

## NEAR SIMILARS AND THE SIMILLIMUM

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Assuming that a physician is practising his profession according to the principles of homœopathic philosophy, we shall find that he is using a single potentized remedy for each patient coming under his care. As to the correctness of the prescription, there are three possibilities. The remedy is either the simillimum, a near similar or a drug that is symptomatically unrelated to the case.

The reaction of a patient to a completely unsimilar remedy is apparently the same as that to a placebo. Nothing happens that can be accounted for with any certainty on the basis of remedial action. Unless such a drug is repeated a number of times, thereby forcing it into the system, the only result would seem to be loss of time in treating the patient. However, some neutralizing effort may be required on the part of the constitution following the use of an irrelevant remedy.

Some patients applying for treatment have had an amazing number of supposedly homœopathic remedies, some prescribed by former physicians, others taken on the patient's own initiative. At best only a few of these medicines could have been related to the symptoms of the case at the time of the prescription. Such patients are often difficult to treat, possibly because some of the previous remedies may have implanted some of their own symptoms, thereby confusing the present picture. Therefore it is impossible to assume that a completely unhomœopathic remedy has absolutely no effect.

Coming now to the problem of near similars, there are certainly many such prescriptions made by homœopathic physicians. There are thousands of remedies in the materia medica. Only one can be absolutely correct in any given case.

Homœopathy is based upon sound scientific principles. Its philosophy is sound. Its system of drug proving has stood the test of time and is far superior to the crude methods of animal experimentation which can only reveal the objective symptoms

and toxic manifestations of the drug under consideration. There is nothing unscientific in any aspect of Homœopathy except in the matter of its practical application. In this, science must yield to the experience and skill of the individual doctor. No way has yet been discovered to determine with certainty the exact remedy and potency for each patient.

Since many drugs present a number of symptoms in common, the chance of making a wrong prescription is considerable. In the final analysis, the greatest obstacle to progress in the homœopathic field is too many failures in remedy selection. Routine prescribing is the curse of Homœopathy. Only by accident can a routine prescription prove to be the real simillimum. Nothing could hold back the recognition and general acceptance of Homœopathy if the average practitioner were to achieve anything better than 75% accuracy in prescribing.

Following the prescription of a near similar, improvement in some particulars is often observed but such improvement is seldom general and rarely includes the mental field. The patient may ultimately recover but cure is not the word for it. At best there is nothing outstanding or convincing in the results of such a method of practice.

The response to the exactly similar remedy on the other hand is unmistakable in all cases that are within curable limits. The reaction to the remedy is noted by the patient in a brighter outlook, renewed interest, more energy and a returning sense of well being. Objectively, there is a difference in facial expression and general appearance, in the tone and inflection of the voice, in the sound of the footsteps and finally in responsiveness and attitude of mind. It often requires no longer than two minutes for the physician to determine that his remedy was absolutely homœopathic to the symptom totality of the case.

The reaction-time and the type of response to the correct remedy varies with the individual patient. Acute cases will react within minutes or hours. In chronic conditions, if the illness is still at the functional level, reaction should be observed in a matter of hours or within a very few days at the most. The presence of definite pathology usually delays and modifies the reaction to the medicine. For this reason the physician must

wait a reasonable length of time before deciding that his prescription was an erroneous one. Haste at this point has spoiled many a case.

Prompt and continued improvement both mentally and physically is almost certain evidence of a bull's eye prescription. Aggravation first, with definite improvement following, is a sure sign of good homœopathic action. Prompt, dramatic amelioration in a chronic case with known pathology is evidence that the remedy is correct but aggravation will almost surely follow. This generally means a long case and the situation must be explained to the patient or he will give up the treatment that would ultimately correct the trouble and restore his health.

The remedy that fully palliates an incurable case is invariably the correct one. Euthanasia induced by the remedy is indicative of its homœopathic relationship to the symptoms.

There is no therapy more versatile in its application to all forms and stages of sickness than is Homœopathy. The drug that fully covers the symptom pattern of the patient meets every therapeutic requirement. A near similar will always prove disappointing and will never completely cure any form of sickness or disease.

—*Jourl. of the Am. Inst. of Homœopathy, Sept., '56*

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## LISTEN TO THE STORY OF GABRIELLE

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*At intervals—short intervals these days—the reading public gets monumental portrayals of medicine in the usual pattern, in terms that seem plausible. The Story of Gabrielle, told by the little girl's mother out of a devout mother's heart, stirs the soul and arouses adoration for the spirit in which the pure and the brave can meet tragic disappointment. It also tells step by step the medical procedures the little girl underwent as if they*