

Sagar (Abram)



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REVIEW OF PROF. PALMER'S STATEMENT RESPECTING THE
RELATIONS OF HIMSELF AND COLLEAGUES TO
HOMEOPATHY IN THE UNIVERSITY.

ANN ARBOR, Mich., September 20, 1875.

Editors of the Detroit Review of Medicine and Pharmacy:

GENTLEMEN: Under the influence and pressure of the facts recently brought to the notice of the profession through their recognized and legitimate organs, the faculty of the "old school" in the medical department of the University have felt themselves called upon to publish a statement of what they conceive to be the exact state of facts in respect to the degree of their connection with the fragmentary faculty of the college of homeopathy (so called).

It will doubtless have struck you, as well as most other members of our profession, with surprise, that upon a question of purely medical ethics, the faculty should have resorted to the unprofessional expedient of appealing to the laity, thus evidently fearing or distrusting the judgment of their compeers, who alone are competent to weigh the testimony and appreciate the bearing of the facts presented.

It is also a fact of curious interest to the profession that in thus addressing themselves to the laity, they have elected as their organ the *Detroit daily* that has rendered itself prominent as the special advocate of the claims and pretensions of homeopathy, and in denouncing as intolerant and bigoted those who have expressed opinions in opposition to the adopted plan of professional amalgamation.

It is not intended to follow the "statement" of the faculty through their lengthy essay, which, considered as an address to the regular profession, must be regarded as "stale and unprofitable," apparently intended to divert attention from the true questions at issue, by the introduction of a large mass of irrelevant matter, and the display of loyalty on questions not involved in the discussion. We propose to confine ourselves chiefly to the main question, whether the faculty of the "old school," while denouncing homeopathy and its practitioners in the abstract, have not lent themselves to the promulgation of the dogmas and advancement of the interests of homeopathy, by becoming co-educators of a class of homeopathic students, and thus throwing discouragements in the path of the graduates in scientific medicine, and rendering the struggle for existence more arduous and unremunerative.

As preliminary to an examination of the statement of the faculty on this point, we beg leave to offer a few historical data bearing

upon the present attitude and claims of the faculty. As correctly intimated by Dean Palmer, prior to the current year, the medical faculty have hitherto exerted whatever influence they possessed with the Board of Regents and the Legislature to prevent the introduction of homeopathy into the department of medicine and surgery in any form, and especially in such connection with the "old school" as would involve dishonor to themselves, and bring disgrace upon the department with which they were associated. In this they claim to have been actuated by a conscientious regard to what the interests of the profession and humanity demanded, and the success of their efforts depended mainly upon their recognized honesty of purpose, and steadfast but respectful persistence in effort. But, alas! a fatal defection occurred in the ranks of the faculty; a grave change took place in the sentiments of some of its members.

It will be recollected that about the middle of the session of the last Legislature, a bill was introduced into the Senate, drawn up by one of the most prominent homeopathic doctors, asking an appropriation of six thousand dollars for the establishment of a complete college of homeopathy in such city or village of the State, as would contribute most liberally to the expenses involved in such location, Ann Arbor being excepted. In this form the bill passed the Senate with little opposition.

Within a day or two after the introduction of this bill and prior to its passage in the Senate, a meeting of the medical faculty was called by two of the oldest members, at which they proposed that the faculty should intimate a willingness to make some concession to the homeopaths by which they might be allowed to acquire the long sought for connection with the University. This proposition was negatived by the majority of the faculty, chiefly on the ground that the circumstances called for no concession. Near the close of the session, the bill passed the House in a modified form, authorizing the Board of Regents to locate the new school at Ann Arbor. The faculty were again convened, and requested to intimate an acceptance of the act of the Legislature, but hesitated to express any definite opinion. The member of the faculty at whose request the faculty had been convened went immediately to Lansing, to cooperate with a member of the Board of Regents, to procure the passage of some appropriation bills for the hospital and college of dentistry, which, from opposition of the homeopaths, had previously failed. A public announcement was made by a Regent that the board would accept the appropriation and carry out the law. Whereupon the desired appropriations were promptly made, and assurance privately given by the friends of homeopathy in the Legislature that any other appropriation would be made if the medical faculty would cease to offer opposition.

