

HOMEOPATHY AROUND THE WORLD

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Introduction

In choosing this title, as a guest from around the world, I was looking for something appropriate for an international organisation which has its origin with a well known Greek who came bearing gifts of healing, and which has nonetheless been mainly based in this one continent. In this paper I consider with historical anecdotes how our subject has blossomed in so many cultures and countries, how these cultures have contributed to homeopathy for both good and evil. I should not like to confine myself to the merely anecdotal. I shall present evidence that our art can be abused and led from its ostensible positive direction as a power for healing. Many countries have contributed something to homeopathy, mainly it seems for good, but this is not always the case. What are the values of homeopathy as it travels?

In the history of science there are mythological moments. Archimedes sat in the bath; "Eureka" he is reputed to have cried out. Newton sat under a tree and watched the apple drop. We do not know what he cried out. John Sculley left his Pepsi Cola bottles and discovered a rather different Apple™, (the computer), as a 'bicycle for the mind'.¹ And Samuel Hahnemann in April 1790 took his first dose of Peruvian Bark.² Here was the first appearance of modern homeopathy on European soil, in Germany. Its spread from that time is well known³ but I should like to recount some of

¹John Sculley, *Odyssey: Pepsi to Apple*, London 1989, Fontana.

²Rima Handley, *The China Syndrome The Homeopath*, 1990, **10**:4, pp.97-99 & 109.

³Richard Haehl, *Samuel Hahnemann: His life and Work*, translated by Wheeler & Grundy, London 1923, The Homeopathic Publishing Company.

the stories that you may not have heard.

Travellers

Apart from the well known travels of Hering to Surinam there were others who visited South America. Benoit Mure (1809-1858) also travelled widely having practised in Sicily and Malta from 1837. He was in Paris from 1839. In 1842 he went to Brazil for 6 years and by 1854 some 38 new provings had been translated into English, ranging from a number of new snake venoms to *Guano*!⁴ He did not sit still and in 1852 travelled to Egypt and the Sudan. Here he produced a Logarithm Repertory which is certainly the most bizarre I have seen.⁵ He used Greek letters in a code that needs a cryptographer to use. Wherever he went he enquired and studied and adapted the medical possibilities of his surroundings to the homeopathic method, even in the Nubian desert.

Wilkinson

John James Garth Wilkinson, the discoverer of *Hekla lava* in Iceland had an interesting mind. Before he discovered homeopathy he translated the works of Swedenborg from Latin to English in London in the late 1830's and early 1840's. His translations were sent to the USA where the Swedenborgian and homeopathic communities were growing and involved the same people. Through correspondence with Henry James senior and Emerson and other literary people Wilkinson heard of homeopathy, and the intelligentsia of the Eastern seaboard heard about Swedenborg. Is the fact that Hering, Kent, and all our intellectual ancestors of this era were believers in the Swedenborgian New Church of Jerusalem relevant to our use of their scholarship today?⁶ This issue was fully discussed elsewhere but is relevant to our theme. Can homeopathy survive without the social and cultural context of its founders?

Card Repertories

⁴ Benoit Mure, *Materia Medica or Provings of the Principal Animal and Vegetable Products of the Brazilian Empire*, Translated by Charles Hempel, New York 1854, William Radde.

⁵ Benoit Mure, *L'Homéopathie Pure*, edited by Sophie Liet, Paris 1883, Bailliere.

⁶ Francis Treuherz, The Origins of Kent's Homeopathy, *JAIH*, 1984, 77:4; pp.130-149.

