Garth Wilkinson Boericke
Principles of Homoeopathy for students in medicine

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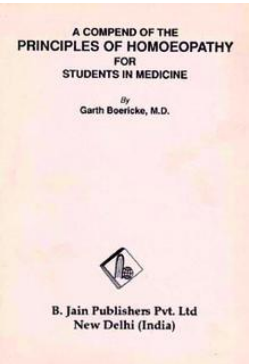
von Garth Wilkinson Boericke



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I

THE THERAPEUTIC FIELD

The aim of the art of medicine is to cure disease, and the physician's highest ideal of a cure, as Hahnemann says, Organon§2, is the rapid, gentle and permanent restoration of health, or the removal and annihilation of disease in its whole extent, in the shortest, most reliable and most harmless manner, and on easily comprehensible principles, that is, with the least possible expenditure of time, money, vitality and suffering.

In pursuance of this object, the physician presses into his service all agencies which tend to health. This is the part of

Therapeutics *[therapeuein,* to attend upon]. It includes all that relates to the science and art of healing, includes all agents, medicines among them, which may aid this purpose. It embraces dietetics, climate, clothing, bathing, nursing, application of heat, cold, electricity and all other means used by the physician for restoring health, when that is possible, or in palliating violent conditions or incurable diseases, or in preventing their development. Hence there are

Three methods of combating disease, of which every physician is bound to avail himself. They are:

1. Preventive medicine.
2. Palliative medicine.
3. Curative medicine.

These cover the whole field of possible therapeutic activity.*

Preventive Medicine includes the application of everything that physiology, hygiene, sanitary science, etc., can teach to lessen the development of disease according to the teaching in § 4 of the Qrganon.

*This was aptly and perfectly expressed by **Dr. Hering** to the author in the German words *Hindern,Lindern,Mindern,* embodying every possibility of a physician's distinctive sphere of usefulness.

Leaving aside the large field of General Therapeutics, common to all physicians, of whatever school of medicine, we restrict ourselves to the consideration of the different uses of drugs as therapeutic agents.

Medicinal Therapeutics is the application of drugs as medicines for the purpose of modifying or curing disease. Drugs are employed in the medicinal therapeutic field either empirically, or according to the Law of Similars-i.e., scientifically, because according to fixed law.

Empiricism is based upon mere experience and is practice without regard to any theory or scientific deduction or investigation. A remedy is given which experience has shown to be effective in a similar case. It is the rule of authority and leads to mechanical routinism in practice. Certain remedies have, however, obtained a permanent place in medicine that have been discovered empirically, and whose mode of action cannot be readily explained. It has been found that certain drugs act curatively against certain definite diseases when given in material dosage. They are known as specifics. There are not many, but such are Quinine in malaria, Mercury in syphilis, Iodine in glandular affections, Salicylic acid in rheumatism, etc. These occupy a rather unique position, though it can be claimed that the relationship is a homoeopathic one, although it differs from the usual homoeopathic relationship between remedies to disease in requiring material dosage.

Practice according to some pathological theory is characteristic of the old school of medicine. It is constantly changing, as different views on physiology and pathology lead to corresponding therapeutic changes. It is, therefore, one of the most unstable of methods. At present, pathology being dominated by bacteriological views, the corresponding therapeutic measures are largely germicidal, anti-septic or anti-toxical. But already bacterial pathology, and as a consequence its therapeutics show signs of the inevitable displacement.*

*Says Lawson Tait, that during his professional life he has learned and unlearned some four or five theories of inflammation, and he predicts that the present prevalent theory, coccophobia he calls it, will soon go the way of the other theories.

based upon a natural *law-nature's law for healing*— and the conditions for carrying out the law are observed, there ought not to be any failure-only success. Why, then this failure at times in certain patients and even typical acute diseases; why this almost constant failure in chronic disease?

He says that, from the year 1816-17, the solution of this problem occupied him day and night, and at length he succeeded in solving it. Like all of Hahnemann's work, it was the fruit of long and patient observation and study and experiment.

Ten years later, in 1827, he was ready to communicate this new discovery, as he believed this epochmaking theory, to the profession. He summoned to Coethen, where he was then practicing as physician to the reigning prince, two of his most esteemed disciples, Doctors Stapf and Gross, and communicated to them his theory of the origin of chronic diseases and his discovery of a completely new series of medicines for their cure, exhorting them to test the truth of his opinions and discoveries in their own practice, he disclosed this to these two disciples in case his death-for he was then in his seventy-third year-should have occurred before the publication of his book on the subject. This remarkable book, entitled "The Chronic Diseases, Their Peculiar Nature and Homoeopathic Treatment," duly appeared the next year, 1828. With the publication of this book, supplementing the Organon, the high-water mark of medical philosophy was reached. A few generations hence this will be generally acknowledged.

Cause of Recurrence of Chronic Diseases

His researches and reflections, Hahnemann tells us in his work, led him to the conclusion that the cause of the constant recurrence of chronic diseases after their apparent or partial removal by the homoeopathic remedy, and their recurrence with new and grave symptoms, was that the symptoms manifesting themselves at any one time were *only a portion* of the deeply-seated fundamental malady, whose great extent was shown by the new symptoms that appeared from time to time. He believed it to be a chronic miasm, which the body could not throw off spontaneously and unaided, not by careful diet or regimen, but that it rather increased in intensity and extent from year to year.

59. Pregnancy offers a brilliant sphere of action to antipsoric remedies, but only the highest potencies ought to be employed. Nurslings ought to get their medicine through the milk of the mother or wet nurSe,

60. The vital forces, if left to itself, tries to palliate by producing secretions and evacuations, or diarrheas, vomiting, sweats, ulcer, hemorrhages,etc., but they produce only an apparent alleviation of the primitive disease, and in fact increase it on account of the great loss of nutritious pabulum which the patient has suffered.

61. At the beginning of the antipsoric treatment constipation is often the great bugbear of the patient, and an injection of pure tepid water may be allowed, which may be times repeated, until the antipsoric remedies succeed to regulate the proofs of intestinal evacuation. Sulphur and lycopodium act most favorably under those circumstances. Hot baths interfere with the effects of antipsoric treatment.

62. The smallest possible electrical sparks aid the antipsoric treatment by animating those parts of the body which had been long affected with paralysis or insensibility.

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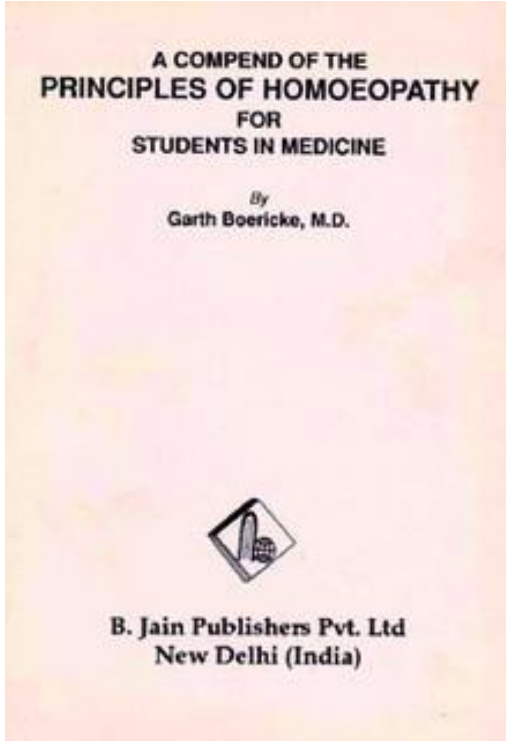

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