A few weeks later the faculty were convened by the request of Regent Rynd, and his plan of organization of the homeopathic

school was submitted to them. Every member of the teaching faculty but one being present, it received their assent. Thus endorsed by the teaching faculty, it was soon after adopted by the Board of Regents.

The minutes of the board contain not the slightest trace of any dissent on the part of the faculty, not the least intimation of any protest. If the fragment of a faculty, dignified for ulterior purposes by the name of a homeopathic medical college, were in reality as distinct and independent as the faculty of the "old school" now claims, it would not need such a labored defense and apology as is now deemed necessary. Its defense would have inhaled in its constitution, and appeared upon the very face of it. Prior to the last act of the board, through which the plan was carried to its completion by the appointment of the homeopathic professors, the faculty of the "old school" were urged to use their influence with the board to induce them to appoint a full corps of professors, and thus make the homeopathic school, in fact, what it is now merely in name, a separate and independent college, but there is no evidence of any effort in that direction. That such was the intention of the Legislature there seems to be satisfactory evidence. We quote from a letter from a prominent member of that body, who advocated and voted for the bill. "It was the intention to establish a complete school of homeopathy by the bill that passed the Legislature at its last session." And again, "If the Regents do otherwise than contemplated in the bill, they do great injustice to those who voted for it, to yourself, and to the other members of the faculty." And from another member who also voted for it: "The original bills without doubt contemplated six professors with a salary of one thousand dollars each." In the bill, as it finally passed, no essential change was made except in regard to its location at Ann Arbor, and authorizing the Board of Regents to expend the money for the purpose expressed in the act, and for no other purpose. This appropriation was made perpetual. Now, the salaries offered to the newly added professors is 1,800 dollars each, for a term of six months (which is 500 dollars more than any member of the faculty of the "old school" ever received for a single course of lectures) leaving a balance unexpended of 1,400 dollars. The incidental expenses (limited, of course, to the first year) for preparing a suitable lecture room is not estimated to exceed 1,000 dollars, and, shared by the dental school, will doubtless be more than paid by the matriculation fees of the students of the schools of dentistry and homeopathy. Whether the balance is to be distributed among the faculty of the "old school," as responsible authority suggests, or employed for other purposes not connected with the homeopathic college (so called), it is perhaps more appropriate for the authorities of the State to enquire.

Waiving the mention of other historical data for the present, we proceed to examine some of the statements of the faculty in regard

to the relations of the old and the new schools in the department of medicine and surgery. We use the term department advisedly, and in conformity with its use in the "Calender," prepared under the supervision of the president, whose literary accuracy needs no endorsement, as designating a primary division of studies based upon the *nature of the studies* pursued, and in contrast with the loose and vague employment of it in the "statement," in which it is applied indiscriminately to every course of study of whatever grade of subordination. Thus we should have a *department* of urinalysis in the *department* of chemistry, in the *department* of literature, science and the arts.

On the contrary it is well understood that whatever pertains to the subject of law, belongs to the department of law, and whatever pertains to the subject of medicine, whether allopathy, homeopathy, hydropathy, dentistry or eclecticism, pertains by the nature of things, as well as by established literary usage to the department of medicine and surgery; any other use of the term, whether by design or otherwise, leads to confusion in the minds of those not accustomed to the strict and appropriate use of language.

In the "statement" of the faculty, of the twelve pages occupied, less than one is devoted to the consideration of the main points at issue, and to give them the benefit of their own language, we quote from the last number of the *Peninsular Journal*: "The homeopathic college created under an act of the Legislature, essentially different from any acts in regard to homeopathy previously passed, which the faculty had so strenuously opposed, and which the Regents had so constantly declined to carry into effect, is entirely distinct in its organization and name from the 'department of medicine and surgery' (meaning the old school in the medical department). No homeopathic professors, as previous acts provided for, are placed in the medical department (old school), but a separate college established; the two faculties never meet in joint sessions, the lectures are given in separate and distant buildings, the students of each are registered in separate books, under different titles, and are to appear in the catalogue under different headings and in different places. The diplomas to be granted are different in title and character; those of the homeopathic students are to be designated as homeopathic, the names of none of the faculty of the department of medicine (old school) are to go upon them, and of course the names of the faculty of the homeopathic college are not to go upon those of the other department. The faculty of the college of medicine and surgery do not recommend for graduation, and have no responsibility whatever in sending forth homeopathic students, or testifying to their fitness to become members of the medical profession. But the students of the homeopathic college have the *privilege* of receiving instruction in the college of medicine and surgery (old school) on anatomy, chemistry, and all the branches excepting those on 'practice of medicine' and 'materia medica,' and they are to be examined in each

