# ANECDOTAL HOMŒOPATHY

FLOODLIGHT ON THE LIVES OF HAHNEMANN, HERING & OTHER MASTERS

Collected & Arranged by

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necdotal Homoeopathy

#### Hahnemann.

Like many earnest searchers after truth, Hahnemann seems to have been nearly totally destitute of humour. He could hardly perpetrate a joke, and seems to have been incapable of appreciating jocularity, or, as he would have considered it, a want of earnestness, in others. Like Dr. Brown's dog Rab, life for him was "full o' seriousness, he couldna get his fill o' fechtin'," This want of humour is not inconsistent with cheerfulness of disposition, and unless Hahnemann was particularly provoked by the attacks of his enemies or the heresies of his disciples he was not by any means morose or illtempered. But on the subject of homeopathy and especially its technicalities, he admitted of no dissentient opinion, and though he changed his own views repeatedly he insisted that his disciples should take his word for law in every case.

Before Hahnemann's temper was spoiled by the persecutions of his medical opponents after the promulgation of his revolutionary medical doctrines, he displayed in some of his published works a cheery and even jocose spirit, of which we find no traces in his writings of a later date. Thus in his *Friend* 

of Health, published in 1792 and 1795, consisting of a series of popular articles chiefly on hygiene, we find much useful advice set forth occasionally in a lively and entertaining manner. We may give one specimen from an article written with the view of overthrowing the widespread superstition that occasional purgatives were useful to keep the body healthy. He introduces the subject in a letter from an imaginary retired captain. It runs thus:

"My DEAR DOCTOR, -I have been advised to apply to you, as you have the character of always telling people in a pretty straightforward manner what they ought to do. It occurs to me, and my family surgeon also has often reminded me, that it is surely high time for me, my wife and my children, to take a good dose of purgative physic. 'Your honour,' he is always saying, 'only think what a quantity of dirt must accumulate in the abdomen in the course of half a year, if the refuse be not swept out and cleansed away at least once a month.' The like of us, to be sure, don't understand it, but one would think that of all the food and drink we take, some of it must occasionally stick in the body, though it may not be so desperately bad as my surgeon makes out. Thinks I to myself, if things collect in the system that way, then my shepherd, who is in his seventieth year and has never taken any physic in his life, must carry about with him in his belly imparities enough to fill a barrel. But my surgeon ought to know more about it than I do.

The fellow has had, he assures me, great experience during the Seven Years' War; he has amputated a frightful lot of arms and legs in the military hospital, and helped to extract many bits of broken skulls. Do not blame me, doctor, for adopting his views; the chap makes an impression on one with his talk. He looks as fierce, as a savage, stammers out horrible Latin and Greek words, gesticulates with his arms, and distorts his features to such an extent that one cannot help being impressed when one listens to him. And after all, what he says may be quite right, and is there any greater blessing than health? What a lot of diseases with Greek and Latin one might get in one's inside by neglecting to take proper precautions!"-and so on, exposing in this merry way the prevalent delusion with regard to the wholesomeness of an occasional "good clearing out" of the howels.

In Hahnemann's earlier letters we meet occasionally with a bit of genial jocularity, but in his later epistles he never deviates from a severe and earnest tone. Here is a specimen of his earlier and lighter style from a letter dated January 24th, 1814, which, at the same time, gives a picture of the disgusted astonishment of an orthodox practitioner on being first made acquainted with Hahnemann's novel practice.

"Just one word more in order to show you how our colleagues investigate diseases and what confused ideas they have about them. A short time ago one

of my chronic patients, who lives at Landshut, in Silesia, asked me to give him instructions as to what he should do for himself and family should the prevailing fever come into his house. I wrote to him, asking him to ascertain what were the predominant symptoms of the disease. He thought this was too difficult a task for a non-medical person, so he begged his ordinary medical attendant to give the desired information. Now just read in the enclosed sheet what learned nonsense the muddleheaded doctor writes; any one who undertakes to treat a disease from such a description must be destitute of reason, I imagine. Taking for granted that the fever did not differ essentially from ours, I sent him two or three phials, each containing globules, and labelled with the instructions for each medicine-one globule to be taken in such and such a case—for my patient is a very intelligent man. He showed them to his doctor, who exclaimed repeatedly, 'Well, now, that is beyond my comprehension!' No doubt, thought I, there are many other things beyond your comprehension."

