

IS THERE A LAW OF DOSE?

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Every substance contains convertible stored force; in the human economy we call the process of transferring this energy into needed channels inciting a reaction, the necessity of which we take for granted.

All matter being in an oscillatory or vibratory state the gentle conversion of a given force is possible only by means of a medium having a more or less synchronous movement, the greater its divergence the more violence will accompany the process.

This law reaches all matter and applies to human dynamics, the greater the similitude of the chosen remedies the more highly must they be potentized and the less frequently can they be repeated, for we are turning the life forces back again into their old but diseased channels and do not want to do this violently, which will be the case should we give an overdose; nature always responds violently to violence.

The response desired must be estimated from the amount of energy available and the removability of the disease, although both of these factors are always variable quantities, especially the latter. We may see disease overwhelming an otherwise powerful constitution, the patient presenting only symptoms of profound prostration, as in dry cholera, or deep systemic poisoning, etc.; here it is absolutely necessary to make a correct choice and seek to liberate force repeatedly until a sharp reaction appears, similar conditions in a patient of weak vitality, i.e., low conductive powers, we may seek to correct by liberating the smallest quantity of force by means of the highest potencies, hoping to bring about a gentle reaction. The more accurate the similarity the more powerful will the liberated forces tend towards the affected areas in revealing their specific action, which must always be more evident in acute or organopathic diseases, although no affection may strictly be called organopathic, the organic tendency is only a general expression through a specific point.

This reasoning seems to show that potency power depends not so much upon the height of the attenuation as upon the vibration rate of the finished product, the latter being estimated imperfectly by the number of strokes used. Hahnemann had an inkling of this. In several places he warns against using too many strokes, seeming to think that the preparation thereby becomes too powerful (see *Spigelia* preface). Some have tried to hold our practice down to the comparatively low potencies. The master himself once warned against unlimited potentization, but users of the highest preparations have found an essential difference between their action and that of those to which they were supposed to correspond mathematically. An instance, Swan's million was, I believe, computed to be about equal to the 8th centesimal; this being true his *lm* would be very low indeed. Actual bedside experience, however, shows the ordinary low or medium preparations to be far inferior in their action to their correspondent higher ones, granting the correctness of the calculations. Only one avenue of explanation then seems open, and that is that their power is due to the vibration rate set in action by the succussions; motions which seem capable of sudden expansion of their amplitude, as shown by the breaking of glasses by the highest potencies, which is, as you know, of frequent occurrence. The exploratory experiments of Prof. Jaeger, off Stuttgart, have not as yet borne their proper fruit. This is doubly regrettable and should no longer be neglected; because, forsooth, we have the law as a basic fact is no reason why its scientific support from all sides should not be cultivated and investigation of its scope undertaken.

The question of dose necessarily rests upon the relative similitude of the chosen agent; the similitum in few doses of the highest potencies calls forth all the efforts the vital force is capable of towards a palliation or cure. The similar adapted to a partial picture can be more frequently repeated, but will work a proportionately less radical cure. It frequently uncovers groups of old symptoms which it is powerless to remove; this is especially true if it be a non-antipsoric.

Discussion

Dr. E. E. Case: As the switch acts upon the railroad train, so does the remedy put the vital force upon the right track. Then so long as it continues moving in the right direction a repetition of the remedy, or a change of remedy, does harm.

Dr. C. B. Gilbert: Dr. Hering once told me that he had taken three remedies and fastened them to the arm of a saw mill, so that they were shaken and succussed all day long without ceasing, in order to see whether there was any new power imparted to them by the process. He could not see that there was any difference in them at all. I believe that he was right. There was a machine invented by a doctor in Rochester, I do not remember his name, in which the vehicle or menstruum run in without violent fluxion or succussion. A Washington pharmacist told me that they worked finely. If this is so it seems to show that there is no virtue in the succussion other than that of mixing the drug thoroughly through the vehicle. I do not think that Dr. Case's illustration is very good; it leaves out the rousing of energy, the stimulation of the vital force into vigorous action against the unfriendly influences of the disease; not until the invading force is overcome do we get the physiological action of the drug.

Dr. Stuart Close: Dr. Fincke's potencies have been referred to here, and it has been implied that they were not properly denominated. They have also been alluded to as examples of violent fluxion. I am in a position to deny the correctness of either of these statements. In the first place it has been mathematically demonstrated that Dr. Fincke's potencies are true centesimal potencies according to name; and in the second place I know that they are made by gentle, 'continuous and not violent fluxion.

