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GENERAL INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

FIRST SESSION

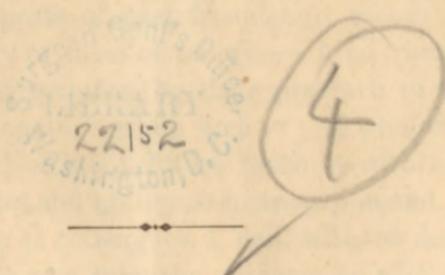
OF THE

Hahnemann Medical College,

OF

PHILADELPHIA.

BY RICHARD KOCH, M. D.,
PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY, &c.



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СВЯТОГО СИОНОВСТВА ПЛЕБИЦКО

GENERAL INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO THE FIRST SESSION OF THE

Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia.

BY RICHARD KOCH, M. D.,

PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY, &c.

GENTLEMEN OF THE MEDICAL CLASS:

In the name of the Faculty of the Hahnemann Medical College, I bid you a hearty welcome to these halls. Those of you in whose faces we notice the impress of past friendship; whose features are yet fresh in the memory of most of us, whose kind remembrance of their former teachers is manifest by their presence to day, I greet with a "welcome back again;" while such of you who are still strangers to us, and who call on your future teachers with a firm confidence in their willingness and ability to instruct you and to raise you gradually to their circle as colleagues, I hail, with no less sincerity, "be welcome." May he who rules the universe be with us and bless your endeavors to attain that knowledge of medical sciences, which is so necessary to, and inseparable from your future success as physicians; may He send his aid to your teachers in their exertion to place you upon the platform of truth, to elevate you to the rank of scientific men, and to make you what we all ought to be, *liberal* and *free thinking*, but TRUE "Homœopathic physicians."

You, I know, are striving for these attainments, and we, I am convinced, will leave nothing undone to aid you in your efforts. But in order to attain these ends, you must throw off all prejudice, relieve yourselves of false impressions, place confidence in your instructors, and then, with a clear head and a hearty will, grasp the TRUTH of Homœopathy, and you will anchor your ship in a safe harbor, from whence you may then sail, without further aid, to such ports as your

own independent judgment, your free opinion and your liberated thoughts will direct.

Gentlemen, it is not my purpose to refer historically or otherwise, to the manner in which Homœopathic training has been conducted in this city; but as our School claims, by the transfer of the majority of its faculty from an older institution to this one, the appreciation of succession, allow me to link that chain.

When the graduating class of last spring and some of the members of the present class met for the last time in the session, the valedictorian, Prof. J. C. Morgan, impressed upon you the following words: "It is your duty, as Homœopaths, to earnestly cultivate all branches of our one healing art. Surgery, aside from its merely mechanical department, has no future save in Homœopathy. For physiology and pathology also, I hazard nothing in saying, there exists no truly philosophical future but in the channels to which Homœopathy invites, and points the way."

And again, at a meeting held but a few days before the one above mentioned, where the members of the "Hahnemann Medical Institute" bade each other farewell, the able graduate of the class, Dr. Augustine Thompson, of Maine, concluded the farewell address thus: "High on the virgin white of our starry banner, write:

"LIBERTY, PROGRESS, SCIENCE."

Let these three weighty words be the subject of a full consideration, and let us see how intimately they are related, and what bearing the one has on the other.

I. *Liberty*.—When Washington and his brave army, by their patriotism and endurance, won the freedom and the political rights of the American people, the consequence was the privilege of self-government, *which remains to this day*; when various reformers agitated the disputed and much abused rites and practices of religious bodies, the result was a liberty of conscience, *the salutary effects of which upon morals are yet visible*; when Kepler, Newton, Humboldt, and that host of savants revolutionized the erroneous sophistries of the dark ages, past prejudice perished, the world advanced into the glorious light of philosophical *freedom*, and became the play-ground for scientific research, *and is so yet*; lastly, when a *Hahnemann* for the first time promulgated those truths, so much cherished by all of us, the chains which bound medical men to the aphorisms of a Galen

and others were broken, past empiricism was forgotten, and medical treatment received an impulse of progress, the effect of which is daily more and more apparent in the evident advance in all schools and creeds towards the abolition of poisonous doses, blood-letting, blisters, cauteries and other barbarisms. *Medical Freedom* then commenced! Has it continued?

