

An Interview With Dr. A. Dwight Smith

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Dr. A. Dwight Smith

Dr. A. Dwight Smith was interviewed by Dr. John Duffy of Tulane University at Dr. Smith's office-home in Glendale, California on August 21, 1968.

Dr. Smith was born in Monticello, Iowa in the year 1885. His family relied largely upon a homeopathic physician for medical care, and the young Smith grew up in a tradition of homeopathy. After graduation from high school in Monticello, he attended Pomona College in Claremont, California from 1906 to 1908. In the latter year he enrolled in Hahnemann Medical College in Chicago and graduated with an M.D. degree in 1912. He began practicing in Mason City, Iowa that same year, and remained there until 1921 when he moved to Glendale, California. During this period he spent some time in the Army Medical Corps, where he served for several months in the Philippines.

Dr. Smith spent the year 1926 in residency at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia specializing in pediatrics. During his many years of practice, he has been an active member of various homeopathic medical organizations. He was president for one year and secretary-treasurer for thirteen years of the International Hahnemannian Association. He also served as editor of the Homeopathic Recorder for thirteen years. Dr. Smith has been a prominent member of the West Coast homeopathic associations, and has held the position of

Dr. Smith

editor of the Pacific Coast Homeopathic Bulletin for over forty years. Despite his age, he still maintains an active practice.

He was quite friendly and cooperative during the interview. His wife was also present and made a few comments. Other than a few minor changes, he accepted the typescript as edited by the interviewer.

Dr. Duffy:

J. Duffy doing the interview. Dr. Smith, I would like to start by asking you to give me a little biographical sketch telling us when you were born, something about your background and education, how you got into homeopathy, and the type of education you had, and something of your career since that time.

Dr. Smith:

I was born September 17, 1885, in Iowa. My father died when I was four years old. We lived in Monticello, Iowa. We had two doctors. One was a homeopath, and one was a regular. The regular attended our church, so Mother always felt kind of an obligation to him, but we had far better results from the homeopathic one. I had to have an operation for appendicitis. They took me to Hahnemann Hospital in Chicago for it, and I have been impressed with homeopathy ever since.

Dr. Duffy:

What date was that, do you know, approximately?

Dr. Smith:

When I attended medical college? (1908 to 1912)

Dr. Duffy:

No. When you had this appendix operation.

Dr. Smith:

Right after I graduated from high school--in the fall of 1905--December.

Dr. Duffy:

And this is what really made you determined to go into homeopathic medicine.

Dr. Smith:

Well, I was interested in the school, and I went to Pomona

College two years after that and then entered medical college.

D.- Were you in California for high school?

S.- No, in Iowa. I practiced in Mason City, Iowa from 1912 to 1921.

D.- But you went to high school in...

S.- Monticello, Iowa.

D.- And from there you went to...

S.- Pomona College.<sup>1</sup>

D.- That is what I was thinking. You came out here, and then went back.

S.- Yes. I had relatives out here.

D.- I see. I was wondering how you happened to come to Pomona. And how much college did you have at that time?

S.- Two years.

D.- Two years at Pomona. And then you...

S.- I went to medical college.

D.- Where?

S.- At Hahnemann in Chicago.

D.- Hahnemann in Chicago. And the course at that time was how long?

S.- Four years.

D.- A four year course. And you finished there in about 1912?

S.- 1912. I had an internship at Rochester, New York in the summer of 1911. I went right into practice after I got out. In 1926 I spent a year in residency in Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, in pediatrics.

D.- Had you been moving toward pediatrics at this time?

- S.- Yes. They always said I handled children well, and that I ought to go into it. Although I didn't stick to it, because any "old" patient would come and there weren't homeopathic physicians around, so I took care of them.
- D.- Were you still in the Midwest at this time when you went to...
- S.- No, I was out here. I came here in 1921 to Glendale. I spent that year in the Children's Hospital.
- D.- And then you practiced...
- S.- I have been practicing steady since I was in the Army in the first World War Medical Corps, except for one year in Children's Homeopathic Hospital, Philadelphia, 1925-26.
- D.- Were you overseas?
- S.- The Philippines.
- D.- Oh yes. That must have been an interesting experience.
- S.- I went to Waco, Texas, and I was there for a year, and at that time I had three children, so I rented a house and sent for my wife, and she got there Sunday. But Monday I got orders to go to the Philippines. And the officer there said take my wife along, so I sent a telegram to the Quartermaster Department and didn't get any answer, so because I didn't dare wait any more, I went to San Francisco and told them I had sent a telegram. They said: "Well, yes, we got it." I said I didn't get any reply, and he said I did not put "Wire reply". That was the first boat--transport--that didn't allow you to take your family, so I had to send them back to Iowa. The first stop was in Mororan, Japan, five days, then I went to Vladivostock, Siberia, five days, Nagasaki,

Japan, two days, and then to the Philippines.

D.- How long were you stationed in the Philippines?

S.- Only about four months, the Armistice was signed when I got there.

D.- So you did it about right. You got a trip there, without...

S.- A nice trip. A good trip. And going over we only had doctors and nurses on the boat. Coming back we had troops.

D.- Did you have much contact with tropical diseases at all?

S.- Well, malaria, and things of that kind. I hadn't been in my post--Camp Statsenberg--it has a different name now, a day or two and I had orders the commanding officer wanted to see me. He wanted me because he had just heard I was a homeopath, and he was so glad. He had always had a homeopath--had tried the other doctors, but they hadn't helped him--would I prescribe for him. I did and cleared him right up. He insisted on all of his officers coming to me after that. After I got home back to Iowa, I got a letter from his mother, saying they were so sorry I had left, and would I please send her son some more of that medicine. He was a nervous type and worked hard.

D.- I hate to go back to your early career. Was there malaria prevalent to any degree in Iowa in your youth or had it disappeared?

S.- No. In the Philippines we had lots of it.

D.- Well, I know historically that there was quite a bit of malaria in the early 1800's in the Midwest, and I was just curious....So you really had had no experience with it prior to that time? Well then you returned to Iowa...



- S.- Iowa. At the time I graduated I wanted to come to California. They told us there was no use trying to get into California unless you graduated from California schools. While I was in the Army, they opened up and gave reciprocity, so that when I got back I applied for reciprocity and moved out here.
- D.- And then you established in private practice in Glendale.
- S.- Yes.
- D.- Were you active in any of the area homeopathic organizations, the American Institute of Homeopathy, the International...
- S.- I have been a member of that ever since I have been out here. I was a member of the International Hahnemannian, which has been consolidated, for thirty years. Before, I was president of it, one year. I was secretary and treasurer of it for thirteen years. I published the Homeopathic Recorder, their official magazine for thirteen years.
- D.- Was this the American Institute?
- S.- No, the International Hahnemannian. That was a group of strict homeopaths--very strict, with members all over the world.
- D.- Right. I was wondering--as I understand it there was some, a little friction between the International and the American Institute. I think struggles between the pure homeopaths and...
- S.- Well, there wasn't friction...
- D.- Some disagreement?
- S.- Well, it pertained to certain things that the others didn't-- but it was indirect. The pure homeopathy belonged to both

groups. They had all the best outstanding homeopaths. The International Hahnemannian had members all over the world. In '36 I went to Europe. I was secretary and treasurer then, and published the Journal. The man who was president was Sir John Weir,<sup>2</sup> the Queen's physician. He couldn't come at the time. There was trouble with the Prince of Wales having his wife trouble, and so I called him up that day in London and he came down in his big limousine and chauffeur and took my wife and I all over London one night.

