

WE HAPPY FEW

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What renders homœopathy unacceptable to the materially minded scientist is the difficulty he has in understanding two points. These are :

That there can be any virtue in a drug which has been diluted so far that its presence is not detectable by chemical analysis in the ultimate solution ; and

How so minute a dose as given by a homœopath can possibly have an effect on the human organism.

The higher the dilution the more potent the energy. It is as if the energy from the drop of a mother tincture expanded, from a bowl to a bucket, and from a bucket to a barrel. In the highest potencies, or weakest dilutions, the energy of certain drugs is comparable to a barrel of gunpowder.

Tribute to the Work of Dr. Wm. E. Boyd

The late Dr. Wm. E. Boyd, of Glasgow, proved that such attenuated dilutions do have chemical properties, and there was recently been published, in the British Homœopathic Journal, the organ of the faculty of Homœopathy, the result of 25 years' work to prove this point. His work is a monument of patient endeavour.

The experiments are so meticulously prepared and so fully authenticated by statisticians, by physicists and by chemists that Dr. Boyd's experiments seem foolproof. The only weakness is that his method is so elaborate that it would be difficult to repeat in other scientific laboratories, unless technicians were specially trained for the work.

How such minute dosage can act on the body is still a problem. Homœopaths in the past have been content to explain the undoubted action of these minute doses as a stimulation of vital force and not physiological action. If we accept the principle of kinetic energy being released by repeated dilution and succussion, it may well be that the homœopathic medicines alter the osmotic pressure in the appropriate cell membranes of the

body, particularly in the reticulo-endothelial system, which contains the white cells, or scavengers of the blood.

In other words, the minute dose of the homœopath may be said to stimulate the vital forces inherent in every person and thus make him less liable to disease, which the homœopath regards as "disharmony," or "dis-ease."

It may seem strange that homœopathy, which has been taught in London for over 100 years, has not made more impression on the medical profession. The question is hard to answer. The reasons are linked with fashion trends in modern medicine and modern thought, and we must have in our minds an awareness of certain tendencies which have become fixed with the advent of the National Health Service.

Mass Medication under N.H.S.

Homœopathy is an individual form of medicine and as such is time consuming and does not lend itself to mass medication. Under mass medication the drug bill goes up and up, and at the moment runs somewhere in the region of £55 million a year. Never a day passes but there arrives through the doctor's letterbox a mountain of samples and advertisements for new preparations, claimed to be beneficial for depression, digestive upsets, dandruff and other diseases whose names are as unfamiliar as the gaudy products acclaimed as cures.

The orthodox practitioner has to humour his patients. They demand the latest tranquilliser, a new bottle of something or other, or a check-up in hospital. So it works out for the patient either as a bottle or a bottle-neck. He is sent to the overcrowded hospital if his case is at all difficult. As the philosopher, William Jones, said: "The bigger the unit you deal with, the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed."

Modern medicine forgets that patients are people, individuals with prejudices, palates and peculiarities. They cannot be treated alike. As Sir Walter Langdon Brown said in his essay on Robert Bridges: "The next demand of evolution is clear, how to give scope for the individual as a real entity and yet for him to form as much a part of a greater whole as do the cells of his own body."

Advantages of Homœopathy

Most medical men know this and consequently are not happy working a Health Service which takes little account of the individual. Here we have the first great advantage of homœopathy. It is an individual form of treatment.

A second advantage lies in its comparative safety as compared with modern medicine. Provided one does not use high potencies, the barrel of gunpowder, a homœopathic doctor need feel no undue alarm if his case of drugs should disappear from his car—they will not kill anyone. That makes him feel safe.

Modern medicine is getting downright dangerous. In the British Medical Journal of Aug. 4, an editorial reports that during the years 1950—54 Ferrous Sulphate tablets caused 39 accidental deaths in England and Wales alone. Thirty-eight of the victims were children between one and four years old. The other was a woman.

Sleeping tablets of all descriptions cause many deaths among children and maladjusted adults. Many of the new preparations now on the market, such as Butazolodin and Cortisone should be used with discretion on account of their side effects. Homœopathy avoids these hazards.

A third advantage of homœopathy is its ease in administration. Children take the medicines readily, as they are all pleasant to taste. From the start they make good homœopathic patients because their systems are untainted by other drugs.

Logical Treatment of Chronic Cases

A fourth advantage of homœopathy is that while it can do dramatic work in acute cases it really has a logical system of cure in the chronic cases of illness. Hahnemann wrote a book on chronic diseases which is unique in medical literature. It was published in Philadelphia early in the century and runs to 1,600 closely written pages.

