

**A LECTURE ON
HOMOEOPATHY DELIVERED
BEFORE THE
LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649227525

A Lecture on Homoeopathy Delivered Before the Legislature of Michigan by J. Charles Julius Hempel

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

J. CHARLES JULIUS HEMPEL

**A LECTURE ON
HOMOEOPATHY DELIVERED
BEFORE THE
LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN**

A LECTURE
ON
HOMŒOPATHY,

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN,

BY CHAS. J. HEMPEL, M. D.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN:
PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAN HOMŒOPATHIC OBSERVER
No. 31 WAYNE STREET.
1867.

A LECTURE ON HOMŒOPATHY,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN,*

BY CHAS. J. HEMPEL, M. D.

Ladies and Gentlemen:—Before entering upon my subject, allow me to express my warm acknowledgments to the honorable members of our House of Representatives for the privilege they have accorded me of addressing you in this Hall. The subject of my lecture is not altogether of a technical nature; it is one embodying deep philosophy and practical usefulness. The restoration and preservation of the public health is eminently a fit subject for enlightened legislation. At all times and among all nations the healing art has enjoyed the fostering care of the governments; the noble State of Michigan will not leave this important branch of human interests to accident or caprice.

The most superficial glance at the history of medicine during the last century shows that, amidst the wonderful improvements and discoveries which the genius of man has achieved in the domain of industry and science, the healing art has not remained stationary. It may be truly said that almost every department of medicine has been created by the philosophical minds of our age.

Look at the wonderful developments of the science of Anatomy; the structure of the human body has been unfolded to our wondering senses, even to its ultimate fibres. Thanks to the microscope we have penetrated into the very workshops of the living forces of the organism, and have traced the beginning of organized existence to the delicate cell, with its

*At Lansing, Capital of Michigan.

nucleus, its surrounding envelope and its intra-cellular substance, which serves as a support and as nutriment to the first-named central starting-point of cell-life. Dutrochet's law of endosmose has likewise shown us how the nutrient fluids after having been sufficiently prepared for purposes of assimilation, pass through the delicate cell-walls as renovating principles of the living tissues.

Physiological chemistry owes its present magnificent developments to the genius of Liebig and a host of other experimenters who justly regard him as their head. Physiology, or the science of the organic functions of animals and vegetables, in its vastest sense, has already derived great advantages from the researches of this department of chemical analysis; diet and hygiene are no longer dependent upon human dictation or caprice, and the art of adapting food to the animal organism is in a fair way of being cultivated in accordance with the indications of science, and of proving a fountain-head of comfort, strength and health to toiling man. When we consider the crude notions which our predecessors entertained concerning the process of digestion, we are afforded even in this single stage in the gradual transformation and assimilation of food, a palpable proof of the immense strides which this age has made towards a knowledge of the laws and functions of the physiological organism. At one time it was supposed that the food was ground up in the stomach as between an upper and nether millstone, and it was not until about forty years ago when Dr. Beaumont, of the American army, had an opportunity of witnessing through a fistulous opening in the stomach of an American soldier, the manner in which food is transformed into a pulpy substance denominated chyme. He found that, as soon as the food comes in contact with the walls of the stomach, a fluid is secreted from their lining membrane, which is known as the gastric juice, of a powerfully acid nature, and admirably adapted to the business of dissolving the organic substances introduced into the stomach. Step by step Chemistry and Physiology are rendering us more and more familiar with the nature and functions of the organic viscera, and of the nervous system. If persons are unable to digest fat, if it nauseates and

otherwise incommodes them, we know that these difficulties are probably owing to a deficiency of secretory power of the pancreatic gland, whose exclusive business it seems to be to secrete a fluid endowed with the power of dissolving fat and adapting it to the wants of the living tissues.

The introduction of Chloroform has changed even an amputation at the hip-joint from a horrid butchery to a comparatively easy and painless operation. Ligating arteries after an operation, instead of cauterizing their bleeding mouths with an incandescent iron, which from time immemorial had been the regular practice of the schools, is of comparatively recent origin; and rhinoplastic surgery, or the art of making a new nose, has been extended by the late Professor Diefenbach, of Berlin, to other portions of the face, with a dexterity and success that entitles him to being regarded as the author of this admirable art.

It would have been strange indeed, if, in the midst of these universal improvements in the different departments of Medicine, the most essential branch of the healing art, *Materia Medica*, had remained unchanged. It may be truly said that the healing art of this day rests upon entirely new foundations, and that nothing remains of the temple of the ancient god, but a mere vestige of its glory.

