

**THE TREATMENT OF
DISEASE
FROM THE HOMEOPATHIC
STANDPOINT**

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The Treatment of Disease from the Homeopathic Standpoint by Henry W. Roby

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Treatment of Disease

FROM THE

Homeopathic Standpoint.

BY

HENRY W. ROBY, M. D.

“My object is not to make people read, but to make them think.”—*Montesqueiu: Spirit of Laws.*

TOPEKA, KANSAS:
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1886.

PREFACE.

UPON invitation of that body, the following lecture was delivered before "THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF CHICAGO," on the 20th of April, 1878. The notes for it were made while the author resided in Chicago and had access to several excellent libraries; but, having no thought then of its publication, the original notes of quotation were destroyed, and the author is now unable in every instance to give credit where credit is due. "Every book is a quotation; and every house is a quotation out of all forests, and mines, and stone quarries; and every man is a quotation from all his ancestors." And so is the larger part of all we can say of anything. A few facts and statistics of later date are added to the published lecture.

A subject which is fraught with such paramount importance to the human family as *the treatment of disease*, demands at our hands our deepest scrutiny into the mysteries and facts that everywhere and always surround us; our best wisdom in the apprehension of facts; our best philosophy in deducing the totality of the relations and conditions of things, and our highest integrity in accepting what is true, and rejecting what is false, no matter to what conclusions that course may lead us. *Truth* is more than men or theories, and we must follow after and cherish it wherever we find it, though it demolish all the theoretical and speculative gods in our Pantheon.

Topeka, Kas., May 1, 1886.

*"Easy to match what others do,
Perform the feats as well as they;
Hard to outdo the brave, the true,
And find a loftier way."*

EMERSON.

MEDICINE.

MEDICINE, in its broadest sense, embraces many departments; e. g., anatomy, physiology, pathology, chemistry, surgery, obstetrics, hygiene, electricity, hydropathy, magnetism, galvanism, *therapeutics*, etc.

It is generally conceded that *therapeutics* is the central and main department of medicine. It is that department which concerns itself solely with the selection and administration of *drugs* for the cure of disease; all other curative agents, when properly classified, fall within some other department of medicine.

THE BATTLE OF THE SCHOOLS.

In this therapeutic or central field of medicine there has existed for an hundred years, and still exists, a great contest between contending forces. Thousands of physicians and intelligent laymen on the one side, and thousands upon the other, are engaged in a desperate struggle for the possession of the field and for the glory of triumph.

In all the other departments of medicine there is substantial harmony and concord. But upon the therapeutic field a great battle is raging, and the contending forces far outnumber those engaged at Waterloo.

Old Medicine comes upon this field of contest with a dogma, more hoary than the oldest cathedral in the world, inscribed upon its banner in the words, "*Contraria, contrariis, curantur*," as its guiding principle in selecting drugs for the cure of disease.

New Medicine enters the field, bearing upon its banner the words, "*Similia, similibus curantur*," as its guiding principle.

And away in the further corner of the field stands, like a two-faced Janus, that medical nondescript, Eclecticism, with both mottoes on its banner (one on either side), crying out "Good, my Lords!" to every well directed shot from either

side of the field. Like "The Man without a Country," it stands for nothing and represents nothing. It is made up largely of the camp followers of the two contending forces, and is like the third party in politics, which always vehemently promises to come to the front, but never gets there.

Almost of necessity, one of the two great therapeutic parties must be wholly or largely right, and the other wholly or largely wrong. For there cannot be two sciences of therapeutics, any more than there can be two sciences of astronomy, or chemistry, or physiology, or geology, or acoustics. *Two* sciences can no more occupy the same time and space, or pertain to the same subject matter, than can two bodies in physics.

Like a good many other men in the world, I have been on both sides of this contest. First on the side of Old Medicine, where, like the professor at Padua who refused to look through Galileo's telescope for fear he should see the rings around Saturn, I refused to investigate or listen to the claims of the new practice; and, second, like Saul of Tarsus, I find myself in later life, the earnest disciple of that which I once persecuted. It is a significant fact, by the way, that one could nearly or quite count on his fingers all those who have gone over from new to old medicine, while the ranks of new medicine are half filled by converts from the other side.

THE CLAIMS OF THE SCHOOLS.

When stripped of all verbiage and illusion, the contest between the schools is a very simple one. Homeopathy (new medicine) claims to be *the science of therapeutics*. Allopathy (old medicine) denies the claim. And the object of this address is to show the philosophy and the scientific basis of the modern method of healing the sick.

I say to you frankly, that if the old therapeutic method, as expressed in that old medical shibboleth, *contraria, contrariis curantur*, is scientific and true, then the new has no foundation in science or philosophy, and is not worthy of respect or credence. But, if Homeopathy is true and scientific, then it is worthy of the respect and support of all mankind; just as much so as the law of gravity or chemical affinity.