D.- What were the circumstances that led to the merging of the two groups?

S.- Well, just that the homeopaths were getting so small in number there wasn't enough of them to carry on both. At one time I would go to the American Institute meetings and there were 1,000 members there in attendance. The banquets would have a thousand. It kept dropping off. The biggest blow came to homeopathy when the A.M.A. opened up and tried to get all of our people to join their society.

D.- When you went to school in Chicago--that was really the transition period, was it not?

S.- No, I don't think so. It was at its height then.

D.- At that time you were taking the full homeopathic course?

S.- Well, we had to take both courses.

D.- Right. But what I mean is that there was a strong faculty teaching homeopathy.

S.- Yes, as a matter of fact the first month we were tutored about homeopathy.

D.- How do you account, or what do you think brought this change, because there is no question that say, beyond World War I, the homeopathic schools tended to drift into the more orthodox or to move toward the...

S.- The A.M.A. kept trying to get them in, and then they would keep still about homeopathy. They have done everything they can. They have done the same to osteopathy. They tell them to join.

One of the biggest mistakes I think the homeopath ever made was to let the A.M.A. grade their colleges. They would come and grade them, and they would say, "No, well, if you don't put so-and-so in," and some they would let in, until they got enough of their men in, and then they would take them over, and they practically got all the colleges away from us. Hahnemann in Philadelphia was the last one. My son graduated from there.

D.- This is what I was curious about, why you have this transition, because it is my own experience that there was a pretty strong body of support among the layman for homeopathy.

S.- Yes, there is now.

D.- And I was curious to know, precisely how did this come about?

S.- Well, they have done everything they can to kill homeopathy. They have all my years of practice, and it is ending up my fifty-sixth year of practice. I want to tell you one thing. When I was head of the Homeopathic Recorder, our outstanding homeopaths graduated from regular medical school and had practiced ten to twenty years regular medicine, and they made

the best, most enthusiastic members.

- D.- I suppose that as the colleges shifted and began to follow the pattern set by the A.M.A., you feel that this was one of the decisive factors in reducing the number of homeopaths and almost eliminating most of them.
- S.- Yes. We had a lot of homeopathic colleges, and they gradually took them away in some form or another.
- D.- Do you think the homeopaths were negligent in any way? In other words, here you have a going organization and yet it tended to go downhill. Do you feel that there were any errors or mistakes that the homeopaths themselves may have made in not defending...
- S.- No, I don't think so. Of course there is always some that wanted to cater more to the other, and they didn't work, but the strict homeopaths really weren't to blame, as far as I can see.
- D.- Do you think that the rise of what we might call "scientific medicine" and that is a poor term, I realize, but as orthodox medicine became more effective, as it did in the twentieth century, that this tended to undermine or take away some of the power of homeopathy?
- S.- Only the real scientific medicine is homeopathy. You know the scientific law--all the wonderful new drugs come out--they play them up for the money back of it. They tell you how many new drugs come out in a year, but they don't tell you that in two to five years eighty percent of them are discarded because they have done too much harm. I've got

medical material in my library that is 150 years old.

Everything in them is true today. You can add to it, but you don't have to take anything away. It is the wheel of scientific law.

D.- Do you consider yourself a pure homeopath?

S.- Yes. I use both, but mainly homeopathy. I am a strict homeopath and have been all my life.

D.- Now as a homeopath I assume that you would accept surgical intervention where necessary.

S.- We enjoy curing a case without surgery, if we can, but if they need surgery, we have it. I have always had very good cooperation from the regular physicians.

D.- Are you a member of the California Medical Association?

S.- No, but they seem to consider me one. When I first graduated back in Iowa, a surgeon there was secretary and treasurer in Mason City, Iowa, he said I was the only doctor in the county who didn't belong. I said: "I will join, but I won't sign an application that I agree not to practice according to any particular dogma or method." I said: "I am a homeopath and I practice it." Well, to join it, I would have had to sign that. Well, then I would never do it. But now, here, they consider me as a member, invite me to everything, send me all the literature. I am past the age of paying dues.

D.- Yes. Well, has it been your experience or the experience of other homeopaths in this area that you ran into any problems in terms of staff appointments on hospitals?

- S.- I haven't had any complaints. Of course, they usually want you to belong to the regular society. I belong to the Behrens here.
- D.- How about the younger men practicing today? ~~Your~~ son, for example. Has he...
- S.- He belongs to the state and national.
- D.- He has had no problems then as a homeopath.
- S.- No, I think he would have got in anyway. At Behrens I told them I belonged to the National Homeopathic, and not the A.M.A., and it was perfectly all right--of course I started going there when it was an osteopathic hospital.
- D.- Well, in talking with some of the homeopaths in the East, and I talked with quite a few of them--Dr. Baker, Dr. Weaver, ~~Mrs.~~ Vargo, and Dr. Stephenson...<sup>3</sup>
- S.- ~~Mrs.~~ Vargo isn't a homeopathic physician. I know all of them.
- D.- No, as I say, ~~Mrs.~~ Vargo. Anyway, I talked with quite a few of them and I gather Dr. Sutherland up in Vermont...<sup>4</sup>
- S.- He and I were interns--I was chief resident and he was intern at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia together.
- D.- Is that right? I guess he is getting on in years. I don't think he is quite up to you yet...
- S.- Much younger than I am.
- D.- Yes, I was going to say that I think he is in his seventies.
- S.- I imagine he is 70.
- D.- You say you were born in 1885...
- S.- 85.

D.- 1885.

S.- I will be 83 next month. I try and hold my work down to 14 hours a day now. I took my family on a trip to Mexico. The trip was on the Empress Italia. When I got back my son went on his, and I haven't caught up yet. I have a whole pile of mail I am trying to get out.

D.- Well, you seem to be in remarkably good shape. You would be a good advertisement for homeopathy here.

S.- I am. You know when I was young and first talked of studying medicine, I was sick so much when I was a boy people said I was too puny to be a doctor...But as a physician I don't think I have lost a day for sickness for thirty years.

D.- Going back to homeopathy--to medical practice--what is your attitude toward antibiotics, for example?

S.- Well, I don't use them but about once for every twenty-five times the others do. If I see a good case for it, I use it. But I don't feel that they are an absolute cure. And a lot more chance of recurrence, than if you cure it homeopathic.

D.- In other words, from most of the homeopaths that I have talked to I get the impression that if any new therapeutic comes out that your group feels has value, you will use it, but...

S.- We usually have both in our training, but the better you know homeopathy, the less you use the other thing. And there are all the side effects. I have a case now--terrible reaction. I think it started through antibiotics. My son was treating it, and I treated it. While I was away, she wanted an anti-

biotic, so he gave it to her, and it reacted, and now it turned into a terrible case of shingles. She was allergic to it.

D.- Yes. I had one shot of penicillin, and I am allergic to it. I am like you. I am a little suspicious. I am not adverse to antibiotics. I know they have their place, but it does seem to me they are powerful drugs, and need to be administered with discretion.

S.- If I get a good case like a severe otitis media--abscessed ear--a severe tonsillitis, or a severe abscess, I always recommend penicillin. But I haven't fooled with a lot of these other antibiotics that are coming out. I haven't got time to keep up with them, and I don't want to.

D.- Do you mind if I ask you just what do you think are the fundamental tenets or principles of homeopathy? I think you are aware that there are some differences among homeopaths. As you see it, what are the basic principles of the homeopathic system?

