

and which do not die off of themselves like the acute miasmas but can only be exterminated and annihilated by a counter-infection, by means of the potency of a medicinal disease quite similar to it and stronger than it, so that the patient is delivered from them and recovers his health?"

HOMŒOPATHY—A NATIONAL ASSET

A PHYSICIAN

At the British Homœopathic Congress held in Glasgow in 1933, Dr. Henderson Patrick delivered his Presidential Address with the above title. In the course of his paper he quite naturally quoted the remarkable figures of the successful homœopathic treatment of cholera in the last epidemic in London in 1854. The result at the London Homœopathic Hospital was 16.4 per cent of deaths, compared with 59.2 per cent in the allopathic hospitals. This result was so startling that at first the homœopathic figures were suppressed by the medical authorities and had to be specially called for in Parliament.

Again in an enteric epidemic in Melbourne in 1889, the figures for the homœopathic and allopathic hospitals were respectively 7.2 per cent and 16.7 per cent of deaths. Not only was there this remarkable difference in the mortality rates in favour of homœopathic treatment, but the time the patients had to stay in the homœopathic hospital was on the average less than one-third that of the sojourn in the allopathic hospitals.

It may be objected that these figures refer to rather ancient times and so should no longer be quoted, especially as the methods of orthodox or allopathic medicine have made such wonderful strides in the last ten to twenty years. There surely is no longer that great discrepancy between the results of the two schools of medicine in the treatment of acute illnesses—so would our opponents argue.

Another important facet of the importance to the nation of Homœopathy, as pointed out by Dr. Patrick, was the great saving in costs to the country effected by the homœopathic school.

Do these advantages of homœopathic treatment still hold good? I shall hope to answer that question in the course of this paper.

Let us discuss, as is fitting, the most important of these questions, viz. the saving of life and the lessening of disability obtained by homœopathic treatment compared with its alternative.

Because Homœopathy is based on the natural law of "Similia similibus curentur"—likes may be cured by likes—its therapeutics are not blown about by the winds of fashion, the changes in theories as to the causation of diseases, or the potent advertisements of the big drug houses. Its basis is as true today as it was on the day of creation, for the laws of nature never vary. Just as Arsenic could cure acute food poisoning before the Christian era, so does it do so today, because of the similarity between the symptoms of acute arsenical poisoning and ptomaine poisoning; and so will it be for all time.

The homœopathic physician is still the artist of medicine: he is not a mere technologist, obeying the behests of the big drug houses or the pronouncements of the medical pundits. Every case that comes to a homœopathic physician gives him the opportunity of exercising his art, by matching the patient's symptoms and their modifications by changes in his environment with a similar drug picture. This is true whether the case be one of acute or chronic illness.

Since the National Health Service came into being Homœopathy has received recognition of the governments that have been in power since 1948: and in 1950 the Faculty of Homœopathy was incorporated by special Act of Parliament. Yet, in spite of these acknowledgments of the efficacy of Homœopathy, unfortunately, up to the present,

the hierarchy of the profession has refused to accept this particular method of treatment as an alternative to more generally accepted lines of therapy. This attitude of theirs is quite against the public interest, and therefore must be changed as soon as possible. On what grounds do we make this assertion?

Unfortunately we have not a lot of modern statistics to offer, chiefly because the homœopathic physicians in the country are so few, and consequently are too busy treating patients and have not the time to compile many statistical tables. At a recent international homœopathic congress, however, one of the British doctors reported some very significant results obtained at the Royal London Homœopathic Hospital in the treatment of pneumonia and acute bronchitis in children. Out of eighty cases of pneumonia during the years 1948-53, fifty-five had homœopathic treatment alone and twenty-five had Homœopathy plus Chemotherapy. In this series there was only one death of a boy of five, who suffered in addition from a chronic condition of muscular dystrophy and had had two previous attacks of pneumonia. And what is particularly remarkable is the fact that out of twenty-nine patients under the age of two years, there were no deaths at all.

The physician had not been able to find any figures so favourable from the reports of the allopathic hospitals in the country.

From the reports of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for Sick Children for the years 1947-49 in eighty-seven cases, under two years of age, there were three deaths, and out of one hundred and eighty cases from two to twelve, one death.

In seventy cases of acute bronchitis at the Royal London Homœopathic Hospital there were no deaths, while at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital out of one hundred and sixty-five cases there were eight deaths. These comparative figures suggest that homœopathic treatment for these cases is at least a very valuable alternative to the usual methods

of dealing with these children, and, therefore, warrants examination and more extensive trial than is possible under present conditions.

And what is more, homœopathic treatment does not subject the patient to any hazards or side effects, which are more or less inherent in modern therapeutics.

It is becoming more and more recognized that the problems that anti-biotic treatment poses are by no means negligible. The organisms for whose destruction these drugs are devised have an unpleasant habit of developing tolerance to these drugs, indeed they sometimes come to thrive on them. The destruction of the organisms causing the complaint for which the patient is being treated, sometimes leads to the over development of other bacteria and organisms, which then give rise to some other complaint which may sometimes be more resistant to treatment than the patient's original illness. Or maybe, the antibiotic may produce undesirable psychiatric or somatic changes in the patient, such as mental derangement, giddiness or deafness, which all will agree is much to be deplored, even though it may occur in a very small proportion of patients.

When we consider other modern drugs such as Cortisone, A.C.T.H., and those used to lower excessively high blood pressure, not only must we realize that these are only palliative and not curative remedies, but they may set up very serious side effects or pathological changes, which if they do not lead to the death of the patient, may very adversely affect his health.

But as the great majority of doctors nowadays, in their ignorance of the value of Homœopathy regard these modern "wonder drugs" as the best treatment available in spite of their possible side effects, they naturally use them and think they are doing the best possible for the patient.

The modern physical treatments of mental patients are also not devoid of danger to the patient.

Another of our homœopathic physicians, who is a consultant psychiatrist under the National Health Service, has

recently stated in a paper given before the Faculty of Homœopathy, that in his considered opinion homœopathic treatment can do at least as much for these unfortunate patients as can these modern treatments, and is of course, devoid of all the secondary risks; therefore, should not Homœopathy have priority in the consideration of treatment of these cases?

To sum up, it would appear that homœopathic treatment, if more extensively used, would lead to a much more satisfactory state of health of the community, not only because of its very effective power to help both acutely and chronically ill patients, but also because of its greater safety.

Finally, it is well known that most of these modern drugs are very expensive and are used so extensively as to lead to a very great increase in the national drug bill. On the other hand, homœopathic remedies are very much less expensive and, therefore, would lead to very great economies if more extensively used.

For these reasons the fuller use of homœopathic treatment of the sick should be very seriously considered by the Minister of Health, who in the interests of the community, should insist that all barriers to the learning and practice of Homœopathy should be removed. From this it would follow that homœopathic treatment would become much more widely available to the public and lead to their greater wellbeing.

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