

Dr. Hahnemann,

A Multisplendoured Personality

We all know and many a time it is mentioned in our journals about his struggle and wonderful achievements in Homoeopathic Medicine. But few of us are aware about his multiple activities in other spheres and his social status.

Long before Dr. Hahnemann discovered Homoeopathy, he was disgusted with the way the medicine was practised at that time. He denounced blood-letting, leeching, purging and emetics, etc. He was a real Christian at heart and he was praying to Almighty God to show him a more humane way of treating patients from this darkness and ignorance. He was hurt with the way insane people were treated by flogging, chaining and starving them. He immediately drew the attention of the Government of Germany that a more humane treatment should be given to them and that they were not insane but Mentally Sick Patients. 200 years back, he was the first Physician to use this word. He could be considered the Founder of Psycho-somatic medicine. Today, Science has much advanced on this line.

I. Hahnemann, a Chemist of Repute :

This is also long before he converted himself to Homoeopathy. His essay on Forensic detection of Arsenic poison is worth-reading. He denounced the sale of Arsenic which was grossly used as fever powders with disastrous effects. His wine test was used for several years to detect lead in a solution of 1:30,000. Mercury was tried by all medical men for centuries as a treatment for many diseases but none succeeded. Side effects were observed. Dr. Hahnemann's Article on "Exact Mode of Preparing Soluble Mercury 1789" was a master-piece. His MercSol

is very valuable to us for several ailments. His genius of preparing HeperSulph is unique. Cal Carb is not merely Calcium Carbonate, but his mastery of preparing this remedy from the inner layer of Oyster Shell is unique. Most of us know the story of his visit to a friend, a painter who was constantly putting his brush into his mouth and was keeping very indifferent health. He instantly found out the cause of his illness; that the inky fluid was responsible. And this was the discovery of Sepia.

II. Dr. Hahnemann as a Hygienist & Dietician :

In those times, no one knew or cared to know about Hygiene in food and drinks. No drainage system existed. Pure water was rare and no one thought of boiling or filtering. There were repeated epidemics like Cholera and Plague. Doctor's medicines were not of any use. He gives minute detailed views about food and drink for ill persons. Today, diet plays an important part and there are books written for the same. He gives strict instructions for visiting the sick and how to avoid infection. He had never seen a case of Cholera. Still, he described it very correctly and stated that minute animals were responsible for the disease. No microscopes were available at that time. Hahnemann recommended Camphor, Cuprum, Vert Album and Arsenic for the same. When the patients were treated with these remedies, the percentage of death was comparatively much less. He recommended exercise, open air and outdoor life to patients long before the dawn of civilization. Isolation of sick persons suffering from contagious disease, and disinfection of all utensils and living room of such persons were suggested.

IV. Surgery during those times was very crude. Asepsis and Anaesthesia was not known. No one thought of sterilisation of instruments, bandages and hands of the surgeon. But Hahnemann suggested these methods. In these pre Homoeopathic periods, he gives clear instructions about hygiene but also avoidance of surgery in this crude manner.

V. Dr. Hahnemann, a Privy Councillor (Hofrath) and a Royal Physician :

The Duke Ferdinand the Duchess and Prince of Anhalt called him for the illness and conferred upon him this high honour.

VI. Dr. Hahnemann, a Free Mason :

He was a good mason too and a Member of Lipsic Lodge though he had little time from his busy practice.

VII. Dr. Hahnemann, a Linguist :

A master of several languages which enabled him to study various books on medicines and particularly when translating Cullen's Materia Medica, he came to know about Cinchona Bark which was the first step in his research and Homoeopathic medicine. As a student, he knew Greek and Latine besides his own mother tongue Germany. Later, he knew French, Italian, English, Hibeew and many European languages. Dr. Bradford is his Author, who describes Hahnemann "Scholar whom scholars honoured and respected. Physician whom physicians feared. Philologist with whom philologists dreaded to dispute Chemist who taught chemists. Philosopher whom adversity nor honour had power to change."

Jean Paul describes Hahnemann as a double-headed prodigy of philosophy and learning.