S.- Well, it is a scientific law, similar cures similar. All the drugs are proven on healthy people to find out their action, and when you find that symptom you treat the patient, not the disease. Unless it is some acute virus, or something like that. In any case, you have to take the whole patient into consideration. In other medicine, they give you all the new drugs. They give you something to get rid of that, and you get a lot of side effects. We will bring out symptoms in homeopathy, and bring them to the surface when they are



suppressed. An example of that--years ago when I first came to the clinic, they advertised more than anything. They had a little boy nine years old, and I had a Sunday School class I was teaching. He was supposed to be in it and never came. The assistant pastor was very much interested in homeopathy, and he kept telling me he wished I could get him. He was in the Children's Hospital and finally he came home; they had operated on him for the bile obstruction, but the wound wouldn't heal, so they sent him home and said he was hopeless. So his parents called me and in going over his case, I asked just a routine question: "Have you ever had sweaty feet?" They said, "Yes, very bad." I said: "When did this stop?" They said it stopped just as his trouble began. I said I will probably have to bring it back. In a week's time he was up and around. I think in about two week's the visiting nurse from the Children's Hospital came to see if he was still alive, and he was around playing. Poor people, as quick as they got better, they didn't come after they cleared everything up. About a month later, I met one of the parents on the street--she said: "You said you would bring back the foot sweat, well you certainly did." Five years later I had been back to Philadelphia, came back and I met one of the parents, and he said: "Norman don't feel good." He was about fifteen then. I said to send him in. When he came I said: "How about your foot sweating?" "They're not sweating." I gave him the same medicine, and he came back in a week or two, and said: "Oh, I am fine." I said: "How about those feet

sweating?" "Oh, they are sweaty again." Well, if he had stayed with it, I could have cured him, and I guess they moved away soon after that. I am pretty sure they would have gotten in touch with me if they had any trouble.

D.- What is your feeling about succussion?

S.- Well, how do you mean?

D.- There are some homeopaths I have talked to who are not too sure that succussion has any other value than the value of simply assisting the dilution...

S.- Oh, succussion. All homeopathic medicine is put up with succussion.

D.- Do you believe in high dilution, or low dilution?

S.- I use a high dilution whenever I can. You get better results with it. But today we have many older people who use the eye drops of the eye man, and various things, and then I have to use the low. Succussion is a wonderful thing, and your dilute medicine is very dilute--harmless. So the action is deeper. I have always been a high potency man.

D.- Yes, that is what I was going to ask you.

S.- I have always been a high potency man, trained in college, and kept it up, but nowadays I use lots more low potency just for that reason. Many people are using and many of them are carrying a bunch of aspirin in their pockets, and all that would kill the high potency.

D.- In other words you feel that if people take other drugs...

S.- That will kill it.

D.- Yes. If they were taking nothing but homeopathic drugs then you feel high potency...

- S.- Homeopathic medicine won't kill it. Another remedy will kill it--whether it is homeopathic or other drugs.
- D.- Do you have any ideas as to why a high potency drug would be more effective, say, than a low potency one?
- S.- Deeper action. It goes into the system, gets far deeper in. The thing is we start on a straight high potency, keep that up for a certain time, then go higher and higher. Some people change, you know, all the time, but I keep treating the remedy. The longer a remedy reacts with them the better results you get. Where you are changing all the time, you get a badly mixed-up case.
- D.- Well, you know that some of the doctors in the late nineteenth century, particularly the late 1800's, maintained that homeopathy was successful because the use of high potency meant that they were using practically no drugs, whereas the regular profession, particularly in the early 1800's, was over-dosing, and that the success of the homeopath was more because they were leaving the cure to nature and not abusing the patient with calomel and blood-letting, etc. Do you think there is some truth in this?
- S.- Yes. The high potency will cure things that you could get good results with low, but you get better with high. In chronic cases you have much better chance of curing with high potency.
- D.- One of the criticisms that has been levied against the homeopaths is that there has never been adequate clinical testing of homeopathic remedies.

- S.- I don't know how you would have any better. They test it on every patient. During every epidemic--we have had big epidemics--the homeopaths have gotten better results. In the big flu epidemic of 1918 we didn't lose one in twenty-five of what the regular school did. And they were so busy--I was in the Army at the time--I was on the ship. But cholera, yellow fever, all of those things, homeopathically--there has been no comparison in the mortality rate between the two--the homeopaths have been so much lower.
- D.- I know from my own historical research--I have written the history of medicine in Louisiana and I have written on epidemics--that the homeopaths were actually more successful in dealing with yellow fever in the nineteenth century--in nineteenth century Louisiana. Although the argument has been put forth that they were more successful because they didn't try to kill the patient with calomel, quinine, and blood-letting, etc.
- S.- Because they (homeopaths) have scientific medicine. They give the medicine that covers that case.
- D.- But the problem--when I say that the argument has been raised that there has not been enough clinical testing--is that it is difficult for a physician dealing with individual patients to really know precisely how successful he has been. I say this because Benjamin Rush probably killed more people in the yellow fever epidemic of 1795 than anybody else, he was bleeding and administering huge doses of medicine, felt that he was very successful, and

yet, there is little doubt that he was killing an awful lot of patients. He argued that his philosophy of blood-letting had been successful. You see this is why I raise this point.

S.- Well, I don't know where you would have any better proving than taking the cases and treat them. Now one doctor that was head of Montgomery Ward & Company's medical department gave treatment in that epidemic; he had a couple of doctors helping him. They worked night and day there with the flu epidemic, and they lost two cases, and they both were practically dying when they were called. They were so busy they gave a flu remedy, gelsemium. The patients of the surrounding doctors and nurses were dying, and he wasn't losing any. Then in the epidemic the regulars were buying more gelsemium than the homeopaths. But they soon got away from it, though. You can't practice medicine with one remedy that way. And the flu, all those things, there is no question you have to get the remedy they need. A bunch of remedies may be indicated; you have to find the right one. Now I had an experience in my first year in medical college--I mean in practice in Iowa--I got a call one day--there were a couple of other Dr. Smith's--and I got a call and went there, and she said, "I meant to call the other Dr. Smith." I said: "That is perfectly all right, I'll leave you call him." "Oh, no, you stay." She was too poor to pay and wanted an excuse for calling a strange doctor. She was about eight months pregnant and had a fever. I

diagnosed it as influenza, asked to wash my hands before I left, and she gave me an old dirty rag, and I was too bashful to say anything so I used it. I came back the next morning, and she was broke out with smallpox. It was the first case I had seen, but I recognized it. Then I got to snooping around and found two of her children had been broken out for over a week, and she had kept them out of sight as they didn't want to be quarantined. They had used that towel they gave me. So I came down with smallpox, and it was one of the most wonderful things that ever happened. We had smallpox nine months of the year at that time...

D.- Where was this?

S.- Mason City, Iowa. They wanted me to be health officer, and I asked the detention officer where he kept his smallpox, and I had charge of its detention hospital. I took care of over a thousand cases in about six years. Now, all of the mortality rates I have seen were about 25 percent deaths. I never had a death. They turned them all over to me, and of course I gained experience with contagious diseases you couldn't get today. Nine months of the year most of my work was contagious diseases.

D.- I would say if you had no fatality in that number of smallpox cases you were doing a good job.

S.- Well, we never had a death. Shortly after I left there I heard the mayor of the town got it and died. I never had a death, and I treated them all homeopathically. It was all turned over to me as soon as they were diagnosed.