I am the proud owner of a wonderful small Repertory which fits into a library card index box. It was created by Dr Marcos Jiminez and came to me from a rural bookdealer in a remote part of Scotland. I wrote to the Mexican Homeopathic Association and was moved when I discovered Jiminez to be still alive and he corresponded with me in 1984 from Guadalajara. His father Dr Enrique Jiminez-Nuñez was a pioneer of homeopathy in Costa Rica. Less complex than the Logarithm but equally fascinating, it is a Spanish English bilingual card repertory! There have been many card repertories, such as those by Boger and Field in the USA, Flury from Switzerland, Broussallian from France, and the largest and most comprehensive from Kishore of India. But Jiminez' is definitely the most curious. He claims that his father produced the first one in 1920 based on Boenninghausen's *Therapeutic Pocket Book* comprising some 2593 punched cards. He even succeeded in acquiring a US Patent in 1925, but could not find a publisher. Jiminez achieved his own version in two languages with 552 different cards and 480 remedies each denoted by a square hole, and each chapter having a different colour code. He modified his father's model so that the system is more Kentian in its construction.

Kishore's card repertory is based on Kent's with additions and has many thousands of rubrics. He has two copies in special filing cabinets in an anteroom off his main consulting room in New Delhi. He has assistants interview the patients and take the cases and they select the cards. If there is pathology he takes a photograph for 'before and after' pictures. Kishore then receives the patient, looks at the notes and holds the cards up to the light to see the remedy shining through before pronouncing a prescription and explaining his reasoning to observing students. He does make it seem easy and he thinks nothing of seeing forty patients at a single session.

India

It is thought that already at the time of Hahnemann a German geologist and physician took homeopathy to India but there is no

verification. Also still in Hahnemann's time a Dr Mullens, a missionary was using remedies in Bhowanipore, Calcutta. A Dr John Martin Honigberger in 1839 was brought to India to treat the Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was then seriously ill, and was successful. By the start of the next decade there were many recorded instances of the spread of homeopathy in India including the well known Dr Rutherford Russell who later returned to England and became a leading light in the British Homeopathic Society. Dr Tonnerre, a well known French homeopath was also in Calcutta and carried out the first proving of *Acalypha indica* well known in tubercular haemoptysis.⁷ It was the first prescription I observed when I visited India myself. It was, like the other drugs described by Ghose, already well known to indigenous Indian medicine, and was tested after the system of the homeopaths, and the knowledge was transmitted around the world and entered our materia medica textbooks. Much was learned from Ayurvedic, Unani and Siddha medicine.

So far there was no Indian physician practising, there were European doctors and laymen, and Indian laymen. Under the patronage of Babu Rajendra Lal Dutt, a local Calcutta worthy, homeopathy prospered and spread. His major success was to persuade Dr Mahendra Lal Sircar to adopt homeopathy. Sircar was a brilliant and well known young physician, the second MD graduate of the newly founded University Medical School. At the opening of the Bengal branch of the British Medical Association in 1851 he bitterly denounced homeopathy. Dutt persuaded him to review a new book on homeopathy. Sircar was smitten and when he became a homeopath he was expelled by the BMA. Controversy continued and came to a head in 1870 when Sircar was appointed a Fellow of the University; he was placed in the Faculty of Arts. But in 1878 the Senate transferred him to the Medical Faculty who not surprisingly objected. There was a long and arduous constitutional crisis within the University which has been faithfully preserved in

⁷ Sarat Chandra Ghose, *Drugs of Hindoostan*, Calcutta, 1944, Hahnemann Publishing Company pp.34–50.

print.⁸ Dr Sircar survived with honour although he did eventually resign when plots against him continued. His career in colonial India was as subject to anti homeopathic prejudice as the homeopaths who were expelled from the Massachusetts Medical Society in 1873,⁹ and the *odium medicum* expressed in The Times of London in 1888 to the hapless surgeon who consorted with a homeopath.¹⁰

Indian Homeopathy prospered and spread and is one of the systems of medicine recognised and supported by the state. And Ghose has recorded some 50 remedies from India in regular use. For example *Syzigium jambolanum* is the Jambol fruit, the sweetest fruit I have ever tasted, one of the linguistic origins of the well known sweet food, jam. Of course it is used for a sugar disorder, diabetes mellitus, a wonderfully obvious pathological simillimum.

