

Hahnemann and his doctrines : an address, introductory to the first course of lectures in Hahnemann Medical College : delivered October 15, 1860 / by A.E. Small.

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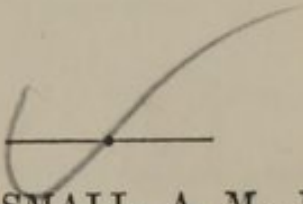
HAHNEMANN AND HIS DOCTRINES.

AN

ADDRESS,

INTRODUCTORY TO THE FIRST COURSE OF LECTURES
IN HAHNEMANN MEDICAL COLLEGE.

DELIVERED OCTOBER 15, 1860.



By A. E. SMALL, A. M., M. D.

Prof. of the Principles and Practice of Medicine.

CHICAGO:
BEEBE BROTHERS, NO. 102 WASHINGTON STREET.
1861.

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CHICAGO, OCT. 30TH, 1860.

Prof. A. E. SMALL, M. D.:

The undersigned, members of the class of Hahnemann Medical College, would most respectfully request a copy of your valuable Introductory, delivered to them on the 15th instant.

E. A. BALLARD, Ill.
R. I. CURTIS, Pa.
F. N. GORDON, Ill.
J. A. COPELAND, Ill.
T. F. DE DERKY, Ill.
GEO. E. HALL, Ill.
L. D. HEMINWAY, Ill.
GEO. E. HUSBAND, C. W.
GEO. E. KESSLER, Pa.
E. M. P. LUDLAM, Ill.
JOHN MOORE, Ill.
A. J. MURCH, Mich.
A. N. PHILLIPS, N. Y.
L. F. SMITH, Mich.
F. L. VINCENT, Ill.
C. A. WILLIAMS, Mich.

CHICAGO, NOV. 5TH, 1860.

GENTLEMEN :

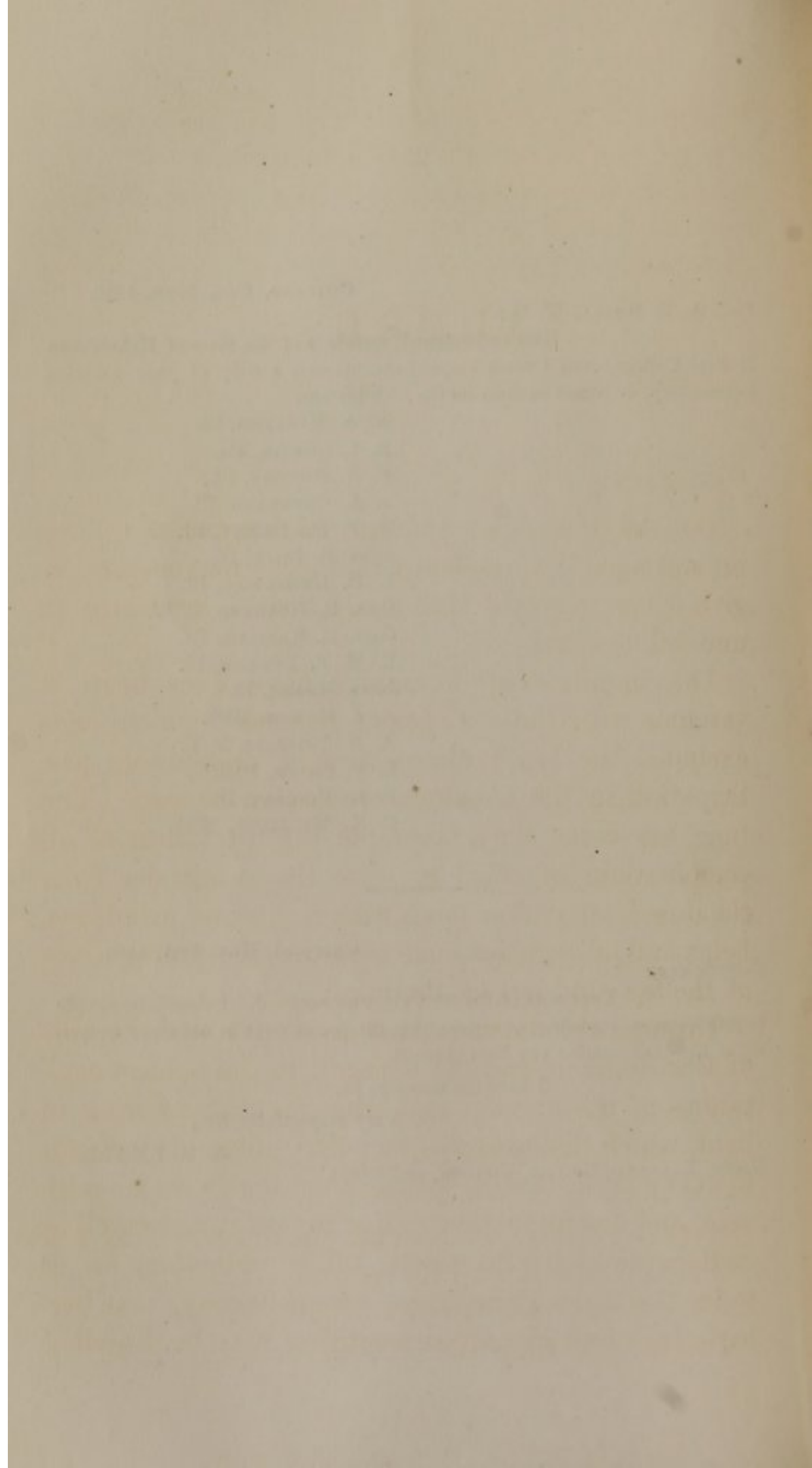
Your note of the 30th ult. was received. I cheerfully accede to your request, regretting, of course, that the manuscript is not more deserving of the consideration you have given it.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, &c.,

