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A reply to "Against Divisiveness" - letter of the 21 - Homeopathy Today (2001, May)

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## Homeopathy versus Speculative Medicine

### A Call to Action

"If we are true to homœopathy it will be true to us — that is our experience." —Lippe

Twenty-one prominent members of the homeopathic community have signed their name to a letter addressed to Mr. Julian Winston, editor of *Homeopathy Today* (May 2001: 21-22). They accuse him of being intolerant and divisive of the homeopathic community by advocating his personal beliefs. Such accusations are not new in the homeopathic community—simply because homeopathy is a therapeutic method which is based on *fixed* principles and its history is characterized by practitioners taking license to call their practice homeopathy in spite of practicing contrary to its basic principles. Over one hundred years ago Lippe said that "the followers of Hahnemann who have found that his promises of successfully combating disease... were guided by certain fundamental and infallible principles... naturally looked upon every new departure from this strict practice which procured unparalleled success as a step backwards, and when these departures became so many fold, there was really nothing left of the school but the name. To try to gain a hearing, try to defend the master's teachings which led to success, try to show erring men the baneful consequences of their backward sliding—this can surely not be construed into a persistent effort to divide the school." In this conflict one thing is clear: divisions within the homeopathic profession are always initiated by authors and supporters of approaches incompatible with Hahnemann's specific method of healing, which he called homeopathy, and not by Hahnemannians upon whom it is incumbent to keep denouncing the numerous misrepresentations and departures.

Hahnemann clearly defined homeopathy and all its underlying principles and warned us against misrepresentations. In 1832, in his fight against the "half-homœopaths" of Leipzig, Hahnemann wrote, "Should any false doctrines be taught under the honorable name of homœopathy... may you depend upon it that I shall raise my voice aloud, honestly and to its utmost. In all the public papers far and near I shall warn a world already weary of deceit against such treachery and degeneracy, which deserves to be branded and avoided."

Hahnemann and his faithful disciples denounced with great vigor every misrepresentation and departure with the objective of preserving the purity of our noble art. There is no reason why the present time should escape the same scrutiny, especially when considering that it will likely be remembered as the most effervescent in the extravagance of its departures. How often have we heard that in front of a class or a seminar, a professed homeopathic teacher took the case of a patient with a chronic disease in fifteen or twenty minutes; that the teacher could perceive the totality through a partial case; that the patient was prescribed a remedy from an association made with the clothes worn by the patient at the time of the visit (e.g., that a patient wearing a white shirt with black stripes was prescribed *Lac zebrenum*, or a patient with black pants and a yellow and black striped shirt was prescribed *Apis mellifica*)? What are we to think of provings conducted by giving the remedy to half the people attending a weekend seminar but including in the proving the symptoms experienced by *everyone* in attendance as if non-provers were affected by some sort of "group mind"? Or provings in

which symptoms experienced two weeks prior to a proving are also considered part of the proving as it is said that the subconscious of these provers already knew that it would come in contact with the remedy; or provings done by putting the remedy under the pillow? At other times teachers go as far as falsifying follow-ups to demonstrate the cleverness of their prescribing. We have heard such stories from many quarters. Some teachers teach as illuminated gurus possessed with mystical knowledge. What a farce they are making of Hahnemann's homeopathy. Things don't seem to have changed much since Hering said, "The teaching has becoming a trade by which the profession is degraded, traders are profited and the public injured." When devoid of the rigor taught to us by Hahnemann and left to speculation, what is left of homeopathy easily turns into its antithesis.

Therefore, the question is: Are the twenty-one signers of the said letter to the editor promoting any false doctrine?

Arguing in favor of the doctrine of signatures, they write that "at the time of Hahnemann the 'doctrine of signatures' meant simply and *only* that the shape of a substance could be used to determine the organ the plant was likely to help (for example a bean-shaped leaf applies to kidney ailments). This rudimentary doctrine was criticized by Hahnemann. But nowhere does Hahnemann criticize the idea that the source of the remedy has a bearing on the symptoms it produces.... Why are so many of our remedies made from creeping plants found to have dreams or desire to travel? Is this coincidence or is it possible that the life struggles and habits of the remedy source do influence the feelings of the provers? We cannot explain how this might take place but why should this concept be so implausible?... And if the physiology of the remedy source can give us clues, why should we ignore the possibility of using these hints?"

First of all regarding the assertion that the doctrine of signatures in Hahnemann's time "meant simply and *only* that the shape of a substance could be used to determine the organ the plant was likely to help" is pure fabrication. In Hahnemann's time, as well as for time immemorial, the doctrine of signatures was not "simply and *only*" related to the shape of the substances, but instead, as Hahnemann himself mentioned, to all "*sensible external signs*" which could be used to divine the properties of medicines. Even *Dorland's Medical Dictionary* defines a signature as "any characteristic feature of a substance formerly regarded as an indication of its medicinal virtues."