#### Hahnemann's Garden.

During the earlier years of Hahnemann's residence in Coethen, the calumnies and intrigues of the doctors and apothecaries had so prejudiced the citizens against him that he could not appear in the streets of the town without being insulted—sometimes even stones were thrown at him. Hence his walks became

entirely limited to the little garden at the back of his house. An admirer who visited him at Coethen was taken by Hahnemann into this garden. "Herr Hofrath," said he, "so this is the garden where you take your daily walks—it is very narrow." "True," replied the old sage, "it is, as you say, narrow, but you will allow that it is infinitely high."

#### Hahnemann in Paris.

#### BY ERNEST LEGOUVE.\*

Samuel Hahnemann is one of the great innovators, of the nineteenth century. He commenced about 1835 † a medical revolution which still continues. I do not criticise the system, I only state the fact.

An accident, for which I cannot be too thankful, brought me into contact with him, at the moment when his reputation was in its full glory. I had something to do with it, and an account of the close relations which were established between us will assist us in our knowledge of this extraordinary and superior man.

My daughter, aged four years, was dying: our medical man, a physician of the Hotel Dieu, Dr. R—, had told one of our friends in the morning that she was irremediably lost. Her mother and I

<sup>\*</sup> From Le Temps.

<sup>† 1835</sup> was the year Hahnemann removed to Paris. As a Frenchman, M. Legouve would naturally think that that was the date of the discovery of homeopathy, though that event occurred about forty years previously.

were watching, perhaps for the last time, beside her cradle; Schoelcher and Goubaux were watching along with us, and in the room there was also a young man in evening dress, whom we had only known three hours previously, one of M. Ingres' most distinguished pupils, Amaury Duval.

We wished to have a souvenir of the dear little creature whose fate we already bewailed, and Amaury, at the earnest entreaty of Schoelcher, who had gone to fetch him in the midst of a ball, consented to come and make this sad portrait. When the dear and charming artist (be was then twenty-nine years old) came overcome with emotion in the midst of our distress, we had no idea, nor had he, that a few hours later he would do us the greatest service we had ever experienced, and that we should be indebted to him for something much more valuable than the likeness of our child, to wit, her life.

He placed at the foot of the cradle, on a high piece of furniture, a lamp, whose light fell on the child's face. Her eves were already closed, her body was motionless, her dishevelled hair hung about her forehead, and the pillow on which her head lay was not whiter than her cheeks and her little hand; but infancy has such a charm of its own that the near approach of death seemed only to lend an additional grace to her face.

Amaury spent the night in drawing her, and he had, poor fellow! to wipe his eyes very frequently in order to prevent his tears falling on his paper.

By morning the portrait was finished; under the stimulus of emotion he had produced a masterpiece. When about to leave us, in the midst of our thanks and our sorrow, he all at once said, "As your medical man declares your child's case hopeless, why do you not make a trial of the new medical system which is making such a noise in Paris? Why do you not send for Hahnemann?" "He is right," cried Goubaux, "Hahnemann is a near neighbour of mine. He lives in the Rue de Milan, opposite my institution. I do not know him, but that does not matter; I will go and bring him to you." He went; he found twenty patients in the waitingroom. The servant informed him he must wait and take his turn. "Wait!" said Goubaux, "my friend's daughter is dving! The doctor must come with me at once!" "But, sir-" exclaimed the servant. "I know, I am the last. What does that matter? 'The last shall be first', says the Evangelist." Then, turning to the patients, "Is that not so, ladies? Won't you oblige me by letting me go before you?" And, without waiting for a reply, he walked straight up to the door of the doctor's study, opened it, and burst in in the middle of a consultation. "Doctor," he said, addressing Hahnemann, "I know I am acting contrary to your rules, but you must leave all and come along with me. It's for a charming little girl, four years old, who will die if you do not come. You cannot let her die! That's impossible!" And the irresistible charm of his manner prevailed, as it

always does, and one hour afterwards Hahuemann and his wife came with him into our little patient's room.

In the midst of all the troubles that distracted my poor head, racked by pain and want of sleep, I thought I saw one of the queer people of Hoffman's fairy tales enter the room. Short in stature, but stout, and with a firm step, he advanced, wrapped in a fur great-coat, and supported by a thick gold-headed cane. He was about eighty years of age; his head of admirable shape; his hair white and silky, brushed back and carefully curled round his neck; his eyes were dark blue in the centre, with a whitish circle round the pupils; his mouth imperious, the lower lip projecting; his nose aquiline.