A. E. SMALL.

Messrs. BALLARD, CURTIS, GORDON, and others.



A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN :

One of the commanding characteristics of the present age, is a tendency in all its movements, to give wings to truth, that it may shed its lustre in unusual benefits.

The impulses of humanity have ever been at variance with those "ancient customs" which once excluded the lower classes from a measurable participation in the blessings vouchsafed to man. The time has come for a favorable interpretation of all combinations of effort to raise the multitudes from the dust ;—to endow them with rights and privileges, helps and advantages once regarded the prerogatives of the few, and not of the many.

Through the darkness that once curtained the hills of Christendom, and bid defiance to the noblest aspirations of the human soul, there is a glimmering of light, which discloses the fact that humanity belongs to every rank, that it possesses noble powers to cultivate, and has important duties to perform, as well as inalienable rights to assert. It is obligatory on us to let this light shine more conspicuously, that barbaric rage and gloomy superstition may be dispelled

from civilized life. To aid in the accomplishment of a work so worthy of effort, and to arm and equip with the weapons of truth, a class of men to go out into the world, to dispense its practical advantages, that the afflicted of all classes may derive consolation from it, the charter for instituting the Hahnemann Medical College was granted by the Legislature of Illinois. The name so appropriately chosen as worthy of honorable mention, to indicate the purpose and intention of the institution, is that of a distinguished reformer of medicine, who, in his time, undertook the Herculean task of pointing out the errors, follies, cruelties and uncertainties, which the ignorance and cupidity of the schoolmen had heaped upon the healing art.

Every one will understand, that by the assumption of the name, it was intended that the scientific discovery of Hahnemann, which lies at the foundation of practical medicine, should enter the curriculum of positive sciences usually and necessarily embraced in a thorough medical education. Therefore in commencing the first course of instruction in this Institution, it will be in place to exhibit a brief history of this illustrious man and his doctrines, with some account of the medical reform they have been instrumental in accomplishing.

But fifteen years have elapsed, since Hahnemann left the stage of action, and this brief period has witnessed an extension of his doctrines unequalled by their spread for years during his life. At the period of his decease, he could only reckon his disciples by hundreds, but now, thousands acknowledge him as their master. In all civilized and enlightened

nations, and in nearly every city and town, medical men of learning and rank have become his admirers, and although he was persecuted and driven from Leipsic in 1821, this city has now the honor of containing his bronzed effigies. In 1851, thirty years after his expulsion by the persecutions of the physicians and the apothecaries, we find that the magistrates and municipal authorities of Leipsic joined in the ceremonies of inauguration of the Hahnemann monument, erected to his memory by the united efforts of his admirers of all nations.

Hahnemann belonged to that class of distinguished men, who rise to eminence in spite of the greatest obstacles and under the most unfavorable circumstances. He was not born rich; his father was a porcelain painter, and sought nothing more ennobling in the way of employment for his son. He was found however, at an early age, in the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and in opposition to his father's wishes. He was afterwards sent to a Grammar school, where his aptitude for study excited the admiration of the principal, with whom he became a favorite. Under the direction of this man, he was encouraged to pursue a higher order of studies than those pursued in a Grammar school, but his father was opposed to the enterprise, and removed him from school, and moreover restricted him to some less intellectual employment. After awhile he was restored to his favorite studies, through the earnest importunity of his teacher, who as a gratuity, retained him as a pupil until he was twenty years of age.

On leaving school, he wrote the customary essay, selecting for his subject, "the wonderful mechanism

of the human hand," in which he manifested a strong bias towards natural science; and shortly after, he left Meisen, the place of his birth and early education, and went to Leipsic, in order to pursue the study of medicine. With a sum of money in his pocket equal to about fifteen dollars in Federal currency, he commenced the struggle for honorable attainments. He was allowed free access to the classes in Leipsic, and during his attendance upon them, he managed to support himself by teaching French, and by translating English works into German.