Yet, even in this direction, the improvements are chiefly due to the genius and devotion of the present age. The ancient *Theriaca* which *Andromachus* of *Crete* had to prepare by order of *Nero*, and which consisted of a farrago of sixty-one ingredients possessing the most opposite properties, has held its place in the *Codex* of the medical faculty of *Paris* with even an additional number of ingredients. The *Opiate Electuary* of this *Codex*, or the *Electuarium Opiatum Polypharmacum* contains acid ingredients, 5; astringent, 5; bitter, 22; indigenous aromatics, 10; umbelliferous aromatics, 7; balsams and resinous substances, 8; fetid ingredients, 6; narcotics, 1; earthy substances, 1; gummy or amylaceous substances, 3; saccharine, 3; total 72; and one of these the flesh of the viper! A little more than a grain of opium is contained in each dram of this compound.

It is true that these and kindred compounds are repudiated by all enlightened practitioners. Nevertheless the art of applying drugs to the treatment of diseases seems to be revolving in a vicious circle. Even the horrible calomel-practice of former years is now being revived by the most distinguished practitioners of Paris. "The horrid spectacles," writes Dr. Heustis, of Alabama, in the second volume of the "American Journal of Medical Sciences," "frequently to be seen as the consequences of the mercurial treatment, are shocking to humanity and disgraceful to the profession. Even were mercury the only alternative, *that* life is dearly purchased which is bought at the sacrifice of everything that renders life desirable, the constitution broken and destroyed, the person maimed and disfigured, so that it is scarcely recognized by the unfortunate sufferer himself, who is an object of pity and horror to his friends. Deprived of their teeth, perhaps of their jaws, we sometimes see those pitiable objects with distorted features, the cheeks and palate partly destroyed by mortification, and the remaining portion cicatrized into an unsightly knot, with the mouth twisted from its natural position, drawn obliquely to the ear, and the lips and cheeks consolidated with the gums."

In the 19th volume of the "Journal" the same writer observes: "I have known an artificial disease produced and kept up by the daily exhibition of Calomel, and because a flow of saliva was excited, it was concluded that the medicine had not exerted its specific effect, or had not been given in sufficient quantity. It was therefore pushed further, and sloughing and mortification of the gums, cheeks and fauces, and death itself followed in the train."

I have it from the lips of the illustrious Valentine Mott, the prince of American surgeons, that he operated upon no less than twenty individuals whose jaw-bones had become united by ulceration in consequence of mercurial salivation. In some of these cases the jaws were pried open and their use in a measure restored, where the mobility of the articulation had not been destroyed. His last case was that of a beautiful young lady from New Orleans, the only daughter of a wealthy merchant, whose jaws had become firmly consolidated, from

one articulation to the other. It was found impossible to relieve this interesting victim of a barbarous practice ; all that could be done for her was to remove the front-teeth and so administer nourishment through this narrow opening, in order to save her from starvation.

For a time it seemed as though the horrid consequences of mercurial poisoning had intimidated the physicians and fairly frightened their patients into an absolute unwillingness to be butchered in this manner any longer. But the vicious circle in which the science of Therapeutics has been unfortunately revolving, necessarily brought back the frightful abuses of this wretched empiricism with redoubled violence. The distinguished Velpeau, one of the surgeons-in-chief to the largest public hospital in Paris, is in the habit of prescribing the mercurial ointment, in doses of one to two ounces, in order to produce a speedy salivation. Trousseau, Professor of Medicine in the University of Paris, informs us that he does not hesitate to employ three to five ounces for a similar purpose, during the space of twenty-four hours ; and Paul Dubois, the most celebrated obstetrician of France, has carried this dose even to the enormous quantity of one pound and even one pound and a half. Think of it, one pound and a half of mercurial ointment rubbed into the human body for the purpose of producing a salivation which common experience informs us may lead to the most murderous mutilations of the human frame.

In this respect it would therefore seem as though all progress in the practice of the healing art had been illusory. Yet it cannot be denied that substantial improvements have been introduced in this branch of medicine during the last twenty-five years. If we contrast the prescriptions which our predecessors were in the habit of having compounded by the apothecary, with the prescriptions of the present day, we shall find that whereas half a dozen or a dozen ingredients were required in former years in order to constitute an orthodox recipe : one, two, or at most three make up the sum total of the remedial agents contained in a modern prescription. And even if three or four medicinal substances are seemingly enumerated on the tiny scrap of paper, a closer inspection will reveal such names