

AN ADVENTURE IN HOMEOPATHY

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If in this brief chronicle of high adventure a personal pronoun should seem much in evidence two reasons will explain it. Among pronouns "I" is my favorite, by far. None other falls so trippingly from my lips. Again, an adventure must be personal and concrete. It can never be abstract. Inasmuch as this will recount a venture into fields much too little known wherein I myself was bound either to win or lose I myself must tell the tale.

In my own mind there has never been any doubt of the truth of Homeopathy. It has always seemed scientific and explainable. But would it stand a test that would convince others, that we who are Homeopaths are not dreamers and followers of phantasies? In other words, if an opportunity came to try out Homeopathy in a large way would it stand the test? Would it so rise to the occasion that everyone who observed, or participated, would be convinced? I thought it would.

Of course we have all had our demonstrations. We have all seen remedies act like magic. But even then the only ones impressed were ourselves. Patients themselves are interested only in results. To them the long hours of study, the differentiating, the summing up of the totality of the symptoms mean nothing. The chances are that they never know of them.

Even if the effect of the remedy was most phenomenal the profession itself would give it but passing thought. No one is so tiresome in medical meetings as he who reads case histories. What I longed for was a large dramatic victory for Homeopathy. I wanted it to win so triumphantly that not only its friends but its enemies would sit up and take notice.

A system of medicine to be effective must meet many requirements. If Homeopathy in a large experiment were expensive, if it kept its patients longer in bed, if complete recoveries were more slow, then it would be unsuited to a community of wage-earners. If only those more comfortably placed, who could have trained nursing and all other comforts, made good recoveries then Homeopathy was unsuited to the vast majority of people. What I wished to know was whether

I could take a community of people, make them all Homeopaths, and have it to their advantage, from every point of view.

How I Became a Homeopath

Up to the time I began my experiment I can't say that I was ever an enthusiast for Homeopathy. Mind you,—I say "enthusiast." My preceptor had been a Homeopath. He might have happened to be a veterinary. If he had been I should now, perhaps, be treating cows and horses. The books he loaned me were homeopathic texts. The school he sent me to was a homeopathic college. Eventually I got my degree. Finding myself with this degree, and the royal permission to practice medicine and surgery, I did the only thing I could do. I prescribed homeopathically. I was not an adherent by conviction. The chances are that I should have been just as elated at being a Neuropath, if perhaps there is such a thing, or a Holy Roller. I just "happened" to be a Homeopath. I wanted to justify the accident.

By the time one has practiced medicine twenty years he has either succeeded or failed. He, himself, may be the only one who knows. I feel sure I had succeeded as well as I should have done in any other work. But I was not contented. It did not seem enough, in a great city, just to "practice medicine," even homeopathically. Again, being a Homeopath, I was a disciple of a system that the great majority of the profession did not recognize. And the busy drama of a great city was all about me and I never saw the actors at all; only the play, and then from a distance. What I longed for was contact with people who did things.

And Then the Opportunity Came

In a very cosmopolitan center of these United States there flourishes a large industrial corporation. It lies in the heart of the city, where green trees are unknown and where the very air one breathes is commercial. Into its massive entrance there pass, each morning, 8,000 souls. Time was when the door closed after them they left their personalities behind. They became parts of a great machine. At five o'clock each evening the 8,000 poured out. They scattered to their various homes to become individuals again.

And then there came a happy day for "visions." The president of this immense pulsating plant is, happily, a dreamer of dreams. He had a vision, a splendid one, of having

his many hundred employes happily placed, with every advantage of hygiene and sanitation; with no fear of loss of position, from accident or disease; a vision of rest-rooms and recreation parlors, a ballroom and library,—but, most of all, a medical department that should be perfectly equipped with everything known to medical science,—and all of this free, a gift, a tribute of appreciation of the employer to those who had made his success possible.

Into my hands by a strange co-incidence was given the medical direction of this plant. It was like a sign from heaven. If I could organize this group of workers into an immense homeopathic clinic and make them see its value then I should have demonstrated the very thing I had always wished to prove.

Of course I realize that we have worked under almost ideal conditions. We have had unlimited funds with which to work. There has never been the handicap of false economy. I realize, also, that half of the prescription is confidence in physicians and nurses and in faith in the loyalty of the firm. I concede that many factors have entered into our results. However, it was a “flyer” in Homeopathy. It succeeded.

The field we had to work in was quite virgin. We were missionaries, all right. The first month had scarcely passed before the Insurance Company called up the management and said, “You’ve got to fire that Medical Director; he’s a Homeopath.” I happened to be present when the conversation took place. The manager turned to me and asked: “Are you a Homeopath?” I confessed the truth. He put a troubled hand upon a more troubled brow, and exclaimed, “Oh, my God.” Thanks to having had a Christian bringing up I know when “My God” indicates despair and when thanksgiving. He didn’t look grateful. A month later he called me to his office again. I was spiritually fortified for more criticism. His face was wreathed in smiles. During the first month our department had cost \$300 less than the month before, and even then that expense had included the outfitting of the Medical Department.

