

**KNAVES  
OR FOOLS?**

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Knives Or Fools? by Charles Wheeler

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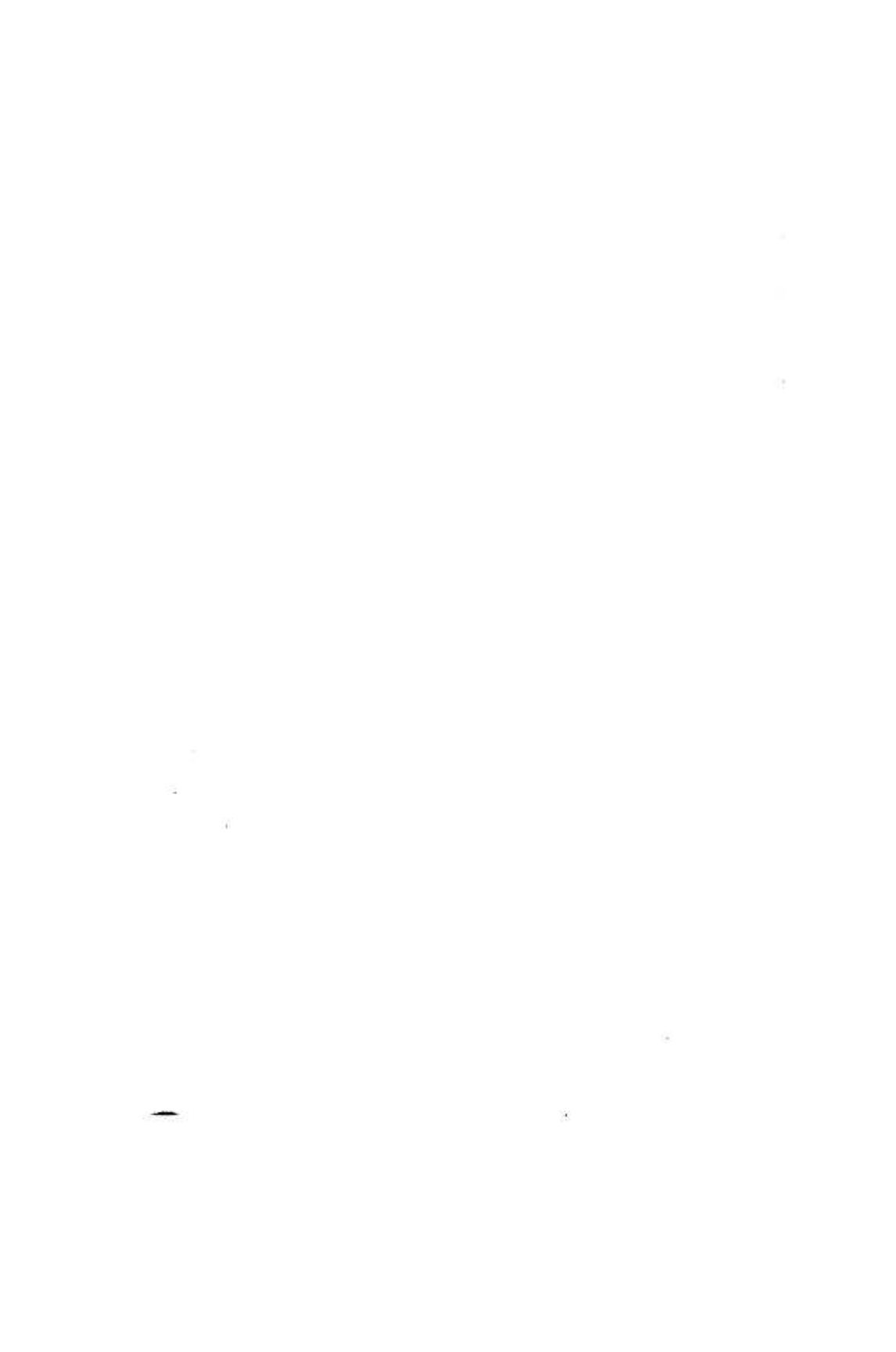
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### PREFACE

**I**N defending any cause it is difficult to Preface steer between the position of the special pleader and that of the apologist. I should much resent seeming to make any apology for Homœopathy, since, if apologies are due at all in this matter, it is not Homœopathy that owes them. But I have endeavoured to avoid intemperate or unfair advocacy, believing that they serve no cause well, and least of all a scientific one.

Moreover, I have little faith in the power of abstract conceptions of Truth and Justice over the minds of men. We form our beliefs, I fancy, from hearsay as much as from independent enquiry, out of intellectual apathy and a habit of deference to bold assertion. "The intolerable fatigue of thought" is a very real burden, one we shirk as much as we dare, and therefore, in appealing for independent judgement, I am contending against that disinclination for mental exertion which I feel too

Preface strongly myself to underrate in others. I submit, however, that members of a profession of public service are pledged to a certain degree of effort; and as our pretensions are considerable, we must in some sort justify them by our labours. He who has ever known the joy of clear thinking will feel that the result (even if incomplete) repays the endeavour. So then in putting forward a plea for reconsideration of popular conclusions, I am not without hope that I may here and there obtain a hearer who will proceed to seek a justification for beliefs he may hitherto have entertained as a legacy from respected teachers, or as a dogma so widely accepted as to seem divinely inspired. Homœopathists ask for nothing but investigation. Their own conclusions are founded on enquiry conducted to the best of their ability; and while they fully admit the possibility that they may be mistaken, they would prefer to be confounded by the proofs of experiment, rather than overwhelmed by the weight of incurious authority.

I am much indebted to many medical men for aid derived from their writings and their personal encouragement. I wish to make grateful acknowledgement of assis-

tance to Dr Dyce Brown, Dr Byres Moir, Preface  
Dr Burford, Dr J. H. Clarke, Dr E. A.  
Neatby and Dr Speirs Alexander. The  
principal books from which I have drawn  
material are: Dr Bradford's *Life of Habne-*  
*mann*, Dr Ameke's *History of Homœopathy*  
and Dr Dudgeon's *Lectures*. Allusion is  
made in the text to works on *Materia*  
*Medica*, by Professor Lewin and Professor  
Schulz. The work of the last-named in-  
deed, is of the greatest importance to all  
who are interested in the art of medicine.

October 24, 1907

C. E. WHEELER