Second and most importantly, in a period of almost fifty years, Hahnemann made it *very clear* in several of his writings that signatures were inadequate for revealing the inner hidden healing property of medicines. In 1796, in his *Essay on a New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Powers of Drugs*, Hahnemann writes that "as the above-mentioned sources for ascertaining the medicinal virtues of drugs were so soon exhausted, the systematizer of the materia medica reminded himself of others, which he deemed of a more certain character. He sought for them in the drugs themselves; he imagined he would find in them hints for his guidance. He did not observe, however, that *their sensible external signs* are often very deceptive, as deceptive as the physiognomy is in indicating the thoughts of the heart. Lurid-colored plants are by no means always poisonous; and on the other hand, an agreeable color of the flowers is far from being any proof of the harmlessness of the plant."

In 1808, in *On the Value of the Speculative Systems of Medicine*, he writes that "although it is certain that the Materia Medica can and must be the daughter of experience, yet even it has given away to arbitrary opinion, ideal and dream hypotheses, and has allowed itself to be molded today into one form and tomorrow into a new form,... *What is to become of an art* (to which the charge of human life has been committed) *if fancy and caprice are to have the upper hand in it?* . . .

"How uninquiringly our writers on *materia medica* have adopted the statements proceeding from these impure sources is evident, among other things, from this, that they enumerate among the virtues of crude medicines such as were originally derived from the mere suppositions of our superstitious forefathers, who had childishly enough asserted certain medicinal substances to be the remedies of certain diseases, merely on account of some external resemblance of those medicines with something appreciable by the senses in those diseases (*signature*), or whose efficacy rested only on the authority of old women's tales, or was deduced from certain of their properties that had no essential connection with their fabulous medicinal powers... This is what I call a philosophical and experimental origin of the *materia medica*!"

In 1813, in *Genius of the Homœopathic Healing Art*, written for his early students, Hahnemann writes that "it is impossible to guess at the internal nature of disease, and at what is secretly changed by nature in the organism, and it is folly to attempt to base the cure of them on such guesswork and such propositions; it is impossible to divine the healing power of medicines according to a chemical hypothesis or from their colors, smell, or taste; and it is folly to use these substances (so pernicious when abused) for the cure of diseases based on such hypotheses and such propositions. And had such a course been ever so much in vogue and been generally introduced; had it been *for thousands of years the only, and ever so much admired course*, it would nevertheless remain an irrational and pernicious method thus to be guided by empty guesswork; to fable about the diseased conditions of the internal organism, and to combat them with fictitious virtues of medicines."

In 1817, in *Examination of the Sources of the Common Materia Medica*, he writes that "the *second source* of the virtues of drugs, as ascribed to them in the *materia medica*, has, it is alleged, a sure foundation, viz., *their sensible properties*, from which their action may be inferred. We shall see, however, what a turbid source this is.

"I shall spare the ordinary medical school the humiliation of reminding it of the folly of those ancient physicians who, determining the medical powers of crude drugs from their *signature*... I shall refrain from taunting the physicians of the present day with these absurdities, although traces of them are to be met with in the most modern treatises on *materia medica*...

From this anyone may easily see how irrational and arbitrary the maxims of the ordinary *materia medica* are, how near they are to downright falsehoods! And to make falsehoods the basis of our system of treating the sick—what a crime!...

"Thus, the life and health of human beings were made dependent on the opinion of a few blockheads, and whatever entered their precious brains went to swell the *materia medica*... All our senses together, employed with the utmost care, in the examination of a medicinal substance *with regard to its external properties*, do not give us any, not even the slightest information respecting this most important of all secrets, the internal immaterial power possessed by natural substances to alter the health of human beings; in other words respecting their true medicinal and healing power, which is so extremely different in every active substance, from that of every other, and which can only be observed when it is taken internally, and acts upon the vital functions of the organism! . . .

"But in the arrogant medicine of the common stamp, the medicines—the tools of the healing art—are employed without the least hesitation in the most important work which one man can perform for his brother—a work whereon life and death, nay, sometimes the weal or woe of whole families and their descendants depends, namely, the treatment of disease; and the acquaintance with these remedies being derived solely from their deceptive outward appearance, and from the preconceived notions and desultory classifications of teachers of *materia medica*, there is the greatest danger of deception, of error, and of falsehood...

"So much for the unfounded allegations respecting the general therapeutic virtues of the several medicines in the *materia medica*, which are all elevated to dogmas, on a foundation of blind guesswork, preconceived ideas, extraordinary notions and presumptuous fiction. So much for this *second* impure source of the *materia medica*, as it is called, hitherto in use!"

As for Scholten's "similarities of symptoms in related chemicals," referred to in the letter of the twenty-one signers, Hahnemann interjects in the same article that "*chemistry*, also, has taken upon itself to disclose a source as which the general therapeutic properties of drugs are to be ascertained. But we shall soon see the impurity of this third source of the ordinary *materia medica*."

"Attempts were made a century ago by Geoffrey, but still more frequent have such attempts been made since medicine became an art, to discover, by means of chemistry, the properties of remedies which could not be known in any other way."

"I shall say nothing about the merely theoretical fallacies of Baume, Steffens, and Burdach, whereby the medicinal properties of medicines were *arbitrarily* declared to reside in their gaseous and certain other chemical constituents alone, and at the same time it was assumed, without the slightest grounds, *on mere conjecture*, that these hypothetical elementary constituents possessed certain medicinal powers; so that it was really amusing to see the facility and rapidity with which those gentlemen could create the medicinal properties of every remedy out of nothing. As nature, trials on the living human organism, observations and experience were all despised, and mere fancy, expert fingers and overweening confidence were alone employed, it is easy to conceive that the whole affair was very soon settled..."

