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Research Based Homoeopathic Practise

- An Approach to Hyperuricemia, Flagship Sign of Early Onset of Gout with Case Report
- My Head is Aching.....!
A Case Study of Anaemia Cured with Homoeopathic Medicine



Hospital. Kolkata- 09, WB.

3. **Dr Sumanta Kamila**, BHMS. PG Scholar (Part-II), Department of Practice of Medicine of The Calcutta Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital. Kolkata- 09, WB.
4. **Prof. (Dr.) Kisor Kumar Naskar**, HOD. Materia Medica, The Calcutta Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital. Kolkata- 09, WB.

In Italics

Why Learning our Homeopathic History is Important?

About our Columnist



Dr. Vatsala Sperling

MS, PhD, PDHom, CCH, RSHom

- Former Chief of Clinical Microbiology services at The CHILD's Trust, a children's hospital in Chennai, India, where she conducted research with the World Health Organization (WHO) and published extensively.
- After moving to the United States, Dr. Sperling pursued an education in homeopathy at Mi-sha Norland's School of Homeopathy, Devon, UK. She continues to study and practice homeopathy in Vermont.
- She volunteers for the National Center of Homeopathy and has served on the board of directors of the North American Society of Homeopaths.
- Author of ten books including The Ayurvedic Reset Diet through Inner Traditions as well as many essays and articles on homeopathy, health, and spirituality

As students and practitioners of Homeopathy, we refer to literature from earlier centuries, repertories and materia medicas written by people who died way before our parents were born. These readings are done for our bread and butter. We simply cannot ignore the works of Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), James

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based practice is the demand of homoeopathy for its scientific validation, but the progress is very slow, so experienced, qualified, energetic people must be allowed to work and modern types of equipment/ laboratory facilities should be utilized for this purpose. Homoeopathy can give be-fitted replies to the doubts raised by other schools of medicine with evidence and clarity.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

1. **Dr Vishakhaba R. Gohil**, M.D Scholar, Organon of Medicine and Homoeopathic Philosophy
2. **Dr Pooja Chauhan**, M.D Scholar, Organon of Medicine and Homoeopathic Philosophy
Under the guidance of: Dr Heena Rawal, MD [HOM], Principal of Ahmedabad Homoeopathic Medical College, HOD – Department of Organon of Medicine

Taylor Kent (1849-1916), Margaret Lucy Tylor (1875-1943), William Boericke (1849-1929) and so on. Their writings are so relevant to our day-to-day job as homeopaths that we do not consider these as ‘history books’. Still in print, these classic books are alive and well as if they were written in contemporary times.

I find it immensely interesting that just as these illustrious practitioners were writing about their experiences of homeopathy, the “history of homeopathy” was being written. As modern homeopaths, we are not aware about this history, and it is not taught in any great details even in our homeopathy medical schools. Can you imagine, just how completely unaware the regular public must be about history of homeopathy?

Such being the condition, you can also imagine the level of my excitement when I was asked to read a manuscript on this subject, written by Jerry M Kantor. In this manuscript, I could see a book that every student of homeopathy must read with PRIDE – pride in knowing that we have a very rich history. “Sane Asylums: The Success of Homeopathy before Psychiatry Lost Its Mind” is a book by Jerry Kantor. In this book, he presents copious verifiable information focused on a hero we can root for and a heroine we can relate to, alongside snippets about a slice of time (1875-1925) when the stars of homeopathy were ascending. Taking you on a fascinating stroll through medical history, Kantor shows how, in the late 1800s visionary medical doctors were treating mental illness with gentle and effective homeopathic remedies and achieving success rates far superior to current drug-based treatment modalities. Homeopathy as a treatment option had just emerged after an era when the insanes were known as beasts, as someone possessed, as sinners, as ill, defective, tortured souls, and troublemakers. These crude perceptions changed, and homeopathy offered an enlightened mental-health-care method, a practice set in motion by the

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

1. **Dr Srinivas Babu Kathi**, BHMS, M.Sc., (EE) M.D(H), PhD Scholar, Hamsa Homeopathy Medical College, Hospital Research Centre
2. **Dr Boini Kavya**, BHMS., M.D (H), Hamsa Homeopathy Medical College, Hospital Research Centre
3. **Dr Akhila Gundagona**, Internee ,BHMS - Batch 2017, Hamsa Homeopathy Medical College, Hospital Research Centre

founder of homeopathy, Dr Hahnemann, M.D, in 1792 when he took charge of an asylum for the insane and cured a very important patient, Herr Klockenbring, a police chief.

