

STATE RECOGNITION TO HOMŒOPATHY*

It is a red-letter day in the annals of Homœopathy that in pursuance of an undertaking given in the Constituent Assembly of India (Legislation) on 17th February, 1948, during the course of debate on the resolution regarding recognition of the Homœopathic system of treatment, the Government of India have appointed a Committee to report on the present status of Homœopathy in India and the ways and means of its improvements and standardisation of teachings, etc.

Time is ripe to assess what part Homœopathy is going to play in the Scheme of medical re-organization. Time is ripe for stating in clear unequivocal terms the scope, sphere and principles of Homœopathy. Time is ripe for the foundation of well-equipped homœopathic institutions and up-to-date hospitals where students acquiring thorough theoretical and practical knowledge in homœopathic medicines, will be able to hold their own in every field of medical Science.

Human knowledge has become unmanageably vast, every Science has begotten a dozen more, each subtler and more complex than the rest. The entire corpus of medical knowledge has split into a thousand isolated fragments each claiming an exclusive devotee of its own. Each department of specialised Medical Science resolves the whole into parts, the organism into organs, dynamic processes of Life in health and diseases into static tissue-changes and ignores the concrete individual in favour of abstract conceptions. In the zeal to identify each tree the wood is missed. Very often facts replace understanding; wide and true perspective is lost. The common man realises in a way, that they are getting from the medical profession a good many things that they do not want and are not getting some very important things which they badly need.

* Read at the Durham Homœopathic Medical College Lecture Hall.

This unfortunate situation has been brought about by medical men themselves. They often forget their fundamental mission in life, which is to restore health to the sick as Hahnemann has put it in his Organon. We need a philosophy of medicine, which will co-relate and direct all the diverse Scientific Knowledge to achieve the highest mission in the physician's life—to cure the sick. The Science of medicine exists only in order that the Art of medicine may be made effectual in the prevention, amelioration and cure of diseases. All the Surgery, all the organ-specialising, all the theorising, laboratory research, classifying, naming and explaining of diseases amount to very little if it does not lead to the cure of the patient.

It is here that Homœopathy steps in and supplies a philosophy relevant to the sphere of medicine. Before the days of Hahnemann, the two principal departments of medicine, *viz.*, the study of diseases and the study of drug-actions on human beings, were developing each in its own way. Hahnemannian Homœopathy supplies a Law to knit together the two branches of medical knowledge and has thereby put the Art of medicine on a Scientific basis. Yet Hahnemann was not a solitary philosopher ploughing his lonely furrow. Homœopathy, his discovery, was the logical and legitimate offspring of the Inductive Philosophy and Method of Aristotle and Lord Bacon. Hahnemann was a prince amongst the Scientists as evidenced by his constant appeal to experience, to facts of observation and experiment and to the necessity in medicine of avoiding speculations of all kinds and by his strict refusal to speculate about the essential nature of things. Neither did the crown of a philosopher ill suit him when he accepted the reality of supra-sensible entities like Life, Mind and Soul. As a philosopher he differed with regular medicine in its interpretation and application of several fundamental principles of Science. It is these differences of interpretation and practice growing out of them which give Homœopathy its individuality and which serve to continue its existence as

a distinct school of medicine. Modern Science in general and Medical Science, in particular, regards the facts of the Universe from a materialistic standpoint. It endeavours to reduce all things to terms of matter and motion. The modern "Biologist" seeks to avoid all 'isms' except organism. He always enriches his knowledge about life through the studies of Bio-chemistry, Bio-physics and Bio-mechanics, yet, at every time, he is forced to admit that organism transcends mechanism. No complete vital phenomenon has yet found adequate chemico-physical description; there is always something, some residual factor which is beyond chemical and physical formulation—indispensable as they are. Still the Biologist being a hard boiled materialist refuses to accept the existence of Life-principle; and he is compelled to admit that, as a matter of fact, organisms require for their Scientific descriptions certain biological concepts or categories which are at present irreducible. Homœopathic philosophy views the facts of the Universe, in general and medical facts, in particular, from a vitalistic-substantialistic stand point—which regards all things and forces (material or sense-perceptible and immaterial or supra-sensibles), including Life and Mind, as substantial entities, having a real objective existence. In Homœopathic philosophy Life and Mind are the fundamental verities of the Universe.

Nevertheless Hahnemann was pre-eminently a master-artist whose science and philosophy instead of losing themselves in the dreary desert sands of barren theories flowed and mingled together to form into a mighty stream of the noblest art of healing that human ingenuity can devise. He concentrated his whole attention on the individual, who combines in himself the universal and transcendental aspect of existence. As a practical realist his whole system is based on the individuality of each patient and drug in nature. From this individualistic point of view it is apparent that we have to deal with a diseased person (the concrete reality) and not with a disease (an abstraction).