"*Knowledge* indeed! And what *knowledge* does chemistry give us with respect to the inanimate, speechless, component parts of medicines? Answer: It merely teaches their chemical signification, it teaches us that they act so and so with chemical re-agents, and hence are called gum, resin, albumen, mucus, earths and salts of one kind or another; matters of vastly little importance to the physician. These appellations tell us nothing of the changes in the sensations of the living man which may be effected by the plant or mineral, each differing from the other in its peculiar invisible, internal, essential nature, and yet, forsooth, the whole healing art depends *on this alone!* The manifestation of the active spirit of each individual remedial agent during its medicinal employment on human beings, can alone inform the physician of the sphere of action of the medicine, as regards its curative power."

Hahnemann concludes that "this improved healing art, *i.e.*, the homœopathic, draws not its knowledge from *those impure sources of the materia medica hitherto in use*, pursues not that antiquated, dreamy, false path we have just pointed out, but follows the way consonant with nature. It administers *no* medicines to combat the diseases of mankind *before* testing experimentally their pure effects; that is, observing what changes each can produce in the health of a healthy man—this is *pure materia medica*."

"Thus alone can the power of medicines on the human health be known; thus alone can their pure importance, the peculiar action of each drug, be exhibited clearly and manifestly, without any fallacy, any deception, independent of all speculation; in their ascertained symptoms all their curative elements lie disclosed; and among them may be found a signalisation of all cases of disease which each fitting (specific) remedy is capable of curing..."

"This doctrine of the pure effects of medicines promises no delusive, fabulous remedies for names of diseases, imagines no general therapeutic virtues of drugs, but unostentatiously possesses the elements of cure for disease accurately known (that is, investigated in all their symptoms); and he who will take the trouble to select the remedy for a disease by the rule of the most perfect similarity will ever find in it a pure inexhaustible source whence he may derive the means for saving the lives of his fellow-men."

In summary, Hahnemann and the twenty-one signers have diametrically opposed views regarding the use of signatures and *any* speculative source of the materia medica. What, then, are we to think when so many of our well known teachers of homeopathy sign their names to the false statements mentioned so far, and advocate teachings so contrary to homeopathy's fundamental principles? These signers have now crossed a line by blatantly showing great ignorance of Hahnemann's work and by clearly misinforming the community on a fundamental level.

Mr. Winston, as editor of a homeopathic periodical, clearly has the responsibility to identify and condemn such departures from homeopathy. In fact, this responsibility belongs to everyone in a position of authority. The least we could say is that Mr. Winston's criticism of these new speculative trends is much gentler than Hahnemann's. Also it is clear that Mr. Winston was not advocating "his personal beliefs," but rather defending homeopathy from misrepresentations as Hahnemann and his true followers have always done.

Should it be such a surprise that so many professed teachers of homeopathy have departed from the teachings of Hahnemann? Not really, as it has been the case in most of our history and the reason has always been from a lack of knowledge of the basic teachings of Hahnemann. It is really remarkable that so few in every generation, and even fewer today, have earnestly sought to understand the true nature of the inductive method of Hahnemann—this is in spite of identifying themselves as "classical" homeopaths, or being graduates from or teachers at "Hahnemann" colleges.

One of the *most important* pillars of homeopathy is the great care to avoid any speculation in the observation of the sick and in the development of our materia medica. Carroll Dunham summarized well this unique characteristic of homeopathy when he said that the *chief duty* of the prescriber is to "base the treatment on facts, indisputable, unmistakable, the results of pure observation." Hering said that Hahnemann "called his materia medica 'pure,' in order to indicate its *freedom from fiction*, experimental cures, preconceived opinions, and abstract ideas. Such impurities are not found in the least degree in the whole eleven volumes [of Hahnemann's materia medica]." This is not the case with the twenty-one signers, as in adopting their speculative approach they have clearly and blatantly stepped outside the homeopathic method.

They say that the reason for their innovations is their failures in practice, which they relate to the imperfection of our materia medica and repertories. Every experienced practitioner will meet with failure from time to time in curing curable cases with dynamic disease. However, these failures are not a failure of the law of similars but a failure to apply the law correctly, and not a failure of the method of Hahnemann but a failure to comply with it. Instead of mastering and perfecting the method of Hahnemann, the twenty-one signers are stepping aside to explore what may be considered new and exciting avenues but are in reality the very old and easily traveled routes of speculative medicine. What they may consider progress is in reality a giant step backward.