I am sorry to be obliged to state that the tendency of medical slavery is again to throw its bands around liberty of thought, around freedom of judgment, around honest convictions and experience. This evil spirit of bondage is stealing itself into our ranks by two separate paths; first, from the ranks of our open opponents, the Allopathic profession; and second, from our own ranks.

The former is not dangerous and can be met openly, easily and decisively, provided we are truly prepared. In what does that necessary preparation consist? Gentlemen, in nothing else but a thorough medical education, and sound scientific attainments. Be assured that, whenever you are able to stand before your opponent, equal to him on any question in medicine; whenever you can meet him face to face and say, "I am your equal in learning, come and prove your point," then he will not dare to throw out his wanton insinuations to injure you, nor will he feel safe in ridiculing you. But his lance will tell terribly on the ignorant, on the uneducated, on the *quack*. We hope, gentlemen of this medical class, that you will once dare to meet such opponents, and that you will not be intimidated nor enslaved by them.

Now we come to meet the evil spirit approaching by the other path; the more dangerous one, because his base of operations is in our own ranks, and, therefore of a treacherous, faithless character. What! Bondage in the ranks of Homœopathy! Are we to be told that because we do not think as we are told to think, because we do not blindly believe what we are ordered to believe, that we are not Homœopaths? And this too by a Homœopath, to an admirer of Hahnemann, who, in spite of persecution, ridicule and hatred, stood up before the world and *dared* to act the champion of reform, who exclaimed to his antagonists that they were slaves to prejudice! All this is preposterous! To force the profession to a blindfold belief, by threats of excommunication, can only be thought of by those who fear an open investigation, who are not equal to others in research, in short, who are not able to convince. Excommunication is a shallow argument.

All disputed, unsettled and doubtful points in any science must be left to the free judgment and mature deliberation of every one. If we only believe what our former teachers inculcated and do not advance in medicine, we fall back to the days of darkness, from which a Harvey, a Sydenham, a Hahnemann emerged. I will go even further than this and say, upon my own responsibility, that, although the aim of your present teachers will be to impart to you the theories and truths of medical science, and the purity of Homœopathy to the best of their knowledge, belief and experience, yet far be it from their thoughts to compel you to adopt all blindly. No! After you have been educated here, we want you to criticize, to progress, to discover. It is for such purposes, and not for a stand-still, that we propose to give a thorough medical instruction.

II. This brings us to the second part of our theme: *Progress*. It is of course unnecessary to impress upon you, that we live in a century of Progress, not only in arts and sciences generally, but also in the art and science of medicine. And I ask again, who broke the chain of charlatany in medicine at the end of the last century? Let me answer by an altered quotation from Cowley :

From these and all long errors of the way,
In which our wandering predecessors went,
And like the old Hebrews, many years did stray
In deserts but of small extent,
Hahnemann led us forth at last.
The barren wilderness he passed ;
Did on the very border stand
Of the blest promised land,
And from the mountain-top of his exalted wit,
Saw it himself and showed us it.

Yes, Hahnemann showed us the promised land, where the science and art of medicine approaches perfection; he smoothed the path for us to reach it; he, with his indefatigable industry and courage, hinted to us the truth of Homœopathy, and also, mark me, what Homœopathy is yet to be. Does that mean indolence? Does it mean a stand-still? Did he wish us to remain where he began, on the border of the promised land? No, never! If his spirit could speak to us with living tongue, he would exclaim: advance, progress and add to the magazine which I have collected for you.

But if our mind is influenced and bound by men who profess to be pure Homœopaths, because they do not go beyond what Hahnemann

said, we will never approach perfection. If we reflect on such a doctrine, we must come to the inevitable conclusion that its source is either indolence or ignorance. It is time to turn a cold shoulder to such a profession, and to stand upon the only true basis of true Homœopathy, "Liberty, Progress, Science."

It has been argued, that by making progressive efforts, we are apt to theorize on the explanations of the Homœopathic law, and that we fall thereby into heresy. There is no such danger; simply because all our practical experience has bound us too strongly to our faith. Should, therefore, a theory in the path of progress enter our field and fail in practice, it will die its own death; should it, however, be confirmed by it, see what we have gained—a new proof of truth. I believe in adopting the law "*similia similibus curantur*," not only as a proposition sanctioned by experience, but also as a truth confirmed by scientific investigations. These investigations have been attempted by Dr. v. Grauvogl and others, but succeeded only in part to the satisfaction of the profession. The field is, therefore, open yet; open for you, gentlemen. It is not sufficient for a liberated, progressive man to say, "*I believe in Homœopathy;*" he ought to be able to say, "*I know Homœopathy, and, therefore, think it good.*" This glorious point might have been reached long ago, but for an opposition by some, based upon the hypocritical plea of such a step being *un-Hahnemannian*. Hahnemann was progressive, but they are decidedly retrogressive. We should have reform and not revolution; we should preserve the old and add the new.

But to come to the last part of my address to you.

III. Science. Can we think freely on disputed points, or can we progress in the truths we advocate, without the knowledge of the necessary accessory sciences upon which Homœopathy is based? Can there be any answer but a negative one? Although it has been publicly and privately advanced by some again and again, that Anatomy, Chemistry, Physiology and Pathology were not *necessary* accomplishments of a Homœopathic physician, and that any man could be a successful practitioner, provided he only knew our *Materia Medica*, I will fearlessly take ground against such a position, and try to convince you of the absurdity of such an assertion. I have never met a person yet, advocating indifference in regard to collateral medical sciences, who did not lack that accomplishment himself. Gentlemen, it is one of the failings of mankind always to begrudge in others what they have not themselves, and I can fully comprehend why an igno-

rant man battles against the advantages of attainment which another possesses.

In the opinion of your teachers, the full understanding of the following branches of medicine is absolutely necessary for a medical education, viz.: Anatomy, Chemistry and Chemical Physics, Physiology, Materia Medica, Toxicology, Pathology, with a full knowledge of Diagnosis, Surgery and Midwifery, together with the respective clinical instructions. Besides these, we think the comprehension of Homoeopathic Pharmacy, of Hygiene, of Botany, of the use and practical results of the Microscope and Medical Jurisprudence as scarcely less important. It shall therefore be our aim to impart them all to you.

Anatomy being the foundation of all medical knowledge, is probably the most important, especially to a first-year student. Without it none of the other branches can be either learned or understood. You cannot appreciate the chemical composition of bone or any other tissue, if you do not understand its physical construction. You cannot follow your preceptor in his explanations of the acts of digestion, absorption, assimilation, circulation, secretion, excretion, calorification, procreation and nervous action, all branches of Physiology, if you are ignorant of the location and form of the digestive apparatus, the glands, the heart and arteries, the generative organs, and the brain and spinal cord. So in Materia Medica, it would be impossible for you to value, or undervalue, or compare a symptom, if you did not know whether it is near the pyloric or cardiac orifice of the stomach, or whether it is in the pharynx or the larynx. Without Anatomy you cannot be a pathologist, because you might be tempted to percuss the heart over the side where the liver is situated, or to diagnose an aneurism of the subclavian artery for a bronchocele. That, in order to practice Surgery, Anatomy is essential, must be self-evident; no fracture can be treated, nor the smallest operation performed properly without having the form, situation and structure of the part under the command of memory. Not even Midwifery can be practiced without it, as the whole mechanism of labor is based upon the anatomical construction of the pelvis, the uterus and the foetus; or, how is it possible to tell a flexion or descent of the uterus or a congenital hernia of an infant without understanding the topography of the parts.

In connection with this word "topography" let me urge you not to neglect that branch of anatomy commonly called practical, often surgical and sometimes topographical anatomy. A thorough com-

prehension of it can only be acquired in the dissecting-room and during the lectures on that branch. The opportunity you have to enter into that department fully, is this year better than ever before. The knowledge of descriptive anatomy only, without being acquainted with the regions of the human body, does not qualify you for surgeons. Topographical or surgical anatomy is special anatomy practically applied.