D.- This was around 1913, 1915 to 1918.

S.- Yes. 1913 was when I had the smallpox.

D.- Had you been vaccinated?

S.- Yes. I had been. Not recently.

D.- Of course one of the problems in those days was that the vaccine matter was not always...

S.- A lot of our cases came in with smallpox, and they claimed they had been vaccinated a short time ago, and they thought they couldn't get it. I saw dozens of them who had been vaccinated and it was working good when they came down with it.

D.- Where was the disease coming from at that time, do you know?

S.- Well, they had it all over at that time.

D.- Fairly general. I know this was the period they were having the big drive--from 1900 on--in the schools to vaccinate everyone and try to eliminate it.

S.- I was vaccinated when I was in high school, I know, but I don't remember that there was any drive. There was since I have been practicing, a drive...

D.- Well, this, I guess, was largely in the big cities; in Chicago, New York, and the major cities. I know there were extensive drives at that time.

S.- I had scarlet fever my third year in medical college. I was in Cook County Hospital a month, so I had good experience with that.

D.- You seem to have encountered most of the diseases. How much has practice changed since you first started practicing?

S.- Practice? I had more faith in the regular medicine of forty

or fifty years ago than I have today. We didn't have all the terrible side effects that they are getting now.

D.- And yet life expectancy is high today. People do live longer.

S.- Well, I don't think it is much higher. I think people lived about as old then as they do now. They claim it is higher.

D.- Well, statistically more people are living longer. Of course what you are saying is that in your day there were quite a few people in their eighties and nineties just as we have them today. But statistically we have reduced infant mortality, which has been a major factor in increasing life expectancy. I was going to say that I would think when you first started practicing the summer fluxes and dysenteries were still a major factor with small children.

S.- I never had any trouble with it. I did obstetrics for fifty years. One thing I have found about the Rh factor, which they now claim causes all the deformed babies. Yet I have taken care of lots of such cases, even third or fourth pregnancies. I never had any trouble. I say treat them homeopathically during the pregnancy and you can overcome that. We hear about three-day measles causing deformed babies, but I am sure I took care of a lot of mothers that had three-day measles during pregnancy, and they never had any trouble.

D.- You say that you had practically no deformed children?

S.- I never had any. I know when my patients go in for delivery, the nurses here at the hospital will say: "Who is your



doctor?" And when told my name they will say: "Oh, we never have any trouble with him." They asked me how come none of my cases ever had any fever or anything after delivery, and I said: "I treat them all homeopathically during the pregnancy, and I would always give them some medicine at the time." Arnica was a common remedy, if there was no other indicated. I didn't fill them full of dope.

D.- I had some questions. What do you feel, or how do you feel about the American Institute of Homeopathy? Do you think they do a good job?

S.- Well, they are doing the best they can. But it is not what it used to be. They haven't got enough members for one thing.

D.- What do you think about working with laymen? Do you think this may help...

S.- Well, I have always tried to interest laymen in homeopathy. I believe that some laymen certainly will go hundreds of miles, or thousands of miles to get homeopathy.

D.- Do you think that if they could get enough interest among laymen that it may stimulate a demand for homeopathic physicians that may...

S.- Well, there is plenty of interest now. Here in this country we have no way of training them. A short postgraduate course, but that is not enough foundation. For years I have advocated graduate study in homeopathy. England has never had undergraduate homeopathy. I think we ought to have a good postgraduate school where they can go for three

months and get a foundation. You never learn all of homeopathy. It is a life study. You can always learn a little bit more.

D.- Unfortunately the postgraduate courses offered by the Institute in the summer have not been too successful, have they?

S.- Well, what can you do in two-week's time?

D.- But my point is that even if they had offered more, part of the problem they simply have not been able to get enough recruits. And the question is how does one stimulate an interest among medical students.

S.- Well, there is too much knocking of homeopathy. Like with my son. But I taught him enough homeopathy during his college years that they couldn't scare him out of it.

D.- But it seems to me that the big problem is, somehow or the other, to convince the medical schools of the need for or at least an interest in homeopathy itself.

S.- There is not enough money in it for them. And the pharmaceutical houses and the drug stores--they are not in favor of homeopathy. We don't write prescriptions, or very few prescriptions, and don't use all of their expensive drugs. We give our own medicine, and don't charge for it. While if you go to a regular, it is usually from five to fifty dollars for a prescription.

D.- I gather there are enough supplies of homeopathic remedies in this area, in southern California. You don't have any problem obtaining homeopathic remedies.

- S.- No, but they are awful slow. Of course...
- D.- You do not have the access to the distributors that you would have, say, in Philadelphia, or in the East?
- S.- No, we don't have. There is just the one real branch, the one store here. They sell more to the laymen.
- D.- Well, getting back to the Laymen's League. How do you feel about lay practitioners--men like Mr. Green<sup>5</sup> in Boston?
- S.- He is not a lay practitioner. He is teaching. He publishes this journal. I have known him. His sister is Dr. Julia Green, you know.<sup>6</sup> She was a wonderful physician. Known him for years. But they are doing good work. They are interested in homeopathy. They are not practicing. I train my people because I can't take care of all the patients who want me. I train them. Try to have them stop counting drugs. Tell them to call me up. Some of them get very proficient at it. They would make a lot of homeopathic doctors look bad with the results they get. I had one, he was a missionary in Alaska and didn't have any doctor in fifty miles. He had a heart attack. I took care of him, and he was very much interested. His wife and two girls also. He had a wonderful work up there helping people when they were up against it. They had no doctors.
- D.- There are some dangers, of course, in laymen doing prescribing.
- S.- Not as far as the homeopathic remedy is concerned. These homeopathic drugs I use there is no danger if a kid gets ahold of the whole box or bottle of it, it won't hurt them to use it, too dilute. They call me up, and I tell them

what to take. I don't charge for telephone prescription. I have twenty-five or thirty people a day calling me. It takes a lot of my time, but I can't make so many calls, and if they don't get along, I see them if they are able to come in or make a house visit. A lot of the doctors that are homeopathic charge for these prescriptions, the same as an office call. I feel I like to help people some without being paid for it at times.

D.- Of course I think you made a good point when you said that many of the new modern doctors are not willing to take the time with their patients. Now I gather that as a homeopath-- since a homeopath tends to take a very complete case history and...

S.- We don't go for all these tests. I have tests made, and if I feel it is absolutely needed, we will probe something, but in a lot of these tests they have a complete check-up. They know beforehand that four-fifths of them won't show anything, but they get a good fee out of it. I think it is a crime to run up such big bills on people. Anything that will help, though, I want done.

D.- Of course now, the orthodox profession maintains that they, too, emphasize treating the patient instead of the disease.

S.- Not in general, I don't think that.

D.- This, of course, is what Hippocrates talked about, you know, in a sense--observation, and dealing with the patient as an individual.

S.- We have no remedy for a specific disease. You have to fit

it to the individual patient. Those with chronic troubles will come to you, and cry to you, and maybe in a few months or so, say: "I had so-and-so, and it is gone." They forgot to tell us about it, but it is enough to find the right medicine for them.

D.- What do you think of the efforts that were made in the 1950's or have been made to try to get homeopathy in the medical schools? I think you indicated that you feel that it should be taught primarily at the graduate level. Do you think it would be better to try to get one of the regular schools to offer it as a graduate course, or whether it would be better to establish a...

