

## CONSTANTINE HERING

The following sketch of Hering was published in the Hahnemannian Monthly shortly after his death:

Suddenly, at half past ten o'clock, on the evening of July 23, Dr. Constantine Hering departed this life in the eighty-first year of his age. During the past decade the doctor has at times suffered quite severely from asthma, though for several years past the attacks have been less severe, so that he has been enabled to attend almost daily upon a large circle of patients. Having spent the early part of the evening of his decease with his family, he retired to his study shortly after eight o'clock, seemingly stronger and more cheery than for some weeks past. Just before ten o'clock he rang for his wife, who, immediately answering, found him suffering from extreme dyspnoea, but perfectly rational. He asked for his old friend and physician, Dr. Charles G. Raue, who was immediately sent for; at the same time, Dr. A. W. Koch also, an old and esteemed friend and neighbor, was summoned; but before help could be offered the spirit had departed. Not unexpected, nor yet unprepared for, was the call. To one in attendance he remarked, "Now I am dying." Many times during previous illnesses did his friends despair of his life, but he felt his time had not yet come. Now he knew that a change was indeed coming. That undaunted spirit, which for more than fourscore years animated the living clay, was about to leave its abode for realms above. Thus departed one to whom Homœopathy in America—yea, in the whole world—will ever remain a debtor.

Though called in the ripeness of old age, his death, nevertheless, falls like a heavy pall over the entire profession. We have been called to mourn the departure of others whose names we must ever revere; but with the death of Hering is broken a connecting link which bound the present to the past, the established triumphant homœopathy of our own day to the early struggles and sacrifices of its pioneers.

East, West, North and South, Europe and America, have among their busy practitioners many who look toward the home of this truly great man as toward the home of a father. Hundreds have shared with him of the wondrous store of knowledge which he possessed. Many came; none were sent empty away. Their capacity to receive, rather than his willingness to give, limited the amount bestowed. Blessings will ever attend his name.

Constantine Hering was born at Oschatz, Saxony, on Jan. 1, 1800. From earliest childhood he evinced an extreme desire to investigate all things. Apt as a scholar, he soon mastered the preliminary studies, and was prepared at an early age to enter the Classical School at Zittau. Here he continued his studies from 1811 to 1817. Even thus early in life he evinced an aptness for study and an accumulation of knowledge far beyond his years. Besides his familiarity with the classics, his proficiency in mathe-

matics was truly surprising. While thus employed his mind was turned toward medicine, and when opportunity offered he pursued his studies in that direction, first at the Surgical Academy of Dresden, and later at the University of Leipzig. In the latter institution he was a pupil of the eminent surgeon Robbi.

About this time his preceptor was requested to write an article against Homœopathy—one which might prove its death-blow. Dr. Robbi declined for want of time, but recommended his young assistant, Hering, who, quite pleased with this mark of confidence, began the work; but meeting much in the writings of Hahnemann which was new to him, and finally reading the expression, "*Machts nach, aber machts recht nach,*" he determined on personal investigation in order that he might more positively refute the points which Hahnemann had set before the profession.

Calling upon an acquaintance, a druggist of Leipzig, for some Cinchona, he was met by the friendly inquiry, "For what do you want it?" To this he answered, "For the purpose of proving it, in order the more thoroughly to attack the new folly." To this the druggist replied, "Let it alone, Hering; you are stepping on dangerous ground." Hering's answer was that he feared not the truth. And the result was, the pamphlet was not written, and Homœopathy gained an able champion.

Subsequently, while still pursuing his medical studies, Hering received a dissecting-wound, which under the treatment of his teachers reached such a degree of severity that amputation of the hand was advised. At the suggestion of a friend who was a student of Hahnemann's, the efficacy of the potentized drug was tried, the result being a complete cure of the wound and a thorough conversion of Hering. So thoroughly was he convinced that the law of cure had indeed been discovered, that he staked thereon even his success at the University. His inaugural thesis, "*De Medicina Futura,*" contained a forcible and unflinching defense of the law of cure. He completed his medical studies, and received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Wurzburg, March 23, 1826. Soon after his graduation he was appointed by the king of Saxony to accompany the Saxon legation to Dutch Guiana, there to make scientific research and prepare a zoological collection for his government. He continued in this capacity for some years, but his love for the new truth which he had learned impelled him to further study, and finally to the practice of medicine according to Hahnemann's doctrines. Such was his success that he gained great favour with the governor of the province, whose daughter he cured of an affection which the resident physicians had declared incurable.