When he entered he walked straight up to the cradle, threw a piercing glance at the child, asked for particulars about her disease, never taking his eyes off the patient. Then his cheeks became flushed, the veins of his forehead swelled, and he exclaimed in an angry voice: "Throw out of the window all those drugs and bottles I see there! Carry the cradle out of this room. Change the sheets and the pillows and give her as much water to drink as she likes. They have put a panful of hot coals in her inside! We must first extinguish the fire, and then we will see what can be done."

We hinted that this change of temperature and of linen might be dangerous to her. "What is killing her," he replied impatiently, "is this atmosphere and.

these drugs. Get her into the drawing-room; I will come again in the evening. And mind you give her water! water! water!

He came again that evening; he came again the next day, and began to give his medicines, and each time he only said: "Another day gained!" On the tenth day dangerous symptoms suddenly developed themselves. Her knees become cold. He came at eight o'clock in the evening, and remained for a quarter of an hour beside the bed, apparently a prey to great anxiety. At last, after consultation with his wife, who always accompanied him, he gave us a medicine, with the remark: "Give her this, and notice if between this and one o'clock the pulse gets stronger." At eleven o'clock, while feeling her wrist, I fancied I perceived a slight modification of the pulse. I called to my wife; I called to Goubaux and Schoelcher.

And now see us all feeling the pulse one after the other, looking at the watch, counting the beats, not daring to affirm anything, not daring to rejoice, until, at the expiry of a few minutes, we all four embraced one another—the pulse was certainly stronger! About midnight Chre'tien Uhran came in. He came towards me, and, in an accent of profound conviction, said: "Dear M. Legouve', your daughter is saved!" "She is certainly a little better," I replied, still desponding, "but between that and being cured——" "I tell you she is saved," and, going to the cradle, he kissed the child on her forehead, and took

his departure. Eight days after this the patient was convalescent.

When my daughter was cured I showed Hahne-mann Amaury Duval's delicious drawing. He gazed long and admiringly at this portrait, which represented the little resuscitated girl as she was when he first saw her, when she seemed so near death. He then asked me to give him a pen and he wrote beneath it:—

"Dieu l'a benie et l'a sauvee.
"Samuel Hahnemann."

#### A Valetudinarian in search of a Doctor.

By Dr. C. HERING.

Whilst travelling 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 quarrelled about his disease, and that, consequently, he had employed neither of them or their medicines, but that he had

registered the affair in his book. Then, after finding the disease did not get better, he set out on his travels, resolved, if he could find three doctors who perfectly agreed upon his case without any hesitation, to allow himself to be treated by them, but never by any other. For this purpose he consulted at first all physicians of any reputation, and afterwards others whose names were less known, but having, in spite of all his sufferings, never abandoned his first resolution, and keeping exact account of every consultation in a book for the purpose, he never succeeded in finding any who agreed respecting his case. Accordingly, not having followed the advice of any, he still remained an invalid, but he was still alive. As may well be supposed, the book had cost him a pretty sum of money.

This book had the appearance of a ledger in large folio, and was kept in the form of tables. In the first column were the names of the physicians, amounting to 477; in the second, those of the disease, with the explanations concerning its nature; of these were 313 differing importantly from each other; in the third column were the remedies proposed, these consisted of 832 prescriptions, containing in all 1,097 remedies. The sum total appeared at the end of each page.

He took up a pen and said cooly, "Won't you prescribe something for me?" But having no great inclination to do so, I only asked if Hahnemann was not in his list. With a smile he turned to No. 301.

name of the disease O, remedy prescribed O. "That was the wisest of the lot," he cried, "for he said that the name of the disease did not concern him, and that the name of the remedy did not concern me, but that the cure was the essential point." "But why," I inquired, "did you not allow him to treat you?" "Because," he replied, "he was but one, and I must have three who agree."

I asked him if he were willing to sacrifice some hundred francs for an experiment, in which case I should be able to mention not three but thirty-three physicians living in the neighbourhood, and in countries and parts of the world widely separate, who should all be of one opinion. He expressed his doubts, but at the same time resolved to undertake the trial. We then made out a description of his disease, and when the copies were finished we sent them to thirty-three homeopathic practitioners. He enclosed a louis d'or in each letter, begging each physician to name the remedies which were capable of curing, or at least of alleviating, his disease.

A short time since I received a cask of Rhenish, of the vintage of 1822. "I send you wine of the year 1822", he wrote, "because twenty-two physicians agreed respecting my case. I thereby perceive that there is certainty in some things in this world. I have got various works on the subject in order to gain information upon it, but of about two hundred medicines twenty-two physicians have fixed upon the same remedy. One could not expect more. The

physician nearest me has got me under his care, and I send you the wine that I may not be tempted to drink too much from joy at seeing my health improving from day to day."