S.- Well, I think it would be too much--if they could get the right teachers, it would be all right, but I doubt if they would. And the people who are teaching it wouldn't know homeopathy well enough. California University--is he one of the men that you...

D.- I saw Dr. Guttentag.<sup>7</sup> I talked with him, oh, I guess, about three weeks ago.

S.- In my years in practice in Iowa we had it there. But I don't think it has ever attracted a lot of men, yet good homeopaths came out of it. Hahnemann still has some. I know one man who hasn't a chance to teach homeopathy any more--Dr. Seidel.<sup>8</sup>

D.- Of course one of the problems is that there is a shortage of really good, young men in homeopathy. I talked with Dr. James Stephenson in New York, one of the youngest men I know

who is quite active and very much interested in furthering homeopathy. Let me ask you, do you know how many homeopaths there are practicing in California today?

S.- No, I don't.

D.- Do you have a fairly large group in say, the Los Angeles area?

S.- No. My son and I, and a couple of osteopaths.

D.- Dr. Neiswander?

S.- Neiswander in Alhambra, and Dr. William Jackson in LaBrea. There is an osteopath in Pasadena that is very good. Now you take the schools which used to have a six-week's postgraduate course in homeopathy. That worked out pretty good when they had it, and I know a lot of osteopaths that went back, and they are pretty good homeopaths now. And regular men went back. Six-weeks will give you enough foundation.

D.- This would be true if you have had some medical training to begin with.

S.- Well, they are regular physicians.

D.- That is what I am saying, the men who already...

S.- They have enough interest in homeopathy before they go.

D.- I suppose all of the men are well along in years--the practicing homeopaths in this area?

S.- Well, Neiswander, he is about the same age as my son.

D.- Yes. I suspect that he and Dr. Neiswander would be two of the youngest, are they not?

S.- Yes, I guess so.

- D.- I found in Pennsylvania and the Washington area and New England that it seems the homeopaths, rightly or wrongly, are dying out, literally.
- S.- Well, they live longer than the allopaths.
- D.- That is true.
- S.- They have made a survey in a medical journal--I don't know whether they could tell the school they graduated from-- here about twenty five years ago of the obituaries--oh, it took them about a year--I suppose it was the A.M.A. Journal. And the homeopath averaged ten years longer life than the others. And they worked longer, too. Do you know Dr. Griggs<sup>9</sup> in Philadelphia?
- D.- Yes, I had an interview with Dr. Griggs.
- S.- I worked under him a year in Children's Hospital.
- D.- I saw him in June, and he is amazingly lively. He is quite alert. I think he is 96...
- S.- About 95.
- D.- 95 or 96, yes. And I was just amazed that...
- S.- I always thought the world of him, and he always thought the world of me.
- D.- Yes, he is a fascinating individual.
- S.- He cured many children--some considered hopeless at birth. He cured lots of them in his time.
- D.- I think he was responsible for getting Dr. Weaver into homeopathy.
- S.- I don't know.
- D.- Dr. Weaver is in Philadelphia, too.

- S.- Yes, I know Dr. Weaver. I don't know anything about his background.
- D.- I think that Mrs. Weaver had some real problems that Dr. Griggs helped her with, but...
- S.- Yes. I had a wonderful privilege the time I worked under Griggs in Philadelphia. And then when I was in Rochester, N. Y., I had some wonderful men to work under. I had a good foundation.
- D.- But the fact remains, you see, that there are not going to be men to carry on the homeopathic...
- S.- No, something has to be done for it.
- D.- What do you feel are the prospects for homeopathy?
- S.- Well, I don't know. I have been advocating the postgraduate course for years, and they don't seem to get at it.
- D.- Do you feel optimistic, or pessimistic?
- S.- Well, homeopathy has to come back. They have never had anything to take its place. Anything as successful as it is--scientific law--is bound to come back. Though it may come back under a different name. And all through the world homeopathic philosophy is very good. In India it is taking the biggest stand. We had a doctor here from India at a meeting a year or two ago, and he said that the homeopaths got far better results at half the money there, and that the government was taking over the colleges and hospitals there financing them to get more homeopaths.
- D.- I get the impression that homeopathy has been more successful overseas in recent years than it has been in the United States.



S.- Yes.

D.- But I get the feeling that the prospects for homeopathy as such, are not too bright, as an organized group, as a practice. Now the question is whether the ideas of homeopathy will survive. How do you feel about that?

S.- It can't help it. It is based on a scientific law--the most scientific law we have in medicine. I am sure it will survive. And even if it is dropped for a time it will be brought back by somebody. I had in here awhile back--a doctor was telling about somebody, one of these drug house men--a doctor in New York, maybe you know him, Dr. Henry Eisfelder, moved to Florida now. One of the drug men came in and telling of their wonderful work, they had just spent fifty thousand dollars getting out some drug, and how wonderful it was. He went in his library and got the Homeopathic Materia Medica, and showed him everything he had and a lot more, in a book we have had for years. In England the Royal family has been on homeopathy for years. The Queen, her father, mother, grandmother, and the Prince of Wales were all on homeopathy. They don't dare fight it like they did here. At one time years ago the Royal Academy of Medicine--the same as the A.M.A. here--appointed four outstanding doctors to study homeopathy, expose it once and for all, and do away with it. Three of them adopted homeopathy and the fourth one was never heard from. One of those, [Constantine] Hering, came to this country and was one of the outstanding men of a hundred years ago. Then, oh, you take twenty years

ago when I was editing the Homeopathic Recorder I counted up, and I remember our most outstanding men had all practiced regular medicine for ten to twenty years before they took it up. They were the most enthusiastic. They saw the difference in the results.

- D.- As I say, I do get the impression that homeopathy as we know it today may well die out. Now I think that Dr. Guttentag and some of the others have made the point that the ideas of homeopathy have already survived in terms of immunology, and some of these other so-called new developments in medicine.
- S.- A lot of them are based on homeopathic laws.
- D.- Yes, and this is the point I think you made, was it not, that the ideas of homeopathy may survive even if...
- S.- Yes, it will be dropped, but somebody will bring it back.
- D.- Why do you think that the A.M.A. or the medical profession in general was antagonistic to homeopathy?
- S.- Well, we are doing things different than they are, and they wanted to run things. They don't want anybody who is any different, and I don't know whether it has anything to do with it, but wherever they have had statistics homeopaths have been so much higher--I don't know, I won't say that has caused it, but they have fought it always...
- D.- Yes, there has been very strong opposition to it, certainly. As a matter of fact, the A.M.A. was more successful, of course, when it stopped fighting and began to absorb it, taking over the homeopathic schools. They defeated it by ostensibly accepting it.

There were a couple of questions I wanted to ask you. How do you feel about the chiropractors, and efforts by chiropractors...

- S.- Well, I think if patients get something out of place that can be put back in without injury, the chiropractors can cure it quicker than I or any doctor can. And the osteopaths, too, but we haven't got many osteopaths now.
- D.- Well, now some of these people have been coming into homeopathy, and I think...
- S.- Well, chiropractors become interested in it, but they have no right to practice it. A lot of osteopaths are taking it up.
- D.- Yes. Well, I got the feeling that some of the homeopaths felt that the osteopaths were acceptable because they did have medical training, but that the chiropractors and some of the other groups were simply trying to come in and get respectability, or let's say, status.
- S.- They have no license to give medicine. I might say on our trip to Mexico when I took my family--thirteen of us--there was a nurse who worked for a doctor in Westwood, a surgeon, and somebody introduced me. She was along on the trip. I met <sup>her</sup> before we got on the trip, and didn't see her until we got to our first stop. Then I said: "I haven't seen anything of you." "Oh," she said, "I have been seasick all the time." She had taken dramamine and it hadn't done any good. I said: "Let me give you a homeopathic remedy for it." So I gave her cocculus indicatom. The rest of the

trip she had no more seasickness. I got a letter from her yesterday thanking me. I sent her literature on homeopathy.