Regarding failures in homeopathy, Lippe said, "the law of the similars is a natural law on which rests the whole structure of the homœopathic healing art. The history of the development of that law, and how it can and must be applied for the cure of the sick, was fully described in Hahnemann's *Organon of the Healing Art*. A deviation from his methods will necessarily be followed by failures, and weak as well as lazy men will never, hardly ever, blame themselves, but find some plausible excuse." He continues by saying that "the logic of experience and reason combined, teach us that we cannot obtain the results claimed for Homœopathy by its founders, if we reject, alter, or modify the fundamental principles on which it is based, or the practical rules known to govern these very principles in the application for curative purposes. Hahnemann left us a new system of medicine, not finished,

nor will it ever be finished, as something complete. If we go on developing it, like all sciences and arts are being developed, we will bring it nearer perfection from year to year, we will reach greater results; but if we do not follow the beaten path, the results will become less favorable, and we must again fall into the slothfulness of the previous schools of medicine. The logic of experience and reason taught the writer of this paper that to reject, alter or modify Homœopathy, as taught by Hahnemann, is 'Homœopathy misapplied.'" By adopting opposite approaches how could these modern teachers expect the results promised by Hahnemann? Very few practitioners, even among the most popular teachers of today, have demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the teachings of the past masters of homeopathy. If they were familiar with these teachings, it is unlikely that anyone would ever consider departing from them, or try to fix what is not broken. In cutting off our roots, what shall we expect? As Hering reminds us, "a tree without its roots cannot grow or yield its appropriate fruits." And Dunham asked, "If a student should fall among false or incompetent teachers, could the doctrine and practice he learns be true and successful?" Lippe adds that "in our day, many efforts have been made to introduce various departures, to set aside Hahnemann's teachings and introduce labor saving methods in the so-called practice of Homœopathy... and how can we now, or at any later period, expect to obtain the same results in practice, which the master and his earlier and later pupils obtained from him, if we do not follow his advice implicitly?"

Homeopathy is a discipline that is relatively easy to practice when properly learned, but is relatively difficult to master. Dissatisfaction and discouragement are common when dealing with difficult cases or failures, even for the best-trained practitioners. In such time of vulnerability, did the masters of the past look outside Hahnemann's method for solutions, or did they delve deeper into it? In 1864, Lippe described what Bœnninghausen had done to become the great prescriber he was: "As a friend and pupil of Hahnemann his unbounded admiration increased daily by his intercourse with him, and after the great master's death he studied all his writings, and by these he became still more penetrated by and convinced of the truth of Hahnemann's observations and the great work accomplished by him." In the 1880's, Hahnemannians started forming local societies to study the *Organon*. Their main purpose was to develop a deeper understanding of homeopathy for better dealing with their difficult cases. In Philadelphia it was led first by Lippe and then by Kent, in New York city by Wells, Bayard and Carleton, in Boston by Bell and Wesselhœft, in Rochester by Biegler and in Toronto by John Hall. If these very experienced and successful prescribers felt the constant need to study the *Organon* to improve their results, why would our modern teachers not follow the same path of success? Edmund Lee, who knew the practices of Hering and Lippe very well, said in reference to them curing many chronic cases which other physicians could not help in the least, that "these men had no secret methods of practice, no secret remedies; they had nothing more than the humblest of us may acquire, a profound knowledge of Hahnemann's *Organon*, of his *Chronic Diseases*, and of the homœopathic Materia Medica. Cannot we all obtain that knowledge also, and having it, cannot we, too, use it to cure these scourges of the human race as they did?"

In 1879, Hering wrote, "A small number for some one or other reason, call themselves homœopathists, but find it far too much trouble to read the *Organon*, and still greater one to examine the sick according to the master's advice;... The very worst thing in these doctrines of Hahnemann's is, that if we do not follow them strictly and accurately—'*Machts nach aber machts genau nach!*' ["Do alike, but do it accurately."] said our master—we fail to heal the sick and the patients do not get well except now and then, accidentally, as it were."

In 1911, after about thirty years of homeopathic practice, Kent wrote, regarding the study of the *Organon*, that "the masters of these living doctrines and the materia medica have been constant readers of this great work. Not one of the great prescribers has ever claimed a discovery not fully set forth in this work, but all in their greatest accomplishments have said

that they based their success upon the *Organon*. It is the first book for the student to read, and the last for the old and busiest physician to ponder over. When Lippe, Wells and scores of others advocated a continuous reading of this book during their long careers, should we not likewise look upon it with a feeling of profound respect? Should we not crave the hidden truths that have made these faithful followers of law so successful? To whom would a rational man apply for light when desiring to follow law in healing the sick and measuring out uses to man? Naturally to Hahnemann and his faithful adherents, and not to those who smile at what they choose to consider the ravings of an aged man." Lippe, homeopathy's most successful prescriber, said in 1883, "it is now over 50 years since I first read the *Organon*. I just begin to comprehend it." Now, how can we expect homeopaths to understand and practice according to Hahnemann's teachings if their own teachers do not do so? In 1912, Kent wrote that "homœopathy is making wonderful strides in curing chronic miasms but they are upon the lines laid down by Hahnemann. The author has no discovery of his own to introduce to the world. He has learned to be faithful to, and contented with what has been handed down. The Law of Similars will direct to curative remedies for all that are curable and comfort such as are incurable, if we can keep our selfish ends in subjection."