department of study by those who teach them, and are to have their knowledge or want of it in those *departments* certified to. If the student becomes a proficient in chemistry, anatomy, etc., the simple fact is stated, while no intimation is given that he is qualified to practice medicine, or to be a proper associate of medical men."

We have already shown that the *act of the Board of Regents* by which the homeopathic college (so called) was created, had been, previous to its adoption, submitted to the faculty of the "old school," and accepted by them.

In reference to the appointment of one or two homeopathic professors, we beg to say that by no prior act of the Legislature did they assume to dictate to the board any arrangement of the duties of the new professors, any connection with or separation from the school already established in the department of medicine and surgery, but simply that they should be included in and embraced by that department, leaving entirely to the discretion of the board to make such arrangements as might be deemed conducive to the interests of the University. Hence they felt themselves at liberty under the act of 1867, granting conditional aid to the University, to proceed to organize a "school of homeopathy in the department of medicine;" to enact that the lectures should be delivered after the close of the term in the then existing school in the department, and it was at one time suggested that the lectures should be delivered in the chapel of the literary department of the University.

It was never contemplated to require under any previous act of the board, that the students of the "old school" should attend the lectures of the homeopathic professors as a condition of graduation; nor would the homeopathic students have been required to attend the lectures on "practice and materia medica" in the regular school, as an essential condition for a diploma; all this was left to the discretion of the board, yet the medical faculty urged most strenuous objections to the entire plan on the ground that it involved the necessity then, as now, that three-fourths of their corps of instructors should become practically united with the homeopathic professors in qualifying the class of homeopathic students for the degree of homeopathic M. D.

But the teaching faculty insists that "the two faculties never meet in joint sessions, and the lectures are never given in the same building;" they might have added with equal pertinency that the two faculties are not required to ride in the same hack to church, or visit the theater in company. Must the faculty conceal the fact that an essential part of the instruction in the regular school is received in the laboratory, a building removed from the medical college proper? Do they ignore the fact that the chemical lectures to the literary classes have always been delivered remote from the buildings designated as the literary department, and yet has not the chemical professor always been a member of the literary faculty? What puerility.

But again it is claimed that the names of none of the faculty of

the "old school" are to go upon the diplomas of the homeopathic graduates, *nor, of course*, they say, are the names of the homeopathic professors to go upon the diplomas of the graduates of the "old school" in the department. Here it will be observed that it is distinctly asserted by implication, that the names of the faculties of the two schools *do go* on the diplomas of their respective classes. But the Regents, in the ninth section of the homeopathic act, distinctly declare, that "From and after the present University commencement, degrees shall be conferred as provided for by the Regents of the University, but *all diplomas* from every department shall be signed *only by the President and Secretary*, and shall have the corporate seal of the University attached." As we do not intend to charge the faculty with intentional equivocation, or with making an attempt "to palter with us in a double sense," we leave the reconciliation of the discrepancy to the sagacity of your readers.

Hitherto the diploma has been distinctly a certificate of qualification of the graduates, given by the faculty, their teachers, for the joint benefit of themselves and the public. Do not the faculty know that this ninth section of the homeopathic act was expressly designed to shield the majority of the faculty from an humiliating self-conviction of complicity in the education of homeopathic doctors as such? Else, why was it made a part of this act, and evidently made to apply to the other departments to save appearances?

But again, and this is not the least important point in discussion, the faculty assert that the students of the homeopathic college have the *privilege* of attending the lectures in the college of medicine and surgery (the old school) on anatomy, chemistry, surgery, physiology, obstetrics, ophthalmology, and in practical anatomy, in short, on all subjects there taught, except those on "practice and materia medica." Now, in the ordinary use of language, a *privilege* implies the right of acceptance or rejection, but is it so in respect of the requirements of the class of homeopathic students? On referring to the fourth section of the act of the Board of Regents we find the following, viz., "section 4:" "Students entering the homeopathic college *shall receive instruction* in the now existing medical department (old school) in all branches not provided for by the chairs established above" (homeopathic practice, and materia medica).