- D.- What do you think of the efforts to establish homeopathy as a specialty within the medical profession? Do you think there is any hope for that?
- S.- No. Because those who want to practice homeopathy don't want to be tied up that way, and I don't think there is any hope for it. I don't think it would go. And then those that don't know anything about homeopathy--don't believe in it--would ridicule it so much that that way the young fellows don't take it up. They hear so much crazy stuff about it.
- D.- Well, my own feeling is that if homeopathy is to survive that they have got to make some appeal to the medical students. They have got to attract medical students.
- S.- Well you've got plenty to appeal to them, but then they are just crowded out by the average college. And all they hear about homeopathy is ridicule in medical colleges.
- D.- Yes, I think this is true, the tendency to dismiss it. I am curious to know if you feel that the medical profession has ever really given an adequate testing of homeopathic remedies?
- S.- Not the regular medical schools, never. The homeopathic remedies are all tested on people. That one test I heard about in England. I don't know what they did, but they adopted it, anyway, and became very famous men.
- D.- Well, let me see, I think we have covered most of the points

that I am particularly interested in.

S.- Many chronic conditions can be overcome by homeopathy. I had migraine headaches. My mother had them. They are hereditary. I know when I was first studying medicine I wanted to cure her headaches. She had those terrible headaches about every two weeks--they laid her up. When I got in medical college, I thought not a chance. I came home at the end of my first year so enthused about homeopathy--studying it every minute--and I kept studying it. She got up one morning and put a wet rag on her face, so I knew she had one coming. I gave her the remedy I had decided on, pulsati<sup>o</sup>llaom. I had to go out to do some work and when I came back at noon she was still up. I said, "How about the headache?" She said, "It was practically gone when I took the second powder." I think she had one slight one after that. She had had them for years. They had been worse that summer than ever, so I raised the potency. And then I developed the headaches. Mine took a number of years to cure. I had them almost cured, but then I went into the Army and the shots brought them back, and it was hard to cure afterwards. I haven't had one for years now.

D.- Don't stop talking. I am just going to check the machine here. We are getting close to the end of the tape.

S.- So many of those conditions I cured. In my early years of practice, a fellow came into the office one day, and was telling me somebody had been ordered to the insane asylum.

He came 150 miles, way over where my brother lived, farming. And his brother-in-law had a mental breakdown, and he brought him to me, and I straightened him out. And if I could straighten Wally, I ought to be able to straighten his father-in-law out. He had been before the mental experts of the state, and they ordered him to the insane asylum for the rest of his life. The fellow had quit farming and retired, and he just couldn't take it. Two years before that he got up one morning and fractured his skull, was operated on, and was better for awhile. Well, I said I would be glad to take him, if the hospital would take him. The hospital said they would take him if his wife would stay with him. So they brought him out and I had him in the hospital about two weeks.

(End Tape I - Side 1)

(Begin Tape I - Side 2)

S.- He had been there two weeks, and was feeling better, and I took him to my home for a couple of weeks before I let him go back to where he lived, about 150 miles, but he picked right up. And about a year later I was out in that community, and it was very near where I was brought up, so I stopped in going by the place, and he was out in the field plowing. I said, "I am a cattle-buyer. Do you have any cattle to sell?" He said, "You can't fool me. You are Dr. Smith." But that fellow lived a normal life for several years, and then had an accident of some kind, and died. He would have spent the rest of his life in the insane asylum

if it hadn't been for homeopaths.

Another experience--about fifteen years ago I had had my eyes tested. They were all right. Then I noticed my vision was failing. I went back to the optometrist who usually fit my glasses, and he was very much concerned because they can't use any drops or anything. He wanted me to go to an oculist. I went to one here--Dr. Welch--he is dead now. He was one I had worked with for thirty years at that time on eye cases, and treatment, and I had a thorough examination, he said I had a hole in my macula lutea of the left eye and nothing could be done for it. He said: "I will send you to some of the best eye men in Los Angeles if you want to go." I said: "I have worked with you for thirty years. I have faith in you." And he didn't do a thing, and told me to come back in two months. I got busy homeopathically, and I didn't go back for about nine months. He said: "What have you been doing?" I said: "Nothing but homeopathic medicine. Why?" He said: "The hole is closed and the vision has come back." The optometrist, who was also a friend of mine for many years, said: "I would like to examine you for curiosity." Afterward he said, "Oh, remarkable!" I said: "What is the difference between today and eight or nine months ago?" That day it was 20-20 normal vision. Eight or nine months before it had been 20-80, or one-fourth vision. I had spent about forty years with this same Dr. Welch, the ophthalmologist I had worked with here, and I don't know how many times I sent a case to him and he

examined it. He didn't know anything about homeopathy, but he knew we got the results. And he told me what he found and he said: "I can't help them, but you can."

I had cleared up so many cases that he felt couldn't be helped.

D.- I see you use homeopathic remedies yourself. I gather that you attribute...

S.- Yes it is the only thing I want.

D.- I notice that the homeopathic physicians frequently in taking a case history are aware of the emotional problems affecting...

S.- Well, mental symptoms are very prominent. You get certain outstanding symptoms of the case. You get them first. All of those are more important in prescribing.

D.- But you feel that part of the success of the homeopaths is that they recognize both the physical and the emotional condition of the patient.

S.- Yes.

D.- Do you have any comments that you would like to make? Any particular cases you feel that are significant, or aspects of your practice that should be noted?

S.- I would like to tell you about one I had in Philadelphia. I was chief resident there, and during the night a colored man was shot through the lung and was brought in. The night man had one of the surgeons on service called in and he said, "He is going to die." They gave him some things. So every time I went into the ward I thought he would be



gone, but he was still there, and I got to thinking: "I will give him a homeopathic remedy." Well, it was in the winter time, and he wanted nothing but a sheet over him and the window open at the foot of his bed. He was a warm patient. He knew he was going to die, and he was afraid to die, and all excited. All of his symptoms pointed to arsenical chloride, if you don't know anything about homeopathic remedies. Fear, and everything, except that the arsenical is a cold patient. I had read material about this secale cornutum which is really a warm patient, and he had all the symptoms of arsenicum album except that it was warm-blooded. I looked through all of our drugs, and finally found one low potency of it, and I put it in a glass of water. It was about ten or eleven o'clock and ordered two teaspoons every hour. Just then I was called to maternity to deliver a baby. His pulse was up, his chest was full of blood, pulse was about 140 or 150, and I was sure he would be dead when I returned. But the chart showed a marked improvement on the second dose of the medicine. It cleared up, and he left the hospital in good health in two weeks. Some of the doctors said, "Oh, that remedy couldn't do it--what you did couldn't do that." I asked Dr. Griggs: "What do you think about it?" Well, he said: "It certainly did." "It saved his life, no question about it."

D.- How do you think the homeopathic remedies work? In other words, differentiated, say, from the drugs administered by the regular profession?

