

THE GENIUS WHO FOUNDED HOMŒOPATHY

Dr. Samuel Hahnemann Was Born 210 Years Ago

The homœopathic system of medicine which is practised all over the world and today enjoys a popularity all its own and posing a formidable challenge at the same time to the current and orthodox system of medicine, known as Allopathy, was founded by a man who was born in Germany two hundred and ten years ago. He was Dr. Samuel Hahnemann.

The son of a painter, Samuel Hahnemann was born on April 10, 1755, at the Saxon china factory in Meissen. After attending the famous St. Afra Prince's School, he studied in Leipzig, obtained his M.D. degree at the age of 24 in Erlangen and set up in practice as an official district physician. In 1784, he began a vagrant life which took him across half Germany, lived in turns between Dresden, Hamburg and Wittenberg, in towns both large and small, practised, taught and wrote a great deal. He made many enemies as a result of his new theory of homœopathy, the treatment of disease by the prescription of certain drugs in small quantities. In 1835, Hahnemann went to Paris, where he died in 1843, famous and respected.

It is difficult to estimate the force of character and courage which was implied in Hahnemann's abandoning the common lines of medicine. More than this, he and his followers showed results in the treatment of disease which compared very favourably with the results of contemporary orthodox practice.

Some points of Hahnemann's system were, no doubt, anticipated by Hippocrates and specially by Paracelsus (1495-1541). But Hahnemann undoubtedly deserves the credit of being the first to break decidedly with the old school of medical practice in which, forgetful of the teachings of Hippocrates, nature was overlooked. Hahnemann gave his contemporaries a great deal of trouble with the novelty of his theories and the obstinacy with which he tried to convince them that he was right, even experimenting on himself. His main tenet was: "If you want to cure

a disease quickly, gently and permanently, choose the agent which can itself provoke the same disease. Cure a thing with something similar". In accordance with his theories, he founded "Homœopathy" in 1799 and in 1810 published "The Organ of Rational Medicine", which has since become the "bible" of homœopaths.

On a number of occasions, Hahnemann had to appear before a law court. For a time, he was forbidden to produce and administer drugs to himself. But despite this, he gradually made his influence felt. In 1826, he founded a Society of Homœopath Doctors. In 1834, he became the chief physician of the Homœopathic Hospital in Leipzig.

Among other institutions, the Hahnemann Museum in Stuttgart and various hospitals run on homœopathic principles bear witness to the fact that his ideas have a continued influence today in the German Federal Republic. Numerous doctors both in and outside Germany practise today according to his methods. Homœopathy is a process for healing in direct contrast to Allopathy. This science makes use of all types of medicines—ranging from minerals to those obtained from the animal and plant kingdoms—available in their natural form. Besides, it takes full advantage of the rich experience and changing medical intuition of its practitioners, and also utilizes the law of similarity and the healing procedures derived from it. Hahnemann studied the effects of certain medicines on a healthy person and by provoking an artificial disease similar to the chronic disease of the patient, he was successful in curing the patient.

In his book "*Organon der Heil-Kunde*", Hahnemann has made a detailed study of various diseases, taking into account the cause, development, nature of the malady, accompanying circumstances etc. Instead of a suppression of the symptoms he has always tried to cure the disease "from within" by using stimulants.

The theory of Hahnemann which laid down treatment with highly diluted medicines found confirmation today in the theory of the efficacy of colloidal substances.

The theory of dose is another peculiar feature of homœopathy, which has divided the members of the homœopathic school into bitter factions. This was one of the later creations of Hahnemann's mind.

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