Dr. Foubister summed up this book admirably in one sentence when he said in 1939 :

Hahnemann's doctrine of chronic disease is essentially that all chronic ailments are secondary manifestations of an infection or infections, at their inception acute, later lying dormant till stimulated to flare up in the various guises of

ill health by adverse circumstances, such as prolonged anxiety, environment or relatively trivial inadequacies of diet and so forth.

It is easier to treat acute illness, such as 'flu, colic, and so on, than chronic ill health, which requires much patient research into the habits and habitat of the patient. But by careful work it is often possible to alter a legacy of ill health which has been handed down to a child by one or other parent. The orthodox doctor with a large panel simply has not the time to devote to the poor old chronics who clutch at every straw in their search for health and clutter up the hospital service at every turn.

Laws Which do not Change

The fifth reason why homœopaths should be happy prescribers is that they are working with a system of drug therapeutics which is based on laws which do not change.

Most of Hahnemann's philosophy is contained in his "Organon of Medicine", a book which every doctor should read. The first of his laws is popularly translated as : "Similia Similibus Currentur" "Like cures Like". But, as Hahnemann states in paragraph 26 of his "Organon" :

This rests on that not unforseen but hitherto unacknowledged homœopathic law, lying at all times at the foundation of true healing, that a weaker dynamic affection in the living organism is extinguished lastingly by a stronger one if the latter, while differing in kind is similar to the former in its manifestations.

Another of these laws in his remarkable discovery in treating the chronic sick is **the orderly procession in which afflictions leave their victims**. He found that symptoms disappear in a regular procession from within outwards, from above downwards and that the first manifestations of illness in a person are the last to leave.

This is a useful thing to remember when treating the apparently hopeless case, and many a suppressed skin rash which started a patient on the downward path of illness reappears before a final cure. While the patient may not feel happy to have it return, the homœopathic doctor feels happy to reassure

him that his illness is better out than in and that presently he will be free of all his symptoms and at ease.

A sixth reason why the homœopath should feel happy and contented is that he deals in minute doses of medicine—the smallest amount he can give, rather than the allopathic method of massive dosage. The cost, therefore, to the country is but a fraction of the tremendous drug bill which goes down the throats and sinks of the long-suffering British public.

TRENDS OF MODERN MEDICINE

Bound up in "Big Business"

The six reasons why I have to talk of "We happy Few" and not of the many are bound up in the present day trends of modern medicine. We cannot afford to be compassionate in this age of brutality. Modern medicine is now "big business". Each year sees the great drug houses more and more powerful, more self-assured, more extravagant in their claims for any product they happen to manufacture.

It stands to reason that they have not much use for "queer eccentrics" who don't believe in purgatives, panaceas and poultices or sleeping pills and who would rather give the patient less medicine, than more, and who would hesitate to use the same medicine for everyone suffering from the same trouble. The Welfare State has no time for the exceptions and everyone must conform to a dull uniformity. There is no time today to study the idiosyncrasies of the individual. If he doesn't fit into the pattern he is lost.

The Gentlest Form of Treatment

A further very important point : Homœopathy does great work in the so-called geriatric practice, for it is the gentlest form of medicine known.

The second reason why we homœopaths remain the "Happy Few" is because we can offer no new breath-taking discoveries such as the antibiotics and the tranquillisers which have so changed modern therapeutics. The Sulpha drugs, Penicillin, Streptomycin and Chloromycetin are killing off the bacilli—until eventually they grow their own immunity to these lethal weapons.

The homœopath regards drugs more as restorers of harmony than as lethal weapons. He believes that there are no diseases, only sick people to be cured. He accepts the fact that a patient can become ill with plague, cholera, typhoid fever or any of two dozen illnesses where a single microbic cause may have reduced the vital forces of his body and swamped his vitality to such an extent that he must die unless the triumphant bacteria can be killed off.

In acute disease time is the essence of the contract and if the proper simillimum is not chosen or if the weight of the infection is too great for the patient's strength, then, by all means, use Penicillin or the appropriate antibiotic to kill off the invaders.

"The Patient Must Cure Himself"

As Sir John Weir said in his pamphlet "Homœopathic Philosophy" in 1915 :

The patient must cure himself. Medicine cannot cure him. All that medicine can do curatively is to stimulate his curative reaction. The dose of the drug to which his idiosyncrasy makes him sensitive merely acts as a vital stimulus.

That holds good today. In other words : Put the patient into fighting trim with homœopathic treatment and in all probability "this fortress built by nature for herself against infection and the hand of war" will have no need of the antibiotics unless as a last line of defence, certainly not as a first line of attack. Would it not be more sensible to treat the patient and reserve the attack on the bacilli only if he failed to mobilise his own resistance ?

The professor of bacteriology in the University of London published in the British Medical Journal of May 24, 1955, an excellent paper entitled : "Present Position of the Chemotherapy of Bacterial Infections." In this article he gave a useful table of diseases where antibiotics are indicated, each of them caused by their own specific and very virulent type of microbe, where the patient is likely to be overwhelmed quickly by the weight of infection.

