

THE POWER OF THE SIMILIMUM

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The physician's highest aim should be to cure the sick, speedily, gently and with precision. In order to do this, he must have some idea of what really can be cured, what is more doubtful, and what remains most difficult of all. Certainly no sharp lines can be drawn between these classes, and we commonly see cases pass from one to the other by, or in spite of, our efforts, as the case may be, mainly because human judgement is not capable of fully gauging the power of the most variable of all phenomena, the vital force.

Until now surgery has overcome one great difficulty after another while old-line therapy was sleeping or actually retrograding, a condition which has spread like an infection in the general homeopathic camp, also. Here its effects have been doubly destructive because Homoeopathy has had much more than empirical methods to Jose. Decadence in our own ranks has had many causes, the greatest and most fatal of which has been the glamour which material findings have cast over the whole medical world. The parade and glitter of the operating room, the power of tangible disease causes and the boastfulness of our regular brethren have all made their appeal to the poorly equipped Homeopath. The wonder is not that so many have fallen and followed devious paths, but that any at all are left who have penetration enough to see the emptiness of what are exclusively materialistic pretensions.

It is almost axiomatic to say that the broader the culture, the more ready is the mind to grasp homeopathic fundamentals, and the narrower the mind and the more thoroughly it is drilled in mechanical routine, the easier it is to put allopathic goggles on its eyes: For this reason especially I am inclined to look askance at much of our hospital training.

True education develops and upbuilds inherent qualities and talents. Above all, it avoids forcing the mind into grooves and hard-trodden paths, where hardly a green blade of originality can grow. Curiosity looms large in our mental makeup, and if it can be so aroused as to interest the student in the continuous unfoldment of nature's ways, we shall have opened up a path which will safely lead him into the natural sciences, of which Homoeopathy is the one whose ramifications interlock with all of the others most intimately. The laws of physics and our own dynamics, as amplified and extended by modern developments, are all of a piece. Our philosophy is thoroughly Baconian, while our relation to the sciences of botany and chemistry are most intimate.

In the field of practical therapeutics, we draw from, as well as are guided by, all of these sources of knowledge; so that when the prescriber comes to choose the essentially curative agent, he is first governed by the general aspect of the disease as compared with the general outlines shown by drug action, which said out-lines of necessity include the minutia upon which Hahnemann said the final choice must almost entirely depend. Obtaining de-tails without being able to grasp the general motive or whole colour scheme only makes for confusion and is especially to be avoided by having the student well grounded in the general relationship of morbid action, whether arising from diseases or induced as a counterpart thereto by drugs.

If some one were to ask me to name the drug which has led me further afield I should very likely recall Lycopodium. Some years ago it fell to my lot to point out the very great power of Lachesis in a large proportion of cases of laryngeal diphtheria; now I wish to speak a like word for Lycopodium in tubercular meningitis. We have all had doubt cast upon the diagnosis of every suspicious case of this disease which recovers, and per contra, the true-to-name seal set upon every one that dies. A more posterous

kind of reasoning is hard to imagine, especially from the truly homeopathic view point, which takes note not only of all the available life forces and their impedimenta, and not of the time-frayed opinions of what calls itself scientific medicine. If is a practically unanswerable argument when I say that in the early days of my practice these cases nearly all died, while now more than two-thirds of them recover. Even a Homoeopath may learn.

As usual, little things have pointed the true way to this great polychrest. From the very inception of his sickness the patient inclines toward irritability, at times only on awaking. Later, when rolling of the head and the "cri encephalique" ensues, irritability still clings, and the scream also has an angry tone in its note. When the wings of the nose begin to quiver, you are foolish if you wait for them to frankly flap in and out and the cry to subside into a low moan before giving *Lycopodium*. Part of the time the eyes are half closed and gummy mucus collects on the ball and in the canthi. The urine may be suppressed for a day or two, but do not despair; stick to your remedy and repeat only when improvement halts, then take a step higher with your potency. The interval will probably be four to six days between doses. At best, these are not every-day cases; but we should be well prepared to meet them, and have the courage to see them through to a successful end.

When our late confrere, Dr. H. C. Allen, pointed to the nosodes as the most important of remedies in arousing reaction, he did the greatest thing of his busy life. Carrying the idea a step further, and coupling it with the fact that tuberculosis certainly has a great predilection for the lungs, has led me to give bovine tuberculin as a clearing up remedy at the close of pneumonia. We know that these

patients are very susceptible to tubercular invasion, hence any measure capable of rapidly raising vital resistance is very welcome and the striking results often obtained have more than justified the prescription. Hahnemann said that similar diseases mutually extinguish each other. For this reason and the one that similarly acting medicines are more effectual than isopathic ones, I selected a potency made from the product of bovine tuberculosis.