From Leipsic he went to Vienna, to witness the practice of medicine in the hospitals, where he remained for nine months under the special instruction of Doctor Von Quarin. At the termination of this period, he felt himself obliged to accept the situation of family physician and librarian of the Governor of Transylvania, which post he held for two years, and then he removed to Erlangen, where he graduated with more than usual honor in 1779.

After this event, he spent two years in his native district, devoting his attention to chemistry, and to writing his first book on medicine, which gives the result of his experience of practice in Transylvania. He was in service as district physician in Gommern for three years, and then removed to Dresden, where he held the post of hospital physician for one year. While in Dresden, he published several works on chemistry, the most celebrated of which was a treatise upon poisoning by *Arsenic*, which to this day is quoted as an authority by the best writers on toxicology. In a letter to Hufeland written about this period, he complained of the uncertainty of medi-

cine, that it had no fixed principles, and it appears that this fact was so fastened upon his mind, that he discontinued the practice of medicine, and discountenanced the pursuit as being at variance with the interests of society, and the good of mankind. For a time, he devoted himself to chemistry and literature, and in these departments, according to the testimony of Berzelius, he acquired an enviable distinction.

In 1789 he removed to Leipsic, and published a treatise on Syphilis, showing himself familiar with the best authorities upon the subject. In this work he described *Soluble Mercury*, a discovery of his own, which, even to the present time, is known among the chemists, as the *Mercurius Solubilis Hahnemanni*. The year following he translated Cullen's *Materia Medica*. It was about this time that the reputation of Hahnemann as a ripe scholar became widely known, and he enjoyed the friendship and confidence of the most distinguished physicians of his time. By his indefatigable industry in acquiring knowledge, and by his bold and independent deduction from facts, as well as his habit of careful observation, he had won for himself an enviable standing among authors. Up to this period of his life he had known no rest from his labors, and but little freedom from the restraints of poverty; he was always employed in the accomplishment of some literary task or work that might afford him a reasonable support. It was while translating Cullen's *Materia Medica* that he noted the peculiarities of the Peruvian bark, and discovered its fever-producing property; which, like the falling apple to the mind of Newton, and the swinging lamp to the reflections of Galileo, opened

up to his mind a new channel for more extensive experiment. From this isolated fact, that the Cinchona bark would cause a fever, it occurred to his mind that this might afford a key to its therapeutic powers. Further experiment proved that the Cinchona bark would produce in healthy subjects a fever bearing a close resemblance to that which it had cured. This fact led to the inference that other drugs might in a similar manner cure such diseases as resemble those which they were capable of producing, and careful experiment verified the fact. The next inference was, that all medicines possessed curative powers only in the degree that they were capable of producing morbid phenomena similar to the diseases they antidote. By multiplied experiments, this fact also became verified to the mind of Hahnemann. It does not appear, however, that he with imprudent haste made known his discovery. It was not till he had searched among the ancient authors for facts concerning the physiological action of various substances, that he ventured to make known his discovery.

These researches resulted in bringing to light a multitude of facts confirmatory of the actual disclosure of a therapeutic law by Hahnemann, which not only generalizes the entire *Materia Medica*, but furnishes also, at all times, a test of the capability and powers of every substance included under this head. The first essay which Hahnemann wrote and published concerning this new principle, appeared in 1796. Two years after, he published two papers on continued and remittent fevers, and on hebdomadal diseases.

During his residence in Leipsic, Hahnemann appears to have had but little opportunity for testing the practical advantages of his discovery. Being dependent upon his daily labors for support, he was obliged to devote his time to writing chemical essays, and the translating of works of value for the book-sellers; for as yet there seemed to be no other alternative for acquiring a support for his increasing family. How perplexed and fretted must have been that master mind, so burdened with the clog of poverty, in its longings for opportunity to test the practical value of his unique discovery; and yet, says the historian, it was by reason of his poverty that he was led into a channel that resulted in his making it.

Naturalists tell us that "the oyster forms the lustrous pearl around certain extraneous substances that intrude themselves into the cavity of the shell, and vex and irritate its tender flesh;" and so it is with the great and good: the vexations and annoyances of life are often the means of eliciting and developing those pearls of the mind that fill us with admiration.