He also gave a second table where the effect of antibiotics are unpredictable, because sensitivity and cause varies--Staphy-

lococcal ills like boils, carbuncles and broncho-pneumonias, sinusitis, meningitis and so forth.

Modern Bacteriology Defeated

Here then are two large classes of common complaints which might be said to defeat modern bacteriology, and yet which have been successfully treated by experienced homœopaths all over the world. It is not practicable to have the blood of every sick person examined to isolate the particular microbe supposed to be causing his illness, and even if this were done, how can the doctor be certain that the microbe found is not resistant, or what would be worse, that the patient had not become allergic and might die from shock ?

Most microbes live in a state of equanimity in a healthy person. The Hoffman *Bacillus* of diphtheria could be isolated from some skins, and certainly from most city throats there could be cultivated Streptococci of every type. When such people are given Penicillin for sore throats, the delicate balance of the flora in the mouth is disturbed and a harmless microbe may suddenly multiply and become virulent because Penicillin has destroyed the master Streps. which kept the lot in balance.

The bowel flora is another colony of microbes which should not be disturbed lightly, for as the professor says in his paper : "What I have seen recently of diarrhœa, following antibiotic therapy, sometimes Staphylococcal and sometimes without a positive ascertainable cause, has given me an altogether new respect for the normal intestinal flora. We should not interfere with it lightly."

Medical Curriculum Overloaded

The third reason why there are few new homœopaths coming forward is in my view, because the art of homœopathy is difficult to learn and takes time and patience to apply. Also, the medical curriculum is so overloaded already that once the doctor is qualified he feels himself a beast of intellectual burden and that another spell of drug therapeutics would be the last straw to break the camel's back.

We homœopaths are perhaps ourselves to blame for this state of things. We need new modern textbooks and much

work has to be done in co-relating homœopathy to modern medicine.

The fourth reason why homœopathy is not more popular is that there still remains the difficulty of proving how the minute doses of medicine work on the body. Until we get scientific proof of the stimulation of the vital force we will be at a disadvantage in convincing our scientific brethren.

Academic Opposition

The fifth reason that impedes the progress of homœopathy is the academic opposition to which it has always been subjected. In Hahnemann's time the chemists drove him out of Germany to Paris, and since his time we homœopaths have had to endure all manner of indignities. Perhaps today the opposition is more veiled, but it is none the less real for all that and many hard things are said of us.

I could tell many stories of this opposition to homœopathy but I will be content to remark that as far as I gather none of the opponents have ever had practical experience of homœopathy. Those who have been brought into contact with it have been impressed and some converted to the system.

My sixth and last reason why modern students look with disfavour on homœopathy is because they all have a curious fear of being thought eccentric. Many of them get State grants and learn to regard the State as all-powerful. They will do nothing without official sanction.

They do not know or care to enquire that the Faculty of Homœopathy is now incorporated by Royal Charter and that the art can be practised within the framework of the National Health Service; that the large homœopathic hospitals are State controlled and that a homœopathic practitioner in London, Liverpool or Glasgow can keep in closer touch with his patient in these hospitals than can an ordinary practitioner, who complains that he is not welcome in the big general hospitals.

Age of Dead Uniformity

In an age of dead uniformity like the present, when everything is standard or sub-standard, I think we should cherish eccentricity if only to relieve the monotony.

Anthony van Leeuwenhoek first saw protozoa and bacteria

with a microscope which he had made himself about 1700. He was by profession a linen draper in Delft. His baptism is recorded on the same page as that of Vermeer, the great painter, in 1632.

I have given you six reasons why I think the art of homœopathy is good and I have tried to give you six reasons why I think it is an unpopular form of therapeutics to learn at the present time. I have shown you why I think the homœopathic doctor should feel happier than his allopathic brother. The full quotation on which I have based this lecture is : "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers".

We cannot be regarded as a band of brothers unless we realise that we are all in medicine for a common purpose—to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. The true scientist who will accept nothing unless it is proved, should remember that Wm. Blake once said : "What is now proved was once only imagined." That is worth pondering over.

Anyone taking up homœopathy need not be afraid of lacking patients. One good result leads to many another, and up and down the country there are numerous nests of homœopathic communities eager and waiting for a prescriber of skill and understanding to revive the general interest in homœopathy in their district.

Two hundred years ago Oliver Goldsmith said : "The few poets in England no longer depend on the great for subsistence. They have now no other patrons but the public and the public, collectively considered is a good and a generous master."

That is still true today, and the public is not easily fooled. If a homœopath knows his job he can do the public a lot of good with or without the help of the State, for the public are just people.

—*Homœopathy, Nov., '56.*