VIII. Dr. Hahnemann, a Philosopher

The Homoeopathic Medical Science owes its Philosophy solely to Hahnemann. At a time when suppressing the disease was more or less routine, he vehemently protested against the same as it did a lot of harm to

the human organisms according to his belief. For example, the suppression or removal of skin disease by ointments containing very harmful ingredients temporarily removes the itching or eruptions on the skin but later on, the same patients suffer from another more serious disease, like Asthma as the disease was merely pushed inside. Hahnemann believed that skin disease are external manifestations of internal disorder what nature wanted to throw out on the skin, the Doctors. Pushed it inside. Rheumatic fever or Rheumatic joint pains by use of internal and external medicines removes the pain from joints but effects the heart which is a very vital organ. Suppression of any diseases like Dysentery may affect the liver. Patients who suffered from Chronic Colds or a Sore Throat are advised removal of tonsils. But after that they suffer from frequent colds, cough or headache. The Almighty God in all his wisdom has put different organs in suitable places to perform particular functions. If they are ruthlessly removed or cut because they are not functioning well, it is no excuse. Nature reacts by creating a stronger disease. Closer of Fistula in many cases causes Tuberculosis in some patients who are prone to it. All these facts are known to the Medical Science to-day. It is a wellknown fact that Asthma and Eczema alternate and many wise Physicians are against suppressing one or the other diseases. Many such cases can be quoted.

IX. The Unknown Grave and the Unusual Honours & Fame After death:

Dr Hahnemann died on Sunday, 2nd July, 1843 at the ripe old age of 88. Madam Hahnemann had his body embalmed and by a special permission kept the body in his house for ten days. She did not inform the world about his death, neither about his burial. She who loved and adored him so much during his life behaved in a mysterious manner after his death. Only five persons accompanied the coffin; herself, Dr. Hahnemann's daughter and her son Dr. Sus Hahnemann, Dr. Lotheir and Ganal who had embalmed his body. His coffin was thrust into an old family vault without any religious ceremony. No tombstone or any inscription was put on the

grave. Dr. Hahnemann died but his teachings spread far and wide. Homoeopathic Physicians all over the world, particularly Germany, France and United States were on the look-out for his resting place. Dr. Willimar Schwabe of Germany, Dr. T. L. Bradford of Philadelphia and Dr. Richard Hæil along with his grandson Dr. Sus Hahnemann located his grave 50 long years after his death next to his wife. All Homoeopaths united to improve the grave fitting this great Doctor. At the International Homoeopathic Medical Congress at London, 1966, they decided to erect a monument of Hahnemann. Very few people know but it was Dr. Hahnemann's last wish to be buried together with his wife. In the presence of an august gathering of well known Homoeopaths, his old grave was broken open with the permission of the State authorities, his frail body was exhumed; the wedding ring on his finger bore the inscription of his marriage along with dates. Madam Hahnemann's hair was coiled round his neck, a gold memorial medal presented to him was found in a sealed glass bottle. A copy of this medal is known the world over to-day and all medals for the souvenirs are made of this type. A humble attempt was made by me at the last

International Homoeopathic Medical Congress at Delhi in 1977 which bears a profile of Dr. Hahnemann exactly the one that was given to him. Madam Hahnemann's coffin was also removed, ten persons accompanied the hearse, including Dr. Sus Hahnemann, Dr. Richard Hughes and other famous Homoeopaths. Both the bodies were deposited in a cement vault in a beautiful cemetery of Paris, where the topmost Heroes of France are laid to rest. Two years later, a fitting monument to this great soul was erected over his grave.

Born in Germany, buried in Paris, a great Monument stands to his memory in Washington in a prominent Square next to Gen. W. S. Scott in a country which he never visited. Many monuments were raised in Germany and other parts of Europe. Stamps were issued in his memory and India too issued a beautiful stamp at the last International Homoeopathic Medical Congress at Delhi, 1977.

Dear, Readers, have you ever found such a gigantic medical personality in all your life? We pay him our homage.



Have fire and spread all over. Work, work. Be the servant while leading. Be unselfish and never listen to one friend in private accusing another. Have infinite patience and success is yours. Take care! Beware of everything that is untrue; stick to truth and we shall succeed, may be slowly but surely. Work as if one each of you depended the whole work. Fifty centuries are looking on you, the future of India depends on you. Work on.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA