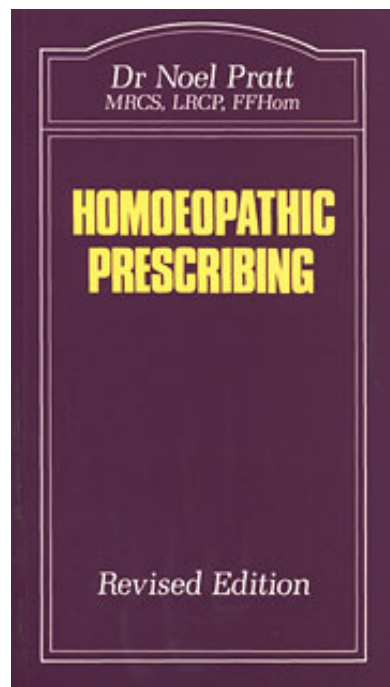




Noel Pratt

Homoeopathic Prescribing

Reading excerpt
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INTRODUCTION

This book is intended for the student of homoeopathy who requires short lists of remedies for most of the common ailments.

In composing these lists I have referred to the works of other authors, in addition to drawing on my own experience of homoeopathic prescribing in thirty years in the National Health Service. I gratefully acknowledge my main sources of reference:

Dr C. M. Boger's *Synoptic Key of the Materia Medica*, Dr J. H. Clarke's *The Prescriber*. Dr D. M. Gibson's *Homoeopathic First Aid*, Dr R. Hughes' *Principles and Practice of Homoeopathy*, Dr J. T. Kent's *Repertory*, Drs Neatby and Stonham's *Manual of Homoeopathic Therapeutics* and Dr Margaret Tyler's *Drug Pictures*.

This book is primarily for qualified physicians, who will know when investigation and other treatment is needed. The book can, of course, be bought by others who are not medically qualified but require the information for the benefit of themselves, their families and friends. To such persons I say: homoeopathy is of great value as first aid and for minor diseases, but if there is any doubt of the significance of the symptoms and signs of the disease for which a remedy is sought, be sure to obtain the opinion of a qualified physician. You may find the homoeopathic remedy a valuable supplement to other treatment.

The list of symptoms, signs and diagnoses is presented in alphabetical order. The sections are confined to one page for ease of reference and to avoid any confusion which might arise from long lists of remedies, including some which are seldom used. In each section the remedies are presented in alphabetical order; this is better than trying to arrange them in order of importance, about which opinions would differ. Lay terms are not always included - sometimes they are deliberately omitted. For example, 'Spots' would be an unsatisfactory section; the prescriber must know what variety of spots is in question. Relatively vague terms such as Sore Throat have no separate sections, because the reader will need to make a more precise diagnosis, such as vii

Tonsillitis, Pharyngitis, Laryngitis, or Tracheitis, and then refer to the appropriate page.

I have carefully considered the suggestion that the subject matter should be presented under the headings of the anatomical systems most involved in each disease. I have decided not to do so, because the book does not pretend to be a systematic textbook in that sense, but essentially a handbook for quick refreshing of the memory.

The brief notes after each remedy will not always be sufficient to select the right one without further thought; these few symptoms and signs are in the nature of reminders, to encourage further thought. It is usually necessary to take into account not only the main symptoms and signs, but also the physical and temperamental characteristics of the patient, and the various factors which make the disease better or worse.

Critics may object that the presentation of short lists of remedies will encourage prescribers to dodge the work of formal repertorisation on paper in the Kentian manner. There are times when full repertorisation is necessary, but there are other times when personal experience enables a simpler way of selecting the similimum, especially when aided by a handbook such as this.

It will be noticed that there are only a few sections concerning mental symptoms and the various moods and temperaments. The main reason is that to include them all would make the book unwieldy. In Kent's *Repertory*, for example, there are eighty-four major rubrics in the ninety-four pages devoted to 'Mind'. Therefore no attempt has been made to mention all of them.

Strange, rare and peculiar symptoms are mentioned, just as in the clinical situation patients sometimes describe their troubles in strange, rare and peculiar terms. In teaching hospitals these are usually ignored because they do not fit into the textbook descriptions of disease. Many doctors hardly hear them because they seem to be irrelevant to prescribing, but when they are used for selecting the homoeopathic remedy, their value is great.

The list of subjects is deliberately not comprehensive; most of the infectious, contagious and notifiable diseases have been omitted, because if they are not treated (and when necessary notified) on conventional lines, allegations of negligence are possible. Nevertheless, homoeopathic remedies can be valuable additional treatment, especially in convalescence and for any sequelae.

Homoeopathy cannot, in my opinion, reverse degenera-

live diseases, but experience of its use does seem to justify the hope that it may restrain degenerative processes or even halt them, by improving the general health.

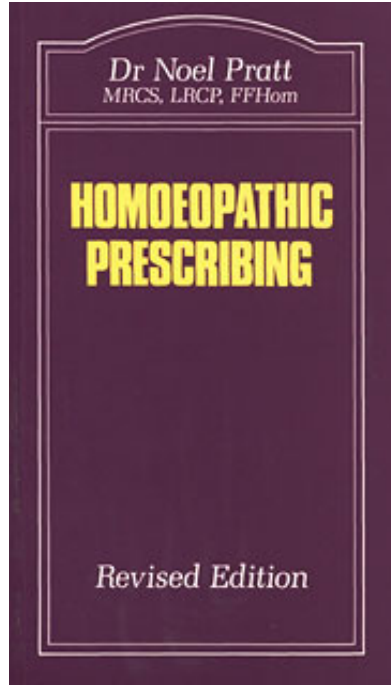
Dr Marion Gray's list of constitutional remedies and the main indications for them is a welcome Appendix to the book. Whenever no 'local' or 'organ' remedy is clearly indicated, reference to the list of constitutional remedies will usually enable the choice to be made with confidence.

I am grateful to my friends Dr Hamish Boyd, Dr David Gemmell, Dr Marianne Harling, Dr Alastair Jack, Dr Marion Gray and Mr John Ainsworth. MPS, all of whom read and made many helpful comments on earlier or later drafts for the book.

Homoeopathic knowledge continues to grow, as is shown by the recent publication of the *Materia Medica of New Homoeopathic Remedies* by Dr O. A. Julian of Paris, in which there are seventy-eight new remedies described and recent additional information about twenty-eight other remedies.

Every homoeopath should strive to record all that he or she learns from experience, as well as from conversations and from reading. The interleaved pages of this book are suitable for recording such knowledge.

N.J.P.



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