

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SIMILIA

C. M. BOGER, M.D., Parkersburg, W. Va.

Intensive study of detail seems to narrow the mental horizon, cripple the faculty of association and weaken the power of co-ordinating related phenomena.

So it comes about that we speak of voluntary and involuntary action just as if every one knew precisely where the one ends and the other begins; not realising that this center of control is a shifting one, a sort of flexible governor which constantly adjusts the surge and resurge of vital power.

Sickness is first felt as a disturbance of this governing center, which if not too violent and no terminal interference arises, soon subsides into its accustomed play again. These purely dynamic forces can be held in leash only by a more or less synchronously acting power, while irremovable terminal obstruction surely makes for death, by just that much.

It is here that we enter the arena of the age old struggle between the realistic and the idealistic or dynamic schools of thought. For us it is between surgery and therapy; everything depending upon our breadth of mind and point of view. The realist leans toward material and mechanical means, while the philosophically inclined works out his problems from the dynamic standpoint; all of which tells why the law of similia does not appeal equally to every one and why quite a few Homeopaths don't fit well into Homoeopathy.

For many centuries past the acts of medicine have, perhaps, not always been edifying. Like Omar it has mostly come out of the same door through which it went in, and over whose portal is graven the fateful word, Materialism. Once within its noisome precincts the student is intoxicated more and more at every step until the supersensible side of nature becomes to him but a vague, indefinite thing, unworthy of serious consideration. That the material is but the visible side of the less palpable, but more permanent, does not come up for consideration and ultimately it becomes to him a dark enigma.

Although continually struggling along material lines medicine is always arriving on the borderland of the immaterial and infinitesimal, with its law of similia. Incredulity and unbelief, ultimately based upon purely materialistic conceptions, have however thus far been sufficient to keep it from venturing into the domain of the seemingly intangible. Yet we need not be disturbed, for general science and philosophy is slowly but surely forcing the issue, in spite of the side-stepping opportunities which the victories of sanitary science afford.

Homoeopathy, springing from and preserving the vitalism of the ancients, is nolens volens, the leaven of modern medicine. Its victories have, more than once, saved medicine from utter rout and shameful defeat. While pathologists have placidly hunted microbes amidst the myriads of dying, Homoeopaths have calmly cured the sick with infinitesimals.

Of "the powers within" ordinary medicine has no just conception, hence no philosophy and no means and methods. If it knew as much of curing as it does of anatomy, diagnosis, etc. we might indeed speak proudly of the "science of medicine"; but as the matter now stands, aside from recoveries due to the recuperative powers of nature and homoeopathic cures, so-called cures are in reality a sorry joke, with often a tragic ending.

In this day we hear much about the near approach of science to the discovery of methods by which greater energy may be liberated and thus the whole material world revolutionised and benefited. Discovery is actually moving rapidly in this direction; but its consummation may after all not prove an unmixed blessing. Meanwhile we as Homoeopaths hold in our hands the golden wand with which we may transform and conduct almost unlimited stores of native energy into healing channels. This being the case, why is it that every homoeopathic physician is not also a homoeopathic healer, whose work will far outclass that of the ordinary physician? Perhaps it is a large question, but failing to grapple with it will not bring the correct answer.

If we look back over our history and mark well the mental equipment of those who have left their impress upon our development, we cannot fail to observe that it has been the mind of larger grasp that has prevailed. The mind capable of laying aside preconceived ideas, willing to take facts as they come and for what they are worth and capable of drawing correct deductions therefrom.

True Homoeopathy is not the thing that comes out of the mouth of its false prophets, that has grown by establishing hospitals or by fattening on privilege and position. No! These things are self-destructive in their very nature. Homoeopathy lives and exists in the inner conviction of its votaries that nature cures likes by likes; hence it follows that it is our duty to acquaint ourselves with every means by which we may develop and facilitate curative reaction.

Such a study may at times seem to take us far afield, but if we always keep with us the lamp of pure philosophy and wisdom, and always act from the point of pure disinterestedness, the way and means will gradually become clear and the truth will prosper gloriously.

Under the guidance of a few devoted souls this Association was born at a time when the pathologic materialistic idea had already revolutionised old school medicine and was fast permeating the whole homoeopathic organism also. Sensing the danger, they banded together for the preservation of a purer and better Homoeopathy; and now, after a lapse of forty years and having passed through many critical vicissitudes the Society is what you see it today. Do not think that it has done but little more than preserve the traditions of glories that are past and gone. Its moral influence has always extended far beyond the limits of its membership, so that in these days, when Homoeopathy in general is undergoing a most severe moulting process, this organisation stands as the rallying point around which all of its adherents may foregather and feel the joys incident to a common interest.

Its archives hold many treasures of which it may well be proud. Not only are there records of cures of unsurpassed brilliancy but there are provings not otherwise available, philosophical dissertations of great acumen and debates which throw light upon many a moot point in practice. Dull is the man who can read them and fail to feel the inspiration for nobler and better work in the relief of suffering and weak humanity.

If I stand before you and tell of the wondrous results of the application of similia, it may look brilliant, but unless it stirs up in you a desire to know how you may also do the like, my effort smacks of vaingloriousness and the fruit thereof is dead.

If I would cure I must perforce arouse a similar reaction. If I wish to excite you to emulate the fathers in Homoeopathy I must appeal to your humanity, that you may awake and strive to find the straight and narrow path presided over by the genius of self-sacrifice in which they walked in the light of similia.