Chemistry is hardly of less importance to the practitioner than Anatomy. Organic as well as inorganic Chemistry are, together with Anatomy, the bases of Physiology, and the interchange of gases and fluids, during the various processes of digestion, absorption and elimination, are a dead-letter to a non-chemist. Cantharides has, as one of its symptoms, coagulated, albumen-like urine; in proving it, how do you know that it is only albumen-like, and not albumen, if you do not know the chemical test for the latter? How would you find out, whether a discharge, when produced by a remedy, while proving it, is acid or alkaline, bloody or whether it contains pus, without the aid of chemistry or the microscope? Is it possible to prove a remedy at all, without the knowledge of the collateral sciences, including chemistry? Not only in *materia medica*, but also in the other practical branches are the proficiency in chemistry and the use of the microscope essential. Diabetes melitus can only be positively proven by a chemical test for sugar, only confirmed by the microscopic spermatozoids, Bright's disease by the search for pus, some lesions of the Liver by the chemical test for biliverdin in the excretions, internal and external Cancers, all Tumors, Tuberculosis, internal hemorrhages, and a multitude of other pathological states can often be definitely confirmed only by the above means.

Let us now examine the importance of *Physiology*, the science which gives life to Anatomy, practical utility to Chemistry, and is the pedestal of all other medical science. It is at the present time conceded that the science of life cannot be divided, and that the varying phenomena of health and disease are governed by the same laws. In this way our general views of disease have been much simplified. We examine now the conditions of disease just as we study the other vital processes, mainly by the assistance of physical, chemical, microscopical, and other experimental means.

It must be plain to all, that a thorough proving of a drug, to be relied upon, cannot be undertaken by any one, who, acting as supervisor, has no idea of the functions of man during health. Take some symptoms of any of our remedies, and suppose it has a frequent, hard

pulse, how can you judge, if you are unacquainted with the number and strength of beats in health, or the physiology of the heart's contraction ; or suppose there is *retarded or diminished menstruation*, how do you know, without being able to represent to yourselves the quantity excreted in health, and the period when the flow is expected ; or how can you detect the symptom of an *increased flow of urine*, when you are not aware that from 40 to 48 ounces is the normal quantity, and that this changes according to the season ? Upon the same principle, increase or decrease of respirations, coughing, vomiting, the various abnormal ejecta, the flowing of tears, the healing of wounds and fractures ; in short all pathological states are founded upon Physiology, and, as a symptom of a remedy is a pathological state, all provings are based upon Physiology, and the Homœopathic Materia Medica is a nullity without it. We can never recognize the symptom of a drug as pathological, without being able to say with certainty, *that it is not physiological*. I wish to lay an emphasis on this last phrase, because physiological symptoms have entered the reports of provings as pathological more than once, and particularly lately.

I wish also to draw your attention to the importance which the knowledge of that branch of physiology known as Histology, or minute anatomy of the tissues and cells, bears to the human organism. It is the anatomical structure as well as the physiological functions of these cells and tissues, which plays so weighty—perhaps the first—*role* in all pathological changes. If this is so, must it not be of great import for general practical medicine, and especially for the Homœopathic Materia Medica, to understand the direct and indirect relation which the drugs may have to the different tissues, so as to enable us, after proving them on the healthy, and applying them to the sick, to give to the law of "similia similibus curantur," in practice as well as in theory, that firm basis which will forever prevent its overthrow ?

If we do not understand an organ in its structure and function, how can we presume, when it is diseased, to have brought it back to its normal condition, without being obliged to admit that we did so blindly, accidentally, and that we were quite ignorant of how we did it ? Where is the difference here between the physician and the quack ?

One word yet on the necessity of being a *pathologist*, and of the value of *diagnosis*. The old and true, but much abused saying, that in Homœopathy we do not strive to cure the disease, but the symp-

toms of the patient, has not been generally accepted in the sense it was intended, but so construed that any one might, can, and usually does turn and twist it to suit himself. A pathological state is manifest to us by the symptoms expressed in the subject under treatment, and if a name is given to those symptoms, it is not for the purpose of selecting a remedy according to the name, but to express the pathological state of the patient; and just as the name of a disease classifies the latter in pathology, so do the symptoms of that disease classify also the remedies, out of which we have to select the proper one, according to its modalities, or, if you please, according to the characteristic expression which the disease shows in the individual. In short, pathology and diagnosis teach us: 1. To individualize the disease; 2. To individualize the character of the disease according to constitutionality and disposition of the subject; 3. To individualize the remedy.

