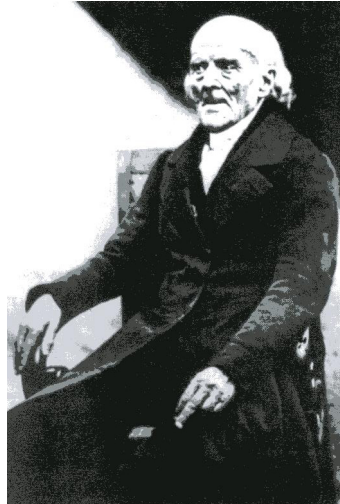


THE LIFE OF SAMUEL HAHNEMANN



HAHNEMANN'S BIOGRAPHY

Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann was born on the 10 April in 1755, he was the third child out of five and the eldest son of a pottery painter in the porcelain town of Meissen, Saxony in Germany. As a child, he showed a remarkable aptitude for study excelling both in languages and in science; he loved to learn languages and in fact attained proficiency in eight of them, he was fluent in English, French, Greek and Latin. He subsequently learnt Arabic, Syriac, Chaldaic and Hebrew. At the age of 12 he had started teaching Greek. Thus he became a language teacher at a very young age.

In 1775, Hahnemann enrolled at the University of Leipzig to study medicine, but there he soon became very disappointed with its poor facilities, because the medical students at Leipzig had "neither clinic nor hospital at their disposal." While he was at the University of Leipzig, he translated four books from English for income and also taught French to a wealthy Greek man. He was very hard working and did not mix much with other students, preferring to devote all his spare time to work.

In the spring of 1777, Hahnemann decided to continue his medical studies in Vienna to gain greater clinical experience, though he could barely afford it. After only nine months and after being robbed and facing financial hardship he was forced to leave. However the physician to the royal court, Professor von Quarin, was so impressed with Hahnemann that he was given a job to practise medicine for a rich patron in Transylvania; the Governor of Hermannstadt, Samuel von Brukenthal. Hahnemann stayed there for 18 months cataloguing the Governor's coin collection, ancient books and manuscripts, it was one of the finest collections in Europe of texts on alchemy and magic. Thanks to this huge library, Hahnemann had "the opportunity of learning several other necessary languages and of acquiring knowledge of some collateral sciences."

In 1779, Hahnemann continued his studies in Erlangen and in 1781, took a village doctor's position in Mansfeld, Saxony. He obtained various medical positions during 1780-83, but soon after his marriage in 1782 to Johanna Kuchler, he became increasingly disenchanted with the problems of the accepted medical practice of the day, and had to rely on translation work for a modest income and to support his growing family.

By the time he moved to Dresden in 1784, he was so dissatisfied with the harmfulness and inefficacy of medicine that he decided to practise his profession only to obtain definite proofs against it. As a result, he was very poor. However, he soon came to be highly regarded as a translator of scientific and medical texts from French and English for the Dresden Economical Society.

In the 12 years from 1792-1804, he had lived in fourteen different towns. He moved his growing family from town to town and never stayed in one place for more than a few months or a year. During this important phase he was a lonely figure, he had become thoroughly disgusted with medicine and completed many translations for his sole income. Between 1777 and 1806 he translated 24 large textbooks and numerous articles into German, usually accompanied with extensive footnotes and detailed corrections of his own. Hahnemann "sat at his desk writing until his fingers were sore. There was no more talk of medical practice. The doctor was a fanatic devotee of the quill pen, who now drowned his sorrows over his lost medical career in a sea of ink." (Gumpert)

In 1790, while translating William Cullen's *Materia Medica* the first evidence emerged for his future work. Unconvinced by Cullen's theory that Cinchona was a specific for Malaria because of its tonic action on the stomach, Hahnemann decided to take a small dose of Cinchona over several days to observe its effects. In this first proving experiment, Hahnemann observed symptoms broadly similar to those of malaria, including spasms and fever which suggested to him a medical principle. He thus established the validity of the old therapeutic maxim of Hippocrates and Paracelsus: 'like cures like' or *similia similibus curentur*.

