

ALLEN AND LIPPE

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A complete history of Homœopathy will never be written. Ameke, King and Bradford are the three best known of our historians but there are many facts and incidents that do not appear in their pages, some, because they were overlooked, some perhaps, which the author deemed of little importance, but some because they were a discredit to those of our school who were involved or to the good name of Homœopathy itself. Yet there are innumerable incidents, numberless stories in the life of our forebears, that are of extreme interest to us of the present day. They lie buried in the pages of the old periodicals of our school, but they will bear repetition. One, for instance, about Adolph Lippe and how he converted the late Dr. H. C. Allen from a routine prescriber, breaking every rule for correct prescribing, yet an earnest seeker after truth wherever he could find it.

Several years ago, in my ninety monthly contributions to the special department of "Homœopathic Philosophy," in the *Institute Journal*, I sketched the life and accomplishments of some thirty-five of our noted homœopathic physicians, among them Adolph von Lippe and H. C. Allen. I quote from the April number of 1942 :

"Lippe was the son of Count Ludwig and Countess Augusta zur Lippe, scions of an old and illustrious family, whose estate lay near the town of Goerlitz, Prussia. Here Lippe was born on the 11th of May 1812. His parents tried to persuade him to study law, but he had made up his mind to become a homœopathic physician. He received his medical education in Berlin and, shortly after his graduation in 1837, he sailed for America and matriculated in the Allentown Academy, the only homœopathic college then in existence. On July 27th, 1841, he received his diploma from the hand of Constantine Hering. After practicing for a short time in Pottstown, Pa., then in Carlisle, where he distinguished himself by the brilliant cures he made in an epidemic prevailing in the Cumberland Valley, he moved to

Philadelphia where he practised till the time of his death on January 24th, 1888.

Lippe was a staunch and uncompromising champion of strict Hahnemannian homœopathy. To him the *Organon* was the last word in the science and art of healing the sick. In his opinion, homœopathy, as taught by Hahnemann, offered the sole means of cure and was universally applicable in both acute and chronic diseases. All other methods were palliative, vicious and harmful. He minced no words in defending this position and vigorously assailed all who advocated what he termed the "pathologising" of the *materia medica*, those who practised the alternation of remedies or scoffed at high potencies.

As a boy of eleven years of age, I was the bearer of a message to Lippe from my father. The sixty intervening years (now seventy-one) have failed to dim my vivid recollection of the distinguished doctor as he stood reading the note that I had handed him. His keen, piercing eyes, his shock of white hair, high forehead and long, gray beard, are still a clear picture in my memory.

Although Lippe was the author of a few books, the number of his contributions to homœopathic literature is unsurpassed by those of any writer in this field, with the possible exception of Hering. Many of his papers are devoted to the elucidation of homœopathic philosophy; others to the methods and rules of correct homœopathic practice. Still others deal with the finer points of the *materia medica* and reports of clinical cases. A long series entitled "Fatal Errors" appearing chiefly in the *American Homœopathic Observer*, are vigorous polemics aimed at what he considered unhomœopathic opinions and practices that were vitiating homœopathy and causing its gradual downfall. His style was clear and forceful; his argument logical and, at times, irrefutable. If at times he seems dogmatic, it is due to the profoundness of his convictions and, perhaps, to the influence of his early education and Prussian heredity."

The late E. A. Taylor, who was a great admirer of Lippe, presented me with a full set of the *Observer* with the request that I proceed to have all of Lippe's writings published in book form, but the cost of printing and the possibility that the book

would have but few purchasers prevented my fulfilling his ardent desire. Yet the book would have been a veritable gold mine to those who were endeavoring to perfect themselves in the art of prescribing according to the law of similars, for this remarkable man was one of the most accomplished prescribers in the history of our School. He not only possessed a deep knowledge of the materia medica, but a keenness of observation seldom equalled. With uncanny accuracy, he picked out the essential indications of the case, frequently making use of symptoms which seemed trivial or having no evident connection with the patient's ailment. By far the most important of his contributions to Homœopathy are his reports of clinical cases. He was a past master in the art of presenting the essential indications and, what most writers neglect to do, he always tells why he gave the remedy that cured the case.