During his residence at Surinam he was an occasional contributor to the Homœopathic Archives, for which journal he had written as early as 1825, while still a student of medicine. The court physician learning of this, wrought upon the king sufficiently to cause a notice to be sent to Hering,

directing him to attend to the duties of his appointment, and let medical matters alone.

His independent nature rebelled at such intolerance, and led him promptly to resign his appointment. Dr. George H. Bute, formerly a Moravian missionary at Surinam, and a pupil of Hering, had settled in Philadelphia, and was engaged in the practice of Homœopathy. Dr. Hering continued the practice at Paramaribo for a short time after his resignation. Learning, however, from Dr. Bute that Philadelphia offered a good field, Hering left Paramaribo, and landed at Philadelphia, January 1833. Here he remained for a short season, when he was induced by Dr. W. Wesselhoeft to assist in the establishment of a homœopathic school at Allentown,—the North American Academy of the Homœopathic Healing Art. He labored in this field until financial embarrassments necessitated the abandonment of the institution.

This led to his return to Philadelphia, where he engaged in practice with Dr. Bute, locating on Vine street, below Fourth. Here he soon acquired a large and lucrative practice. The wide scope of his education naturally offered a ready introduction to scientific and literary circles, while the active interest which he took in our republican form of government led to an acquaintance with many persons of political prominence. Among these may be mentioned Henry Clay, who, as a patient and friend, highly appreciated the services rendered by Dr. Hering, as witness the following extract from a letter dated Dec. 14, 1849:—

“Your liberal kindness toward me would not allow you to indulge me in the gratification of testifying my gratitude to you for the successful exercise of your professional skill on me, on two distinct occasions, by the customary compensation; but you cannot prevent the expression of my great obligation to you for the benefit I derived from your obliging prescriptions. I thank you for them most cordially. . . . With great regard, I am your friend and obedient servant,

“H. Clay”.

Agassiz, Carey, and a host of others, distinguished in politics, art, and science, were among his friends.

Always a student, endowed with indomitable will and untiring industry, he seemed to infuse every one with whom he came in contact with the spirit of work. “Change of occupation is rest”, was his oft repeated expression.

Though conducting a large practice, he found time to write much, and to superintend the work of many younger and less experienced. His Saturday-night meetings, held for the instruction of students and young practitioners, were prized as a boon. Here he imparted golden truths, reaped from fields of ripe experience such as but few have enjoyed.

Among the remedies which he proved prior to his departure with the Saxon legation may be mentioned Mezereum, Sabadilla, Sabina, Colchicum, Plumbum acetum, Paris quadrifolia, Cantharis, Iodium; also fragmentary

provings of Antimonium tartaricum, Argentum metallicum, Aristolochia, Clematis erecta, Belladonna, Caltha palustris, Demantium, Geum rivale, Nostoc, Opium, Ruta, Tanacetum and Viola tricolor.

During his residence in South America his observations and provings embraced Lachesis, Theridion, Curassivicum, Askalabotes, Caladium seguinum, Jambou, Jatropha, Solanum mammosum, Spigelia, Vanilla, Alumina, Phosphoric acid, and Psorinum.

After his arrival at Philadelphia we find him again employed in like work, either proving or superintending the provings of Mephitis, Ictodes foetida, Crotalus, Hydrophobinum, Brucea, Calcareo phosph. (both acid and basic), Hippomanes, Castor equorum, Kalmia, Nicandra, Viburnum, Phytolacca, Gelsemium, Gymnocladus, Chlorine, Bromium, Fluoric acid, Ferrum met., Kobalt, Niccolum, Oxalic acid, Oxygen, Ozone, Thallium, Tellurium, Palladium, Platinum, Osmium, Lithium, Glonoine, Apis, Cepa, Aloes, Millefolium, Baryta carb., Nux moschata, and Formica.

