

THE LAYMAN'S STAKE IN HOMŒOPATHY

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The privilege you have conferred upon me to occupy your rostrum here this evening is a great honour, and your Officers, I am sure, share my gratitude for such a splendid turnout. Five years or so ago I was similarly permitted to discuss with you some of the legal aspects of Homœopathy, past and present. Tonight I propose to describe the posture of laymen in the general homœopathic picture, as I see it, and how they stand to be affected by the improvement or the impairment of the homœopathic physician's lot.

During each of the fifteen years I have been exposed to Homœopathy, my appreciation of the personal preference for homœopathic treatment has increased to such an extent that it became clear that even my basic selfish interests stood to be helped or hurt by the availability or absence of competent homœopathic prescribers.

As was the case with so many of you, no doubt, my introduction to Homœopathy was the result of some degree of desperation. I had made the rounds of the better skin specialists' offices in the attempt to get rid of a rash that persistently appeared on my hands for more than four years. From pictures and descriptions you have seen and read in magazines and newspapers, I am sure you are familiar with the ailment known as "athlete's foot." The only compensation I ever derived from the annoyance that plagued me for so long was the occasional kick I would get out of referring to my malady as "athlete's fist".

After four of these leading specialists failed to clear up permanently what they all insisted was a local dermatitis, it was Dr. Green who proved my hunch to be correct—that it actually was a manifestation of systemic disorder. But of course I could not be so naive as, by one cure, to be converted to so strange a type of medical therapy. Despite a subsequent cure of a friend's chronic sinus trouble by one appropriate powder, such internal procedures, I allowed, conceivably could be ventured by many non-homœopathic doctors, or allopaths, as I had then learned to call them. So another demonstration of how Homœopathy is different in diagnosis and therapy had to come to my attention.

This time, as a medical science and an art in its application, I observed how Homœopathy almost instantly relieves and quickly cures poison ivy, a common summer ailment that admittedly baffles "modern" medical science. Here is a disorder that most orthodox physicians regard as a burn or superficial dermatitis that, except in unusual cases, is confined to the skin and therefore must be treated topically. But despite the fact that she boasted that since childhood she had been "picking her teeth" with the

climbing shrub, it was my wife who had to be put to bed with the worst case of poison ivy imaginable.

From her waist to her toes her body was a mass of suppurating sores and the anguish of the accompanying fever and crazing itch was obviously enough to drive her mad. When after a few days it became apparent that the popular specific that she was applying, calomel lotion, was about as ineffective as gingerale, again in desperation I visited Dr. Green's office, described my wife's condition as well as my untrained eye made possible, obtained one powder from her, took it home, administered it to the patient who by this time was clearly ready to jump out of the window and then with the suffering victim just hoped for results.

Well, if the term "seemingly miraculous" were applied to that which followed within twenty minutes, it would be no exaggeration. I did not have to be told; it was obvious within that time that the fever and the crazing itch began to subside and that night my wife enjoyed a refreshing sleep. The following morning, bright and early, she was able to get up as though nothing had ever happened. The suppuration ceased, the sores had already begun to heal and within a few days the last skin blemish had completely disappeared.

I had to report this dramatic cure to Dr. Green, not only to thank her for such a miracle drug, or "magic powder" as my children call them, but to satisfy my curiosity as to what it was. When I learned that the curative agent was derived from the *Rhus tox.*, a plant which presumably had caused the distress, I expressed the thought that *Rhus tox.* must be the specific for all cases of poison ivy. Then to my surprise I was told: no, that depending on the symptomatology or reaction of the patient to the poison, which can differ in many respects, one of a half dozen or more other drugs could be selected which would promise quicker or more positive results. This set me to thinking that there must be some other views on procedures for the treatment of human ailments than most present-day doctors seem to have been taught in medical school.

I learned one more dramatic lesson before I became somewhat familiar, in an academic way, with the basic principles of the philosophy of Homœopathy with respect to the diagnosis and treatment of sick people. The difficulties of a child in the neighborhood who was a victim of another ailment rather common to children was brought to my attention. This lass was being treated for pinworm and her revulsion to the large strong pills that were administered would remind one of Hahnemann's reaction to the medical practices of a hundred and fifty years ago. By chance I met one of the leading pediatricians in the neighborhood at the time and, discussing this poor child's plight with him, was told admittedly pinworms present to a doctor a malady that seems to resist anything that modern science has to offer. When the mother reported poor progress in her child's case, I suggested that she take her to see Dr. Green. Undoubtedly it was in desper-

tion that she did so, but the result was that the child was entirely cured within a week, with no costly pills that would make her retch and with no psychological reaction that would ever cause her to fear a prompt return to such a prescriber for the treatment of her next disorder.