By Dr. Fincke's process it is a physical impossibility for the drug and vehicle to be in any other proportion than that in which they exist when the process of potentiation is started. If the proportion be one to ninety-nine at the start it will be that and nothing else all the way through. They are made and named according to the centesimal scale. As we all know that Dr. Fincke's preparations are thoroughly reliable, this tends to disprove the idea that succussion has anything to do with the effect of a preparation, or that it enhances its power. I have no theory to enunciate as to what the power of a potency depends upon, but from authoritative information, I can deny the imputation that Dr. Fincke's potencies are not what they purport to be.

Dr. E. E. Case: Dr. Backe believes, and I think rightly, that the element of time has much to do with the thorough preparation of potencies. His are made very slowly. I have talked with him upon the subject, and he says that his potencies are as true to denomination as it is possible for science and mathematics to make them, and for me the word of Dr. Fincke stands against the world. I know the man.

Dr. G. P. Waring: I am very glad to hear about Dr. Fincke's potencies. I am already convinced of their efficacy, and this discussion informs me further of their accuracy.

Dr. L. M. Stanton: I would like to ask what the time consumed in the process of making the potencies has got to do with their value.

Dr. E. E. Case: You must ask Dr. Fincke about that. If my memory is not at fault it takes about two weeks to prepare the cm. potency from the mother .tincture.

Dr. E. P. Hussey: As I understood Dr. Fincke, he said that the violent succussion had nothing to do with the power of a potency, but that thorough mixture had, and that the slow preparation was necessary for the purpose of securing thorough mixture of the medicinal substance and the vehicle. That is where the element of time came in.

Dr. Flora M. Watson: I have heard that Hahnemann found it necessary when he had been riding over rough roads to use potencies that had not been so shaken up, as it increased their power. And that was the way that he discovered that succussion had the property of adding something to the power of the potencies. I think that Hahnemann used more than three remedies in his experiments.

Dr. J. B. S. King: That is a rumour or a legend not founded in fact, and I challenge any one to produce any authority for the statement.

Dr. J. C. White: When I first began to use homoeopathic remedies I was very ignorant about the subject and did not know of any other preparations than Humphrey's. I followed him into his office one day and told him that I wanted to study Homoeopathy, and asked some questions about the medicines. He illustrated the matter by taking a large bottle full of alcohol and put one drop of a tincture in it, and shook it up, explaining that every succussion raised it one degree higher. This I subsequently found to be wrong.

Dr. C. M. Boger: Professor Jaeger has shown by experimentation that the vibration rate of the 30th potency prepared according to the Hahnemannian method varies little from the 60th or from the 200th. In fact, he found no great difference until he arrived to the 1000th, and a very great difference in the 1200th. This does not surprise me, for I saw yesterday for the first time a potentizing machine. It was a Skinner instrument, and I am free to say that that machine does not make potencies at all and never can. It is nothing but a washer and does not fulfil the requirements. I will venture to say that if you take a drug like Asafoetida or Musk and run it up from the mother tincture on that machine to the 30th, you will still smell the Musk or Asafoetida in it. When Hahnemann made his 30th potencies he used a separate vial for each of the thirty, and if a 30th were to be made in that way I do not believe that you would have any drug substance perceptible to the senses left. The only rational way, in my opinion, of making our high preparations is to run the drug up according to the Hahnemannian method to the 30th and then use your machine with the 30th as a base, or, better, go higher than that, using separate vials for each, until you come to where you want to go on with the machine. Such preparations would stand some chance of being what we suppose them to be. There is a distinct difference in the rate of vibration of the 30th potency made by hand, with separate vials, and the 30th made by a machine. Every substance has in itself a different rate of molecular vibration, and the more minutely the substance is divided the more freedom of vibration and the more amplitude of motion there is, and that is a basis for a real scientific explanation of the effects of our potencies.

Dr. J. C. White: That seems to me to be a distinction without a difference. What difference does it make whether you put a drop in a new bottle or use the drop that is left, after emptying the liquid out? About a drop adheres to the sides of the glass.

Dr. C. M. Boger: It is impossible to wash out any substance from the interstices of the glass; these remain and contaminate all subsequent potencies.