It appears to have been the order of an overruling Providence, that Hahnemann should have a new and more desirable field for labor, and in 1792 the reigning Duke of Saxe Gotha offered him the charge of an asylum for the insane, and therewith a pecuniary support for his family, while at the same time he was favored with sufficient leisure to pursue his interesting investigations, and for practically testing the "new principle." It was here that he created considerable sensation by effecting the marvelous cure

of the Hanoverian minister, who had fallen a victim to the satire of his enemies, and become insane. From an account of this case, published in 1796, it would seem that Hahneman, was in all probability the first who advocated mild instead of coercive treatment in such cases — a practice which has since obtained universal favor. “I never allow,” said he, “any insane person to be punished by blows or other painful corporeal inflictions, since there can be no punishment where there is no sense of responsibility; and since such patients cannot be improved, but must be rendered worse by such treatment.”

We will not attempt, however, to claim all honor for Hahnemann as being the first to substitute moral treatment for the insane; for in the very same year Pinel made his first experiment of unchaining the maniacs in the Bicehe, and therefore it is but just to divide the honors between these distinguished philanthropists.

After Hahnemann had finished his engagement, and resigned his charge of the asylum, he removed to Königsütter, and published the first part of the “Friend of Health,” a popular miscellany on hygiene, and also the first part of his Pharmaceutical Lexicon. Additional parts of each of these works he published subsequently. Not long after, he published in Hufeland’s Journal his remarkable essay on his new discovery, and its application in the cure of chronic diseases. Several other essays followed in rapid succession. In consequence of these papers he became the victim of persecution: the hostility of the physicians was openly proclaimed, and they induced the apothecaries to bring an action against him,

because he infringed upon their rights by preparing his own medicines. It was in vain that he appealed to the spirit of the law that regulated the apothecaries' business, securing to them only the privilege of compounding medicines. He argued that every medicinal man had the right to prescribe or vend uncompounded drugs, which were the only articles he employed, and these he administered gratuitously. But all in vain. The opposition was too powerful, and consequently he was denied the right of dispensing his own simple medicines.

During his residence in Königsütter, the scarlet fever for a time prevailed epidemically, and in bestowing his special attention to the malady, Hahnemann discovered the prophylactic power of *Belladonna*, which till the present time has been the subject of honorable mention by both friends and foes. Some of the most distinguished writers on medicine in modern times, have recognized *Belladonna* as a medicine of rare curative powers, and of remarkable preventive properties, where *scarlatina* has prevailed. In our own country, *Dunghison* and *Dewes* have both alluded favorably to this discovery, and *Watson* and others in England have noted the fact, in connection with the name of *Hahnemann*.

When the facts that led to the discovery of *Belladonna* being a preventive of scarlet fever, were promulgated by *Hahnemann*, the ire of jealousy wrangled still more violently in the breasts of the doctors, who contrived to drive him from Königsütter in 1799. Twenty years after, when an epidemic scarlet fever broke out in *Leipsic*, where *Hahnemann* then resided, some of the physicians complacently recommended

the employment of Belladonna as a preventive, claiming it as a recent discovery; thus withholding credit from the venerable sage in their midst, who so many years before was its author.

From 1799 to 1806, Hahnemann was so unremittingly persecuted by physicians and apothecaries, that he was compelled to remove from one place to another; but all the while his powerful intellect and ready pen were employed to advantage. He translated works of value for the publishers, wrote essays, and poured hot shot into the enemy's camp, by publishing articles in Hufeland's Journal, denouncing the errors, follies and absurdities of the prevailing practice of medicine.

On one occasion he was employed to translate a collection of medical prescriptions, to which he was allowed to prefix a preface, which proved an excellent antidote to the book itself. By reason of such independence, his labors as a translator came to an abrupt termination; and with the single exception of his translation of Albert Von Haller's *Materia Medica*, executed in 1806, his works henceforward were all originals. A little later he published those masterly productions, "*Æsculapius in the Balance*," "*Materia Medica Pura*," and "*Medicine of Experience*." This latter work was the most original, brilliant and convincing of any essays that had appeared on the art of medicine. His enemies, unable to refute its masterly arguments, became captious, and fell to ridiculing his system. This was an easier task for them than it would have been to point out its imperfections.

Hahnemann from this time acquired friends and

admirers of his writings ; and while the press and the aristocracy of the profession indulged in harmless diatribes, he was ever at work in the new field which had been opened for his labors. In 1810 he published the "Organon of the Healing Art," which laid the foundation for a new school of medicine. From the time this work came into antagonism with old physic, disclosing its fallacies and absurdities that had descended from the dark ages, its author became marked as the victim of allopathic hatred, and from day to day his lot was to suffer from imprecations, calumny and persecution. But to vigorously assail a genius like Hahnemann, one of the ripest scholars of his age, and to hold him up as the victim of scandal and outrage, was nothing more than a sad commentary upon the bigotry and blind devotion to antiquity that characterized the physicians of that day. Instances are by no means rare, of men adhering pertinaciously to antiquated doctrines, and closing their minds against new openings of truth, until, like the bats and owls, they prefer the darkness of night to the dawn of day. It has ever been the custom of such men to vilify and impugn the motives of those who advance in new observations and discoveries. But, *magna est veritas et praevalabit.*

It was fortunate for mankind that persecution could only drive Hahnemann from place to place ; it could not interrupt the progress of his doctrines. Every new field he entered, it was his fortune to gather fresh laurels ; for, those very doctrines so scornfully rejected by the "*Scribes and Pharisees*" of the profession, invariably found favor with candid and reflecting men.