Contrary to this, in our present era, any newcomer steps aside from the well established path of success, develops his own approach (as if there was a need for it) which he takes license to still call homeopathy, and peddles it as a "new" truth around the globe. In fact nothing of these "progressive" trends is new for homeopathy. In 1886 Lippe wrote, "'Progressive Homœopathy' is, in our days, the watchword of the present young generation of pretending-to-be Homœopaths. The historical fact is, that the Old Guard, the early pioneers of our Healing Art, progressively developing Hahnemann's teachings and methods, contenting against great odds, made great strides in making Homœopathy respected by curing the sick... And now the young generation, not yet born when these early victories were won, unmindful of the last labors of the early pioneers, desiring to reap the benefits of their hard work, blab about 'Progressive Homœopathy.'" Any claim to progressive homeopathy has to be faithful to Hahnemann's teachings, which will always remain the foundation of homeopathy.

The key to success in homeopathy taught to us by the masters of the past is the strict adherence to its fundamental principles. Basic to these principles is the strict inductive method of Hahnemann, which consists of drawing the right conclusions only, after having carefully observed all that can be observed without leaving anything out or adding anything that cannot be observed. Induction is not a matter of mere guesswork but a precise instrument of inquiry for arriving at the most plausible and best available answer. This is in sharp contrast with most of the current teachings in homeopathy, which are based as a rule on speculation—opinions, fancies and theories. Lippe said *because* the pioneers of homeopathy strictly followed the teachings of Hahnemann they "have met with success—such a success, as to our knowledge, no other mode of practice could ever claim. We desire to show the great necessity of and the advantages derived from the strict adherence to the principles taught by Hahnemann... and how a faithful adherence to these principles will guide us on to an invariable success. And if all persons professing and pretending to practice Homœopathy were consistent, if they exercised that *fidelity* to the principles of a school to which they profess and pretend to belong, then such a paper like this would be out of place; but as a great many of the professing and pretending Homœopathic practitioners not only practice but even teach a multiplicity of erroneous but plausible opinions, and as they very modestly claim that their own *individual opinions*, quite unsupported by any argument, but thrust at the profession merely as '*my opinion*' must be accepted for the time being, and as it is desirable to establish a certainty of medicine, and as this desirable certainty is at our command, offered to us and to all mankind capable of comprehending any logical argument and deductions from indisputable facts, I offer to testify to the correctness, applicability and results of

Hahnemann's great teachings, fidelity to principles is and must be followed by success, and that success is our *only* and *sole* weapon against error. It is admitted that success must be followed by the full acknowledgment of the superiority of Homœopathic practice over all other modes of practice, and that this success is invariably coming to us if we are true to the principles of our school... Why dare, I ask, do men professing and presuming to be homœopaths, venture upon 'new departures'? It is that they found the laws and practical rules when applied practically leading to failures?"

The twenty-one signers defend the teachers of these new trends by suggesting they are all "expert" in the materia medica. If we would remove all conjecture from their teachings, as Hahnemann demands, what would be left of their modern materia medica? They teach and write materia medica as if paragraph 144 of the *Organon* did not exist; in it Hahnemann unequivocally writes that "all conjecture, everything merely asserted or entirely fabricated, must be completely excluded from such a materia medica: everything must be the pure language of nature carefully and honestly interrogated." By neglecting the teachings of Hahnemann aren't they sabotaging their own efforts for success and Hahnemann's prediction of certainty in medicine? In the preface to his *Materia Medica Pura* Hahnemann writes that "he who has understood this will perceive that if a work on materia medica can reveal the precise qualities of medicines, it must be one from which all assumption and empty speculation about the reputed qualities of drugs are excluded, and which only records what medicines express concerning their true mode of action in the symptoms they produce in the human body. Hence the practitioner will rejoice to find here a way in which he can remove the maladies of his fellow-creatures surely, rapidly, and permanently, and procure them the blessing of health with much greater certainty."

Regarding the development of our materia medica with "themes," "essences" and "central delusions," Hahnemann writes in the introduction to Camphora that this remedy "must have a sort of general pathological action, which, however, we are unable to indicate by any general expression; nor can we even attempt to do so for fear of straying into the domain of shadows, where knowledge and observation cease, whilst imagination deceives us into accepting dreams as truth; where we, in short, abandoned by the guiding of plain experience, grope about in the dark, and with every desire to penetrate into the inner essence of things, about which little minds so presumptuously dogmatize, we gain nothing by such hyperphysical speculations but noxious error and self deception."

Regarding the "basics" which the twenty-one authors say is the materia medica and repertory: perhaps they have forgotten that the "basics" of homeopathy are, more importantly, its fundamental principles, of which they are making a complete farce. Materia medica and repertories based on speculation are completely off base, and have nothing to do with the basics? One of these fundamental principles is the reliance "on facts, indisputable, unmistakable, the results of pure observation." The mastery of homeopathy requires rigorous studies of the reliable material *only*. Shall we drop all the old and wise teachings of the past masters and follow modern teachers down their new avenues, or shall we follow the *sure* road traveled by the ones who have at all mastered homeopathy?