John Henry Clarke

You must know the work of Clarke, John Henry Clarke. It was he who collected and republished The Times correspondence mentioned above. He was a scholar and an industrious writer who collected material from around the world. His best friends included James Compton Burnett, Thomas Skinner, and Robert Cooper. They regularly dined together and after Cooper's death they became known as the Cooper Club. Each of the members could themselves be the subject of a lecture. Clarke wrote the *Dictionary* because of his own laziness so that he would not have to search so hard in his books if he had it all in one place. So he wrote down everything they said at dinner and the *Dictionary of Materia Medica* is full of symptoms with (B) and (RTC) as sources.¹¹ In fact you cannot discover much about how Burnett prescribed from

⁸ Sarat Chandra Ghose, *Life of Mahendra Lal Sircar*, Calcutta, 1935, Hahnemann Publishing Company 2nd edition.

⁹ Massachusetts Medical Society, *Trial of Drs Bushnell, Fuller, Gregg, Hoffendahl, Russell, Talbot, Thayer & West, for Practising Homeopathy while Members*, Boston 1873.

¹⁰ John Henry Clarke, *Oidium Medicum and Homeopathy: The Times Correspondence*, London 1887, The Homeopathic Publishing Company.

¹¹ John Henry Clarke, *Dictionary of Homeopathic Materia Medica*, London 1900, Homeopathic Publishing Company, 3 Volumes.

his own prolific writings, you have to read him with one eye on Clarke to see the real reasons for his prescriptions. Also some of Burnett's one liner's finished up in Clarke's *Clinical Repertory*.¹² His *Dictionary* was presented to American colleagues at a conference in Atlantic City with the sentiment "Hands Across the Sea".¹³

You may not have realized that Skinner was a high potency man and the Hospital staff in the 1870's were mainly 3x'ers. When Clarke became a true Hahnemannian under the influence of Skinner all offices became closed to him, hence the club and its brilliant publications. His obituaries make it clear that he used all the potencies as needed, and that when he was later offered honours within the Society he refused them.¹⁴ Clarke did not write much philosophy but his *Constitutional Medicine*¹⁵ is the only clear and original summary of the obtuse ideas of the celebrated von Grauvogl and his infamous 'Hydrogenoid Constitution'.¹⁶ He was Editor of a famous journal, *The Homeopathic World*, from 1885 to 1898, and again from 1923 until his death in 1931. He wrote so much that I will not list his work here but refer you to my bibliography.¹⁷

¹² John Henry Clarke, *Clinical Repertory*, London 1904, Homeopathic Publishing Company.

¹³ George Burford The Clarke Memorial Meeting *BrHomJ* 1932, **22.1**, 115-143.

¹⁴ Homeopathy 1932 pp.33 & 73-74 which reprints the notice from *The Times*, and *Homeopathic World* **66**:1, January 1932

¹⁵ John Henry Clarke, *Constitutional Medicine*, London nd, Homeopathic Publishing Company

¹⁶ Dr von Grauvogl, *Textbook of Homeopathy* (1865) Translated by Geoffrey Shipman, London 1870 S Compston.

¹⁷ The main medical works of John Henry Clarke:

All are published in London by the Homeopathic Publishing Company unless otherwise stated.

The Prescriber 1885 (9 editions)

Revolution in Medicine 1886

Odium Medicum and Homeopathy *The Times Correspondence*, 1887

Indigestion its Causes and Cure 1888

Dictionary of Domestic Medicine 1890

Cholera Diarrhoea and Dysentery 1893

Therapeutics of the Serpent Poisons 1893

Homeopathy: All About It 1894

Diseases of the Heart and Arteries 1895

Clarke did not confine himself to homeopathy. He wrote about diet and lifestyle and became interested in William Blake.¹⁸ He was an anti-vivisectionist, taking the scientific imperative of homeopathic medicine, further, into the moral sphere. This was by all accounts an area where apparent moral clarity was obfuscated by political alliances which may appear improbable today.¹⁹ There was a view among certain anti-vivisectionists at that time that there were too many Jews involved in medical research. Clarke went so far as to work for an organization devoted solely to the purposes of anti-semitism and similar propaganda. He took the chair at its foundation meeting.²⁰ There were very close ties between this organisation, the Britons, who later became the British Union of Fascists, and the London Anti-vivisection Society. Until his death Clarke was at the heart of all this and himself wrote 5 booklets with lurid titles, and held offices like treasurer and vice president in the Britons.²¹ Lebzelter shows how Clarke was left to manage the