In 1811 he completed the publication of the *Materia Medica Pura*, which contained an account of the physiological action of a large number of remedies which had been proved by successive trials upon persons in health. In the same year he was permitted to defend a thesis before the "Faculty of Medicine" of Leipsic, in which he evinced a degree of scholastic attainment seldom equalled, and by few excelled. He afterwards gathered around him a school of learned adherents, to whom he lectured, and indoctrinated in the theory and practice of Homœopathy. From year to year this school progressed and multiplied in numbers, while its founder, aided by his friends, augmented its literature, until its rivalry was severely felt in several of the European nations. In 1828-9 he published his celebrated work on chronic diseases, in five volumes. On the 10th of August, 1829, fifty years after he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine, he solemnly founded the "Central Society of German Homœopaths," which still exists. It was not long after, that Homœopathy spread beyond the limits of the German States, and gained a foothold in Russia, Prussia, Italy, France, and the United States of America.

Hahnemann was twice married. His first wife, who was the daughter of an apothecary of Gommern, was the mother of his numerous family of children, and the sharer of all the vicissitudes of his eventful life. She died in 1830. Five years afterwards, Mlle. Melanie d'Hervilly came to Coethen, and succeeded in captivating Hahnemann, then in the eightieth year of his age, by the charms of her youth and beauty, and carried him off in triumph to Paris,

where by her influence with Guizot, she obtained for him authorization to practice; and for eight successive years his house was the resort of invalid strangers from all countries. These last eight years were seemingly the happiest of his life, made so in part by the brilliant virtues of his attentive wife, and partly by witnessing the homage which the great and good of all nations began to pay to the great truths which had been the labor of his life to disseminate. He died, laden with honors, on the second day of July, 1843.

Such is a brief outline of this man's eventful life and labors, whose name we delight to honor, as a true philanthropist, and an indefatigable student; whose entire life was but a continued scene of hard study, original thought and indomitable perseverance.

To impart anything like a fair account of Hahnemann's medical doctrines, would require more time and labor than can be devoted to a single lecture. We have already alluded to his discovery of a new principle in therapeutics, by him regarded as one of nature's unchangeable laws. When his attention was directed to the febrifuge properties of Cinchona, and perceiving that it would produce, in healthy persons, the several stages of a fever resembling that for which it had been regarded the antidote, he at once inferred that other drugs might produce affections similar to those which they had cured; and in order to ascertain the fact, whether they did or not, he searched the writings of his predecessors, as far back as the time of Hippocrates, that he might gain some insight into the physiological action of drugs. He was surprised to find "that the fact had been

universally overlooked, that all well authenticated instances of cure had been effected by such remedies as produce, in healthy subjects, affections similar to the morbid ones they had cured ;” while at the same time he was like Cicero, when he discovered the tomb of Archimedes, so overjoyed that he cried out, “*Eureka!* I have found the law of cure !” He found what the sages of medicine had long sought, to wit: a principle, universally applicable in determining the capabilities and powers of all substances found in the *Materia Medica*.

Therefore, instead of relying upon the numerous and diversified theories with which the books on medicine abounded, he held up the law of nature which he had discovered, as the only reliable guide in the selection of remedies to meet any and all cases of disease. He showed, by experiment upon himself and friends, when in health, “that a drug which would produce morbid phenomena, would cure only such diseases as manifest similar morbid characteristics.” Many of the older writers had wrought cures upon this principle, a fact which had become apparent to the mind of Hahnemann, from his researches, as well also as the probability of the fact that no cures had ever been effected upon any other principle. In order to test the principle, and prove its truth beyond all cavil, he instituted experiments upon himself and friends, with more than three hundred remedies, whose physiological chart or range of action he obtained; and so far as these remedies have been employed upon the *similia* principle, the result has been a satisfactory confirmation of its truth. Notwithstanding the extensive experiments

made by Hahnemann, he was unable to discover any other principle of cure than that expressed in the formula, "*similia similibus curantur.*" Therefore he concluded that this great central truth generalizes the entire Materia Medica, and holds in perpetual contribution to its stores the three kingdoms of nature, that remedies may be multiplied, sufficient to antidote the various forms of disease.

The discovery of this therapeutic law had nearly the same effect upon the numerous medical theories then extant, as had the science of chemistry upon the notions of philters and charms, or that of astronomy upon the terrors of astrology, or that of science in general, upon gnomes, ghosts, freebooters and witches,—to drive them all from the pale of enlightened and civilized life.