In all other departments of medicine, men agree substantially as to what is, or is not, true; but in the therapeutic department, for four thousand years before Hahnemann's time, there had existed the wildest confusion. But since his time there has been a well defined, well outlined contest between the old and the new methods.

Hahnemann and his disciples take the ground that old school therapeutics is not, and never has been, scientific; that it was always a chaotic mass of incongruities, uncertainties, and absurdities. And we are supported in that view by a very large and respected number of eminent teachers and scholars in the old school ranks. To substantiate the truth of that assertion, let me quote to you some of the recent utterances of men who stand very high in their profession.

WHAT PROMINENT ALLOPATHIC TEACHERS ADMIT.

In discussing the question of science in therapeutics, in 1852, WUNDERLICH said:

Instead of exact observations, we nowhere see anything but hastily taken notes; instead of demonstrated principles, we have mere notions; instead of a strict exposition of the cause of effect, we have useless definitions. *Words void of sense and meaning.* That is what we find everywhere.

PROF. HENCKER.—We do not know what is disease, how remedies act, and, still less, how diseases are cured. We must abandon the way which has been thus far followed.

RICHTER.—No science contains so many sophisms, errors, dreams, and lies as medicine.

VOGEL, in 1871, said:

The best evidence that drugs do not meet what is expected of them is that we are constantly in quest of new ones. If we had reason to be satisfied with their curative action we should not seek others in every corner of the globe. New modes are continually arising, and only show that old ones were worthless. Many patients who are really treated abusively or nonsensically get well, nevertheless, because active nature struggles not only against the morbid principle, but also against the remedies of the doctor.

SCHENLEIN.—Since the time of the Greeks and Romans, medicine has made no progress, or hardly any. It should be entirely reconstructed, upon entirely new bases.

MAGENDIE.—If I dared to say just what I think, I should add that it is chiefly in the service where the medication is the most active and heroic that the mortality is the greatest. * * * Gentlemen, medicine is charlatanism.

BROUSSAIS.—Medical science resembles superstition and every kind of charlatanism.

MALGAIGUE.—Complete absence of scientific doctrines in medicine, absence of principles in the application of the art; this is the state of medicine.

DE BREYNE.—Physicians execute you learnedly, conscientiously, and promptly.

PROF. RAMAGE, of London.—We cannot deny that the medical science of the day is a shame to its professors. Can we call science a series of crude and doubtful theories? How often do they aggravate the state of the patient! I affirm, without hesitation, that in the great number of cases, the patient would have been much *safer without* medicine.

JOHN ELDERTON.—*We are all charlatans, dosers, and empirics.* We hide our great ignorance behind expressions, incomprehensible to the patient.

DR. JOHNSON, editor of the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*.—I declare in the sincerity of my soul, and after my long experience, that there would be *less disease and less mortality* if there had never been doctors, nor surgeons, nor accoucheurs, nor pharmacists, nor drugs.

PROF. GREGORY, of Edinburgh.—Medical precepts in most cases are *veritable absurdities*.

DR. MASON GOOD.—Medical science is a literal nonsense. *Drugs have destroyed more lives than war, pestilence, and famine combined.*

TROUSSEAU.—Therapeutics and materia medica are, in our day, in the chaos of a transition.

VIRCHOW.—We have no rational therapeutics.

NIEMEYER.—We must really agree with Bamberger, who thinks that the greater part of patients who die, of endo-carditis even, have succumbed, not to the disease, but to the remedy.

One of the commission appointed to revise and improve old school therapeutics, in 1865, wrote to the *Medicine de Vienna*:

We are working hard on the Tower of Babel of therapeutics. What one advises is forbidden by another; what one gives in large doses, another gives in small; this one extols a remedy which is despised by another. A confusion, a contradiction, a chaos without a parallel; and all this changes every year! aye, every month.*

*In contradistinction to the above quoted paragraph, so full of the terrible wrangle and jargon of allopathic practice, we quote the following anecdote told by Dr. HENNE (now deceased), of Philadelphia, one of the ablest physicians the world ever saw:

"Whilst traveling in Germany, I one day came to a village, the proprietor of which invited me to spend the night at his house, in place of putting up at the inn. He was a rich old gentleman, a great original, always an invalid, having ennui and good wine to a great extent. Learning that I was a young medical man, about to commence my travels, he told me he would sooner make his son a hangman than a doctor. On my expressing surprise at the observation, he produced a large book, saying that it was now twenty years since he first became ill in body but not in mind; that two doctors of celebrity, whom he then consulted, had quarreled about his disease, and that, consequently, he had employed neither of