For 6 years or so he mostly experimented on himself and his family and friends, he then undertook further drug provings. He also collected histories of cases of poisoning. His purpose was to establish a physiological doctrine of medical remedies, free from all suppositions, and based solely on experiments. His family and friends became central to his task and the results of his investigations were meticulously catalogued. However, it wasn't until 1796 with the publishing of his *Essay on a New Principle* that he first informed the medical world about homoeopathic philosophy through the medical journal. The work with Cinchona consolidated and extended into a general principle, applicable for all drugs.

By 1804, he had settled with his family in Torgau, staying until 1811 and began to write his chief works where every detail of his new system was taking shape. Into these essays were instilled everything he had discovered during his years of restless wandering, derived from his provings, his thinking and his studies. His book *Fragmenta de viribus* (1805) presented the first published details of 27 provings, including Pulsatilla, Ignatia, Aconite, Drosera and Belladonna.

Then he wrote "The Medicine of Experience" in 1805, which was a forerunner of his *Organon*. His other essays of 1805, 1808 and 1809, amount to magnificent critiques of every mode of medical treatment and discussions of why *similia* and single drugs are superior, and always have been. These were soon followed up with his "Materia Medica Pura" (1811) and "Organon" (1810), which proved to be great landmarks in the establishment of homeopathy.

In 1812, Hahnemann moved back to Leipzig with a new confidence and the chief intention of taking on the allopathic establishment. He returned, "pre-eminently as a teacher...to declare publicly...what he had discovered." He obtained a teaching post on the faculty of the university medical school after defending a thesis on Hellebore, which quoted scores of ancient works in most European languages. Such was the vast extent of Hahnemann's knowledge of the medical past and of languages. Unfortunately, his lectures soon degenerated into ranting and raving against the old methods and student numbers dwindled to seven, which weakened his position in the university.

Traditional medical doctors of that time strongly apposed him and in 1820 AD the proponents of the old allopathic system of medicine had his system of homoeopathy declared unlawful by the government, and even they went to the extent of suing him. However, before homoeopathy was declared unlawful, Hahnemann sent for Prince Karl Schwarzenberg of Austria, and treated him successfully in Leipzig. The prince being naturally grateful to Hahnemann recommended to king Friedrich that all restrictions against homoeopathy should be removed. And in future none should be re-imposed. Unfortunately for Hahnemann, the prince re-indulged himself in the life of ease and

resorted to alcoholism. He became seriously ill again, and he was treated allopathically but to no avail. When he died the Austrian government blamed the prince's death on Hahnemann. The public was outraged, his books were burnt in the open and Hahnemann had to run for his life. He took shelter in Cothen. When Hahnemann moved to a new position in Cothen in 1821, he was patronised by the Duke of Cothen and stayed there for 14 years researching chronic illnesses.

Here, he was allowed to prepare and dispense his own medicines which had been forbidden him in Leipzig. He remained in Cothen with his wife and youngest daughters, Charlotte and Louisa until 1835. He continued to publish essays and books, updating his *Organon*, and *Materia Medica Pura*.

His publication in 1828 of *The Chronic Diseases* opened up an entirely new chapter by exploring the underlying causes of disease as rooted solely in three ancient dyscrasias: skin diseases (Psora), gonorrhoea (Sycosis) and Syphilis. This 'miasm theory' stirred up great controversy among his followers, and seems to have elicited much more ridicule than it did praise.

His wife Johanna passed away in 1830. Four and half years after the death of his first wife, Melanie D'Hervilly Gohier (1800-1878) came to Cothen from Paris on the 8th October 1834. She was a young, attractive and well-connected French artist and although forty years younger than him, they were married on 18th January 1835. They moved to Paris on 7th June.

In the final eight years of his life, he established a thriving medical practice in Paris with his young wife, becoming a celebrity and the preferred physician of the rich and famous, as well as giving free treatment to the poor. He and Melanie allegedly made four million francs in eight years. She apparently never left his side. She mastered his casebooks better than any of his pupils had ever done and knew all the symptoms and most obscure notes of the *Materia Medica Pura*, becoming a living compendium of homeopathy.