It was never maintained by Hahnemann that his discovery superseded the utility of any of the positive sciences that had before come into use. He discarded nothing justly entitled to the dignity of a science, and yet it is not denied that theories, guesses, conjectures, incongruous compounds, mixtures and superstitions, were in his estimation of but little value. He was a man of science, a diligent inquirer of nature, and while he saw chemistry, anatomy, operative surgery, and other sciences that properly belong to the curriculum of medicine, to be indispensable, he wished to complete the circle by introducing a scientific basis for therapeutics and the practice of the healing art, that would command the respect of the student of nature, and inspire him with the grandeur of its importance, in no less a degree than would the science of astronomy, that

discloses the laws and motions of the heavenly bodies.

It has been alleged by Hahnemann's opponents that he discarded the sciences of physiology and pathology, as useless appendages; but this needs qualification. He merely discarded the speculative physiology and pathology of his day, which were manifestly the offspring of conjecture, and really possessed no scientific merit. He beheld in the rivalry of the humoralists and solidists, that neither presented well founded doctrines. That his observation was correct, may be inferred from the fact that the later writers, Bostwick, Carpenter, Mayo, Budgé. Puget, Draper, Todd and Boman, by inductive observation, have developed the facts of physiological science to a degree that excludes effectually the physiology and pathology which Hahnemann condemned.

It is remarkable that these later writers on physiology, as well as such writers on pathology as Schoenlein, Skoda, Henderson and Henle, have pursued their investigations in their respective branches, as diligent interrogators of nature; and this in a correlative department, was precisely the course pursued by Hahnemann; and moreover, in the estimation of many liberal minded observers, the discovery of Hahnemann in therapeutics is likely to be called into requisition, as a test of the purity of physiological and pathological doctrines.

It is evident that all schools must agree in the science of anatomy, for the human body presents the same tissues to every scalpel, the same elements to analysis. There must also be the same agreement

upon true physiological and pathological doctrines, and upon the principles of operative surgery and obstetrics. The necessity for studying all these branches found no abatement with Hahnemann. But when he came to *Materia Medica* and Polypharmacy, he opened up a new channel for the labors of the student; he required of him a familiar acquaintance with chemistry and botany; with the former, that he might be able to obtain the pure elementary substances used as medicines, and with the latter, that he might be able to collect the medicinal plants, and discriminate between them. The mixing of medicines together found no favor with Hahnemann, because in his estimation they exert upon each other a modifying influence which renders their action uncertain. He therefore maintained that only one medicine should be used at a time; that it was the merest charlatanism to mix two or more together for the sake of procuring a wider range of action upon disease, and thus to defeat all efforts to gain pure medical experience. His *Materia Medica* was a collection of medicinal substances as they exist in nature, each having been proved by itself, and its physiological action recorded. His therapeutic doctrines were founded upon the law of simile, which he believed to be of universal application. He based his doctrines of physiology upon life and health, and in order to rightly comprehend them and be able to judge of the functions of the various organs in man, and to obtain a correct idea of their analogy, a knowledge of the elements of his constitution is requisite.

When man was first created, mention was made of

matter, a vital fluid and a soul; "and these," says *Michael Granier*, "are the three sides of a triangle, disclosing the physiological unity of man, in whom there are solids, liquids, vapors, gases, fluids, and a soul." The solids engender the liquids, the liquids the vapors, the vapors the gases, the nervous fluid approaches the vital fluid, and the vital fluid is the transition of matter to the soul. In order to comprehend more fully this doctrine of Hahnemann, the mysterious mechanism of man may be compared to a monarchy; the soul being the king, the organs, the subjects, the vital fluid, the minister,—all together constituting a unity; and all the parts which enter into the composition of his being are indissolubly united in the closest sympathy. This unity, according to Hahnemann, cannot be modified in the least degree, without its effects telling upon the functions; the undulations of the centre are transmitted to the circumference, and the slightest shocks upon the points of the circumference converge to the centre by an infinite number of rays. Thus in a liquid mass, the particles communicate their movements one to another, as an electric spark awakens and puts in motion the fluid which circulates in a current of the most unbounded extent.

There is then an intimate connection between spirit and matter, by means of the vital fluid, but how effected is an unfathomable mystery. It is the soul which is possessed of thought, volition, responsibility and freedom of action. It is the vital fluid which directs the material part of man and all his vital actions, the lever that moves the machinery of his organs and enables him to breathe, digest and

walk, that spends his strength by fatigue and repairs it by sleep. When this vital fluid is calm, he is in health, and when its equilibrium is disturbed, he suffers from disease.