The significance of the imperative "*shall receive*," which the faculty seem incapable of distinguishing from a mere privilege, will become more impressive by referring to the seventh section of the same act, viz., "section 7:" "Every professor in the medical department (old school) of the University, and also in the homeopathic medical college, shall, upon the completion of the *required course of study*, and upon the students giving the necessary evidence of professional scholarship, furnish such student *with a certificate to that effect*; the Deans of the respective faculties shall report to the President, who shall present such reports to the Board of Regents."

Need anything be more explicit? It is distinctly required of the members of the regular faculty to examine the homeopathic candidate for a diploma, to give him a certificate of standing (or, in other words, his vote) to be presented to the homeopathic Dean, by him to be transmitted to the President, accompanied with a statement of the aggregate vote he has received from his teachers of both faculties, and the standard adopted by them as the criterion of qualifications for graduation, which certificate is merely a dodge to avoid the necessity of using the word "recommend," but is obviously, to all intents and purposes, the same in effect. It is not to be presumed that a body of non-medical gentlemen would assume to pronounce upon the qualifications of medical students without the judgment of their teachers of both schools.

The same examinations are to be made, the same form of certificate of standing to be given by the same teachers to the candidates for graduation of both classes, with the exception of the professors of practice and materia medica. If, therefore, as the faculty affirm, they do not *recommend* the homeopathic student, and are not responsible for *his* graduation, neither do they *recommend*, and are not responsible for the graduation of *the students in the old school*, the same rule of proceeding being applied to both classes. Is it worthy of the dignity of the authorities of a great institution to adopt, and the faculty to apply, such a mere quibble? If further evidence of the necessary and intimate union of the three colleges now constituting the medical department were needed, it could be found frankly admitted in the announcement of the dental college, there being here no reason of concealment. After referring to the legislative act making the necessary appropriations, the faculty go on to say: "The Board of Regents at once took measures to secure the objects contemplated, by making the necessary appointments of professors *besides* those furnished by the medical college, where all students of dentistry (homeopathy) will attend lectures and receive instruction jointly with the medical class." In view, therefore, of the distinct statements in the plan of organization of the homeopathic school, and the necessary consequences that flow from it, it is believed the following tabulated arrangement will exhibit at a glance the degree of fusion of the old and new schools, together with their annual outcomes in the medical department:

CORPS OF TEACHERS, OR FACULTY.

	Prof. of Anatomy.	
	Prof. of Chemistry.	
	Prof. of Physiology.	
	Prof. of Surgery.	
	Prof. of Obstetrics.	
	Prof. of Ophthalmology.	
Prof. Hom. Theory and Practice.		Prof. Reg. Practice of Medicine.
Prof. Hom. Materia Medica.		Prof. Reg. Materia Medica.

OUTCOME.

Homeopathic Graduates.

OUTCOME.

Regular Graduates.

But apparently not satisfied with a discursive statement of the general relations of the regular profession to the homeopaths, and a self-laudatory intimation hardly justified by the experience of the past, that in the "hand to hand contest," looming up on their horizon, their opponents are to be utterly demolished, they seek to lessen the force of the opinions of Prof. Gross in relation to the case before us, by attributing the sober judgments of a highly cultured gentleman of three score years to mere *juvenile impulses*, and making a garbled quotation (perhaps from lapse of memory) give a false coloring to his opinions. We feel ourselves compelled to correct this error by quoting from the letter. Referring to a letter written several years ago to the faculty (the Dean) he writes, "At least one of your colleagues knows my opinion about homeopathy and the disgrace of being connected with a school in which it is taught as a branch of medical education." It would seem, therefore, that the mere impulses of this venerable gentleman must be of a very persistent character. And again, "In this way you will be compelled to mix yourselves up with an organization for which every member of the regular profession has a sovereign and immitigable contempt." The venerable professor will probably pardon this assault upon his reason and judgment in consideration of the patronizing endorsement by the faculty of the the general purity and correctness of his professional sentiments, especially as the disparity in age must add great weight to the endorsement. The faculty are fortunate in procuring the solicited opinions of Prof. A. Flint, Sr., and Dr. Marion Sims, whose views on questions of professional ethics, when based on a correct appreciation of the subject presented, are entitled to very respectful consideration. We have only to suggest that if the letter from the Dean, that drew forth these opinions, was accompanied with such a statement of the case as that the fallacies of which we have endeavoured to expose, we are not surprised at the form in which the replies are given, for if the old and new schools in the department of medicine and surgery are in *reality* as separate as they are in name, and that only, there can be no doubt of the correctness of their opinions; but if, on the other hand, the so-called two faculties are, as we think we have shown, practically but one, then we think the voice of the regular profession will not sustain the distinguished gentlemen whose opinions the faculty have quoted.