- S.- Well, ours fit the case. They go to work where needed. I don't know how to answer that question fairly, but they act on the patient, and you are prescribing for the patient and not an individual. In regular practice the medicine goes mostly on one particular thing. We go on the whole patient, and of course in flu epidemic, or something like that you strive then for the disease--the acute symptom--but in general you can try for the whole patient. You have to fit the patient.
- D.- You see the problem of homeopathy is that to many people it seems as if you are just treating symptoms.
- S.- You are. That is the important thing.
- D.- But the question is that there may be deep-rooted causes that...
- S.- Well, if you treat the symptom you are going to get the deep-rooted ones. I have read something in that these cases that they can't make a diagnosis, can't find out what it is for sure. Yet the symptom, you can treat it anyway. The indication is one thing that is very hard to get. I had an osteopath in--I don't think she had had very much to do with homeopathy. Another osteopath, this woman had retired when she was up in her seventies. I had an awful time getting the indications from them. Other people can give you a perfect picture. I have children sometimes that will just tell you perfectly how they feel, and describe it. We have children come in here, and the first time, you know, they are afraid. They have had shots. After they have been here once or twice, they are tickled to death to come.

I have a lot of them that come with their parents. I have to give them a powder before they leave--a little box of sugar pills. I also have a dog out there. I had a little Mexican girl who came with her grandmother, and she always had to have a sugar powder, and a little box of sugar pills. Well finally, they came one time, she brought me this dog.

- D.- One of the statements I have heard homeopathic physicians say is that regular physicians in treating the symptoms frequently suppress certain other symptoms, and actually cause more serious problems later on. This is why I was asking you about treating symptoms, you see.
- S.- True. I am interested in that. Foot sweat. I don't know what suppressed that. Another case I had some years ago a woman had severe asthma. I asked if she had ever had skin condition. Asthma is due to an allergy. "Well, yes, she had had eczema on her hands for years, and tried everything, and finally got something that cured it." I said: "When did the asthma come on?" She said it came just as the rash left. I said: "I would have to bring that rash back to cure your asthma."
- D.- Well now, in a case like that, would you assume that the rash was a normal state, or in other words, if curing the rash brought on the asthma, then would she have to live with the rash?
- S.- No, because you can cure the rash, the eczema. The right remedy should cure it. It is sometimes pretty difficult. I can't remember how she got along, but I know I cleared it up and got the eczema back. I can't remember whether I got

the eczema cured or not. That was back in Iowa.

D.- In some cases you are saying that the treatment instead of curing the skin rash actually simply suppresses it.

S.- You drive it in.

D.- But there are other treatments which will actually cure it, and not drive it in. The correct treatment.

S.- The homeopathic treatment properly administered would cure that and not bring--well, it would bring the rash out, but I mean if you cure that for her you wouldn't have had the asthma.

D.- But how does one know that in treating something like the eczema that you are curing it and not really driving it in?

S.- Well, we are not doing anything to drive it in. I mean we are treating the symptom.

D.- This is a fine point. I...

S.- We are treating the patient. You won't drive it in that way. But when you use something powerful application you don't cure it, but it just suppresses it.

D.- The homeopathic remedy tends to be more constitutional.

S.- It is constitutional, in chronic conditions.

D.- Yes. Whereas you are saying that external applications may simply have the opposite effect from what they really...

S.- Yes, they do more harm than good.

D.- Yes, so that when you talk of driving a skin condition or disease inward it would be more the result of topical application than say, constitutional.

S.- Well, yes, drugs can do it, too. I mean, internal drugs. More topical would do it, but internal drugs will, too.

D.- I think we have covered a number of the points. I wonder

if you have any comments yourself that you would like to make.

S.- Well, when I started practicing homeopathy fifty-six years ago, I thought it was the greatest system of medicine the world has ever known, and I still think so, after fifty-six years of practice.

D.- You would say that on the whole you have been successful with it?

S.- Yes, we have on a lot of cases. A lot of cases you can't find the right remedy. And some cases are incurable. But we cure a lot of cases considered incurable.

I had a case a few years ago--a widow woman I took care of. She was from Iowa, and she went back there to a small town. The banker had lost his wife. He had retired and they got married so she brought him to me. He had psoriasis nearly all over his body. Nails were eaten up with it. She said he had had the three best dermatologists in Iowa. He had had all kinds of treatments, even x-rays. I said: "I doubt if I can help you." In two years time I had cleared him up. He was in the Presbyterian Home here. He has had no psoriasis. He calls me up to get treatment. Used to be he and his wife would come up. She isn't able to any more--they are about 40 miles from here. Now psoriasis is supposed to be incurable. I have had good results with it. I haven't cured near all of them, but as a rule it takes several years to do it.

D.- And I suppose you feel that since you are dealing with a great many complex syndromes, to be a good homeopath and know the precise remedy takes a great deal of practice and

experience.

S.- A great deal of experience, and a great deal of study. We never know all of it--homeopathic materia medica. Of course we have a repertory. Here is probably one of the greatest homeopaths of the last seventy-five years.

D.- Which one is that. Which book is that?

S.- Dr. Kent's Repertory.<sup>10</sup> Now this will give a description of all those symptoms. But you get the main symptoms, find all the main symptoms, and then go through here and find the remedy that is the strongest in these, and then work out the remedy. Thirty years of practice I used to work out almost every case of any consequence in the repertory.

D.- But where the symptoms vary so widely and you get such a mixture of symptoms, this is where I suppose...

S.- You have go to be able to know the most important ones, and then get the most important, then you get down to the less important.

D.- I take it that you still are like most homeopaths, and give the medicine when you prescribe.

S.- We prescribe without charge.

D.- That is what I thought.

S.- I mean we don't charge for the homeopathic medicine because it don't cost much. We give such a little of it, it will last.

D.- One reason why the drug profession has not been too enthusiastic...

S.- Yes. They are opposed to it. We don't write all these

prescriptions. Some doctor's prescription medicine will run five to forty or fifty dollars. I have one patient that a man brought to me, and she was going to two or three doctors for shots. She was coming to me, and I knew I couldn't get any results--she was taking, I think, six pills every day, and had terrible headaches. It cost her about eight or nine dollars just for those pills besides all the other things. I didn't really want her to come, and she didn't come, but her husband was still coming and said she wondered if she could come. I said, "No chance as long as she is taking all the dope."

- D.- Of course this is one problem with patients, since most patients like to take some medicine. You know the average patient feels unless he gets some medicine he is not getting his money's worth.
- S.- Yes, some feel that way, but they learn after they go that people who use homeopathy don't. Now I had terrible migraine headaches. I have never taken an aspirin or anything like that in my life that I know of. If I was ever given it, I didn't know it.
- D.- In other words, you feel that the homeopathic remedy can clear it up.
- S.- It can, but with migraine headaches the more dope you take the harder they are to overcome. I just put up with it. I can stand pain better than some people.
- D.- Yet aspirin is considered to be the safest, practically, of all modern drugs, isn't it?
- S.- Well, I don't know. It does a lot of harm. It is the

safest for small children, yet there is the most deaths. Every big city in the United States where there are small children there are more of them killed with aspirin than anything.

D.- Would you say that none of the homeopathic drugs could kill if taken in excess?

S.- No, not if they are taken the way we use them. I don't use anything under 6X (diluted six times).

D.- But you mentioned children died from poisoning from taking too many aspirin. This is the case where children simply get into the medicine.