It is the matter, thus subject to the vital fluid, and by it chained to the soul, that often usurps the sceptre, as in disease, and obliges the soul to submit to its tyranny. The physician exercises his art upon the physical rather than upon the moral, because this is more immediately the domain of his researches; nevertheless one part ought not to be excluded to the detriment of another, since man is a unit.

We should not, on the one hand, confine our attention to the body exclusively, nor yet, on the other, to the soul; but to the vital fluid more particularly, which binds soul and body together. For it is this fluid, when disturbed, that manifests the various forms of disease, and to it must all our remedies be addressed. It will be seen, then, that health, according to Hahnemann, is the result of the perfect equilibrium of the vital fluid, and the disturbance of which constitutes disease. Others as well as Hahnemann, maintain that diseases are the virtual or dynamic changes of the vital fluid. The term dynamic means, that diseases have a fluidic, immaterial or imponderable origin, a doctrine somewhat allied to the actual progress of the age, which all must agree, is remarkable for the development of fluidic powers.

The vital fluid, which in a disturbed state is a condition of disease, sustains undoubtedly an analogy to the electric fluid, which in modern times is employed to convey items of intelligence through wires, if not across the Atlantic, between the remotest cities and towns of our own country.

Another doctrine of Hahnemann is, that there are no diseases of purely a local character, although they may manifest themselves in particular localities. This doctrine, so manifestly in opposition to that of the school of Paris, he thought would better account for chronic maladies transmitted from generation to generation. These maladies are those of prolonged duration, being always much slower in running their course, than acute ones.

It is evident that the chronic character of these maladies cannot alter their radical source; or in other words, diseases, whether chronic or acute, always originate from an intrinsic morbid cause, which has assailed the vital fluid. Therefore Hahnemann supposes that three very distinct miasmata have engendered in this vital fluid, the thousand modifications, more or less hidden and slow, which are termed chronic maladies. Psora, syphilis and sycosis are the three: the first, like Proteus in the fable, assumes a thousand different forms, and manifests itself in various affections, as itch, ringworm, dartre, scrofula, etc. etc.: the second engenders that loathsome disease sometimes termed the French or Italian, and other times emphatically the American: the third begets all the maladies which grow, vegetate and bud, as excrescences, fungoid or fibrous tumors. Such, according to Hahnemann, being the origin of all chronic diseases, and all the suffering to which humanity is subject, it is only necessary to draw aside the veil that covers them, and the lid of Pandora's box is lifted. It is not necessary now to inquire whether this view of Hahnemann is true or false, the object being merely to state them. It may

be added, however, that this doctrine has many advocates, and appears to have received of late a marked degree of favor among many learned pathologists, who maintain that much can be adduced in favor of the theory.

Hahnemann maintains that when any foreign agent assails the vital fluid or centre, the effects immediately radiate to the circumference, and by losing the equilibrium, the vital principle struggles and echoes the disturbance by signs, which are called symptoms, or pictures, which become the reflection of nature in pain. On account of this he has been sneered at as a mere symptomatologist, who directs the physician at the bedside of his patient to collect all the particulars of the case, that he may obtain an exact idea of the totality of the disease, the manifest symptoms of which are to serve as a guide in the selection of a remedy whose pathogenetic symptoms form the counterpart, and must therefore operate in the same direction, as an antidote.

It will be seen, therefore, that every disease was viewed by him as a distinct entity, individual in its character, requiring a corresponding individual treatment. He discarded Nosology as a subtle mischief breeder, which invariably leads to a routine practice. He counseled his disciples to regard every abnormal condition as something so new and distinct as to require specific attention and study, with reference to its appropriate remedy. Such is a brief outline of Hahnemann's pathological views. His *Materia Medica* and therapeutics, based upon a knowledge of the pathogeneses of medicines, fully accord with these views and those he entertained of man's physiological

unity, thus rendering a correspondence of his doctrines concerning the entire curriculum of medicine so full and complete, that the whole forms one entire system, equal in all its parts. In his doctrine of physiology and pathology, as well as in his system of therapeutics, we behold the prominent idea of vital force or fluid, from which diseases originate, and to which remedies must be addressed to effect their cure. When the vital fluidic force is in perfect equilibrium, the physical man is in health; when disturbed, he is smitten with disease, and remedial agents addressed to the same force are requisite, in order to restore the equilibrium, that he may regain the healthy standard.

When Hahnemann first discovered the new principle in therapeutics, he employed simple substances as remedies, in the ordinary doses; but as the action of such doses, upon the *similia* principle, was also upon organs and tissues already excited and inflamed by disease, and of course exceedingly sensitive, it was by no means an uncommon occurrence for dangerous aggravations to ensue from their employment. Hahnemann observing this fact, was led to attenuate medicines so as to adapt them more fully to the impressible states of the organism, and thus avoid the difficulty. By one experiment after another, in successive triturations and attenuations, he at last discovered that medicines possessed fluidic powers corresponding to those fluidic forces to which they were addressed. This gave rise to his theory of dynamization, in accordance with which, the expedient of small or infinitesimal doses was necessarily resorted to. When the testimony of science and

scientific facts relating to Hahnemann's system, seem to support the reasonableness of his conclusions, it is to be expected that men of candor and science will, like Hufeland, Boerhaave and Récamier, admit the possibility of, if not the preference for, minimum doses. It is merely intended, however, to state the doctrine, without instituting anything like a defense of Hahnemann's theory of the fluidic powers of remedies.