During this last phase of his long life in Paris, Hahnemann established Olfaction and the LM potencies, which are mentioned in detail in his final *Sixth Organon*.

Hahnemann passed away on 2nd July 1843 in Paris from bronchitis, and was buried first in Montmartre, but later his body was moved to a more grandiose tomb, paid for by American subscription, in the cemetery where many famous people like Edith Piaf and Chopin are buried, the prestigious Cimitière Pere Lachaise,

HAHNEMANN'S TIMES AND MEDICINE IN THE 17th, 18th AND 19th CENTURIES.

In order to understand the relevance of Hahnemann's times to his life and his creative output, it is necessary to know some of what had preceded it.

The 17th Century was considered the age of scientific revolution. Descartes (1596-1650) and Francis Bacon (1561-1626) were 2 scientific philosophers who asked how things worked and not why they worked, a model which developed a concept of a mechanistic world. In Europe, this was contrary to the philosophies in eastern countries, which included a tangible spiritual value in progressive discoveries of nature. In medicine, such mechanistic concepts were to have an enormous influence and still do to this day.

European discoveries had been profound. The microscope was developed, Van Helmont (1577-1644) founded the concept that disease was a separate entity existing in the body, fever being a reaction by the body to an invading irritant; and William Harvey (1578-1657) proved the circulation of blood, controversial for many years, which therefore, already in the 17th Century, opposed in principle the practice of blood letting.

Nevertheless, bleeding remained a major therapy, as well as purging, dietary restrictions, exercise and some use of plant, mineral and animal drugs, eg, the use of quinine with malaria.

In the 18th Century there were various theorists, eg, Leibnitz (1646-1716) Stahl (1660-1734) and Cullen (1710-90), who suggested the ideas of natural law, vital force, and theories of nervous energy

suggesting a rejection of Descartes' machine view of body. In discovering oxygen, Lavoisier (1743-94) revolutionised chemistry and Jenner (1749-1823) introduced inoculation with cowpox in 1798.

Hahnemann's work coincided with the other major breakthroughs of the 1800's. For example, the expansion of pharmacology, synthesized compounds being built from chemical basic units, Schleiden (1804-81) and Virchow (1821-1902) developing cell theories, Louis Pasteur (1822-95) establishing germ theory and Laennec's (1781-1826) invention of the stethoscope. Anesthesia in the forms of nitrous oxide, mesmerism, ether and chloroform were used. An extremely important advance came when Semmelweis (1818-65) noted that the mortality rate post birth was 10-20% in hospital but only 3% with midwives. He advocated that surgeons had to start washing their hands which supported Hahnemann's own values of hygiene. In the old school the main methods of treatment were diet, exercise, rest, baths, massage, bloodletting, cupping, blistering, sweating, emetics, purges, enemas and fumigations.

During this time, epidemic diseases swept through Asia and Europe and these various old school treatments were an inferior mode of treatment resulting in the consequentially high mortality in comparison with Homoeopathic methods. This exacerbated the already vehement conflict between the extremely defensive Homoeopaths and Allopaths.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOMOEOPATHY AND ITS SUPPORTERS

Hahnemann took his calling as a medical healer seriously and applied himself conscientiously to his profession. In the early years as a doctor, using the medicines and techniques available to the profession at the time, he found that he was not achieving a healing response in many of his patients, and worse, his methods were causing greater damage to the health of the patient through the toxic effects of some of the medicines, than the disease left untreated, would have caused. This upset and confounded him greatly.

Homoeopathy became a system for medical application after Hahnemann's translation in 1798 of Cullen's "A Treatise on the Material Medica". In order to reject Cullen's claims, he administered doses of cinchona to himself to test the theory of Similia Similibus Curentur, which had been known throughout the history of medicine and was recognized by Hippocrates. Hahnemann reasoned that it was the similarity of symptoms that produced the healing effect. This became the first principle of homoeopathy: "like cures like."

