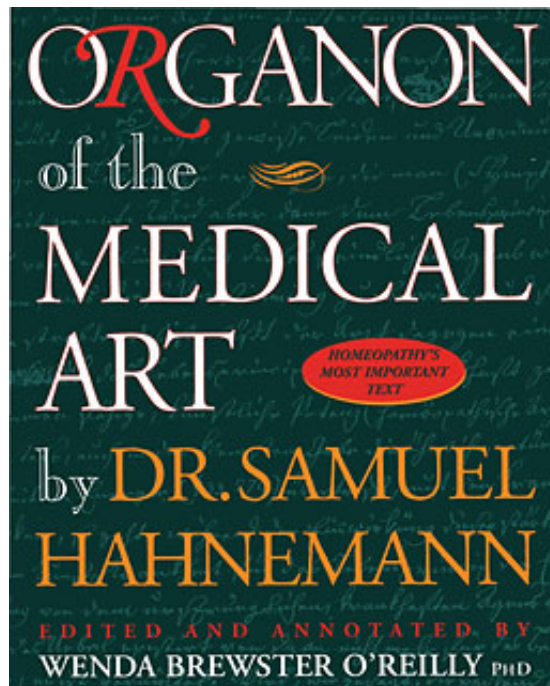


Samuel Hahnemann Organon of the Medical Art

Reading excerpt
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THE HIGHEST IDEAL OF CURE

§1

The physician's highest and *only* calling is to make the sick healthy, to cure, as it is called.¹

§2

The highest ideal of cure is the rapid, gentle and permanent restoration of health; that is, the lifting and annihilation of the disease in its entire extent in the shortest, most reliable, and least disadvantageous way, according to clearly realizable [in-seeable] principles.

§3

Requirements of a
medical-art practitioner

To be a genuine practitioner of the medical art, a physician must:

1. clearly realize what is to be cured in diseases, that is, in each single case of disease (*discernment of the disease, indicator*),
2. clearly realize what is curative in medicines, that is, in each particular medicine (*knowledge of medicinal powers*),
3. be aware of how to adapt what is curative in medicines to what he has discerned to be undoubtedly diseased in the patient, according to clear principles.

Theoretical medicine

- 1 The physician's calling is not to spin so-called systems from empty conceits and hypotheses concerning the inner wesen of the life process and the origins of disease in the invisible interior of the organism (on which so many physicians mongering for fame have hitherto wasted their time and energy). The physician's calling is not to make countless attempts at explanation regarding disease appearances and their proximate cause (which must ever remain concealed) holding forth in unintelligible words or abstract and pompous expressions in order to appear very learned and astonish the ignorant, while a sick world sighs in vain for help. Of such learned fanaticism (to which the name *theoretical medicinal art* is given, and for which special professorships are instituted) we have had quite enough. It is high time for all those who call themselves physicians, once and for all, to stop deceiving suffering humanity with idle talk, and to *begin* now to *act*, that is to really help and to cure.

In this way, recovery must result.

Adapting what is curative in medicines to what is diseased in patients requires that the physician be able to:

1. adapt the most appropriate medicine, according to its mode of action, to the case before him (*selection of the remedy, that which is indicated*),
2. prepare the medicine exactly as required,
3. give the medicine in the exact amount required (the right *dose*),
4. properly time the repetition of doses.

Finally, the physician must know the obstacles to recovery in each case and be aware of how to clear them away so that the restoration of health may be permanent.

[If the physician has this insight, discernment, knowledge and awareness*] *then he understands how to act expediently and thoroughly, and he is a genuine practitioner of the medical art.*

He is likewise a sustainer of health if he knows the things that disturb health, that engender and maintain disease, and is aware of how to remove them from healthy people.

Requirements of a sustainer of health

CAUSES OF DISEASE

§5

It will help the physician to bring about a cure if he can find out the data of the most probable *occasion* of an acute disease, and the most significant factors in the entire history of a protracted wasting sickness, enabling him to find out its *fundamental cause*. The fundamental cause of a protracted wasting sickness mostly rests upon a

The physician should ascertain the occasion and the fundamental cause of disease.

* Throughout the *Organon*, Hahnemann uses various terms to refer to different modes of knowledge, understanding and perception. These include references to intellectual knowledge as well as knowledge based upon participative experience. See *knowledge* and *realize* in the Glossary.

chronic miasm. In these investigations, the physician should take into account the patient's:

1. discernible body constitution (especially in cases of protracted disease),
2. mental and emotional character [character of the *Geist* and the *Gemüt*],
3. occupations,
4. lifestyle and habits,
5. civic and domestic relationships [relationships outside and within the home],
6. age,
7. sexual function, etc.