Some want us to believe that this old method of Hahnemann is a thing of the past and we must evolve from it. For the ones not familiar with history, it is important to understand that the inductive method is what brought medicine out of its chaos. If the fundamental principles of homeopathy were true yesterday they will continue to be true until the end of time. Others want us to combine both methods, Hahnemann's homeopathy with the speculative approach. It is impossible to advocate both as they are as opposite as day and night, or as truth and falsehood. In 1879, Henry N. Guernsey wrote that "the sound of the truth is so repellant to some men's minds that they cannot endure it and it makes them mad, and *then* they become *mad* indeed! Well then, by "our side" I mean the right side, that side which leads one onward



and upward throughout all coming time—not the wrong side which leads in an opposite direction. I consider those persons to be on "our side" who study Hahnemann's *Organon* and his *Chronic Diseases*, and who see in them the great eternal law of cure—that law which cures all manner of departures from health in all kinds of living creatures, when applied according to its genius. They study Hahnemann's writings as scientific men study the principles of science, with a view to apply those principles to practical purposes. They begin at the beginning, and, paragraph by paragraph, they investigate till they catch the real meaning and genius of every sentence; they then apply such knowledge in practice and measure by the results obtained. This they do as Hahnemann did, and not according to any notions of their own or of any other person. This must be done according to principles involved in the context, just as we work out the laws of chemistry, of mathematics, or of mechanics, each according to their principles; and so every law in nature must be met and worked out in accordance with its own principles and genius."

For years some of the signers and others they support have held and openly advocated teachings that are at variance with Hahnemann's homeopathy. It is the duty of every Hahnemannian to denounce their misrepresentation and false teachings, otherwise homeopathy will be remembered only as a caricature in the history of medicine. It is our duty to protect the science that is so dear to us from being degraded. Should our homeopathic institutions neglect to stand by the teachings of Hahnemann and close their eyes on false teachings promulgated even by its most popular members, the consequences would be fatal.

Regarding the tendency our homeopathic institutions have had to tolerate departures from Hahnemann's teachings, Lippe wrote, which was later proven to be true, "let the curtain drop. Behind the scenes—a grave, both for Homœopathy and the poor sick." He writes that "we have to correct errors taught and disseminated, and we shall expose these errors which must lead our school astray, without fear or favor." We hope that our institutions will stand up and perform this unpleasant but vital duty. We must be clear that denouncing misrepresentations and their authors does not in any way, shape or form constitute an affront to any of these authors. Exposing their errors does not carry any implication of malice whatsoever or judgement about the moral character of the people involved.

It is possible that some of the twenty-one signers have signed their names mainly to protest against intolerance of the freedom to investigate, or the liberty of opinion, or perhaps against censorship or dogmatism. The point must be very clearly made that everyone has the liberty to practice medicine as they choose to within the limits of the laws of the land, but honesty obliges that no one has the license to call homeopathy what is not homeopathy. This is simply misrepresentation. Hahnemann makes it clear that departures from pure homeopathy simply cease to be part of the homeopathic method and should therefore cease to be called homeopathy. In his preface to the *Organon*, Hahnemann writes that "what is clearly pure in doctrine and practice should be self-evident, and all backward sliding to the pernicious routinism of the old school that is as much its antithesis as night is to day, should cease to vaunt itself with the honorable name of Homœopathy."

In 1870 there was also a plea for freedom of medical opinion within the homeopathic community. Lippe vigorously warned the profession against this movement. He said that "there are true and good men among us who erroneously believe and endeavor to establish the opinion, that any person professing to be a homœopathist, and who bases his pretensions on the fact that he is a member of a homœopathic society, must be allowed full freedom of medical opinion and action, and that therefore he is at liberty to accept, reject, or modify any or all of the principles constituting homœopathy; that, in fact, he may consistently enjoy multiplicity of opinions, and do just what he has a mind to do;... the liberty to accept homœopathy surely does not include the freedom to reject, modify, or alter any or all of its fundamental principles." He adds that if we accept the teachings of Hahnemann "we shall

never for a moment advocate any of the modern departures—we shall scorn them; and there will be not the slightest danger that the advocates of unlimited liberty, and of that fallacious cry for the supremacy of individual judgment over the application of fixed immutable principles, will ever pervert Homœopathy into Eclecticism which, in reality, seems to be the aim of every healer who discards Hahnemann's teachings, and claims for his own individual judgement superiority to any fixed principles." He adds that Hahnemannians "claim the liberty of following Hahnemann, his tenets, and remain a homœopathic healer; and also the liberty to help to develop our healing art, to cure the sick and report such cures." Indeed, liberty to practice and teach homeopathy is not license to change any of its fundamental principles. Lippe concludes this point with the following quote: "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." This is a small price to pay if our institutions and responsible individuals want to preserve homeopathy intact for future generations.

The circumstances in the homeopathic world of today are very similar to 1833 when Hahnemann said how necessary it had become to gather his "true pupils" around him "in order to separate the sheep from the goats," or to 1844 when, following Hahnemann's death, Boenninghausen wrote that "unless the signs deceive me, we are now at the commencement of a new epoch, marked by the death of our master, whose genius hovers around us, an epoch when the unity of the school shall be restored, when the excrescences shall have been chopped off, and the genuine metal separated from the dross. Let us henceforth be more firmly united, all of us who desire the good, but let us exclude from our ranks with unrelenting severity anyone who sneers at the good cause, schismatics and all those who attempt to substitute opinions and hypotheses for careful observations. But let us at the same time honor the memory of the great reformer in medicine, by subjecting his doctrines, results of fifty years observation, to repeated and comprehensive examinations and trials, and by candidly communicating our experience one to another. This would be the best mode of preparing the monument which the great man has merited by the services he has rendered to suffering humanity."