Some months ago two girls, aged ten, were brought to me. Something over a year before this they had been vaccinated, where-upon an eczematous eruption appeared all over both hands and wrists. Every allopathic measure had failed, and I confess to feeling a little uncertain as to the outcome, especially as *Thuja* in several potencies did nothing. I now reasoned that the results of animal vaccine, which being, in reality, a modified small-pox product, should be just as amenable to a high potency of *Variolinum* as small-pox itself is, and gave each of the little girls a powder of *Variolinum Dmm* of Swan and repeated it in ten days. A remarkable thing followed. Many large typical small-pox pustules which emitted the characteristic variolous odour appeared all over the affected areas, and as they dried off, the whole disease process disappeared. To me this was a most striking exemplification of the law of similars. The effects of vaccination and small-pox are similar enough to be antidotal, but more decisive results are evidently only to be obtained by using the highly potentized preparations.

One more point, owing to the pressure of materialistic ideas the use of the so-called imponderabilia has almost disappeared from Homoeopathy. Only an occasional cure has been reported, even among ourselves. Hence the following may be of interest:

Mrs. W, 60.

1. Intention tremor <right arm <emotions.
2. Sleeps >in a noise.
3. In a half waking state as then she tries to sleep; visions of horrid face, <on closing eyes, keep her awake or she actually dreams of her work. Eyes heavy
4. Fear affects her greatly.

5. Frequent scanty urine; must go at once or gets very nervous.
6. Lack of interest in anything, yet worries over trifles.
7. Chilly; with gooseflesh as she sneezes.

This condition has gradually increased for many years. She received a single dose of *Magnetis pol, aus., 20m.*, because only this remedy and Camphor have great aggravation during the half-awaking state, while several other of her symptoms are fore-shad-owed in the proving. The improvement has been going on for ten weeks. The visions and gooseflesh are gone, she sleeps well and the intention tremor has almost disappeared. Great is the power of the similitimum.

One of our brothers who has now passed over the great divide, said that he could almost always cure, provided he could find the symptoms of the case in the "Chronic Diseases." It has been my experience that no single work offers as many hints that point straight to the curative drug as this book does. Its very language is suggestive of what we may expect to find in a minute examination of the patient, only we can never make that examination too searching. Unless we do so, every little while more new things, which should have been uncovered at the first examination, will crop up to surprise or confound us.

It is only by accident that this paper is here. After writing it I was about to throw it into the fire, but a friend of mine, after reading it, ;persuaded me not to do this.

Dr. Patch: I did not have the privilege of reading this paper before the meeting so I am afraid my remarks will have very little of value. I was unprepared for just what was coming. I had an idea that this paper would follow Dr. Baylies' lead, a purely scientific discussion of homoeopathic remedies but instead we have a paper, perhaps equally valuable, but less practical.

The word or two on the education of our physicians interested me greatly. Just how are we going to arrange these educational matters so that we may get the best results? I do not believe we ought to decry scientific education because it sometimes fails to bring about a better understanding of Homoeopathy and the wonderful work that can be accomplished through its application. I have an idea that we would not be any better off by limiting our students in their necessary hospital practice; that perhaps we should fall upon some other stumbling block equally troublesome. Possibly we should go back to a method of selecting our physicians because of their mental qualifications. If they understand homoeopathic philosophy, I do not believe that hospital practice or any scientific work will be able to influence them; on the other hand I think they will appreciate homoeopathic work all the more.

Dr. Boger's remarks about *Lycopodium* were most interesting. I have never had an opportunity to use *Tuberculinum* as he did but shall be on the lookout in the future. I have used *Tuberculinum* in many instances where it has proven wonderfully helpful in a variety of conditions.

I remember a very severe case of typhoid fever where I was in despair of being able to save the boy. He was about as near death as anyone could be and I must confess that I had no special indications upon which to prescribe *Tuberculinum*. I did prescribe it however and within twenty-four hours the boy began to improve. It was not necessary to repeat it. There was no tubercular history but the patient was psoric. I have to deal largely with nervous cases and I find that many of these have a tubercular history so that I have come to realise that tuberculosis is a prominent factor in the aetiology of neurotic cases. *Tuberculinum* consequently is not infrequently helpful in bring-ing them out. I remember one case a good many years ago where the trouble centered about the digestive system and here *Tuberculinum* was most helpful. Another case of intestinal

tuberculosis responded wonderfully to Tuberculinum. It was practically an acute case; within three or four months she was comparatively well. In that instance it was necessary to repeat the dose once in three or four weeks.

The *Imponderabilia* I have never had an opportunity of using to any extent. I have been much interested in what Jahr has to say of these remedies.