And now, while making no appeal on a question of purely medical ethics to the laity, and indulging in no spirit of defiance of the deliberate opinions of our professional brethren, we await their decision, confident that their "sober second thought" will be the mature judgment of a profession conscious of its own rights and honor, and disposed to maintain them,

Very Respectfully,

A. S.

* The bracketed phrases in quotations from the statement are our own.

FURTHER FACTS AND OPINIONS RESPECTING THE SITUATION AT THE MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL.

THE following extracts are given because some of the facts presented are new, and because the opinions, as well as the facts, are presented by one who has had the most abundant opportunity for knowing the exact truth, and has no possible reason for misrepresenting it. The extracts are from a letter published in the *Medical Record*, September 18th, 1875, by Dr. F. H. Gerrish, who for the past two years has occupied the chair of physiology and materia medica in Michigan University. After detailing the historical part of this miserable affair, to the time when the Board of Regents had accepted the money with which to establish a homeopathic medical college, he says:

“Two plans for the details of the expenditure were brought prominently forward. One, proposed by Professor Sager, looked to the establishment of a homeopathic school, on a distinct and independent basis. As has just been stated, the six thousand dollars, and the fees of the homeopathic students, would not cover the expenses of a school with a six months' course and as many teachers as the regular school has; but, by adopting a four months' course, which is the usual period in other homeopathic colleges, it would be entirely within the limits of practicability to appoint a full corps of six professors, and give to each member one thousand dollars, without any disparagement to the new faculty. They would thus avoid inevitable collusions, the strifes and distracting doubts among students and faculties, arising from opposite teachings, and relieve the faculty of the old school of the grave responsibility of employing their talents and experience as teachers, and yielding to their opponents the prestige of an old and well-established regular school, and of thus directly promoting a school of dogmatism, which, in common with nine-tenths of the profession the world over, they believe to be false in principle, and prejudicial to the best interests of humanity.

“This proposition seems to have received little attention and no favor, presumably on account of homeopathic opposition.

“The other plan, and that adopted by the regents, was to establish a homeopathic college, with a faculty consisting of the president of the University as official head, and two professors: one to

teach the theory and practice of medicine, and the other materia medica and therapeutics. The announcement says: 'To instruction in general chemistry, anatomy, organic and applied chemistry, physiology, ophthalmology, otology and practical anatomy, surgery, obstetrics, and diseases of women and children,' the homeopathic students "will attend the lectures on those subjects in the Department of Medicine and Surgery. While in attendance on such lectures, they shall be entitled to all the privileges accorded to students in said department, and shall conform to all requirements of said department, so far as they apply to the branches which they pursue.'

"Thus, since the same professor in the regular school teaches materia medica and physiology, it appears that the homeopathic student will receive instruction from every member of the old faculty, excepting only the professor of practice. They receive the sacred promise of an equal participation in all the facilities afforded by the University, which includes the daily lecture room quizzes of the instructors in the old department. These professors will likewise examine them in the studies of their respective chairs at the end of the course, as they do the regular candidates for the degree, and give certificates of their proficiency, which will be used in determining their fitness to practice medicine homeopathically.