### Heinrich Heine and the Sausage.

The great German poet, Heine, being about to travel from Lyons to Paris, was requested by Dr. Noack to convey to their common friend, Dr. David Roth, in Paris, one of those sausages for which Lyons is celebrated. We all know these dainty articles of food, with their brilliant envelope of tinfoil, concealing the dark-coloured, highly-compressed meat, interspersed with little squares of fat and having a soupcon of garlic flavour. The journey in the lumbering diligence (for there were no railways in those days) was long and tedious. Heine was hungry, and he could not resist the temptation to open one end of the metallic covering and cut off a little bit of the succulent meat. This was relished so much that he thought he might just venture on another slice. One slice led to another, and by the time he reached Paris very little of the original sausage remained. This was awkward, for it would seem that he had betrayed his trust, and how could he excuse himself to Dr. Roth for having made away with Dr. Noack's gift, which he had been commissioned to deliver to his friend? But Heine was a man of resources, and he extricated himself from the

dilemma in which his incontinent appetite had placed him in the following ingenious manner. He cut from the stump of the sausage which remained a very thin slice, and enclosed it in a sheet of paper, on which he wrote to the following effect:—

"My DEAR DR. ROTH,—Our friend Dr. Noack entrusted me with a Lyons sausage to deliver to you, with his kind regards. Unfortunately, the pangs of hunger during my long journey to Paris compelled me to eat the sausage, all except the enclosed slice, which I now send you. As Homœopathy teaches you that a very small dose is much more efficacious than a large one, I need make no apology for sending you this minute portion, which you will doubtless appreciate much more highly than the gross substance of the entire sausage."

#### Knave or Fool?

Homeopathy, as is well known, was first practised in this country by Dr. Quin in 1828. Dr. Quin was eminently qualified to be the pioneer of the newsystem. Endowed with great intellectual powers, master of three or four modern languages, and one of the best raconteurs of the day, he was admirably fitted to shine in the best society, to which he obtained ready almission from his position as physician to Prince Leopold, afterwards King of the Belgians. Soon after settling down to practice in London he was invited to dine at the house of a

nobleman, and having been detained by professional engagements he came in late and quietly slipped into his appointed place at table. He was highly amused to find his neighbours on either hand, to whom he was personally unknown, engaged in animated conversation about himself. "Have you heard," said one, "of this new-fangled system that has been introduced by a Dr. Quin? It is said to consist in giving medicines which produce on the healthy diseases to be cured, but in such very small doses as to be absolutely ridiculous." "Why the man must be a fool!" exclaimed the guest on the other side of Dr. Quin, "More knave than fool, I should imagine," replied the other. "Pardon me, gentlemen, for interrupting you," said Dr. Quin, "but I think it right to inform you that I am Dr. Quin." His neighbours stammered out apologies for their inadvertent rudeness, but Dr. Ouin set them at their ease by saying, "No offence, gentlemen; and to show you that I bear no ill-will I shall be happy to take a glass of wine with both of you-with you, sir, in my character of fool, and with you, sir, in my character of knave." The neighbours were greatly relieved to find that Dr. Quin took the incident so good naturedly, and before dinner was ended the charm of Dr. Ouin's conversation quite dispelled their prejudices, and gained their esteem to such a degree that they became not only his friends, but eventually his patients.

### The Spider and the Fly.

The attempt of the Royal College of Physicians to suppress Dr. Quin, and with him the homœopathic system of medicine, is chiefly derived from Dr. Hamilton's Memoir.

Quin's practice increased with such rapidity that it excited the fears of the profession that their craft was in danger, and the medical periodicals denounced him as a quack, an imposter and an ignorant charlatan-both knave and fool, in short. The authorities of the Royal College of Physicians of London, urged by the representations of their members and fellows, resolved to put down this pestilent innovator. Their charter gave them the right to prevent any one practising in the metropolis without first obtaining their license after examination. They had not exercised this right for many years, it had, in fact, become obsolete, but they thought they would resuscitate it to put down Dr. Quin, so they sent him the following letter :-

"We, the Censors of the Royal College of Physicians of London, having received information that you are practising physic within the city of London and seven miles of the same, do hereby admonish you to desist from so doing, until you shall have been duly examined and licensed thereto under the Common Seal of the said College, otherwise it will be the duty of the said College

to proceed against you for the penalties thereby incurred.