Again my curious mind prompted me to inquire of Dr. Green as to just how she could succeed where others of her profession admittedly were having such great difficulty. The answer was modest and simple. The others were spending too much of their time treating diseases by attacking germs. Most such parasites, I learned, had their origin in the lower bowels of children even though such children and other persons could be infected by the transfer of the eggs if ingested. The victims of these pests, however, are usually predisposed to the incubation of the eggs through a form of internal contamination, that is, a septic condition, resulting from a violation of one or more of the natural laws of proper living.

This revelation then prompted me to investigate further the easily understandable cardinal principles of Homœopathy. While taking the laymen's course, furnished by the American Foundation for Homœopathy and sponsored by your local Laymens' League, after an introduction to the simple meaning of sickness as being a deviation or departure from health or normal well-being the equally simple principle that in the treatment of sick people the removal of the cause of germs or bacteria by which disease is made clinically recognizable was expounded. The removal of the causes of sickness by the selection of the drug furnished by nature that would stimulate the affected area back into normal functioning was then considered.

One did not need any pre-medical or even pre-legal training to see the sense of the theory that such a drug could be indicated only by the totality of the patient's symptoms. For more than 150 years, countless thousands of provings and countless millions of experiences have shown conclusively that a drug given to a well person will bring about a set of clearly recognizable symptoms. Likewise, it is known that that same drug administered to a patient presenting a similar symptomatology will bring about a reversal of these symptoms and restore him to health, which is simply the absence of sickness. This law was recognized by the early physicians of Hippocrates' age. For it was he who noted that likes could be cured by opposites or likes could be cured by likes. And even in his opinion, history records, it was better to cure likes with likes. Hence the Latin maxim, *Similia similibus curentur*, "Let likes be cured by likes", has been a familiar one for many, many centuries.

Being disgusted with the practices of his time, this genius of languages and a number of sciences, Dr. Hahnemann, quit the practice of medicine and earned a livelihood at chemistry while he conducted intensive research into a better way to deal with sickness and curative therapy. Years of thought and experiment on himself and a group of other volunteers led to

not only a better understanding of the Law of Similars, but a discovery that the use of drugs in what we call a "potentized" fashion unlocks from even infinitesimal doses curative powers that not only clear up acute illnesses with amazing rapidity but bring about cures of chronic illnesses that are even more spectacular.

There should be nothing particularly mysterious about this process of potentization, for it results simply from succussion and trituration, two words that are defined in any common dictionary.

Some time thereafter, about ten years ago, I was invited to become Legal Advisor to the American Foundation for Homœopathy, Inc. Then began my rather intimate relationship with many homœopathic doctors throughout the country and equally well-meaning zealous laymen interested in working for the advancement of Homœopathy. It was then I began to realize that homœopaths are definitely free-thinkers compared with their allopathic brothers. The great majority of homœopathic doctors, however, regard their forte as simply a branch of the medical arts. They are quite willing to acknowledge the proper place of other specialities in the field. Not only do they allow that a broken bone calls for the services of an orthopedic surgeon, they recognize that often emergency measures must come before the patient can be properly conditioned for the administration of the proper medical dose.

I have found that the majority of homœopathic physicians do not sneer at Osteopathy as so many of their allopathic brethren do. They recognize, for example, that manipulation in the treatment of a spinal lesion is far more effective than the prescribing of aspirin or some other such palliative. It was then I also began to recognize the very important stake laymen have in the general homœopathic picture. All the more important interests that many homœopathic physicians have are not necessarily the same as those of their patients. We must face up to the fact that homœopathic prescribers are of necessity a busy group, being as they are very definitely limited in their numbers. I know many homœopathic doctors who, after working hard all their lives for the advancement of Homœopathy, often find themselves too busy to get to the annual national convention and read the medical paper they have prepared for the enlightenment of their colleagues. Instead they will forward it to the convention so that it may be read by someone else.