The Economy of Homeopathy

Few realize the economy of Homeopathy. The first day of my incumbency a girl, getting \$7 a week,—we have no \$7 a week girls now,—brought in prescriptions for my O. K., aggregating \$3.75. These were for one day only. Multiply that

figure by 8,000, and then by the number of working days in the year, and you have an idea of what the expense might be under other than homeopathic control. In any large concern money talks. We save thousands of dollars a year; but best of all, the health standards have so risen that the Benefit Society, an organization existing among the employes themselves, and quite independent of the firm, has remitted its dues for the last three months because there was so little demand upon its funds. In the great influenza epidemics of last winter our city suffered severely indeed. Here was a wonderful opportunity to prove what homeopathy could do. Of our several hundred cases in the first epidemic not one was lost. In the second, equally deadly, one man died of pneumonia. He was alone, and no physician was called until he was quite moribund. A great remedy was Gelsemium. This was bought in gallon lots of the tincture, and believe me we used it. But it saved the day for us. This epidemic came at the holiday season, when literally hundreds of thousands of customers passed through the store each day. And yet we won out.

Influenza Management

So many factors enter into the cure of an illness that I think it is only fair to outline our method of procedure. Every man or woman carrying a temperature of 100 degrees was sent home and put to bed for three days. If he did as he was told he received full pay for the time off. He was given five drops of Gelsemium every hour for six hours, and then every two hours until further orders. The Homeopathy of this may seem crude, but Gelsemium was the epidemic remedy in these parts. Our results proved that. Our doctors and nurses worked night and day. No expense was saved to save our employes' lives. One doubting Thomas, a professor in a great university, said to me, "Your Homeopathy had nothing to do with it; it was your care of your patients that gave you your phenomenal results." Homeopathy requires of us that we observe every hygienic regulation, and that we add to it that medication that covers the picture the disease presents. Other physicians had the advantage of hospitals and nurses; they also had a working knowledge of Aspirin and Digitalis, and Strychnia; and yet their patients died by the hundreds and ours lived. To the everlasting credit of one large hospital in this city be it said that one of its heads came to us

and said, "We have lost two of our interns and three of our nurses and our patients are dying like flies. If you know of anything that will save our patients share that knowledge with us." And it is absolutely true that, finally, the heaviest buyers of homeopathic remedies were old-school physicians. With death peering over the head of every bed these physicians were too fine to allow prejudice to stand between them and their patients' welfare.

During three epidemics of scarlet fever we have never lost a case. Possibly our Belladonna and Hepar Sulphur did not do everything, but each did its share. We have never lost a diphtheria case. We have not had a typhoid case in four years. When we assumed charge of the work there was an average of nine patients in the hospital all the time. Several weeks frequently pass now with no hospital cases except operative ones.

Might It Not Have Been Done Otherwise?

I know what you are thinking,—that all of these things could have been accomplished under any other system of medicine. Possibly the externals could have been; but Homeopathy consists of a knowledge of all that it accepted in medicine, plus a deeper knowledge of drug action. Yet, after all, is it nothing to Homeopathy that under its auspices more has been done, in at least one institution, for the good of its employes, than has ever before been done in any industrial plant? Does it mean nothing that through its influence there has arisen a mutual respect between employer and employes, a broader understanding of the needs of the other? Does it mean nothing that under Homeopathy administration the useless drugging of our employes has ceased, and that from the catalogue, reaching a million homes, advertisements of patent medicine, of drugs of unknown qualities, of tonics and cures, of all the elixirs that delight the soul of the medicine-taker and never do any good, have been ruthlessly cut out? This cost the firm hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Was there a moment's hesitation on their part? Not one. It was only necessary to show the department heads that no good could ever come of these patent drugs and that their responsibility to their customers was a sacred one. That drug catalogue became thin so fast that a careless observer might have thought it had discovered a successful obesity cure.

Seven Years of Success

Our seven years have been seven wonderful ones. Out of a corner room, filled with gallons of tonics and elixirs and mixtures, has grown an immense medical department, with a dispensary supplied with practically every usual homeopathic remedy, in strengths from tinctures to 30's. Every room is snowy white. Five nurses minister to the needs of the men and women. There are now four dentists and there will be six soon. Experience has taught us the people are as well as their teeth are clean. Four physicians are in constant touch with the needs of the employes. Tell me,—could this immense department have grown to what it is if Homeopathy had not been successful? Could we have secured the thousands of dollars we have spent if our venture had been a failure? From all over the United States, and from foreign countries have come presidents of corporations, and men and women interested in the ever threatening problems of labor, to study our system and our results. A business agent of one union came to our plant and spoke long and weepingly of the woes of the down-trodden working man. He reported later, "Phaw, you can't start trouble there; they're all satisfied."

Homeopathy puts upon us particular obligations. It isn't enough that we practice it and prescribe it. We've got to prove that we have the goods on all other systems of medicine; and we've got to go out and fight to prove it, if the fighting is necessary.

Drosera Cure of Goitre

At a recent meeting of the British Homeopathic Medical Society, reported in the Journal of that society, at which numerous clinical cases were presented, Dr. M. Tyler presented a case of goitre cured by *Drosera rotundifolia*, the subject a girl with hard goitre which measured four and a half inches across, three weeks later two and a half inches, now practically gone, under *Drosera*, unit dose. The case was based upon tuberculous family history, with a sister in an asylum. In response to inquiries Dr. Tyler stated that the main indication for the remedy is the tuberculous state, having found it useful also in Pott's disease and whooping cough. Under its administration tubercular glands soften and disappear with a minimum amount of discharge and scarring.