He coined the name "homoeopathy" to describe this approach to healing, deriving it from the Greek: homos (same) + pathos (suffering).

Hahnemann won much attention for curing difficult cases, one of the first of which was the well known author, Klockenbring, who was suffering from mania. In 1800 a scarlet fever epidemic gave Hahnemann the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new type of medicine he was researching, based not only on the Law of Similars but also on the concept of highly diluted, potentized doses. The 1813 Typhus epidemic also brought much attention as 178 of 180 cases were cured with potentized doses whereas allopathic mortality was 20% - 30%.

In 1810 Hahnemann published the first edition of the Organon of the Healing Art, his most important work. This book laid out the foundations of his new approach to healing, including the Law of Similars and the principle of giving a single medicine, which had been potentized, and in the smallest possible dose, and only giving remedies which had been proven on healthy people.

Hahnemann later developed the next stage of his understanding of chronic diseases, the concept of miasms. He published his theories in 1828 in the first edition of Chronic Diseases.

His work with his second wife, Melanie, in Paris, included research with LM potencies and olfaction which he wrote about in the 6th edition of the Organon.

At Hahnemann's death, all 6 editions of the Organon were complete, as well as his compiled Materia Medica Pura, Chronic Diseases, hundreds of articles and translations and his records of 106 remedies that he proved on himself. The sixth edition of the Organon was not published until 1921.

Melanie d'Hervilly Gohier Hahnemann (1800-1878), Hahnemann's second wife, practiced medicine with him in Paris and in the year 1843, the year Hahnemann died, she adopted 5 yr old Sophie who later married the son of the great homoeopath, Boenninghausen.

During his lifetime, Hahnemann had many followers and supporters who helped to prove the first remedies. Gross proved 28 remedies including Chamomilla. Stapf, Hahnemann's first follower, proved 32 remedies and in 1835 was called to England to prescribe for the queen. The royal family are still very strong advocates of Homoeopathy today.

Boenninghausen (1785-1864) came to Homoeopathy after contracting TB. Within a few months he was cured where upon he dedicated his life's work to Homoeopathy. He developed the first repertory and introduced potencies in 200C.

In 1833, Constantine Hering was asked to write a paper exposing Homoeopathy, and to repeat the china experiment for a proving "in order to more thoroughly attack the new folly". Hering famously stated he had no fear of the truth. His research proved the validity of the new method and he was persuaded to try Ars Alb to treat a serious dissecting wound. After it was cured, he wrote to Hahnemann in 1824, which began a lifetime correspondence. In 1828 Hering underwent the Lachesis proving in South America. He was a prolific author, edited Homoeopathic journals and was working on his Materia Medica when he died.

Homoeopathy spread quickly through Europe, Asia, particularly India, America and Australia. The American George Bute was the first prover of indigenous American plants Sanguinaria, Chimaphilla, Rhus Glab and Mezereu. In 1835, Hering, who had travelled to America, started the first school in Allentown, moving to Boston in 1842. Adolphe Lippe was a graduate and wrote Materia Medica and keynotes.

The Homoeopathic Congress of 1878 brought 700 attendees from all over the world and created much discord. In 1880, a group of homoeopathic physicians including Lippe and Allen formed a new association against the lack of good quality homoeopathy being taught and practiced. This was the International Hahnemannian Association, where only Hahnemannian principles were supported.

Later American provers and authors included Hale who documented other indigenous plants, eg, phytolacca, gelsemium and urtica, TF Allen, who wrote Allen's Encyclopaedia, and Nash who wrote about therapeutics. By 1941 the American Homoeopathic directory listed seven mental hospitals in the US and many 2nd and 3rd generation Homoeopaths were active in the country including some prolific women authors.

Fredrica Gladwin (1856-1931) – helped Kent prepare his repertory, Margaret Tyler (1857-1943) was an associate of Clarke and worked at the Royal Homoeopathic hospital for 40 years, Dorothy Shepherd (1885-1952) maintained that the true healer should be both artist and scientist and wrote "Magic of Minimum Dose" and "Physicians Posy" and Margery Blackie (1898-1981) worked with Margaret Tyler and was the Homoeopathic physician to Queen Elizabeth II. She wrote "The Patient not the Cure".