THOMAS HERVIE.
WM. MACMICHAEL:
H. H. SOUTHEY.
H. HOLLAND.

College of Physicians, Pall Mall, East. January 4th, 1833.

"The Board for examining persons who have the requisite qualifications, is holden at the College on the first Friday in every month.

"To Dr. Quin."

To this impertment demand Dr. Quin returned no answer. The College, indignant at finding no notice taken of their threats, after waiting for nearly a month. caused their registrar to send another missive to their dilatory correspondent. It was dated February 1st and was couched in the following terms:—

'Sir,—I am desired by the Censors of the Royal College of Physicians to express their surprise that they have received no answer to their letter of January 4th, admonishing you to desist from practising physic until you have been duly examined. The Censors' Board meets for the purpose of examinations on the first Friday in every month.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,
"Dr. Quin." "Francis Hawkins, Registrar.

Dr. Quin had compassion on the Censors, and at his leisure penned the following to their importunity:—

"King Street, St. James's, February 3rd, 1833.

"SIR,—Your letter of the 1st inst. was duly delivered to me yesterday, and I hasten to beg that you will lay before the Censors of the Royal College of Physicians that it was out of no disrespect to them that I did not answer their communication of the 4th ult., but because I did not conceive that a document of the nature sent to me required an answer. I have now the honour to acknowledge its receipt, as well as that of your letter containing a repetition of the information conveyed to me in their communication.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your very obedient, humble servant,

"FREDERIC F. QUIN."

The College of Physicians, knowing very well that their threats of penalties for non-compliance with their preposterous demand were a mere brutum fulmen, ceased to trouble Dr. Quin with their communications and gave up the contest with a considerable loss of dignity.

An incident that occurred in 1851 demonstrates the insincerity of the College in their proposal to examine Dr. Quin for their license. In that year a well-known practitioner of homeeopathy applied to

the College for their license. This was the answer he got:—

"The foundation of the Royal College of Physicians was for the purpose of guaranteeing to the public skilful and safe practitioners. The College of Physicians regard the so-called homeopathists as neither skilful nor safe practitioners. Therefore, the College cannot, without betraying a sacred trust, give its license to persons whom they regard as wholly unworthy of their confidence, and with whom it is not possible they can hold any communion."

Read by the light of the later document it is obvious that the object of the College was not to license but to extinguish Dr. Quin. Fortunately for himself and for homeopathy he did not give them the chance of exercising their "sacred trust."

#### Cured, but not Converted.

A lady who had been suffering for several months from severe diarrhœa for which she had been treated by several eminent and titled physicians, was persuaded to try homœopathy. She sent for a practitioner of this system who was recommended to her. He, after careful examination, took a bottle of veratrum from his pocket case, put a few drops of it into a tumblerful of water, and told the lady to take a dessert spoonful of the mixture every three hours. He was not asked to call again, but after several weeks he met one of the lady's daughters and enquired after the health of his

patient. "Oh," she said, "mamma is quite well: after taking a couple of doses of the medicine you left she never had any more diarrhœa." "Then," said the gratified doctor, "I suppose she is now a convert to homœopathy?" "No, indeed, quite the contrary; she never ceases denouncing it to her friends. She insists that it must be Satanic agency, or a few spoonfuls of tasteless water could not have cured a complaint of three months' duration, which had been treated in vain by the first physicians in London."

## The A B C of Homosopathy.

A lady with a large family of small children employed a physician of the homeopathic school to prescribe for their various ailments. He was always very successful in curing them, but after a while his services were no longer demanded. After several years the physician happened to meet the lady at a party and enquired if she no longer believed in homeopathy, as he had not been called in for such a long time. "I am more firmly convinced than ever of the excellence of homeopathy," she replied. "Then," said he, "I suppose you have some other doctor?" "No, doctor," she replied, "I have still the greatest confidence in you." "Ah, then, vour children have had no illnesses?" "Oh yes, they have had their full share, but I manage to treat t'iem quite well myself. I have one of those nice little boxes of homeopathic medicines arranged

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alphabetically—aconite, bryonia, chamomilla, &c. When any of my children get ill, I begin with A—Aconite—which generally stops the complaint; if not, I proceed to B—Bryonia; if that does no good, I go to C—Chamomilla, resolved, if that does not cure, to send for you. But as yet I have never had occasion to do so, for the worst cases have never held out against all three letters, so that I have had no occasion for your services."

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<sup>\*</sup> Books marked with asterisk are in press.

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