Allen was, undoubtedly, the most widely known physician of our School from the early nineties till his death in 1909. He was born in Brantford, Ontario, October 2nd, 1836, a descendant of that distinguished family that produced General Ira Allen and his patriotic brother Ethan. He studied medicine in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, and homœopathy at the Cleveland Homœopathic College, graduating in 1861. He served as a surgeon under General Grant in the Civil War, was professor of anatomy in the Cleveland Homœopathic Medical College, and later taught materia medica and clinical medicine at the Hahnemann College of Chicago. From 1880 to 1885 he occupied the chair of materia medica in the Homœopathic Department of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Shortly afterwards, he moved to Chicago. There he organized the Hering Medical College, was its first dean and professor of Materia Medica and Organon, and its moving spirit till the time of his sudden and unexpected death. For many years he was the very efficient editor of the *Medical Advance*. He knew more about the nosodes than any other homœopath and by their means cured many chronic cases when called in consultation, especially where a good prescriber had given other remedies apparently well indicated but was unacquainted with the use of these products of disease. The general opinion that he gave

them empirically was unfounded, as is proved by many of his reports of clinical cases and his posthumous work *Materia Medica of the Nosodes*, in which, as the publisher says, he "placed great store," for it is the most complete compilation on the subject, containing all the symptoms of the provings and the results of Hering's and Swan's experience as well as those of the author.

Allen was widely known as a master prescriber and respected and loved by his students and friends in the profession. He was kindly, genial, tolerant of those who differed with him as to the teachings of the *Organon*, but had the courage of his convictions and never hesitated to point out an error, on the floor at a meeting or in personal conversation, but, unlike Lippe, he did it so graciously that rarely could anyone take offense. So it was that when the International was organized in 1881, he did not resign from the Institute, preferring to continue his active support of the larger body which he joined in 1872, and to fight for what he believed to be the true interpretation of Hahnemann's doctrines. Several others followed his example and their decision undoubtedly paved the way for a better understanding between the members of the two great organizations which is bearing fruit at this day. Undoubtedly such a man would have been successful in the practice of medicine, no matter what school he had adopted. But had it not been for Lippe, Allen never could have attained the stature that was his during the last two decades of his career. We will let him tell his own story. In discussing a paper by C. M. Boger on the repetition of the dose, he says :

"I think we make more mistakes in this than in any other part of the practical art of curing. We frequently fail by a too frequent repetition of the dose. To know when to repeat and how to repeat requires a master's art. Dr. Lippe once made a statement that I thought the most audacious I had ever heard. He said that if he could visit a case of diphtheria the first time, before anybody had had a chance to spoil it, he would generally cure the case with one remedy and often with one dose. I went to Philadelphia to see Dr. Lippe do it. At that time (he does not give the date), I was giving two, three or four remedies at

a time or in alternation. I saw Dr. Lippe clear up serious cases of illness over and over again—in pneumonia, bronchitis and so on, with a single prescription. Not always but very often. The secret is, first to find the remedy and then to know when to repeat and when to refrain from repeating. This is the work that marks the difference between the artist and the bungler. (*I.H.A. Trans.*, 1902.)”

These two great physicians belonged to a race that is gradually passing from the face of the earth. At this day we have many sincere and skillful physicians in our midst, but none quite the equal of Allen and Lippe. Let us emulate them, study their writings, the accounts of their successes and learn how it was that Lippe (and Allen, and Boger, and Hayes) “did it.” Hahnemann, throughout his entire career, was searching for a rational and scientific method for curing the sick. For he said: “God is too merciful to permit his creatures to suffer without providing the remedy.” When his long search was crowned with success, he made this dramatic statement: “THEN DAWNED TO ME THE FIRST RAY OF THAT METHOD OF CURING WHICH WAS TO SOON BRIGHTEN INTO THE MOST SPLENDID DAY!”

—*The Homœopathic Recorder*, Nov., '53

FOUR BAFFLING PROBLEMS

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and happiness depend on factors not all of which can be measured by scientific instruments.”

This is a long way of saying that medicine must remain more of an art than a science and the art of medicine is the study of the individual patient. It is a great advance when so eminent an orthodox medical man as Lord Cohen admits this, but he must not put it forward as a new concept for homœopathy has preached and practised this idea for nearly two hundred years.

—*Homœopathy*, Jan., '58