The same year, in 1844, the pioneers of homeopathy in America founded the American Institute of Homœopathy (AIH) for the following two purposes: "1<sup>st</sup>. The reformation and augmentation of the *Materia Medica*" because the state of the *materia medica* was "such as imperatively to demand a more satisfactory arrangement and greater purity of observation which could only be obtained by associate action on the part of those who diligently seek for truth alone. 2<sup>nd</sup>. The restraining of Physicians from pretending to be competent to practice homœopathy who have not studied it in a careful and skillful manner" because "the state of public information respecting the principles and practice of Homœopathy is so defective as to make it easy for mere pretenders to this very difficult branch of the healing art to acquire credit as proficient in the same." The pioneers were well aware of the danger the various departures represented for the recognition and survival of their profession. In spite of such measures, the AIH as well as most of the other homeopathic institutions became infiltrated and controlled by the ones who had not studied homeopathy "in a careful and skillful manner." The abandonment of principles yielded very bitter fruits for homeopathy in the nineteenth century when most of our institutions departed from Hahnemann's method to eventually disappear. Likely homeopathy would have been remembered as medical folklore similarly to Hydropathy, Eclecticism, etc., if it had not been for the Old Guard.

To save homeopathy, a few of the last surviving members of the Old Guard founded in 1880 the International Hahnemannian Association (IHA), which permitted homeopathy to survive through the twentieth century. P. P. Wells, a member of the Old Guard, recalled in 1886 the motives for creating the IHA. He said that "the IHA originated in deep convictions in the minds of many members of the American Institute of Homœopathy, that that body had drifted so far away in its practical work, from that of its founders, and from the motives which gave it

birth, that it no longer represented that for the advocacy and inculcation of which it had been created... Elucidation or advocacy of the Homœopathy of Hahnemann this body had neither. These had so almost entirely disappeared from its sessions, that little was found in them characteristic of the homœopathic law and its corollaries... It was Homœopathy, as contained in these principles, which the Association, at its birth, pledged itself 'to illustrate and defend.' To illustrate by a practice founded on these principles, and to defend whenever and by whomever attacked, by all the just means and powers possessed by the body. They called this, and rightly, *pure* Homœopathy, by this term intending to distinguish it from the pretensions of quasi homœopathic practice and teaching... Devotion to the interest of the great truths of the philosophy they had accepted and believed was the characteristic which marked the occasion, and made it memorable among remembered assemblages of doctors. Personal interests or ambitions had no place there, but only *what is truth?* And love for all who loved this for its own sake." The members of the IHA met every year from 1880 until 1959, and in publishing all their proceedings, not only have they left us with a wealth of experience but also, most importantly, handed down the traditions of the masters of the past.

Has the time now come again where we need an organization like the IHA to defend Hahnemann's homeopathy from impostors? Or will our current homeopathic institutions and the individuals in a position of authority step forward and prevent the present generation of false prophets from leading homeopathy astray? Doesn't the legacy we have inherited, *at the very least*, demand this from us? In the interest of the profession and the patient, mustn't we stand united by the teachings of Hahnemann? Is the task needing to be accomplished today so different from the one that called for the creation of the AIH and IHA in the nineteenth century? Edmund Lee wrote that the work undertaken by the IHA "is a noble one, and a great one. It is to stem the torrent of eclecticism which threatens to wash away all the old, safe, reliable landmarks left us by Hahnemann. This work necessitates the increase of the *Materia Medica*, and its purification from all errors, clinical, pathological, or hypothetical; the regeneration of its medical schools; the instruction of its physicians and the exposure of false theory and erroneous opinion of many of its professors and leaders. This task the International Hahnemannian Association proposes to accomplish by a strict adherence to the law and its corollaries and by a full and clear explanation of them."

As a profession we have responsibilities toward the community. Will our institutions and individual members stand up and fulfill them? Or shall we leave impostors continue to represent our profession and teach false doctrine without objection? Shall we again be the silent witnesses of the degradation of homeopathy? In 1862 Dunham, in reproaching Hering and Gray for not having made sufficient efforts in denouncing the misleading translations made by Hempel of important works in homeopathy, said that "in a matter which involves the education or perversion of a whole generation and healthy progress and soundness of Homœopathy whenever the English language is spoken—in such a matter the engrossments of business or tenderness toward a delinquent individual kept them silent,—would be to cast a doubt upon the estimate in which they hold scientific truth, a doubt inadmissible in gentlemen of their position." He adds, "Why Drs. Hering and Gray, acknowledged leaders of our school in America, did not suppress this so-called translation or expose its false pretensions... Alas! I have nothing to say." To Dunham's delayed call to action, Lippe said that it "unfortunately does not remedy the evil done to Homœopathy and its progress during that length of time."