"If this condition of affairs is accurately described by the words of your official correspondent, in the issue of the 24th of July, when he speaks of the schools as 'distinct and independent departments of the University,' then must most intelligent members of our profession learn a new definition of the word 'independent.' It is true that no professional association in faculty meetings is required by this arrangement, as by that law which excited the regents to a twenty years' war with the Legislature; but to what extent are most of the faculty giving less aid and comfort to their old enemy, than if the act of 1873 had been enforced, and they had retained their chairs? If the regular school were to suspend operations altogether, what would become of the new and 'independent' school, with its 'faculty' of two professors and a non-medical figure-head? The answers to these questions will give one an idea of the actual practical relation of the two schools, and the necessary dependence of one upon the other.

"Affairs being in this state, it is a matter of surprise and regret to very many of the most thoughtful men in the profession, that the members of the old faculty should not resign their professorships. Those who know them well, however much deploring their decision, are willing to believe that they retain their places in obedience to a conviction that the present is the worst possible for homeopathy, and will result in its downfall. In contrast with their course, the venerable Dr. Sager, emeritus professor of

obstetrics, gynecology and pædiatrics, who has for years been dean of the medical faculty, believing that the plan adopted compromised the professional honor of the faculty, promptly resigned his office, for which act he has been roundly abused in certain quarters, and as cordially applauded by most of those who have appreciated the precise situation. Professor Gross, in a letter to Professor Sager, commending his determined attitude, remarks that, in his opinion, 'the American Medical Association and all our colleges would unquestionably place the medical department of your University under the ban, and cease to recognize your pupils.' While some may hesitate to subscribe wholly to this view, few, if any, will deny that it is the duty of the profession to sternly rebuke the government of the University for its action in this wretched business, and to display their disapprobation by warning students against a school whose diploma has been so depreciated, that winning it cannot be esteemed a rational object of ambition, and which has a faculty, 'two-thirds of whose members,' as that grand old scholar and gentlemen, Dr. Sager, tersely puts it, 'are silent partners in a homeopathic firm of teachers.'

The following extract, from the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, September 9th, 1875, is of interest to some of our readers, as indicating the tide of thought which, in some quarters, is arising respecting the policy at the medical school of Michigan University:

"The disturbance caused by the 'inflation policy' of the Legislature of Michigan, in forcing a so-called homeopathic department into the regular school, has reached the correspondence stage, so that we may hope the end is at hand. The only advantage to be hoped for from the letters, is that the profession may be stirred up to take a firm position in the matter. Nothing is to be gained by temporizing; if the faculty does not appreciate that no compromise with quackery is possible, they will find out their error when it may be too late to repair it. * * * * *

"This affair, let it end as it may, is of great importance, as it points to a moral that the profession at large should profit by. Some years ago a ring endeavored, happily without success, to establish a national university under government control, and we occasionally hear suggestions of State boards to confer licenses to practice. Let it be understood, once for all, that professional honor is too precious to be made one of the prizes of political contests. The theory, as well as the practical working of our political system, forbids us to consider government as a kind parent in whom we may trust. On the contrary, it can be kept pure only by the strongest and most persistent efforts, and a moment's inattention may give the intriguer years of advantage. A Legislature may be respectable one year, and the reverse the

next, or if not the next, yet sooner or later; and it would be as futile as unbecoming for us to pit ourselves against the quack in lobbying and bribing. Professional affairs are safe only in professional hands. Let us keep them there."

The following extract from the Boston Herald and Transcript, Annual September 21st, 1875, is of interest to some of our readers as indicating the line of thought which in those quarters is being pursued respecting the policy of the medical school of Michigan University:

"The financial crisis caused by the inflation policy of the Legislature of Michigan in forcing a so-called permanent reorganization into the existing school has reached the desperate point where we are now, and the end is at hand. The only advantage to be gained by the present policy is that the present policy is being carried up to take a position in the market. Nothing is to be gained by comparing it to the faculty does not appreciate that no comparison with property is possible, they will find out for themselves it may be too late to repair it.

"This alliance at the end as it may be of great importance as it points to a point that the profession at large will probably some years ago a fine endorsement, happily which always to establish a national university under government control, and we occasionally suggest of state boards to be organized to be organized. It is to be understood that for all the professional labor is too heavy to be made one of the present political conditions. The theory as yet is the present condition of our political system, looking to the government as a hindrance in what we may trust. On the contrary, it can be said that only the effort and most respectable efforts, and a national institution may give the integrity of the profession. A legislative body be respectable one part, and the reverse the