In submitting a brief summary of Hahnemann's peculiar doctrines, we will mention: 1. The law of cure, *similia similibus curantur*. 2. That medicines must be employed in simples and not in compounds. 3. That such medicines only should be employed in the treatment of the sick, as have been proved by numerous trials upon persons in health. 4. That medicines possess fluidic powers, which can be developed by successive triturations and succussions. 5. That health is the result of a vital fluidic force in the animal economy, in perfectly calm equilibrium. 6. That disease consists of, or rather originates from, a disturbance of this equilibrium, and should be studied in connection with it. 7. That infinitesimal doses of rightly selected remedies, addressed to this force, will restore equilibrium, and consequently cure diseases. Such, it is believed, constitutes a brief outline of Hahnemann's peculiar medical doctrines, and it will be perceived that they contemplated a mighty reform in medicine.

For more than a century, the great and the good of the medical profession have been pained on account of its failures, as well as on account of the injuries that have been inflicted by the "heroic treat-

ment," and when the Homœopathic practice was introduced by Hahnemann, many were led to behold that cures were rapidly effected without shedding of blood, or without an assault upon the stomach and bowels, with emetics and cathartics, or without passing the sick through a purgatory of perspiration, etc., and they hailed the day as one prophetic of reform. Their hopes have not been disappointed. Hahnemann disseminated his views, and made disciples who won for themselves glory and renown in the old world, by disclosing the errors and absurd practices of those who claimed to preside over the healing art. The effect was like magic. The dosing system fell into disrepute, and reckless heroism with the lancet and drugs began to fall back into the shade. Hahnemann honestly believed that the profession of medicine of his day was a positive evil; that it hurried thousands to untimely graves; that it was blood-thirsty and reckless. He was anxious to bring about a reform, and for this purpose he founded his new system, which forbids that evil shall be done that good may come.

There has been no retrogradation of Homœopathy for more than half a century. Accessions to its ranks occur quite frequently, from among those too who have hitherto held posts of honor and trust in allopathic institutions. Prof. Henderson, of Edinburg University in Scotland, Fewster Robert Horner, late President of the British Medical and Surgical Association, and Tessier, physician of the Hôpital San Marguerité of Paris, are among the number of those high in authority who have lent their aid of late to consummate the reform contemplated by Hahnemann.

The reform has progressed until it has received the sanction of several of the enlightened nations of Europe, and in nearly every city and town upon the continent, where civilization extends, Homœopathy receives a fair proportion of patronage. It has not only gained for itself a foothold wherever it has been tried, but it has changed the complexion of Old School Physic to a degree that all discerning minds behold it. There is less bleeding and leeching, less purging, less drugging of every description, and less of that heroism in the profession that once more than outgeneraled the forces of war, pestilence and famine, in sending victims to an untimely grave, and the reform is still advancing with the rising and setting of the sun. The young Homœopathic giant will yet strangle the dragon of Allopathy, as did Hercules that older personification, when he carried off the golden apples from the gardens of the Hesperides.

The reform thus contemplated by Hahnemann has been in a measure realized, and it consists, first, in ridding society of that universal system of malpractice known as the regular or heroic method, which has done more harm than good, from the time of its earliest introduction. It has multiplied diseases, says Dr. Rush, and made them more fatal. And secondly, it consists of furnishing in its place a more mild, safe and expeditious system of cure, that does no violence to the constitution, and adds nothing to the natural duration of diseases. And will any one attempt to number the slain of regular or heroic medicine, according to the testimony of some of the best authors of that school, and look upon the prostration of health, and the shattering of robust constitutions

which seem to have been the fruits of orthodox medicine, without conceding the necessity for some institution like that of Homœopathy to operate as a restraint upon such proceedings, and to introduce a reform worthy of the true philanthropist?

The fact that in modern times people will not submit to over medication as formerly, simply argues that the influence of Homœopathy has been felt, and that the influence of what has been termed "the system of thorough treatment," has been very greatly abridged. It is to Homœopathy that we are mainly indebted for this reform, and it is humbly hoped it will continue till the last expiring groan of "Old Physic" will only be heard in the distant background, where it has been left by the advancing spirit of the age to go down to the vile dust

"From whence it sprung,
Unwept, unhonored and unsung."