We are now in the same position as when Lippe said in 1860 that "the conflicting doctrines held by the various practitioners of medicine, calling themselves Homœopathists, make it not only desirable, but imperatively necessary to determine the fundamental principles of Homœopathy first... It is a duty we owe ourselves, the community, and the memory of Hahnemann to agree on positive fixed fundamental principles... The community has a right to know, and should know, what constitutes Homœopathy and a homœopathic practitioner. The

community which is to be benefited by a progressively developed art, find conflicting, uncontradicted statements brought before it, with no support but the delusive or idle assertion of irresponsible individuals."

In 1861, Jahr founded a journal in Paris which he called *L'Art de Guérir* (The Art of Healing). In the foreword of the new journal, he writes that he has omitted the word homeopathy from its title as the practice of pretend-to-be homeopaths had given it such a bad reputation that its name alone had become the main obstacle of its own development by discouraging scholars and conscientious practitioners. By not learning from the mistakes of our past, we condemn ourselves to relive them. As a profession we must clearly take a stance and convey to the public that a homeopathic physician is one who understands the method of Hahnemann and practices accordingly. In 1835, shortly after his arrival in Paris, Hahnemann clearly stated in an address to a French homeopathic society that he recognized as his disciples *only* the ones who practice pure homeopathy.

We can already hear replies from the ones not deeply familiar with the history of homeopathy that the pursuit of this pure homeopathy of Hahnemann's is akin to the dogma of religious fundamentalism and in effect stunts progress forward. This is a grave mistake view, as Hahnemann's homeopathy has nothing resembling a religion or a cultist movement but instead it fulfills all the criteria of a science. The first of these criteria, according to Dunham, is "a capability of infinite progress in each of its elements without detriment to its integrity." In fact, homeopathy is the science of therapeutics, and like other natural sciences, it is developed on orderly and methodical investigation where purity and accuracy of what is observed is an absolute prerequisite. When speculation replaces fact or is acted upon as a fact without evidence, whether in the development of the materia medica or in the observation of the sick, it belongs to another field than homeopathy. There is nothing wrong with formulating hypotheses and then using the scientific method to verify them. This would be progress forward. For example, someone could form the hypothesis that it is more than a coincidence that in the proving of many creeping plants "dreams or desire to travel" is a constant. The verification of this hypothesis would not be too difficult to investigate, as one would merely have to read the reliable sources and check whether it is coincidence or not. But how seriously would the formulation of such a hypothesis be considered when it is known by anyone familiar with the materia medica that the majority of the creeping plants do not have this characteristic symptom, including well known remedies such as *Lycopodium*, *Ipecac*, *Gelsemium*, *Colocynthis*, *Clematis*, *Dulcamara*, etc? However, let's assume for argument sake that it was found to be more than coincidence, what value could be ascribed to such a finding as in any case one of the basic principles of homeopathy is not to generalize but to individualize at all times? Progress forward in homeopathy has always been by first understanding very well its foundation and the strict inductive method of Hahnemann. No other method has so far demonstrated its superiority in achieving certainty in medicine, while the speculative method has had centuries to demonstrate its inconsistency and failure, why then would anyone want to return to it? Why not continue the work started by Hahnemann and further developed by his true disciples instead of trying to reinvent homeopathy, or fix what is not broken?

In spite of taking a case in its most minute detail, as described by Hahnemann, and researching thoroughly the materia medica for a simillimum, all practitioners will meet with a certain number of defective cases. What, then, shall we do? Shall we adopt the speculative method, or continue to work with the method which has brought our profession this far? As Dunham said, "Better cure by a 'lucky hit' than not at all. But let not this lead us astray where we might do better. If one had to traverse a wilderness he would desire first of all a compass. If this were not to be had he might 'steer by the stars.' If these were obscured, he might judge from the direction of vegetation and of hills and rivers. Failing these, he might even 'guess'

and his guess might lead him right. Nevertheless, few travelers of sound mind would be led by such a success to prefer a 'guess' to a 'compass.'" History teaches that homeopathy is the *surest* compass to cure the sick and its unique strength comes from the fact that it is based on "pure experiment, meticulous observation and sound experience" and at the same time it excludes the "theoretical conjecture or specious sophistry" of speculative medicine.

Even though many of the twenty-one signers have shown great devotion to homeopathy and some have done good work for homeopathy, the course they have presently taken will hurt homeopathy and undermine their efforts to help our cause. Devotion without guidance and principles is like sailing without a rudder and a compass. Using homeopathy as an outlet for creative expression may be very exciting, but when devoid of principles it is definitely not good for the art and science of homeopathy. A good homeopath will learn to optimally use his creative and intuitive skills, but with complete respect to the fundamental principles of homeopathy.

Hopefully, this paper will inspire reflection on the course currently taken and impel many to renew their effort to rediscover Hahnemann and his great work, rather than trodding on the old ways of speculative medicine. The road that Hahnemann led us down may be narrow, rugged and beset with many difficulties, but is worth all our effort as it has proved to be the road of true knowledge and success. Lastly, I hope that this paper will be a call to action for the urgent need to understand, protect and further develop the legacy we have inherited from the masters of the past.

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