Kantor also shares the story of the madness of Mary Todd Lincoln, President Abraham Lincoln's widow, and her treatment by homeopath Dr. Richard J. Patterson, M.D, revealing how in a mere three months of homeopathic treatment, Mary began to live a normal life.

But the true focus of the book *Sane Asylums* is Dr Selden Talcott, M.D, who emerges as a hero. After serving in the Civil War, he moved on to direct Middletown State Homeopathic Hospital from 1877 to 1902. He also wrote *Mental Diseases and Their Modern Treatment*, the very first systematic book about asylum-based homeopathic care, including the integration of sports (baseball) into the armamentarium of psychiatry. As the superintendent of Middletown asylum, Dr Talcott had a clear mission:

- Combine the philosophy of homeopathy, as described in the *Organon of the Medical Art* by Samuel Hahnemann, with the individualized homeopathic method of handling the mentally ill
- Demonstrate the efficacy of homeopathy
- Create a culturally and recreationally enriching, self-sustaining, farm-operating hospital
- Provide occupational therapy for the mentally ill
- Provide a sanctuary for the incurably mentally ill
- Include forward-looking scientific-medical research into patient care

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

1. **Prof. Dr Yogeshwari Gupta**, Prof, MD (Hom.), Principal & HOD Materia Medica, Swasthya Kalyan Homoeopathic Medical College and Research Centre, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. Former Dean, Homeopathy, Rajasthan Ayurveda University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.
2. **Dr Samridhi Sharma**, MD (PGR) Part-II-Department of Practice of Medicine, Swasthya Kalyan Homoeopathic Medical College & Research Centre, Sitapura, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

As a leader, Dr Talcott provided training to scores of medical doctors from across the country who founded satellite asylums that treated hundreds and thousands of mentally ill. All these asylums followed the treatment plan that Dr Talcott had envisioned.

The medical team at Middletown also worked seamlessly with Dr Clara Barrus, M.D, chief-educator for the nurses, who wrote a medical masterpiece, *Nursing the Insane*. She practiced and taught her students kindness and gentle discipline, rest for physical and mental recuperation, massage, enforced protection when necessary, healthy diet, exercise, amusement, occupation, moral and physical hygiene, and finally, individualized homeopathic care. Various extracts from her book show that treatment of the insane at Middletown was based on a holistic model. It did not include profiteering, giving the insane a disease label and forcefully pushing toxic pills down their throats.

Kantor describes in detail how such sane treatment of the insane included an eternally American sport, baseball. Dr Talcott revolutionized care of his patients by observing that they were totally riveted in watching a game of baseball. He enabled the formation of baseball teams comprised of his insane patients. These teams played and won several games. These accomplishments enhanced not only the patients' physical prowess, but also their self-esteem and team-spirit, helping them recover their sanity beautifully. It was the first time ever that a medical treatment plan included a prescription for sports.

After reaching the peak of success, the stars of homeopathic insane asylums began to fade in the 20th century. The homeopathic insane asylums morphed into conventional hospitals deeply entrenched in the 20th-century material-mechanical scientific model. Patented and profitable pharmaceutical medicine, drug-mar-

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

1. **Dr Sumana Sengupta**, Assistant Professor, Department of Practice of Medicine, D. N. De Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital
2. **Dr Mohan Giri, Professor & HOD**, Department of Practice of Medicine, D. N. De Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital
3. **Dr Hasinur Jahan**, Assistant Professor, Department of Homoeopathic Materia Medica, Kharagpur Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital

keting, electric shock, and surgeries for handling the insane, and Freudian psychotherapy became fashionable. The esoteric spirituality and humane treatment that constituted the backbone of Talcott and Barrus's handling of the insane was no longer considered scientific.

Though drug-based psychiatry is the go-to in our modern times, reading the history of homeopathy particularly with regards to insane asylums, helps us all feel proud of our past. It motivates us to dream a future when people with mental illness would be treated in fully integrative asylums with homeopathy included in the comprehensive healthcare armamentarium. In this dream the insane will be treated as people instead of someone mad. I personally and strongly believe this dream can come true when, as a society, we move forward to invest in sanity.