheric reaction of the patient and his internal chilly constitution—a lack of vital heat. He makes this distinction clear in his *Lesser Writings*. Even in his *Lectures on Homoeopathic Materia Medica*, he writes in chapter of Calcarea sulph., "The patient desires the open air; is sensitive to drafts; takes cold easily.....After becoming cold, complaints come on. Tendency to take cold in drafts, or on slight occasions. He is sensitive to cold, wet weather."

In atmospheric reaction, Natrum mur. has exhibited opposite modalities. Some of them conformed to the chilly Natrum mur. envisaged by Burnett and Clarke, while an equally large number of patients fit in Kent's 'warm blooded' temperament. Clinically, it has been found to be true. There is one more drug which also shows similar characteristic. It is Thuja.

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(5) Educational tours should be conducted by the colleges at least once a year so that the students from one State may visit the colleges and hospitals of other States and there may be interchange of ideas and knowledge. The students should also visit various homoeopathic institutes, gardens with medicinal plants, herbariums etc. from time to time.

(6) Rural Health Service may be organised by the college authorities for advanced students. In this scheme a batch of students under the guidance of one or two teachers will go to a nearby village and open camp clinics for the treatment of village people. This may be made compulsory in the course. Each student should take part in this rural health service at least twice in the course of their study. This scheme will not only create self-confidence among the would be homoeopaths, but it will also popularise Homoeopathy among rural people who are now in the greatest need of health care.
