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Comments on homoeopathic practice by Dr. Hughes: genuine guide for neophytes of homoeopathy

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Abstract

Dr. Hughes, an enthusiastic, clear headed and hardworking pioneer of Homoeopathy is known for his analytical mindset and scientific approach. He made a great impact with his work in this noble science called Homoeopathy. Literature written by Dr. Hughes forms one of the authentic works in field of Homoeopathy. Homoeopathic practice is among those writings of Hughes reflects his practical approach and deeper understanding about the practical aspect of Homoeopathy. This writing of Dr. Hughes is valuable for many neophytes who are seeking to get acquaintance with good Homoeopathic practice. So, let's explore his writing which guides us to establish a successful Homoeopathic practice with a solid foundation in Homoeopathic field.

Keywords: Homoeopathic practice, Richard Hughes, neophytes

Introduction

Dr. Hughes

Richard Hughes was born in London, England. He received the title of M.R.C.S. (Eng.), in 1857 and L.R.C.P. (Edin.) in 1860. The title of M.D. was conferred upon him by the American College a few years later. He worked with Timothy Field Allen on his book Cyclopaedia of Drug Pathogenesis, and also helped Robert Ellis Dudgeon to translate Samuel Hahnemann's 'The Materia Medica Pura' into English.

Hughes converted to Homoeopathy, and in 1876 he was appointed as Permanent Secretary of the Organization of the International Congress of Homoeopathy Physicians in Philadelphia. He also presided over the International Homoeopathic Congress in London, organizing the Congresses that were held every five years. He edited the Annals of the British Homoeopathic Society. He worked at the London Homoeopathic Hospital for a while but spent most of his medical career in practice in Brighton. In 1889, he was appointed as an Editor of the British Journal of Homoeopathy, a position he held until his death. In 1902, he was appointed as Lecturer in Materia Medica by the British Homoeopathic Society^[1].

Contributions of Dr. Hughes^[2]

1. Manual of Pharmacodynamics (1st edition - 1867, 2nd edition - 1868).
2. Encyclopaedia of Drug Pathogenesis (1902).
3. The Principles and Practice of Homoeopathy (1902).

Homoeopathic practice

He was very influential British Homoeopath. He practiced in Brighton and at the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital. He considered modalities and pathological symptoms to be of utmost importance and advocated the use of low potency remedies (below 30 °C).

Dr. Richard Hughes on Homoeopathic practice

[Introductory letter from manual of therapeutics] Dr. Hughes with scientific mindset and practical skills able established a huge practice. If anyone wants to join this science and practice Homoeopathy during his time, he always heartily welcomed them and guided them to grasp the concepts of this science.

Homoeopathic practice

Homoeopathy: An organization

Before accepting any concept or institution, scientific man must search for truth with his

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analytical and rational mind.

One must know about the origin i.e., roots and development of the institution. Knowledge about the evolution of Homoeopathic science creates a strong motivation for neophytes to join and practice this noble science.

Dr. Hughes motivates neophytes by describing about the situation of Homoeopathy during its conception and developmental phase. He described about adversities and sacrifices one need in order to accept and practice this noble science. He encourages neophytes to be faithful to Homoeopathic science if they want to follow the path of truth.

Be physician first

He said first try to get acquainted with suffering humanity and nature of diseases in medical science. One must understand about role of hygiene and auxiliary methods as physician in order to treat suffering humanity. Giving drug to patient is not an end of his job but he must advise patient regarding diet and regimen by understanding his surroundings i.e., natural influences. One should play a role of hygienist along with healer in order to be a good physician.

Experience in Homoeopathic practice

He said that do not try to follow anyone to practice Homoeopathy, try to cultivate clinical skills with your own experience. Many times, neophytes might get confused regarding case taking and application of medicine in case during initial period. He said one will learn experience and confidence with his practice. He mentioned about benefits to learn from experience of Homoeopathic practice e.g., knowledge about disease aetiology and manifestations, skills for giving advises about auxiliary measures and proficiency in understanding and application of Similia Similibus Curentur in practice.

Selection of remedy

Before selection of remedy, Homoeopath focuses on concept of Tolle causam i.e., removal of cause. As we all know that if cause is not removed then disease state is not altered into previously healthy state and sickness is progressed into irreversible form. So, identification and removal of cause are essential points one needs to keep in mind while practicing this science.

Selection of remedy starts from the basic concept of understanding symptomatology. Emphasis on clinical features of disease and understanding about physiological action of drugs make hughesian philosophy unique in field of Homoeopathy. After case taking, Homoeopathic case analysis depends upon two considerations, Generalization and Individualization. His advice points that while analysing the case, one must give more importance to generalizations before individualization.

According to Hughes, similarity should be as far as possible generic, specific and individual. While selection of remedy, with the help of this knowledge one can get group of remedies for case. He said that you don't have to consider all the remedies from Aconite to Zizia but according to above concept of similarity, group of remedies were studied, and final selection should be with one of the remedy from that group.

He gave examples about clinical conditions and their corresponding group of remedies. E. g. pleurisy with group

of remedies like aconite, Bryonia, phosphorus etc. He emphasis that one should possess knowledge about every stage of clinical condition and their corresponding group of remedies.

He kept open mind for introduction of new remedies in that particular group of remedies and extended symptomatology of old ones are helpful to enhance knowledge of materia medica.

Following steps are suggested by Dr. Hughes for selection of remedy with the help of materia medica and repertory

- After case taking, review symptomatology of case
- Look them up one by one in your repertory
- Follow the drug indicated in the materia medica
- Weigh well what you find
- Don't be hasty or too fondly credulous for prescribing medicine.

Choice of dose

Acute cases

He said that in acute cases, you have to prescribe in such a way that action of medicine [physiological] wholly absorbed and care need to protect your patient from over activity of medicine. Medicines with Moderate attenuation are sufficient while one dealing with an acute cases.

Chronic case

Treatment of chronic disorders, dose depends upon the nature of drugs whether it is feebler one or more potent one. But as compared to acute, here choice of attenuation is wide. Treatment of chronic disease needs variations in medicines as well as doses depending upon the nature of remedies, susceptibility of patients. Medium to higher potencies are required to manage these types of cases. Attention should be paid on administration of remedy i.e., in form of tablets or globules.

Choice of books

Dr. Hughes emphasis that physician must possess knowledge of diagnostic symptoms as well as individualistic symptoms for better practice. But first suggestion was Organon of Medicine by Dr. Hahnemann. Following other books and their authors name suggested by Dr. Hughes.

- Homoeopathy - science of therapeutics by Carroll Dunham.
- Essay on medicine by Dr. Sharp.
- Lesser writings of Hahnemann by Dr. Dudgeon.

For materia medica - Materia Medica Pura by Dr. Hahnemann, cyclopaedia of drug pathogenesis, dictionary of practical materia medica, Pharmacodynamics.

He also added some Repertories and Journals from England and America to reading list of Homoeopathic physician.

Epilogue

Dr. Hughes, a man with high spirit to practice Homoeopathy concludes his writings with following words, 'You will do this as you think more of the essentials of the method than of its accidents as you cultivate it for the good of your patients rather than for the filling of your own pockets as you count all difference of opinion as to means a small thing in comparison with our common end the promotion of the good cause we have at heart. Practise Homoeopathy in this

spirit; and you will do your part, small or great as it may be, for the reform in medicine which one day will be seen to mark with white the nine-tenth century of our era.'

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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