

ANTI-THOUGHTS

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Some thoughts against the established concepts of Homocopathy and allied prevailing practices keep on cropping up in my mind. I call them anti-thoughts and deem it morally and ethically appropriate to project them in front of the whole fraternity. Some of my colleagues in the profession may share them while others may frown and ridicule at. I invite their reactions through these columns in order to have a cross-section perspective as well as generate a healthy debate. My first salvo is aimed at the founder father himself.

WHY DIVINE THE FOUNDER?

Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, the founder father of Homoeopathy has been assigned the status of a tribal god of sorts by the homoeopathic society. To my mind he was a scientist of supreme calibre and should be considered as such rather than called Our Lord or Our Master. No physicists call Dr. Albert Einstein their lord or master. Nor is Picasso a lord or master to the painter community. Writings of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann are taken to be gospel and their contradiction rank blasphemy. Homoeopathy is not religion wherein the teachings of the prophets are followed blindfolded—without questioning their rationality. Scientific principles are subject to change on discovery of new facts. It is a continuous process. One time fact about matter's indestructibility is turning to be fiction after proton decay has been established recently in a joint experiment by an Indo-Japanese team in the bowels of Kolar gold fields. Why then, should we not relegate Homoeopathy to its rightful pedestal of science from the present pseudo-abstract cult?

COMBINATIONS—AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD OF HOMOEOPATHY

Homoeopaths prescribing more than one remedy or using combinations are termed non-Hahnemannians by the other class called the classical school homoeopaths. The aim of the physician irrespective of his pathy, is to bring amelioration to the suffering and cure of the disease. Whether this aim is achieved by administering a single remedy, two remedies, a placebo or a combination should better be left to the treating physician without others raising their eyebrows. I for one, am of strong conviction that Homoeopathy is a science so long as one studies it and pure art when one practises.

Over ninety per cent of the homoeopathic remedies that are catalogued in our unpteen materia medicas are already naturally occurring combinations. *Natrum muriaticum* is a combination of sodium and chlorine. *Kali carbonicum* is a combination of potassium and carbon. *Natrum sulphuricum* is a combination of sodium and sulphur. The list goes on and on and on. If the Hahnemannians go according to the dictate that the use of

combinations is unethical, they better wind up their practice. For, there is hardly any non-combination remedy left for them to use in the vastness of the materia medica or the pharmacopoeia.

One may argue that the combinations have not been proved in the strict sense of drug proving. Hence the disqualification for their use. Others may counter-argue that their ingredients have been amply proved individually. Thus a combine of all proven remedies cannot be called unproved. Diacard (gold drops) by Madaus of Germany is a widely used combination by our doctors for cardiac ailments all and sundry. Almost everyone lauds its efficacy. The irony is that one of its ingredients is camphor which should theoretically antidote the action of its other comrades in the phial. But no. It works. The taste of the pudding lies in its eating. Why then, condemn combinations and use them with success too? I have seen in one of the homoeopathic college hospitals, a combination called 'Trauma mixture' being freely dispensed. It had Arnica, Ruta, Hypericum and Symphytum in equal quantity and in identical potency. But inside the classrooms the teachings were against the use of the combinations. Why indulge in such hypocrisy and cheat our own selves?

QUALIFIED, UNQUALIFIED AND OTHER PSEUDO-HOMOEOPATHS

A qualified homoeopath is one who holds a diploma or a degree from a recognized institute in terms of second schedule of the Central Homoeopathy Council Act 1973. An unqualified homoeopath is one who does not bear such a qualification but is allowed to practise after having got registered with a State Board on the basis of experience. There is a third category too—neither qualified nor registered yet practising with impunity. And yet more, a fourth category—an allopath or ayurvedist practising Homoeopathy, some with confirmatory qualifications, thus legitimized while others without it. What is our standard? Is not this multiple standard syndrome devastating to a discipline tinkering with human health?

On the contrary, the science and art of Homoeopathy has been kept alive not by the qualified homoeopaths of the second schedule but by the lesser mortals dubbed as unqualified. It was their devotion to Homoeopathy steadfastness and sincerity of purpose that kept the trail blazing and made India a foster home for Homoeopathy. They produced a galaxy of luminaries in the field. It is grossly unjust to relegate them to a second class status. If they could do so well yesteryear, they could as well do so this year and in the years to come.