I would also like to foreshadow to you the fact, that you will find a thorough knowledge of pathology and diagnosis a valuable aid in *remembering* the numerous symptoms of a vast number of remedies, because you cannot help connecting the symptoms of drugs with those of disease, and by remembering the latter, you grasp at once many symptoms of the former, and therefrom individualize your case.

But not only for scientific reasons, and for your success in treatment, is it necessary to have a full understanding of diagnosis; your financial success will also depend upon it. Many of you will begin your medical career in the country, or in a small town, where no Homœopathic physician is established; where, perhaps, you will have to contend with a number of Allopaths, some of whom may have received a good instruction in all the branches of medicine. It will be your lot to establish Homœopathy in such a place, which you will not be able to do, in the face of your opponents, if you cannot enter the field fully armed, that is, clad in science. Your lack of this is the only weak point of which your antagonists can take advantage in their action against you, and only then can they wield their weapon. The first question usually put to a physician by the friends or relatives of the sick, after having examined his patient, is: "What ails him, Doctor?" Woe to you if you diagnose a consumption of the lungs as bronchitis, or say the asthmatic attack comes from emphysema, when it is due to a disease of the liver; and should you ever pronounce an inoffensive preputial "herpes" "chancre," the best course for you to pursue is, to pack up your potencies, leave the place, and try somewhere else, or else take another course of

lectures in a good institution. The charlatan alone, but no *honest* man can succeed without science.

Medical literature is, at the present time, made up almost exclusively of auxiliary sciences, so that, in order to study medicine as one science, the collaterals cannot be avoided. When we listen to clinical instruction it is certainly, to say the least, some gratification to be able to look at the disease, according to circumstances, from an anatomical, or chemical, or pathological, or therapeutic stand-point; and if we can embody them all connectedly in the diseased subject before us, we can flatter ourselves to rank among respectable physicians.

It occurs, unfortunately but too often, that a student of medicine, after having heard but one course of lectures, and then practising upon the strength of his faint acquirements, becomes, in consequence of pecuniary successes, and sometimes satisfactory cures, possessed with the unfortunate idea that his slight attainments are sufficient for his future welfare. This seems so, because a young practitioner does not appreciate the word welfare in its proper meaning. Blinded, either by financial or by unusual, and often accidental medical success, avarice and vanity seize him, and for a time, but only for a short time, he imagines to have attained his object, and his final aim—"welfare." But remorse soon follows; dissatisfaction with himself enters his soul; he sees his ignorance compared with others; and when that terrible dilemma occurs, where at the bedside of a fellow creature, over whose life and death he has the charge, he finds his resources exhausted, exhausted on account of his limited attainments, then his conscience-stricken self condemns him, and remorse is *too late*. The true welfare of a physician lies in self-contentedness—his misery in self-accusation.

Now is the time for you to learn. Day by day do those who are obliged to spend their life's force and energy in a toilsome and exhausting practice, find it impossible to review even what they have once learned, or to read medical works, in order to progress with the world. Once in practice, close examination and careful study cease, and what you do not learn now, is in future hardly attainable. But if a good ground-work is now built, studies can be continued with comparatively less toil afterwards, and although the language of medicine is ever changing and is particularly now assuming another appearance, the old principles learned once are ever available.

The more the century advances in years, the more will be

required of a scientific physician. He must advance with the century. How can he, if he feels himself *not free* from prejudice or *enslaved* by unworthy criticism, if he has no *love for progress*, if he has received no *scientific education?* These three inseparable qualifications are necessary for a man to be a useful instrument in the great end, which not only the medical profession, but the whole of mankind are striving for, namely, "truth." Without love for truth, the student is a parrot and the teacher a charlatan. Upon truth depends progress, upon falsehood and imposition the quack.

Gentlemen, I do not believe to assume too much, in saying, that the graduates of this College will not fall into such errors. Let me give you the assurance, in the name of the faculty, that it will be their lasting endeavor to educate you scientifically, and be convinced that their aim is, to give you the advantage of instruction, with equal zeal in *all* branches, and to leave nothing undone, to make you proud of your profession. The only evidence of your appreciation of these endeavors which we ask, is *industry*. If *you*, as students, and *we*, as teachers, co-operate harmoniously, my brightest hopes will be realized. This College will then rise as a bright *star* in Homœopathy, and you, gentlemen, will be its *satellites*.

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