Catarrh Colds & Grippe 1899

Dictionary of Homeopathic Materia Medica 3 Volumes London 1900 & 1925

Clinical Repertory 1904

Rheumatism and Sciatica 1904 James Epps

Life and Work of James Compton Burnett 1904

Homeopathy Explained 1905

Thomas Skinner: A Biographical Sketch 1907

Radium as an Internal Remedy 1908

The Cure of Tumours By Medicines 1908

Whooping Cough Cured with Coqueluchin, its Homeopathic Nosode (2nd edition.) 1908

Gunpowder as a War Remedy 1915

Hahnemann and Paracelsus 1923

Dr Skinner's Grand Characteristics of the Materia Medica 1931

Constitutional Medicine (nd)

Foundations of Materia Medica (nd)

Non Surgical Diseases of the Glands and Bones with a Chapter on Scrofula (nd)

¹⁸ *Vital Economy or How to preserve Your Strength*, London T Fisher Unwin 1908

Two books on Blake, details not located.

¹⁹ Julius A. Roth *Health Purifiers and their Enemies*, New York 1967, Prodist p.32.

²⁰ Robert Benewick *Political Violence and Public Order*, London 1969, Allen Lane, pp 42-44, and

Gisela Lebzelter, *Political Anti-semitism in England 1918-1939*, London 1987, Macmillan/St Antony's, pp.49-67.

²¹ John Henry Clarke:

The Call of the Sword, London, London 1917, The Financial News

England Under the Heel of the Jew, London 1918, Judaic Publishing Company

organization when the president went to court to defend a libel action from Sir Alfred Mond, which was lost. Clarke wrote of the ‘need to expel man of alien blood and alien instincts’. He also argued that Prussia and Germany were Judaic nations and that the war was one of Jewish finance aimed at an overthrow of the Christian civilization of England.

Clarke was a significant figure in the development of homeopathy and I cannot see how this revelation changes that. I have known about this information for some 10 years, having stumbled upon it by chance and have not understood how to deal with it. I still refer to his books and study them avidly. Knowing the context does not seem to change my need to study but sometimes I wonder who he really was.

One medical historian, Frank Honigsbaum, noted that many figures from the world of unorthodox practice joined right wing political groups.²² There was much overlap with the Eugenics Society, with hindsight this can be seen as a hint of what was to follow after Clarke’s death. Proctor suggests that ‘the early racial hygiene movement was not a monolithic structure but a diverse blend of both Left and Right, liberals and reactionaries’.²³

Germany

But there is more. There was an International Conference of the Liga Homeopathica Medicorum Internationalis in Berlin in 1937 and I have been unable to locate a copy of the transactions, even to discover if any were printed. Gerhard Wagner, Führer of the Nazi Physicians’ League, and Karl Kötschau, a leading spokesman of organic medicine in Germany both addressed the Conference. Kötschau hoped for an end to curative medicine, in that

Democracy and Shylocracy London, Judaic Publishing Company (nd)

White Labour versus Red, London 1922, The Britons and The Judaic Publishing Company.

A Patriotic Fund to Fight the Hidden Hand, London 1923, Britons Publishing Company.

²² Frank Honigsbaum, *Division in British Medicine* London 1979, Kogan Page p.169.

²³ 19 Robert N Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*, Cambridge MA USA 1988, Harvard University Press

homeopathy as part of the new German Science of Healing as part of the National Socialist Revolution would render it unnecessary, to be replaced by preventive care.

The Liga held a Hahnemann Jubilee Conference in Stuttgart in 1950 with mainly German participants and visitors from some 13 other countries.²⁴ I now feel that as there will again be an International Conference of the Liga in Germany in May 1991 these things must be revealed and discussed and that it is not for me to pass judgement on them. I leave that to the reader. It is another example of homeopathy taking part in the surrounding culture.

