

Sacred Task of a Chemist.

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The science of Homœopathy gets fruition through the following two main channels or rather the success of the art of Homœopathy depends on the merits of the following two factors :—

- (1) Knowledge and skill of the physician.
- (2) Honesty and accuracy of the Chemist.

To-day I shall try to impress upon or rather remind the Chemists of the onerous task they have undertaken to perform. I am quite conscious of the requirements of the physician, but all his intellectual attainments and professional skill will be of no avail to him if the medicine supplied by the chemist be not reliable. Before proceeding any further I shall narrate a very lamentable tale which will bring in bold relief the part a chemist plays in the fulfillment of the divine mission of healing the sick.

Seven weeks ago, I was called upon to attend on some seven typhoid cases in the northern part of the town. Three of them developed marked symptoms of Stramonium. It was served out in the 30th potency on the Centesimal scale. For days together the patients were kept on that medicine, but to my great dismay one of the three began to go down and down and suddenly took a very bad turn and ended fatally. All through the days that she had been given Stramonium I was expecting a change for the better. But I was disappointed. The medicine did not act.

During a practice of about 15 years I had occasion to attend on similar cases previously several times, and under similar circumstances this medicine always performed what I expected of it each time. I do not remember to have ever failed. So this failure ending in the loss of a life valuable and sacred came upon me as a rude shock and forced me to ponder over the matter. I began to pass anxious days and uneasy nights as the other two patients were not also fairing well on the same medicine.

I consulted the books over and over again, but was every time forced to come to the conclusion that Stramonium was the medicine. So I had no other alternative than that of growing sceptic regarding the medicine in my chest.

This medicine had been purchased by me personally from one of the chemists of Calcutta who sells medicines at a fancy price and are considered on that account at least, if not on any other, by the general public and by good many of us as well, to be very reliable. It was procured to treat a case of acute mania. I at once referred to the cases in which it had been used and to my surprise I found that it had not served its purpose in the least in any case. This made me very doubtful about the genuineness of the medicine the vial contained, though it was labelled Stramonium 30.

I therefore ordered for a drachm of the medicine from the nearest chemist for pices 5 only and served it out to the other two patients. The result was only magical. One of them, who had been suffering, for 17 days, was freed from the prolonged fever after 16 hours, while the other who had been suffering for 21 days, was relieved of the suffering after 26 hours.

I am therefore convinced beyond all doubts that the substance supplied to me as Stramonium 30 contained only unmedicated alcohol. The gentleman entrusted with the responsible task of medicating the alcohol must have forgotten to put in it medicine altogether. This mistake has apparently cost a life and unnecessary suffering and agony to others. It is hardly necessary to dilate on the point at any greater length. I have done this only to show how such mistakes, which may appear to be very trifling, end lamentably.