Among his other works may be mentioned:—

“Rise and Progress of Homœopathy;” a pamphlet, Philadelphia, 1834, afterwards translated into the Dutch and Swedish languages.

“Necessity and Benefits of Homœopathic;” a pamphlet, 1835.

“Domestic Physician,” published in 1835. This work passed through fourteen editions in America, two in England, and thirteen in Germany, and has also been translated into the French, Spanish, Italian, Danish, Hungarian, Russian, and Swedish languages.

“The Effects of Snake Poison,” 1837.

“Homœopathic Hatchels,” 1845.

“Proposals to Kill Homœopathy;” a satire, 1846.

“Suggestions for the Provings of Drugs,” 1853.

“Amerikanische Arzneipruefungen,” 1853-57.

Translations of Gross’s “Comparative Materia Medica”, 1866.

“Analytical Therapeutics,” the first volume only, issued, 1875.

“Condensed Materia Medica”, two editions, 1877-79.

“Guiding Symptoms,” the third volume of which he completed just prior to his death.

In addition to these may be mentioned his editorial work connected with the Homœopathic News, 1854, and the American Journal of Homœopathic Materia Medica, 1867-71, besides many miscellaneous writings scattered through the various journals of our school. It may further be added that he assisted in the translation of Jahr’s Manual, Allentown Edition, 1838.

Dr. Hering was a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, to which institution he presented his large zoological collection. He was one of the founders of the American Institute of Homœopathy, and for many years continued in active relationship with it, as well as with the State and county societies. He was one of the originators of the American

Provers' Union, instituted Aug. 10, 1853. He was also one of the founders and a member of the first faculty of the Homœopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania, continuing in this relationship at intervals until 1867, when he assisted in founding the Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia, in which he held the Chair of Institutes and Materia Medica, being Emeritus of the same at the time of his death.

It would be difficult to give a proper estimate of Dr. Hering's character, and of his influence upon medical science. His acts are matters of medical history, and the impress of his thought is already made, deep in the medical practice of our age. It is not possible that the memory of his career is one which posterity will willingly let die; for the coming ages, even more than the present, will learn to depend upon LAW as the great governing factor in the production of the facts of natural science, therapeutics included. And so, as Homœopathy must become more and more the one only acknowledged therapeutic principle, the brightest names that posterity will cherish will be those who have done so much to establish it among men, while among the most brilliant of them all will stand the name of—HERING. (See also: Cleave's Biography. Memorial to Const. Hering, Phila., 1880. Trans. Amer. Inst. Hom., 1881. Med. Couns., vol. 2, 173. vol. 3, pp. 193, 224, vol. 18, pp. 99, 109. Minneap Hom. Mag., June, 1895. World's Con., vol. 2, p. 713. U. S. Med. Inves., vol. 12, p. 154. Hahn. Monthly, vol. 11, p. 423, (Aug., 1880). St. Louis Clin. Rev., vol. 3, p. 238. N. E. Med. Gaz., vol. 15, p. 307. Hom. Times (N. Y.), vol. 8, p. 114. Med. Adv., vol. 9, p. 227. Hom. Jour. Obst., vol. 2, p. 124. The above are the principal references to his death but all homœopathic journalism bears the impress of his powerful pen.)

—T. L. Bradford—*The Pioneers of Homœopathy*, pp. 344-49

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### STORY OF MY CONVERSION TO HOMŒOPATHY

(Continued from page 155)

ambition to pass off as a doctor. He keenly feels his want of knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and other auxiliary sciences. He would give up his self-imposed task if the poor whom he treats would get the regulars to pity them. To such a man we should feel grateful for his services in our cause, and gratitude demands that I should give out his name. He is Babu Dina Bandhu Mukherjee, of Shibpur, a clerk in a Government office.

—*Calcutta Journ. of Medicine*, July, 1902

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