In Germany under Hitler, homeopathic medicine received a great deal of official support. The Robert Bosch Hospital was completed in 1940, a 300 bed modern homeopathic hospital. Tischner, a noted German historian of homeopathy wrote 'in the Third Reich organic medicine has found a respect that it never, not in its wildest dreams, imagined that it would achieve.'²⁵ And then it was abused.

One series of incidents sticks in my mind. It is told that Rudolf Steiner used a high potency of the ashes of the spleen testes and skin of a rabbit, sprayed as a liquid, onto an agricultural estate in Koberwitz, Germany in 1924, to rid the estate of rabbit infestation. Of course the Anthroposophical movement was later banned by the Nazi regime. and although published, this tale may still be apocryphal. Nonetheless there is a sinister sequel, namely the experiments with potentised ashes of the same parts of young Jews as a contribution to the Final Solution. These were used as injections, and sprayed across the length and breadth of the Reich. This appears to be well documented and the perpetrators have been executed for crimes against humanity. Another example of an attempt at the abuse of homeopathy was the futile prescription of

²⁴ Hahnemann Jubilee Congress, Stuttgart, *BrHomJ* 1955; **65**:1, p.25.

²⁵ Rudolf Tischner, Homeopathy as Stepchild: Remarks on the Status of Homeopathy in the New German 'Science of Healing', *Fortschritte der Medizin*, 1937, **55**:41.

Caladium seguinum to induce sterility.²⁶

The tide turned during the war and the criticism of alternative medicine which is always latent in ‘scientific’ medicine re-asserted itself in many forms, such as tracts and speeches against quackery, and accusations that the German Biochemic Association had Marxist Jewish tendencies.²⁷ The evidence shows that the Nazis were using whatever form of medicine suited their purposes, whether organic or orthodox at different times. And both sorts of medicine responded to their needs. We do know that many homeopaths fled, like Edward Whitmont and William Gutman to the USA, like Ledermann, Menasse and Leeser and many others to Britain. Norbert Galatzer even made it to China. There is no end to our voyages.

Otto Leeser

Otto Leeser was a remarkable homeopath. He wrote extensively on materia medica but unfortunately only one volume has been translated from the German, concerned with minerals.²⁸ He attempted to accomplish much when he was in Britain. He established the London Homeopathic Laboratories in a small town near to London. His dearest wish was to establish a British Homeopathic Pharmacopeia,²⁹ something that had not been revised since the 1882. But he could not interest the small community of homeopaths in Britain in his endeavours, although he did begin, and surprisingly to me in 1952 he returned to Stuttgart to the Robert Bosch Hospital in Stuttgart.

There has been a remarkable resurgence of homeopathy in Germany since then, both heterodox and classical methods of prescribing flourish. It is hoped and has to be assumed that there is

²⁶ Trevor Ravenscroft *The Spear of Destiny*, London 1973, Neville Spearman, (reprinted by Sphere 1990), pp.321-328

²⁷ Proctor op. cit. p.247.

²⁸ Otto Leeser, *Textbook of Homeopathic Materia Medica* (1932), Translated by Linn J Boyd, Philadelphia 1935, Boericke & Tafel

²⁹ Otto Leeser, Towards a New British Homeopathic Pharmacopeia *BrHomJ*, 1937 **47**:2, pp.96-116.& Otto Leeser, Report on the New British Pharmacopeia, *BrHomJ*, 1940 **50**:2, pp.102-128.

some critical determination to overcome the legacy of the recent past and to return to the older mystery of the first dose of Peruvian Bark.

“I think there is only one way to science – or to philosophy for that matter; to meet a problem, to see its beauty and fall in love with it; to get married to it, and to live with it happily, till death do ye part. Unless you should meet another and even more fascinating problem, or unless, indeed you should obtain a solution.”³⁰

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³⁰ Attributed to Karl Popper