What is needed is not a general remedy of a disease, so long vainly sought, but a general principle, applicable to all varying cases so that the particular remedy needed by each individual may be found. And the Homœopathic Law of Cure supplies this general principle.

The scope and sphere of Homœopathy must be clearly expressed now. In a wider sense, Homœopathy, in the first place, means a method of Scientific study and therapeutic practice; in the second place, means the facts discovered by this method; and thirdly signifies the theories that have been propounded to explain and correlate these facts. In other words, Homœopathy implies a particular way of applying drugs to diseases according to a specific principle *viz.*, "Similia similibus curanter", and the theory of vital force, of chronic miasms and of potentiation (dynamisation) of drugs. In a narrower and stricter sense, Homœopathy means a specialised system of drug therapy, nothing more or nothing less. As Homœopathy looks upon diseases as altered condition of vital force of the vital principles of a human being, Homœopathy, as a therapeutic method, is concerned primarily with the morbid vital processes in the living organism which are perceptibly represented by the symptoms, irrespective of what caused them. Homœopathy then is concerned only with diseases, *per se*, in its primary functional or dynamical aspect.

With the morbid agents themselves Homœopathy has no more to do than it has with the tangible products or ultimates of disease. It is taken for granted that the physician acting in another capacity than that of a prescriber of homœopathic medicines will remove the causes of the disease and the obstacle to cure as far as possible before he addresses himself to the task of selecting and administering the remedy which is homœopathic to the symptoms of the case by which the cure is to be effected. Thus Homœopathy deals directly with disease itself, the morbid vital processes manifested by perceptible symptoms in the functional side of disease. In fact Homœopathy

might well be defined as the Science of Vital Dynamics. It is confined to and operative only in the sphere of vital dynamics.

As Homœopathy is primarily and pre-eminently a specialised system of drug therapy, it is not a complete system of medicine (in the wide sense of the term) ; but it might legitimately claim itself to be a complete system of therapeutic medication. It is supreme within its legitimate sphere because it is a method of therapeutic medication which is based on a fixed and definite Law of Nature. Time has come for defining the scope and limits of Homœopathy. Wide as its scope is, it has its limitations as well and we have to be cognisant of this fact as the days for bigotry, orthodoxy, sectarianism or prejudice are gone for ever from every field of human knowledge.

Homœopathy may have many details which need be filled up ; may have many points of obscurity which need illumination and clarification and may imply many directions in which researches can be carried out—but it is and will continue as a distinct system of healing art as it is uncompromising with regard to following items which can be claimed as specialities for itself. The most important speciality of Homœopathy lies in the distinctive mode of approach to the study of diseases and drug-actions. It is a clinical method of approach and the art of individualising patients and drug-actions. The Clinical phenomena are those which render themselves perceptible to our senses as a resultant of the actions and reactions of forces, physico-chemical, vital and psychological operating in and through the diseased human organism. Homœopathy disregards all the hypothetical and ever changing explanations of physiology and pathology and uses this plane of clinical phenomena as a guide to reach the unseen activities operating below the surface.

The second speciality is with regard to classification of diseases. The dominant school of medicine follows the system of classificatory sciences of Botany and Zoology. It

classifies diseases into genus and species. But Homœopathy goes further and concentrates its attention on individuals—so it is closer to factual concrete reality. The “Totality of symptoms” is taken to be a guide for individualisation.

The third speciality is with regard to this:—The essential question in Homœopathy is not what the patient is suffering from, but in what kind of way he reacts. Diagnosis in Homœopathy does not mean the labelling of the patient with the name of a disease and then treating that nominal entity, but diagnosing the patient in terms of drug reaction, which would restore his vital equilibrium. The patient is to be diagnosed in terms of treatment.

This is Homœopathy in a nutshell. But “it is a shell which some find hard to crack, but when cracked it is found to be packed full of sweet and wholesome meat with no worms in it.”

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TEACHING OF HOMŒOPATHY

Committee Appointed To Go Into Question Of State Control

The Government of India have appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. J. N. Mukherjee, Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi with Dr. Dewan Joychand, Dr. Dhawale, Dr. P. N. Chopra, Dr. J. N. Hazra, Dr. S. C. Sen, Dr. J. N. Mazumder, and Lt. Col. K. V. Ramana Rao to survey the existing facilities for the teaching of Homœopathy in India, the extent to which this system of treatment is practised in the country and the manner in which such practice is carried on i.e., whether by people adequately trained or not.

The Committee will make recommendations to Government on (1) the measures to be taken to improve facilities for training in homœopathy and to regulate such training and (2) the desirability of state control of the practice of