Being somewhat worn down by the endless difficulties that have confronted them all their lives, it is not altogether surprising to find that there are some who have almost given up their struggle to reproduce themselves in the practice and to familiarize laymen with what Homœopathy has to offer in the treatment of sickness. Right here in Washinton, not too long ago, I was present when one of the most renowned of all homœopaths rather cynically admonished his colleagues not to worry too much about the present plight of Homœopathy in this country. The gist of his remark

was: When humanity suffers enough it will eventually find us.

Some of you no doubt will recall another eminent homœopath who, speaking to you not long ago, adopted a similar "Ishkabibble" attitude. "Homœopathy is truth," he opined, "and truth, of course, even if crushed to earth, will rise again." Although I will concede that Homœopathy is truth and that if crushed to earth it is bound to rise again, I cannot help but ask myself if I would be willing to wait for it to reappear. I understand that civilization once was crushed and that the world went through a long period of misery known as the Dark Ages. Therefore, I simply would not be happy at the prospect that Homœopathy may entirely disappear in my time or even in my progeny's time and that I or they will have to pass through another dark age before the ministrations of a competent homœopathic prescriber, so superior in so many instances, will again be available. My long association with these doctors and laymen, and my reading of much material on the struggle between allopaths and homœopaths during the last fifty years has enabled me to rationalize rather satisfactorily the conflict in which Homœopathy, in terms of popular success, has lost much ground.

I am inclined, first of all, to think that Homœopathy has given much ground during that time by default. Compared with their brethren, homœopaths have not been as insistent upon dominating the practice of medicine as have their counterparts. They were systematically eliminated from examining boards for admission to practice, the character of their hospitals was changed through the reduction of "ratings", or the threat thereof, all of which power was arrogated to themselves by the allopaths and abused by their national medical society.

In time, as a direct result of the curse that was put upon Homœopathy, candidates to the practice of medicine were dissuaded from the study of Homœopathy, which led to the closing of the last homœopathic medical college in this country.

Secondly, it must be recognized that most of these antagonists were subject to the frailties of mortal men. Vanity was bound to play a certain part in making them want to predominate. Some, no doubt, were touched by the lust for power. Some, no doubt, were imbued with the desire for wealth. There is no question about allopathic procedures enabling the doctor to attend to more patients in less time. Homœopathic practice requires greater concentration on the study of the patient's symptomatology and background for the selection of the remedy that will correct all the conditions that account for his one or many illnesses and restore him to health.

I do not want to appear mean in my references to the aggressiveness of allopaths that has accounted for Homœopathy's desperate plight in this country, yet I would be naive if I overlooked the trends which history indicates have occurred. I can take a rather charitable view of their conduct

to a certain extent. To begin with, not many of them knew anything about Homœopathy in the first place. Many, no doubt, honestly thought that their strong doses were better. Many probably thought uniformity in treatment was highly desirable. It is easy to understand how uniformity in the concepts of illness and the teaching of medical practice can be considered very important. As a lawyer dealing with medical matters, I can see how uniformity makes the keeping and the reading of medical records more understandable to doctors and laymen alike. I can understand how the life insurance industry was much interested in the promotion of uniformity for the mere expeditious keeping and compilation of its valuable statistics.

Be that as it may, I was forced to recognize, just as no doubt most of you have recognized, that aside from even the homœopathic physicians who have a personal interest in the science and art of the practice, laymen too have a personal interest in the welfare of Homœopathy. Calling a spade a spade, they have a selfish interest in the availability of homœopathic therapy when the treatment of their illness and those of their dependents becomes necessary.

Perhaps allopaths will mellow, now that they have predominated, in this country at least, in the medical field. Their national society has only recently extended the palm to the osteopaths whom they have just as vigorously badgered as they have homœopaths for the past fifty years. In the near future they may do the same to homœopaths. If so, it may usher in a better era, provided that the homœopaths may be recognized as a specialized branch in the diagnosis and treatment of human ills and their independence in their adherence to the tenets of Dr. Hahnemann may be protected. We must not be so optimistic, however, as to assume that the modern drug makers, who comprise a multi-billion drug industry in this country, will aid and abet any such improvement of relations.

Meanwhile, our stake in Homœopathy is crystal clear. We must not leave it to the homœopaths to struggle alone. We need them more than they need us!

In conclusion, therefore, I would like to leave you with the answer as I see it to the question: "Meanwhile, what can we do?" First, we can and we must realize that the promotion of Homœopathy must continue and increase. This is not a job we can afford to "let George" do, for it is for our benefit and everything worth while requires effort. No one who has finished grade school fails to recognize the simple wisdom of Benjamin Franklin, and it was he who observed, among other things, that "God helps those who help themselves".

