

TRANSLATION OF PIERRE SCHMIDT'S FRENCH ORGANON

DR. P. S. KRISHNAMURTY, Hyderabad

It is a truism to say that Hahnemann's *Organon* is the Bible of homoeopaths. It has been thought necessary to bring out new editions of the Bible in order to bring it closer to the modern reader. Each age needs its own edition of the Bible. What is the New English Bible to-day will soon become outmoded. Another New English Bible becomes necessary.

Hahnemann himself went on refining his work and brought out successively improved editions of his *Organon*. After Hahnemann several people tried to edit it with increasing perfection.

Pierre Schmidt perceived that a new edition of the *Organon* was necessary in order to bring into focus the true application of Hahnemann's concept of Homoeopathy.

Organon is not a mere sacred text, to be worshipped from a distance or to be read as a speculative curiosity. It is a book which is intended to be of practical use to the physician. The earlier editions of the *Organon* do not serve as an effective reference work. The widely accepted American edition "is severely complicated, crabbed and most often incomprehensible; it rebuffs and discourages all those who desire to study it".

Pierre Schmidt has used the modern medical terms which make the book more scientific than the usual lay translations of the technical words.

Pierre Schmidt's translation of the *Organon* into French presents the work in a modern and familiar idiom. One feels one is reading a current medical text and not an outmoded thesis.

His translation also avoids the appearance of being crabbed by its typographically analytical presentation of the contents. This greatly enhances the reference value of the work. Pierre Schmidt's edition prints Hahnemann's footnotes immediately following the aphorism. This avoids the inconvenience of looking before and after for the footnotes. The translator's footnotes are conveniently printed as usual at the foot of the page.

Another great merit of his translation is his elaborate index with cross references. The index occupies as much space as the text. This enables the busy practitioner to refer to the book whenever he is in doubt and needs urgent and quick clarification.

He has given a faithful rendering of the German original without its obsolete idiom or offending syntax. He has carefully cleared himself of the false interpretations of the master's work. Pierre Schmidt has omitted Hahnemann's long introduction to the sixth edition as the remarks on Allopathy now seem to be unnecessary in view of the wide acceptance of Homoeopathy. He has instead given the preface to the first edition.

The sixth edition of the *Organon* although written by Hahnemann in 1842, could not see the light of the world till late 1921, until it was translated into English and was published by William Boericke from the original manuscript of Hahnemann procured with herculean difficulty. Richard Haehl edited and published it in German for the German readers.

The homoeopathic profession owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. James Ward, Dr. Richard Haehl and Dr. William Boericke who were responsible for "scouting and procuring" the manuscript of the sixth edition of the *Organon* written by Hahnemann. It is said this treasured Bible of Homoeopathy survived the French War and the first World War while in the possession of Boenninghausen's family.

The great need for the 6th edition of the *Organon* is justified by no less a person than Hahnemann himself through his letter to his disciple Boenninghausen, "I am at work on the sixth edition of the *Organon*, to which I devote several hours on Sundays and Thursdays, all the other time being required for treatment of patients who come to my rooms." In another letter dated February 20, 1842 Hahnemann wrote from Paris to the publisher, Mr. Schauf of Dusseldorf: "I have now after eighteen months of work completed the sixth edition of my *Organon*, the most nearly perfect of all."

Mr. Kurt Hochstetter F. of Santiago, Chile, a linguist felt the need to publish in German the 6th edition of the *Organon* to avoid long Latin sentences and polemic paragraphs. He published in German the *Organon* in 1970, and titled it as 6B edition because he could not name it either a revised edition or 7th edition as he did not edit it or dare to add new information other than in the original 6th edition of *Organon*. Since he changed the long Latin sentences into short ones without sacrificing the accuracy of the meaning, he titled it as 6B edition of *Organon*. He could not title it 6th revised edition because Haehl used the term.

The relevant portions of two letters from Dr. Pierre Schmidt, written to *The Homoeopathic Recorder* in 1950, are produced here, to testify the importance of his French translation from the German 6th edition of the *Organon*.

Dr. Pierre Schmidt, the living embodiment of Hahnemannian Homoeopathy, and devoted disciple of Kent, has done yeoman's service to the cause of homoeopaths and Homoeopathy. His monumental great work, is the best translation of the *Organon*, even when compared to masterly works by Dudgeon and Boericke.

"Here in Switzerland since two years I devote myself to the translation in a modern language adapted to the modern terminology of the 6th edition of the *Organon*. I have considered necessary to add a very circumstantial index with plenty of cross references to make this book eminently practical.

The *Organon* is not an old book interesting only to the bibliophiles. It is a work that the busy practitioner will be able to utilise every day on his working table".

In another letter dated September 4, 1950 (*H. Recorder*, October 1950) again, Dr. Pierre Schmidt has stated: "Since three years I am working at a clear, concise and in a modern terminology of the French translation from the original old German of the 6th edition of the *Organon* and hope to publish it next year.... This new and modern 6th edition will be a revolution in the application of Homoeopathy as Hahnemann has put it to perfection at the end of his life.

"(1) In the new method of preparation, method *never* applied or practised exactly until the present time.

"(2) The preparation of the mother tincture of plants is now obsolete: *All remedies*, no matter from what origin of nature they pertain, must pass through the three classic triturations *first*.

"(3) About the pharmacopollaxy (repetition), Hahnemann now advises the contrary of what was admitted *urbi et orbi* before i.e. now: in acute diseases give only one dose and watch and wait to repeat only if the patient is worse.

"But in chronic, repeat daily during weeks and months the same remedy, even the big polycysts, but under very exact and clearly defined rules, which render the result inoperative if those rules are not observed and followed rigorously.

"(4) There are sections about which no homoeopath has even seen any mention in the literature till the present day for example:

- The defective diseases; the homoeopathic semeiology;
- The larval diseases; the dissimilar diseases;
- The complex diseases; the chronic apparent diseases;
- The energetic medicament laws;
- The question of localised diseases;
- The new Pharmacopraxy, the new Pharmaconomy;
- The Pharmacopollaxy with the 50000d potencies, etc.

"All this is passionately interesting, it widens and even opens new bounds of the knowledge to those who have at heart the spreading and success of Homoeopathy".

It was suggested by Pierre Schmidt that an English translation of this highly useful and very modern edition of the *Organon* should be attempted. The present author has undertaken the task of bringing out an English translation of Pierre Schmidt's French edition of the *Organon* and finished it in six long years at his limited leisure.