

CURATIVE AGENTS AND HOMOEOPATHY

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Homeopathy was founded by Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician of great eminence, a linguist and a chemist of no mean repute, in the beginning of the 18th century.

Homeopathy is a system of therapeutics based upon the Law of 'Similars' as expressed by the maxim 'SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTUR' - Likes cure Likes. According to Hahnemann's research findings, Hippocrates and Paracelsus were aware of this law before him. But it was Hahnemann who gave it a practical application.

The working of this law in the day to day practice in a Homeopathic clinic takes the following procedure. When a patient attends a Homeopathic clinic, the physician takes a detailed case taking, with special emphasis on the individuality of the patient, his constitution, his desires and aversions, to various things (Food, Heat, Cold etc.). The mental and physical symptoms are recorded.

The Physician visualises a picture of the sick individual in his mind's eye and finds a similar picture of a remedy in the materia medica to match the Disease picture of the patient. It could be a Sulphur Case, A Calcarea Carbonica case or a Pulsilla case depending on the symptom picture recorded.

The Remedy of choice is the 'Similar' remedy, which goes hand in glove with the symptom picture of the patient. It is known as the 'Similimum' in Homeopathic terminology. It is the medicine that is Homeopathically indicated, and if prescribed in correct potency and dosage would relieve or cure the patient. This follows the Law of 'Similias' in Homeopathy.

Let me give a few examples to illustrate the working of the 'Law of Similars'. Medicines are used to cure only the exact conditions they can produce in the healthy. - Like Cure Likes.

Cinchona bark of which quinine is an alkaloid is one of the frontline remedies in the treatment of Intermittent fever. It was the Malaria like symptoms produced by this drug that induced Hahnemann to infer that Cinchona was able to cure malaria because it had the power to produce malaria like symptoms in the healthy.

This was the turning point in Hahnemann's career, and the birth of a new principle in medicine.

Hahnemann's subsequent studies in toxicology drew his attention to various cases of poisoning. The cholera like symptoms produced by camphor poisoning led him to use camphor in treating cholera. It became the most successful remedy during the cholera epidemic in Europe in 1830-31. The toxic effects of Belladonna produced the exact symptoms of scarlet fever (Scarlatina), and therefore was able to cure it.

Hahnemann's analytical powers perceived the numerous events that took place in nature's cures unfolding several natural Laws previously unknown. The Natural law of Cure (the therapeutic law of cure) was one. When two similar diseases meet together in the living organism the stronger removes the weaker permanently. Here are some examples from nature.

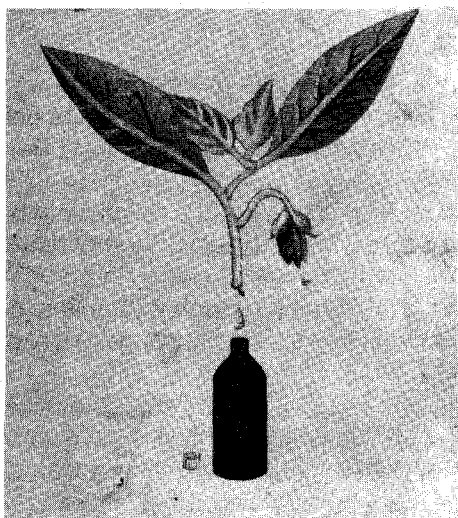
A person suffering from a swollen half paralysed arm was cured after an infection with Cowpox. This happened because Cowpox has the ability to produce a similar condition.

When a patient suffering from deafness was attacked by smallpox, his deafness was also cured with the cure of smallpox. This happened because smallpox was able to produce a similar condition. Cases of Orchitis and Ophthalmia were cured in a similar way after an attack of smallpox.

Although nature perform such cures at random, they cannot be utilized in medicine to cure the sick, due to obvious reasons. Medicines on the other hand although stronger than natural diseases are within the control of the physician, and the action of the medicine cease after a specific duration by itself.

POTENTIATION

Homoeopathic medicines are prepared by a process called Potentiation. The basic material for the medicines come from the Plant, Animal and Mineral Kingdoms.



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A special class of Medicines called *Norsodes* (prepared from diseased products); *Sarcodes* (prepared from healthy animal tissue, and secretions) and *Imponderabilia* (X'ray, magnetism, electricity) are also used.

Potentiation or Dynamization of medicines is the process by which the medicinal properties of basic substances including inert substances are liberated and raised to a dynamic level. Certain substances which are useless in their material or inert form become highly potent medicines after dynamization. For example lycopodium (club moss), which was earlier used only to roll pills, became one of the most potent medicines in the homoeopathic armamentarium.

Natrum Muriaticum (Sodium chloride or common salt) which had only the value of the pinch of salt in the house wife's

kitchen shelf became one of the most effective remedies in the Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Deadly poisons like cobra venom, viper venom, cyanides and a host of other poisonous substances find a special place in the Homoeopathic medicine chest. These highly toxic substances are transformed into non-poisonous, yet profoundly effective remedies after potentiation.

The basic drug material undergo a marked qualitative change as it goes through the process of potentiation. I would not dwell further into the intricate process of potentiation as it is not the purpose of this article. However, it would suffice to note that the drug substance undergoes a dynamic change and reaches the molecular form (Attenuation). The only electronic instrument that could measure the minute vibrations emitted by potentized medicines is the Emanometer produced by the William Boyd Scientific Trust, Glasgow.

Homoeopathic medicines are first proved on healthy human beings prior to their application on the sick. A drug proving is an experiment conducted by an eminent homoeopathy to ascertain the action on healthy human beings. The symptoms so produced by the group of persons to whom the drug has been administered are recorded, processed, and finally incorporated into the materia medica.

The salient feature of Homoeopathy is minuteness of the dose used, and its absolute lack of side-effects. Addiction to a drug never occurs due to the sub-physiological doses used.

The three cardinal principles of a Homoeopathic prescription are:

- (I) The Single Remedy
- (II) The Similar Remedy
- (III) The Minimum Dose

A Single Remedy is given one at a time selected according to the Law of Similars (Similar Remedy). The dose used is the smallest dose possible (Minimum Dose).

Arndt's - Shultz Law states that:

- (I) Small Doses Stimulate;
- (II) Moderate Doses Inhibit;
- (III) Large Doses Kill.

It is the (Dynamized) minute dose employed in Homoeopathy that provide the necessary stimulus to affect a cure.

Hahnemann perceived the necessity for physicians to be guided by a definite law of prescribing. Strict adherence to the law of similars and the fundamental principles of Homoeopathy is the hallmark of the genuine Homoeopathic Practitioner.