Tomas Paschero
Homoeopathy

Reading excerpt

Homoeopathy
of Tomas Paschero
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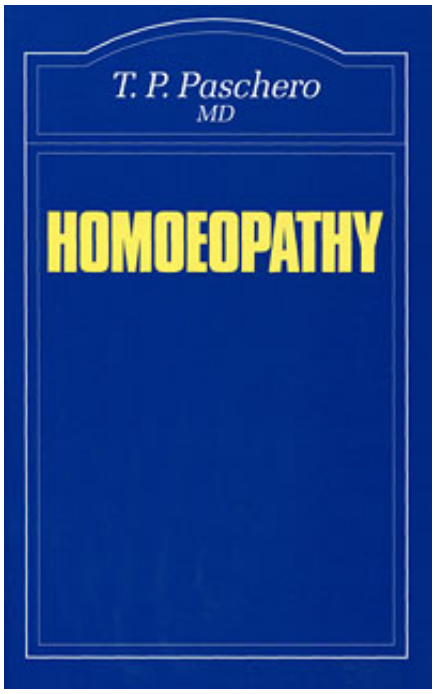

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Preface

This book gathers together a selection of the writings published during the course of a personal formative process which entailed the development of a Hahnemannian concept of chronic disease, and which led to an understanding of homoeopathic remedies as constitutional types. These writings also reflect the influence that the process had on the unfolding of my vocation.

Any profession, no matter how humble, offers the possibility of satisfying a quest for the meaning of life, as long as it is practised with integrity. Thus the dignity of the task depends on who carries it out and how it is carried out, rather than what is actually done. Precisely because humility is required, the art of medicine is an occupation of the highest spiritual order. Medicine consists not only in following the professional rules of the art, but also in transcending them to develop that sense of community which confers a true human sense to one's mission.

This requirement motivated my first steps in medicine. Pondering the meaning of my role vis-à-vis my patients, I began to inquire into the nature and meaning of the diseases from which they suffered. It was not long before I felt that something basic was missing from a training which enabled me to diagnose the pathological lesion, the organic dysfunction or the localised disease. And yet, however exhaustive the symptomatic analysis, it yielded no enlightened synthesis of the whole patient - the very protagonist of their own existential drama whose anguish and moral suffering took the form of subjective symptoms that had no assigned clinical value. I felt ashamed of my inability to respond to the complaints of patients who - intuitively aware of the relationship between their symptoms and their disease - were hinting at a medicine of which I was ignorant and asking for help I could not give.

Again and again I remembered the words of Claude Bernard (1813-78), the great master of experimental medicine, when he said, 'All live phenomena are, beyond doubt, explainable mechanically, but not the order which joins them.' Scientifically oriented medicine lacks

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a vision of the aetiology of the morbid process in the patient's emotional disturbance, what Hippocrates and those of the Aesculapian School so often extolled — the holistic understanding of the patient — which caused them to say that there are no diseases but only diseased people.

Drawn to this clinical vision and favoured by a chance circumstance, I made my first contact with homoeopathy through Samuel Hahnemann's *Organon.* I felt that this was to be my path on reading the first paragraph, which states: 'The physician's high and *only* mission is to restore the sick to health, to cure, as it is termed'. And further, the third paragraph:

> If the physician clearly perceives what is to be cured in diseases, that is to say, in every individual case of disease ... if he clearly perceives what is curative in medicines, ... and if he knows how to adapt, according to clearly defined principles, what is curative in medicines to what he has discovered to be undoubtedly morbid in the patient... as also in respect to the exact mode of preparation and quantity of it required *(proper dose),* and the proper period for repeating the dose; ... *then he understands how to treat judiciously and rationally, and he is a true practitioner of the healing art.*

A reflective reading of Hahnemann's *Organon,* Kent's *Lectures on Homoeopathic Philosophy* and Phatak's work helped me to define my spiritual and professional approach. I then had the good fortune to meet Dr Enrique Bonicel, a French pharmacist with a deep knowledge of homoeopathy who had established a homoeopathic pharmacy in Buenos Aires. He generously informed me on the bibliography and preparation of remedies, and also sought out and gathered together the few physicians who, in an isolated fashion, had begun to practise homoeopathy in Argentina: Drs Godofredo Jonas, Jorge Masi Elizalde, Carlos Fisch and Armando Grosso, the latter being an intern at the Children's Hospital. Before long, Drs Grosso, Fisch, Masi Elizalde and I had established a friendship held fast by our yearning to deepen our knowledge and be worthy of the dignity of a homoeopath.

This book summarises what I learned from these three dear and wise friends, now gone but still vibrantly present as teachers and physicians. The same applies to Drs Jonas and Rodolfo Semich, also members of this group of homoeopaths that offered its first lessons at the lecture hall of the newspaper *La Prensa,* to a rapidly growing audience of physicians. Encouraged by our success we established the Asociación

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Médica Homeopática Argentina, whose legal status was conferred almost immediately.

