

Behar-Orissa Homœopathic Conference

Presidential Address

A conference of homœopathic practitioners must have become a necessity in Behar otherwise so many of you could not be here to-day to bear testimony to that fact. The conference we held in Bengal last year was an unequivocal success and I sincerely hope that you will have greater success here and the outcome of this meeting will result in many good things. I do not know why you have called upon me to preside over your deliberations. There are many good physicians in Behar, who could have more worthily filled this chair. The only justification I have, if that is a justification at all, is that I have served the cause of Homœopathy as a faithful disciple of Hahnemann for three decades and more, and when I look round I feel delighted to see so many familiar faces and some of my old students who are distinguished men here to-day. It was not so very long ago when it was difficult to find a homœopath in these parts. The retirement of the late Dr. Behary Lall Bhaduri in Monghyr had made many converts to Homœopathy. The famous house of Raja Kamaleswari Prasad Singh had become believers in Homœopathy. The remarkable cures of Babu Mohendra Lall and Dr. Paresh Nath Chatterji had made many converts in Patna. Since then the progress of Homœopathy has been so steady and the numbers of practitioners have increased by such leaps and bounds that I dare say you considered it necessary to call a conference to find out ways and means for the propagation of your cause and also to a certain extent to put your house in order. It is unfortunate that we have not received state recognition yet, but I think the day is not far off when we shall receive such recognition if only we can show the utility of this beneficent system of treatment.

The insignificant porcelain painter's son when he made the discovery of the law of similars had little idea of what far reaching effect this system of treatment would be in the near future. Little did he dream that we should be sitting here to discuss the progress of Homœopathy for the good of humanity in this ancient city of Gaya in far of India. The history of Homœopathy abounds with remarkable episodes. Constantine Hering was appointed by one of the crowned heads of Germany to study this system of treatment and expose its vagaries to the world. After eleven years of hard work Hering was convinced of the truth of the law Similia Similibus Curentur. When he found that he had incurred the displeasure of his employer he migrated to America and settled himself as a homœopathic practitioner there. His voluminous writings and his remarkable cures stand as the greatest monument to the glory of Hahnemann and Homœopathy in America to-day.

It is well-known to many of you, if not to all of you, that Homœopathy is recognised by the state in that wonderful country. There are many well equipped colleges and hospitals in the United States of America. Since the holding of the British Homœopathic Congress in 1911, in London, Homœopathy received a new impetus under the leadership of Dr. George Burford in England. By the creation of the International League in Rotterdam in 1917 Homœopathy has become an important factor in the medical world. The meeting of the League in the far off city of Mexico in 1930 was a brilliant function. The holding of the League meeting again in that international city of Geneva this year under the leadership of my esteemed friend Dr. Pierre Schmidt, that erudite scholar, that brilliant speaker, and one of the true and staunch followers of Hahnemann, was a historic event. Regret

was expressed by the members of that august body at our inability to attend that Conference. But I feel happy and proud to be able to state that India has a permanent place in the International League. It may be news to some of you that our men stood side by side with our brethren of the other school and did most excellent work during the great war in Europe.

Constantine Hering had not been the only man to become a disciple of Homœopathy. Every medical practitioner who has been a keen observer and who has cared to look into the science of Homœopathy carefully, has become a convert to Homœopathy. In England the names of Hughes, Ruddock, Burnett, Clarke, Burford, Fergie Woods, Tyler, and others stand out prominent. In recent times the conversion of August Bierre, that great medical scholar and discoverer of Germany, the President of the Medical Faculty of Berlin, has created a new era in World Homœopathy. There is a permanent chair of Homœopathy in the Universities of Berlin and Frankfurt, and a homœopathic ward has been opened in the Berlin Hospital which has been put under the charge of one of Dr. Bierre's able assistants. This spread of Homœopathy, throughout the length and breadth of Europe after the great war has been remarkable. The names of Roy Upham, Bellari, Tuinzie, Schmidt, Meng, Vinials, and others stand out prominent in this connection. Here in India the names of Mahendra Lall Sircar, Leopold Salzer, Pratap Chandra Majumdar, Brojendra Nath Banerji, D. N. Roy and others are well known to you.

The science of Homœopathy has been vindicated before the world without a shadow of doubt. Boyed's emanometer, and Abraham's improved methods have testified to the correctness and usefulness of homœopathic medicine to the scientific world.

The law of similars, the single remedy, and the minimum dose, the three cardinal features of Homœopathy have been demonstrated by our friends of the other school very remarkably. The administration of vaccines is crude Homœopathy and bears testimony to the law of similars. The administration of the single remedy is also becoming very manifest among the members of the dominant school. The administration of injections and drugs in doses such as 1-100, 1-1000, and even 1-10000 is seen every where, and as such bear eloquent testimony to the minimum dose of Homœopathy. The old adage, put a few drops of homœopathic medicine in the Ganges at Haridwar, and drink a cupful of this water from the Ganges at Calcutta, does not hold good any longer.