Secondly, and more specifically, in the performance of this task, we can be regular attendants at the meetings sponsored by your Laymen's League. I know how impossible it is to attend them all. There are so many reasons that can arise that will require the missing of an occasional meeting. Right now, for example, many of you are wondering why you did not

see me at all of the meetings last year. The reason was I taught a class beginning at eight-fifteen last year and the year before for which I could not always obtain a substitute. However, we usually can attend most of these meetings which are so essential to the promotion of Homœopathy, through the stimulation of the initiated and the primary indoctrination of the uninitiated.

When you can't attend a meeting, perhaps you can replace yourself with a neighbor or a friend who many come at your urging. When you come yourselves, you can bring another and chances are he will find it interesting and otherwise rewarding. You can help your League and thereby help yourselves by opening an account with the Perpetual Building Association and, as you do, making it a point in writing to tell them how much you appreciate their letting us have these facilities. (The Homœopathic Laymen's League of Washington, D. C., meets on the second Friday of each month, fall to spring inclusive, in the Perpetual Building Association Auditorium, 10th and E Street, N. W.—Ed.) I am sure you realize what a great boon it is to use to have at our disposal an auditorium of this dignity and character.

Thirdly, in promoting your own welfare you can support the American Foundation for Homœopathy, Inc., the only homœopathic organization in which laymen have an equal voice, by promoting its monthly periodical, **THE LAYMEN SPEAKS**. It not only has the largest circulation of all the homœopathic magazines in the country, but does a propagandizing job for you through its articles that are written by doctors and laymen alike.

Fourthly, you can and should support the Foundation's Book Fund. It isn't every laymen who can influence a doctor in the investigation of Homœopathy as a practice, but the re-printing of repertories and other homœopathic medical books makes possible the study of Homœopathy by those who are attracted through the efforts of the Foundation and others in a position to do so. This project was given a large scale stimulation recently through the establishment of a memorial fund in honor of Dr. Dixon, who only recently passed away after devoting most of his life to the advancement of the practice he loved so well.

Fifthly, and finally, although you may have reason occasionally to be discouraged about the outlook of Homœopathy generally, never despair. Simply do what you can while you can and remember the Foundation in your will so that it may carry on your good works when you have left. We are in a fast moving age, a period when time has quickly passed from the atomic age to the electronic age and what soon appears to be the space age. Almost overnight those in a position to do something big about it could finally discover Homœopathy and bring about a resurgence of interest in this therapy such as it has never known.

Should this happen in your lifetime, as it well may, the knowledge that you have contributed to making it possible will be a reward that will know

no bounds. One who has been privileged to be introduced to Homœopathy cannot afford to do nothing about its promotion. For it is better to light one candle than merely to grumble about the darkness. One who lights a candle on behalf of Homœopathy generates a force that not only serves as a beacon to countless others who seek the road to better health, but which diffuses his own being. Members of Alcoholics Anonymous have found that they find strength in helping others. Followers of Hahnemann have found this equally true of Homœopathy.

—*The Layman Speaks, April, '60*

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tioned in his work is certainly strong evidence; but why not consider the time at which he lived, and think rather that we are under an obligation to profit from the progress in medicine which has taken place since his day. We are of the opinion that Hahnemann, himself well ahead of his time, would, if he had foreseen the future, been the first to publish his discoveries. We give all credit to Hahnemann and it is no betrayal to go further in the direction he has indicated, by using those discoveries which were made after his time.

3. The nosodes of Marmoreck and Denys are: the former anti-tuberculous horse serum, and the latter a filtrate of bouillon containing tuberculous exotoxins and endotoxins. Their applications are: Marmoreck for tuberculinic subjects of low resistance, whose organs of excretion function badly; Denys for tuberculinic subjects who are florid and fat, but yet resist disease badly and suffer from sudden eliminatory crises.

4. There are two methods of preparing homœopathic dilutions (potencies), in both of which succussion is essential. In the Hahnemannian method separate phials are used for each dilution; in the Korsakovian method one phial is used, and in each successive dilution the last drop is retained to become the basis of the next dilution. It is the latter method of preparation which is at present prohibited in France.

—*Brit. Homœo. Journal, Oct., '61*