The intentions of the doyens of the Central Council of Homoeopathy are positive, in that, they do not want the science of Homoeopathy to be prostituted. On the other hand, same set of doyens when sitting in different chairs provided by the Homoeopathic Medical Association of India, enrol members without any qualification at all. They are enrolled in the guise of 'interested in Homoeopathy' or 'sympathisers of Homoeopathy'. The gatherings at any unit of the HMAI is overwhelmed with the 'interested and sympathisers'.

After a while of their association with this all India body, they surreptitiously hang a board on their entry proclaiming the birth of Dr. Tom, Dick or Harry, AM, HMAI. Their associate membership of the HMAI, in other words, becomes a qualification in order to fool the masses. Thus are born hundreds of siblings belonging to the third category of our fraternity mentioned above.

A way out of the impasse could be to establish screening boards to sift the grain from the chaff. The deserving ones should be regularised. I have found some of the so called unqualified homocopaths bordering on genius and have mastered the subtleties of the science most remarkably.

OUR ANTIQUATED LITERATURE

We have suffered a literature-starvation phase for a very long spell. There has been a literal vacuum after the era of Hahnemann, Kent, Hering, Allen, Farrington and their ilk. Whatever pseudo-literature has been churned out afterwards is only a pirated version from these stalwarts and in any case, a repetition. There has been no renaissance after the oblivious period. No updating, no incorporation of later scientific discoveries. Unless we marry up the interrelated disciplines of science with that of Homocopathy, we shall stagnate and stink. Our literature is by and large, outdated and outmoded. Boericke's *Materia Medica* describes Medorrhinum as gonorrhoeal virus. Well, gonococcus is no virus. May be that in the year 1927 when Dr. William Boericke wrote the last edition the difference between the bacteria and virus was not demarcated. Who prevents us in correcting it now?

Most of our journals today depend for their existence on reproducing age-old articles. Following is the passage reproduced from an article titled 'Why Homoeopathy is More Successful' which appeared in the *British Homoeopathic Assn. Journal*, vol. IV, January 1946:

"I contend that disease like health is a state brought about by breaks in the lines of communication between the central control organization of the body and the part affected. There is no such thing as diseased or affected basic cell. The study of pathology is a waste of time as is histology."

In today's environments the passage sounds most idiotic statement. We make a laughing stock of ourselves by not repealing and prescribing what is not true to scientific scrutiny.

Our very book of gospel, the *Organon* devotes 60 pages of its introduction in condemning Allopathy. So are many other publications and articles replete with condemnation of modern medicine. In order to prove our credentials we do not have to condemn others. Many of the stalwarts of Homoeopathy today send their wards not to homoeopathic medical colleges but to allopathic colleges. On their graduation, the father-and-son team practise the combine under the same roof. It is more rewarding and convenient that way. But outside, the father must go on condemning Allopathy tooth and nail! Well, no system is perfect. We have our drawbacks too. The earlier we cease the trade the better for the well-being of our clan.

Our professional journals, save for one or two, are substandard in their

get-up and substance. Articles have been published on abstract subjects of unimaginable context. I remember having seen a front paged article in a journal some two to three years back trying to mix up soul, *moksha*, *nirvana*. Homoeopathy and what have you? The editor commented it as a hypersophisticated article. They also carry some of the most ridiculous advertisements like 'homoeopathic treatment by hair transmission'. When I saw such an ad. for the first time, for a while I thought some superbrain has found out a homoeopathic answer for transplanting hair on the bald tops. But after having gone into its finer print I found the perversity reducing witchcraft into paleness. Ads. which are damaging to the image and standing of Homoeopathy are admitted for insertion for a pittance. The editorial of *IJH*, vol. VI, No. 12, March 1983 issue would have gone better with a Hindu theosophical magazine rather than with a journal of medicine.

It is high time we do something and prevent the drift before it is too late. Or, may be that I am out of tune with the orchestra!

Editor invites comments from the readers on the article.