S.- They get into it. They get into a bottle. Now there is a homeopathic pharmacy that had a state pure food and drug inspector who doesn't know a thing about homeopathy. He said somebody could come in here--they were selling remedies to people--buy a bottle of bella donna 6X. A child eats this and it would kill him. He asked me to write a letter once, so I did. I said I was in the 56th year of practice, and I had never seen any poisoning from homeopathic medicine. I said if a child got ahold of a bottle of bella donna 6X it wouldn't do a bit of harm. One part in a million. I had a patient in here yesterday I guess it was, his son insisted on him going to a heart specialist. He was giving him fifteen drops of bella donna four times a day, a tincture. It was doing him more harm than good. I certainly wouldn't take it. I wrote and I said if they want to do something, why don't they go after aspirin? The manager of this pharmacy



went to the morgue, and there had been eight or ten deaths in Los Angeles already this year--that was a couple of months ago--from aspirin poisoning. One druggist told me soon after I came here, I guess, that after the close of the 1918 flu epidemic that there was a high-up commission appointed to study the flu and report on it. They came back, and they said there were more people died from aspirin than they did from the flu. The druggist told me that. I said: "Why didn't they let the world know?" He replied: "Oh well, it would boost the chiropractors and the non-drug people if they did it." But aspirin--I had one epidemic of flu when I first came here. I would get calls, and they had a doctor say, "Take plenty of aspirin." It reduces the temperature, but they have a little temperature for a week. I get calls, and I make them stop the aspirin and give them a homeopathic remedy, and the temperature was normal. They are not giving so much aspirin now. At that time they were giving aspirin for the flu. Arthritis they were selling them for. People come in who were taking fifteen or twenty tablets a day. That certainly isn't good.

D.- No, I would agree with you there, and yet relatively it seems to be fairly safe. Now you are saying though, that even taken in moderation aspirin has some side effects.

S.- It will reduce the temperature, but doesn't cure the case, like in the flu.

D.- Well, isn't there some merit in a drug relieving symptoms?

S.- What did you say?

D.- Isn't there some merit in a drug which does relieve symptoms?

S.- Well, the homeopathic remedy will. I don't know of anything-- the antibiotics don't. They don't have much effect on the virus.

D.- I was thinking most pain killers that are used in medicine whether they are barbiturates or sedatives or codeine--in other words, narcotics--their aim...

S.- I think codeine is probably less harmful than most of them.

D.- And yet these are basically to relieve symptoms. They don't cure the thing.

S.- No, all they do is deaden pain. I use as little sedative effects as I can, but people who suffer too much you have got to give it to them, when they can't stand it.

D.- Are the homeopathic remedies to relieve pain as such? You do accept codeine as a homeopathic remedy?

S.- No, but where you have to use something for pain...I remember one case back in Iowa. The people lived right back from me. They would call me when I came home for meals, you know, in that end of town. A woman had a terrible headache. I think it was her menstrual period if I remember right. A former doctor gave her a shot of morphine, and it didn't help. Well, I figured I would use arsenicum album, 10M, as a remedy. So I gave it to her and said to let me know if she wasn't getting better. After awhile, about fifteen, twenty minutes, or half an hour she phoned and couldn't understand it. The pain was all gone already.

D.- Well, this has been an interesting talk.

S.- I hope you know more about homeopathy now.

D.- Well, I know a little more. I think each one of these talks give me a little better understanding.

S.- Do you know more about it?

Mrs. Duffy:

Oh yes, I have listened in on three of them now.

S.- Dr. Neiswander. Who was the other?

Mrs. Duffy:

Dr...

D.- Guttentag.

Mrs. D.-

Guttentag. So I am learning all the time.

D.- I am going to see Dr. Clark in Houston. Lucy Clark. Dr. Lucy Swanton Clark.

S.- Yes. I know the name, but I haven't seen her for years. I know most of the homeopaths all over the United States. Lots in foreign lands. I am editor of the Pacific Coast Homeopathic Bulletin for forty years.

D.- Well, we try to talk to a cross-section. You know, we tried to talk to diverse peoples, and it is interesting to get the impressions of the doctors and to hear some of their cases and their opinions on these.

S.- The outstanding man in San Francisco as far as knowledge of homeopathy is Dr. Roger A. Schmidt.

S.- Yes. Dr. Guttentag suggested I talk to him, but we are on a tight schedule and I didn't have time to contact him. We are due back East right now, but we are going to take off almost immediately. We have our car packed, and we are heading back east right now.

S.- Flying?

D.- No, we are driving. We made a big tour, and we have covered Dr. Young, Dr. Goldberg in Cincinnati, Dr. Young in Chillicothe, so what we are trying to do is get a representative group of homeopaths.

S.- I know Goldberg and all of them.

D.- Yes. But I think by the time we get through that the National Medical Library will have a pretty good tape...

S.- That going to be printed afterwards? The whole thing?

D.- No, but we will make a typed script and the typed scripts will then be deposited in the National Medical Library. But as I told you, you will get a chance...

S.- But I mean you won't have a chance to see what the others say.

D.- No, although I am sure they will have a copy, and I am sure we can supply you with a list of the names and you could write to them, if you would like. I am sure they would be very happy to let you see them. But you see we cannot distribute these without the permission of each individual. In other words, I can't send your tape to anybody else without your permission to do it. Well, thank you very much...

S.- R. A. Schmidt...

D.- You were talking about Dr. Schmidt?

S.- Yes. His brother, Pierre Schmidt, in Geneva, Switzerland, and Sir John Weir, the two outstanding homeopathic physicians in Europe. Pierre Schmidt is teaching--had a class practically all the time of about fifty regular physicians studying homeopathy.

D.- Now are these from different countries, or...

S.- No, I think it is in Switzerland.

D.- In Switzerland. And Dr. Schmidt--does he have any students or is he...

S.- You mean the one in San Francisco?

D.- Yes.

S.- No--well, I don't think so. He doesn't have time.

D.- He is a full-time practitioner, I take it.

S.- Yes.

D.- And how old is he now? Do you know, offhand?

S.- I haven't any idea. Sixty, anyway.

D.- Yes. This is one of the problems I think we mentioned in connection with the homeopaths, that so many of them are getting along in years. There is a desperate need to bring in some new ones. Well, have we covered everything, don't you think?

S.- I don't know anything you want to know?

D.- I think we have covered the main points that we were interested in.

S.- Did I answer you satisfactorily?

D.- I think you have done very well. It is always a pleasure to talk to somebody who is quite alert. Thank you very much.

(End Tape II)

## Footnotes

1. Pomona College, Claremont, California.
2. Sir John Weir (1907- ), London physician.
2. Wyrth Post Baker, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Washington, D. C.; William Weaver, <sup>M.D.</sup>,  
Bala Cynwyd, Pa.; Kay Vargo, Secretary of American  
Foundation for Homoeopathy, Washington, D. C.; James  
Stephenson, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> New York City.
4. Allen D. Sutherland, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Brattleboro, Vt.
5. Arthur B. Green, Needham, Mass., editor of The Layman  
Speaks.
6. Julia M. Green, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> died 1967, founder of the American  
Foundation for Homoeopathy, Washington, D. C.
7. Otto E. Guttentag, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Emeritus Professor at the University  
of California Medical School, San Francisco, California.
8. Raymond E. Seidel, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Philadelphia, Pa.
9. William Bentley Griggs, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Jenkintown, Pa.
10. James Tyler Kent, <sup>(M.D.)</sup> Repertory of the Homeopathic Materia  
Medica, (Lancaster, Pa., 1897-99).

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