Now, I must try to remove a misconception that is prevalent among the laity, nay among the less informed of the members of the regular school, who say that Homœopathy has no use for Surgery, Midwifery, Pathology, Physiology, Anatomy, and other allied branches of medicine. Homœopathy, it is well known to all students of this science of medicine, is a law of therapeutics and is not a complete system of medicine by itself. Homœopathy relates only to the use of drugs in cases of disease. It has never ignored the usefulness of a deep and thorough knowledge of the fundamental branches of medicine. In the Organon of the Art of Healing, Hahnemann has explained this in his "Review of Physic." At the very outset he has said :—"Without ignoring the merits of many physicians in relation to the auxiliary sciences pertaining to medicine, such as the advancement of Physics and Chemistry, Natural History in its different branches, and more particularly, Anthropology, Physiology, Anatomy etc. I shall now consider the practical part of medicine, that of curing disease." Again in his 13th chapter of the

Organon he says, "hence disease (not subject to the manual skill of Surgery), considered by allopathists as a material thing hidden within but distinct from the living whole (organism and its life giving vital force) is a nonentity." I could again and again quote from the Master's writings to show that he has never ignored the usefulness of the allied branches of medicine. I should have liked to have gone into the merits and demerits of the therapeutic law enunciated by Hahnemann in his Organon—the novum Organum of our creed, but I fear, I should not do so, because I consider this is neither the time nor the occasion to enter into a lengthy scientific discussion on the law of cure enunciated by Hahnemann. That Homœopathy has been a system of treatment pre-eminently suited to the condition of the people of this country is manifest from the fact that we find homœopathic practitioners throughout India and we hear of admirable cure made by homœopaths here, there and everywhere. In a country where there is only one doctor to every 40000 of its population, that there is a crying need for more and more physicians there is not a shadow of doubt. The practitioner of the other school, the Kaviraj, the Hakim, and the Homœopath are all useful members of our society. I should be the last person to belittle the significance of the valuable work that is done by our Surgeons, our Obstetricians, and our Pathologists. We look up with admiration to the admirable discoveries made by our friends of the other school in these domains. But it is admitted on all hands that therapeutics is the most important of all the branches of medicine and as such Homœopathy claims its right for a just existence. Only recently, it was declared by an eminent medical man in one of the meetings of the Calcutta University, that medicine was the most important of all the subjects and his views were endorsed by the members of the Senate.

Christians have explained "Ecce Homo" in admiration of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind. I echo this sentiment and feel like exclaiming "Ecce Medicus" when I think of Samuel Hahnemann the great savior of suffering humanity. Unhappily for mankind, professional jealousies have developed acrimonious and unpleasant spirit amongst the members of the different schools of medicine from time to time. But happily, for us, that spirit is fast disappearing. The members of the different schools of medicine are realising more than ever that we exist for relieving the suffering of mankind and that we are all aiming at the same goal. Gentlemen, I do not know how to thank you for having organised this meeting. Our cause is always enhanced by our unity. That you have all gathered together here to-day is proof positive of the progress of Homœopathy. In 1882, Dr. Richard Hughes, the famous British homœopath had said "the greater our members, the better our institutions are manned and our journals filled, the more respect we shall win for our system, the nearer we shall bring the days when the profession shall be forced to recognise it and to invite us back to free fellowship. Till then do not weaken the cause by standing aloof from its embodiments. Allow your names be placed in homœopathic directories or rather be proud of it as of an enrolment in a Legion of Honour. Seek service in any homœopathic hospital or dispensary in your neighbourhood. Send cases to journals; apply for memberships in homœopathic societies. Every man who acts thus lends fresh strength to the witness we bear to truth in medicine and hastens the days of its victory. So I tell you all gentlemen, that by the creation of this meeting in Behar you have added to the strength of your cause, and I assure you, victory is assured in the near future.

Regarding suggestions for the betterment of Homœopathy in this Province, I shall leave that to those who belong here, and who, I am sure, will handle the subject with the earnestness it deserves. I do not wish to detain you much longer, and I will conclude by quoting a few lines from the Presidential address of the British Homœopathie Society for the Session 1930-31. "It is for the spread of the truth of Homœopathy in its widest implications that we should all have at heart and that it is the ultimate even more than the present welfare of our cause, which should concern us most. We must build for the future, and just as we honoured those great men of the past who upheld the truth of Homœopathy against bitter opposition and even social ostracism, so in these more comfortable times it is our duty and privilege to hand on as a heritage to generations to come a presentation of the truth of our Art, which, while lacking nothing of its essentials as formulated by its founder, is in keeping with the scientific spirit of the age. The pursuit of truth, scientific or otherwise, should be the aim of all, even though the particular interpretation of truth in the case of each one of us may differ in some degree.

You will say, and rightly so, that there is *sufficient of truth* for our guidance in the principle "similia similibus curentur" formulated by that great genius Samuel Hahnemann, one of those rare souls that from time to time in the world's history, sojourn for a while in this mortal sphere, when in the guidance of humanity towards its larger destiny, some great work of revolution of thought needs to be accomplished; for all that, may it not be the case that a re-statement of truth becomes necessary as humanity advances on its upward path, in order to harmonize it with the spirit of the times and bring it into relation with the out-look, scientific or otherwise, of the day?"