DEFINITION OF DISEASE AND CURE

§6

All the perceptible signs, befallments and symptoms of disease represent the disease in its entirety.

The unprejudiced observer, even the most sharp-witted one — knowing the nullity of supersensible speculations which are not born out in experience — perceives nothing in each single case of disease other than the alterations in the condition of the body and soul, *disease signs*, *befallments*, *symptoms*, which are outwardly discernible through the senses. That is, the unprejudiced observer only perceives the deviations from the former healthy state of the now sick patient, which are:

1. felt by the patient himself,
2. perceived by those around him, and
3. observed by the physician.

All these perceptible signs represent the disease in its entire extent, that is, together they form the true and only conceivable gestalt of the disease.⁶

It is ridiculous for physicians to seek causes of disease in the hidden

⁶ I do not know [am not aware] how physicians at the sickbed could suppose that they ought to seek and could find what was to be cured in disease only in the hidden and indiscernible interior, without paying

§7

In cases of disease where there is no obvious occasioning or maintaining cause (*causa occasionalis*) to be removed,⁷³ we can perceive nothing but the disease signs. Therefore, it must be the symptoms alone by which the disease demands and can point to the appropriate medicine for its relief, along with regard for any contingent miasm and with attention to the attendant circumstances (§5).

The totality of symptoms (along with the patient's circumstances and any contingent miasm) determines the most appropriate remedy in

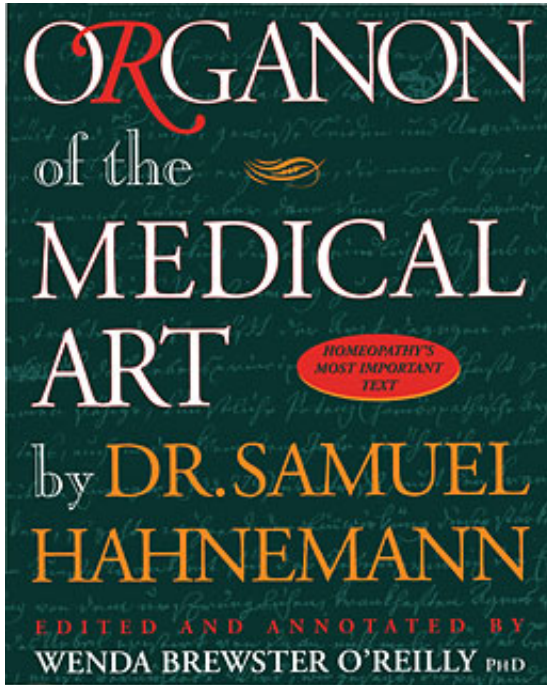
careful attention to the symptoms or being precisely guided by those symptoms in their treatment. I do not know [am not aware] how they could be so ridiculous and presumptuous as to attempt to discern what has changed in the invisible interior of the body without paying much attention to the symptoms, or how they could attempt to set it right again with unknown (!) medicines and then call this the only thorough and rational treatment.

interior of the body while ignoring clearly perceptible symptoms.

The medical-art practitioner can never see the spiritual wesen, the life force, that creates the disease, and he never needs to see it. In order to cure, he only needs to see and experience its diseased effects. Therefore, in the eyes of the medical-art practitioner, is not that which reveals itself to the senses by disease signs the disease itself? What else is the old school looking for in the hidden interior of the organism as a *prima causa morbi* while at the same time rejecting and haughtily disdaining the disease presentation that is clearly perceptible to the senses, that is, the symptoms that audibly speak to us? What else do they want to cure in disease but these symptoms? 7a It goes without saying that the intelligent physician would immediately clear away any occasioning or maintaining causes, after which the indisposition usually gives way of its own accord. For example, the physician would:

Examples of occasioning or maintaining causes to be removed by physicians

1. remove from the room the strong smelling flowers that are arousing faintness and hysterical plights,
2. extract from the cornea the splinter that is arousing inflammation of the eye,
3. loosen the overtight bandage on a wounded limb that is threatening to cause gangrene, and apply a more suitable one,
4. lay bare and tie off the injured artery that is inducing faintness,
5. seek, through vomiting, to expel belladonna berries, etc. that have been swallowed,



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