James Tyler Kent (1849-1916) wrote the Kent repertory with the help of his students. He was president of International Hahnemannian Association in 1887 and in 1890, and founded the post grad school in Homoeopathy in Philadelphia. When it closed after ten years he had seen 40,000 patients and trained 30 physicians.

Homeopathy was brought to England by Frederick Quin in 1830 after studying with Hahnemann for two years. Other English Homoeopaths included Robert Dudgeon who translated the 5th edition of the Organon into English and was editor of the British Journal of Homoeopathy and Richard Hughes, who worked with Allen on the 10 volume Encyclopaedia and 6 volume Cyclopaedia of drug pathogenicity. Hughes only used low potencies, ie, 6C and worked with the remedies in order to understand the pathologies on the organic level.

James Compton Burnett (1840-1901) was one of first to speak of vaccinosis and introduced Bacillinum as a remedy. He wrote "50 Reasons for being a Homoeopath" and more than 20 other texts. John Henry Clarke (1853-1931) wrote Clarkes Dictionary of Materia Medica and Edward Bach (1886-1936) was an immunologist and bacteriologist at London Homoeopathic Hospital and later developed the Bach Flower Essences.

In 1910 the Flexnor Report saw Homoeopathy lose integrity in teaching and consequently, many medical schools dropped the homoeopathic component.

The late 20th Century has seen a resurgence, particularly after George Vithoulkas published "Medicine of the New Man" in 1971 and "Science of Homoeopathy" in 1978.

Today, western mechanistic medicine has had to admit to many unsuccessful "hit and miss" approaches, which has significantly undermined the support it has from the general populations. Homeopathy, as a safe and reliable form of cure is therefore expanding throughout the world, along with other noninvasive healing techniques.

CRITICISM

Hahnemann began attacking the medical practices of his time as early as 1784, attracting notoriety, ridicule and rejection by his colleagues. Emperor Leopold of Austria died unexpectedly in 1792 after having been bled four times in 24 hours for a high fever and abdominal distension. Hahnemann publicly criticized the emperor's physicians and continued to speak out strongly against bloodletting, although he himself was denounced as a murderer because he denied his patients the "benefits" of bleeding.

Hahnemann suffered a lot from the attacks of the orthodox medical establishment of his time, which used all the legal and political weapons at their disposal to stop him. The journals of his time printed scathing, even libellous, critiques. However, the criticisms he endured only motivated him to perfect his system. However, many letters found after his death revealed how much Hahnemann suffered from this undeserved and unceasing persecution. Nevertheless, his attitude did not help the situation. At a later stage in his life he became so intolerant of contradiction, viewing with suspicion anyone who did not agree with him in every detail.

"He who does not walk exactly on the same line with me, who diverges, if it be but the breadth of a straw to the left or right, is a traitor and I will have nothing to do with him."

Apart from the resistance from the old school practising doctors, the pharmacists didn't want to see Hahnemann dispensing medicines on his own. The apothecaries disliked him because he recommended the use of only one medicine at a time and prescribing only limited doses of it, which obviously limited what they could charge for medicines. Hahnemann also distrusted the apothecaries who were not always making them correctly or were intentionally giving his patients different medicines. He chose to dispense his own medicines, which was an illegal act at the time in Germany. The apothecaries then accused Hahnemann of "entrenching upon their privileges by the dispensing of medicines" and he was arrested in Leipzig in 1820, found guilty and forced to move.

Further criticism from the medical schools of thought was forthcoming after his publication of The Chronic Miasms. Not only was he regarded as a quack by many ignorant doctors at the time, Homeopaths also had difficulties with the theory. The antagonism continued throughout these years, and he only found himself in a position of respect from within the medical establishment at the end of his life, in Paris.