During this period I also corresponded with foreign doctors, especially from the United States of America, where Kent, Allen, Farrington, Hering and the other great masters of homoeopathy had written the materia medicas with which I was now familiar.

I then decided to visit the Flower Homeopathic Hospital in New York where I stayed for a couple of weeks, keeping in close contact with such renowned homoeopaths as Drs Steams, Mackenzie, Elizabeth Wright Hubbard, Jackson and others. I then went to the Hahnemann College of Philadelphia where I was able to practise homoeopathy in a hospital setting, mainly with Dr William Griggs, the renowned homoeopathic paediatrician, who shared his valuable teachings with me. I worked too in Philadelphia with Dr Underhill, who also gave me generously of his time and affection.

At the end of my stay in Philadelphia, Dr E. Dixon, the director of the hospital and with whom I had had lunch daily, gave me an enormous quantity of books which were later to become part of the library of the Asociación Medica Homeopatica Argentina. These books are a true bibliographic treasure, as many of them have long been out of print. After a visit to Boston I then travelled to Washington, where I attended many scientific meetings of which I have fond memories and where I had the privilege of working for several days in the private office of Dr Julia Green, one of Kent's students. Finally, I went to Chicago in search of Dr A. H. Grimmer, who had been chief clinician and consultant to Kent himself and who was the main reason for my trip to the United States.

Dr Grimmer welcomed me with a stern yet inquisitive frown. After fixing his gaze on me and hearing my appeal, he curtly explained that he first had to assess my readiness and personal qualities for the practice of homoeopathy. In his long career, he said, he had seen many physicians who had turned out to be bad homoeopaths, due both to a lack of qualifications and honesty, thus harming a system which required steadfast moral and intellectual values as well as a true sense of vocation. Enthusiastic about fulfilling this requirement to the best of my ability, I underwent a thorough examination on homoeopathic doctrine - and I also asked, as a corollary of a prolonged interrogation which he admitted satisfied him, to be allowed to examine a patient and draw up a clinical history before him.

The outcome was that Dr Grimmer invited me to his home, thirty miles from Chicago, and from that moment I worked by his side for

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four months in his office. I lunched with him daily, and after our work we would retire to his home where his wife and children treated me as a member of the family. After dinner we would retire to his desk, where we would discuss the case histories of the day. I enjoyed his wise explanations which, in his warm and fatherly tone, fulfilled my yearning for knowledge and enriched me spiritually.

I am indebted to Dr Grimmer, a worthy and profound teacher who honoured me with his friendship. To this day I treasure the memory of his strength and integrity. I can still see him standing in the snow on the platform of the lonely railway station, slowly waving his hand, on the night I took the train away. With tears in my eyes I saw him grow more and more distant until he was lost for ever in the shadow of the night. The memory of people like Dr Grimmer, who lived in the service of others, endures in our hearts.

Grimmer has not died, just as Hahnemann, Kent, Hering, Allen, Clarke, Boenninghausen, Roberts, Nash and many other brilliant teachers have not died. They have handed down that humanistic homoeopathy with a spiritual meaning which was present in their own lives. Only by realising the highest values is it possible to practise a medicine such as Hahnemannian homoeopathy, which requires a grasp of the essential symptoms of the patient as a whole, unique and singular human being. These values can be perceived and described only when the physician has discovered his or her own true self.

This is the formative process of the first period of my homoeopathic career which I mentioned at the beginning of this preface and which runs through these writings implicitly, both in those on doctrine and in the materia medica.

I am indebted to my friend Dr Shuji Murata, a distinguished homoeopathic physician of our school, for collecting the clinical case histories in this book with zeal and intelligence. I also wish to express my gratitude to Drs Alfonso Masi Elizalde and Eugenio F. Candegabe, special and firm friends, true representatives of Hahnemannian homoeopathy in Argentina, who have encouraged and accompanied me in my teaching endeavours.

T.P.P.

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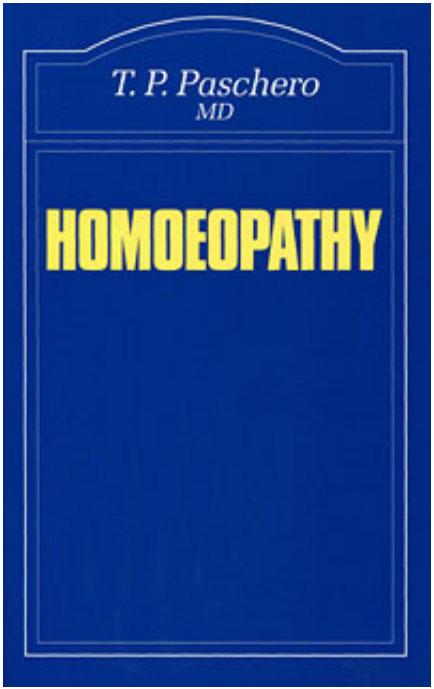

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