

THE DOCTRINE OF DOSAGE

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Homoeopathy is founded upon the universal principles of life and motion. It considers health, disease and cure as three qualitative states of the living organism. Health is the state of the dynamic equilibrium of the various forces at work within and without the economy of the living being. In this condition of life vital functions are performed in an orderly way and there is a feeling of well-being. Disease indicates a changed condition where the equilibrium is disturbed due to actions of some agents or influences inimical to life. Consequently there is disorder in the vital functions and sensations. Cure means restoration of order in the economy and re-establishment of the dynamic equilibrium. This is done through therapeutic medication.

The object of administration of medicine is, therefore, to bring about a change of state of the economy from disordered state to an orderly one. So it should be given in such form and in such quantity and upon such principle as to be able to act on a dynamic plane to effect the desired change, without producing any toxic effects and without causing any injury to the patient. The principle of homoeopathic dosage has been evolved to achieve this goal.

The principle of dosage is naturally dependent upon the principle of selection of remedy and upon remedy itself. What is then our remedy and how is it selected? Our remedies are those medicinal substances whose actions on the healthy living human beings are fully proved and recorded. The remedies are selected according to the law of similars. In a particular case our remedy will be that which is similar to the natural disease, i.e. whose action on the healthy human being is most like the phenomenon of the lost balance of the economy which we call the disease.

Thus the disease producing power of a drug is employed to act as a curative power in sickness. It is a power having a force which causes actions and brings about a change. How much then, of this remedy is to be given in a particular case? In other words, what constitutes a homoeopathic dose?

We look forward to another fundamental principle of science discovered by the great French mathematician Mauperituis. The principle states that the quantity of action necessary to effect any change in nature is the least possible (*maxima minimis*). According to this law of least quantity, the quantity of drug action necessary to effect any change of state in the economy is the least possible. This least possible is always minimum, an infinitesimal. It is just enough to bring about a reaction in the vital principle for effecting the desired change.

Every living being is endowed with an inherent power to react to ex-

ternal stimuli. Drugs are inimical to life. So, when drugs are administered, the organism reacts in defence and offers resistance. In other systems of medicine drugs are used for producing physiological effects. So it must be given in doses large enough to overcome first this resistance and then to produce its own effects.

In Homoeopathy, a drug similar to the disease, which is practically the vital reactions and resistance, is administered. It acts upon the identical tracts involved in the disease process, in a manner similar to the disease-producing cause itself. In its course, therefore, it meets with little or no resistance, because its sphere of action has already been invaded and the resistance overcome. The affected organs are open to attack from without. Susceptibility to similar influences has increased considerably. A demand has been created within, which is required to be met from without or with the remedy. How much of the remedy should we administer at this highly susceptible state of the vital principle?

Any dose, however small, will produce reaction. In order that the suffering may not be increased and the patient injured it is necessary that the smallest possible dose should be administered. Large dose is not only unnecessary but also unjustified, as it provokes violent reaction resulting in severe aggravation of the suffering of the patient besides complicating the case. Hahnemann has, therefore, cautioned us time and again against the injurious effects of large doses.

Homoeopathic dose is, therefore, always sub-physiological. It is a dose so small as not to produce any pathogenetic symptoms; for we do not want to produce any new symptoms, but to remove the already existing symptoms.

What should be then, in practice, the exact amount of the minimum dose? It is just enough to satisfy the susceptibility. What is the measure of the susceptibility in a particular case? We know that the greater the susceptibility the larger is the number of characteristic symptoms of a disease. So the more similar is the drug to the disease, that is, the greater the number of characteristic symptoms of the disease correspond to those of the drug the lesser the quantity and higher the potency of the drug is required.

The quality of drug action is, therefore, governed by the quantity of the drug used. It is in inverse ratio of the similarity. It thus follows that the law of least quantity is an essential and necessary complement of the law of similars. Homoeopathy achieves its ideals of cure by the use of single, simple and pure drug selected according to the law of similars and administered in minimum or infinitesimal doses. This is the homoeopathic law of cure—*similia similibus curantur*: simplex, simili, minimum.