HAHNEMANN'S FAMILY

Hahnemann frequently stated that his wife and children were the dearest things in the world to him. The family ties were very strong and he felt he could only really relax if he was in their company. He had 11 children with his wife, Johanna; 2 sons and 9 daughters. It was also important that he had his own house, not only to feel at ease in his own surrounds but also to retreat from the world. The children were very loving of their parents, obedient and dedicated to their fathers work.

"Hahnemann sent his children into the fields to collect henbane, sumach, and deadly nightshade. They grew up like young priests, they felt the leaves, blossoms and tubers of plants with small but expert hands...everyone was obliged to join in the work...for there was no other way to succeed in his titanic plan of rescuing the wealth of natural remedies from the quagmire of textbooks, and displaying it in the bright light of experience." (Gumpert)

Johanna, his first wife managed the household and education of the children entirely on her own. She knew how to cope with very little and endured many years of financial hardship and uprooting the family continuously for resettlement. He was glad to be able to transfer all worries about the house and family to his wife, and to live solely for his pursuits.

Melanie, his second wife also domestically dominated her husband completely. As well as this, Melanie eventually became the undisputed organiser of all the professional work of his final years. One of his sons, Ernst, was killed in an accident in childhood and the other son, Frederick, became a homoeopath in his own right, leading a somewhat mysterious and troubled life. He was also injured in the afore mentioned accident and suffered rickets as a child. He is said to have had a severe curvature of the spine as well as many eccentric behaviours, which caused his father much distress. Nevertheless, there is much documentation of his brilliance as a homoeopathic doctor, both in Europe as well as strong suggestions that he later cured many people of epidemics and afflictions in America.

The youngest daughters, Charlotte and Louisa, remained in Cothen caring for their father and facilitating his work after their mother's death, until he left for Paris at the age of 80. Another daughter, Amalie, was considered Hahnemann's right hand and had for many years written up the patient's registers and was responsible for his correspondence. She was in Paris with her son, Leopold Suess Hahnemann at the time of her father's death but was apparently forbidden by Melanie to visit him in his last days.

Leopold, Hahnemann's grandson, was to become a homoeopathic physician in London.

HAHNEMANS ACHIEVEMENTS

Millions of people owe the relief of their suffering to the greatest genius in medical history.

Hahnemann was the first to methodically and precisely demonstrate a drug's ability to cause deviations from health. Thus he may correctly be considered the "Father of Experimental Pharmacology".

He published many works and left us his legacy with the Organon.

He furthered chemistry, introducing a new test for arsenic for use in toxicology and forensic medicine. His test for the detection of adulterants in wine was authoritative, as was his standardized pharmacy lexicon used in Germany for a good part of the 19th Century. A preparation of soluble mercury still bears his name.

He could also be called the first psychiatrist, because he was the first person in modern times to promote the humane treatment of the mentally ill as well as curing them with his remedies.

He understood the principles of contagious illnesses and successfully treated the deadly epidemics which ravaged Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century decades before Koch and Pasteur,. Hahnemann is also considered a pioneer of modern public health and sanitation measures. He also preceded scientific thought and the discovery of microbes when he proposed in 1832 that cholera could be ascribed to "infinitely small living organisms".

He was a true visionary whose understanding of the energetic basis of health and healing anticipated the paradigm of matter as energy in modern physics. Allopathic medicine has barely begun to incorporate an understanding of the mind-body connection, which Hahnemann outlined nearly two centuries ago.

Hahnemann would deserve a prominent place in the history of medicine for any of his contributions. His greatest contribution, of course, is the founding of the system of homeopathy, an unparalleled achievement: so far as we know, Hahnemann is the only person to have envisioned an entire system of medicine and then fully developed it into a powerful and practical tool within the span of a single lifetime.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Samuel Hahnemann, His Life and Work -Richard Haehl
A Homoeopathic Love Story - Rima Handley
Homoeopathy (like cures like) – Mirza Tahir Ahmad
www.homeoint.org/books4/bradford/family.htm
www.homeoint.org/morrell/articles/biohahnemann.htm
www.skepticreport.com/health/hahnemann.htm
www.homeopathic.com/articles/intro/history.php