Enloe (J. E.)

"HONORABLE MEDICINE"

AND

HOMŒOPATHY.

Bind cover in front

A defense of individual freedom in the study and practice of Medicine.

By THOMAS E. ENLOE, M. D.,
NASHVILLE, TENN.

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"To follow foolish precedents, and wink
With both our eyes, is easier than to think."—COWPER.

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AND

HOMŒOPATHY.

In the August number of the Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery, owned by William T. Briggs, M.D., and edited by William K. Bowling, M. D., assisted by the proprietor, appeared the following notice:

"DR. ENLOE.

THE MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATING CLASS OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE, OF 1874, WILL REGRET TO KNOW THAT DR. ENLOE, A CO-GRADUATE, HAS ABANDONED THE FLAG OF HONORABLE MEDICINE, AND EMBRACED HOMŒOPATHY."

The terms of this notice, assuming for the mode of practice which the editors of the Journal follow the title "honorable medicine," and imputing to Homœopathy a character and a title *not honorable*, I appear before the profession and the public in vindication of my right to study and practice medicine in any direction and to any extent, prompted by the discoveries of the age and endorsed by satisfactory success, and in defense of the proposition, that no school or system of medicine can be considered *honorable* that is not tolerant, enlightened, progressive, and above all, successful.

In the study of medicine I did not consider it my duty to accept the teachings of the faculty, represented by the editors of the Nashville Journal, as the *ne plus ultra* of medical learning; as constituting all that a man should know who assumes the grave responsibilities of a physician and surgeon among the people.

I went on with my studies after having received their diploma, in which it was certified and attested by their signatures and the great seal of the University, that I was duly qualified to practice Medicine and Surgery in all their departments.

Having made the acquaintance of an eminent practitioner of Homœopathy, J. P. Dake, M. D., of this city, of whose success I had heard much, I endeavored through him to inquire into the merits of Homœopathy.

Finding him to be a man of broad culture, a graduate of one of the best classical and scientific colleges in the land, and thoroughly educated in medicine, Allopathic and Homœopathic, I asked him to tell me something of the new mode of practice.

He first handed me a copy of the transactions of "The Homœopathic Medical Society, of the State of Pennsylvania, for 1873," a fine volume of three hundred and thirty-two pages, made up of medical and scientific papers and discussions, saying, "you can see what Homœopathy is doing in one of our States."

Afterward he handed me "The Transactions of the American Institutue of Homœopathy, for 1873," saying, "here you can see what we are doing in a National way—in the oldest National Medical Society in America."

I looked over the papers bearing upon Materia Medica, Practice, Surgery, Obstetrics, Gynecology, etc., etc., making up a volume of nearly eight hundred pages.

He then pointed to the shelves of his library, saying, "here you can see what we are doing from month to month—here are nine monthly Journals of Homœopathy, and three quarterlies, as you will find, bearing upon every branch of the healing art."

He showed me a list of eight or nine Homœopathic Colleges, teaching all the branches taught in other regularly organized Medical Schools in this country, in the oldest of which, that in Philadelphia, he had himself occupied the chair of Materia Medica, in the years 1855, 1856 and 1857.

He showed me eight or nine different Text Books on Materia Medica, some of them very large volumes, several works on Practice, Surgery, Obstetrics, Diseases of Women and of Children, in fact, a large library of books setting forth the Homœopathic mode of practice in its various applications.

He explained to me the nature and bearings of the Homœopathic principle or law, how it had reference merely to special Therapeutics, where medicines or other agents were employed to make a specific impression upon vital parts, that in the end should prove curative. That it had its own sphere, distinct from and co-ordinate with those of chemical, mechanical or strictly physiological or hygienic laws.

He showed, what I had often times observed, the entire absence of any general Therapeutic principle in the common or old school mode of medical practice, the want of harmony and constant contradictions in its remedial measures, the ignorance of Materia Medica among its practitioners, and the sad and too often fatal results of their blind and reckless administrations among the sick.

In the books he handed me I discovered the lines of order and beauties of system, under a general Therapeutic

law, rising up out of the chaos of medicine as taught me in the lecture room and in the text books of the old school.

I saw that a general law had been discovered, its application tested over and over again in various diseases—in various countries and with constant success.

Coming out of the darkness where but the dim tapers of experience or the less reliable will-o-the-wisps of transient theories guide in the selection and use of weapons against disease, it was one of the happiest experiences of my life to walk in the clear sunlight of a law, fixed and unfailing, telling me ever—*to select the remedy capable of producing by large doses in the well, affections similar to those I would cure, with small doses in the sick.*

I saw that under the pointings of that law belladonna had cured scarlet fever; camphor, veratrum and cuprum had cured Asiatic cholera; nux vomica had cured paralysis; colocynth had cured dysentery; Peruvian bark had cured chills and fever; and so on through the whole list of most formidable diseases, the remedies most successful I found to have been acting in obedience to the Homœopathic law—*similia similibus curantur.*

Authentic comparative statistics I found favorable to Homœopathy. The General Board of Health, of Edinburgh and Leith report the total number of cases of cholera treated from October 4, 1848 to February 1, 1849 as follows:

	CASES.	DEATHS.	PER CENT.
Homœopathic,.....	234	57	24
Allopathic,.....	581	489	84

In six Homœopathic hospitals with 1,248 cases of cholera, there were 336 deaths, making 27 per cent.

In nine Allopathic hospitals, with 3,899 cases of cholera, there were 2,089 deaths, the per cent. being 54.

But the most remarkable success in the treatment of cholera was by Dr. Dake, of this city, in the summer of 1873. Out of sixty-two cases treated by him he lost but one.

I have seen a list of the cases, giving name, sex and age of each patient.

One fact, the Doctor says, may account for this unusual success, not especially due to the remedies employed, namely: that nearly all his patients were in white families, where the nursing and general care was of the most enlightened and faithful character.

In yellow fever, statistics are quite as favorable to Homœopathy, and so also in other diseases, which I can not here mention in detail.

With such evidences before me, I was not so blinded by prejudice that I could not see the truth, nor so afraid of my old teachers and associates that I dared not act up to my convictions.

Holding on to all that I had learned from them, I have added to the stock, and propose to go on adding to it, all that may in any way better enable me to discharge the duties of a faithful physician.

If, for my belief in the Homœopathic law, and my use of remedies under its direction, I am to be characterized as an adherent of *dishonorable medicine* by the Nashville Journal, and if I am to be refused professional recognition and aid, under any circumstances, by my old colleagues, acting under the "trades union," self-promoting and heresy-stopping rules of the American Medical Association, and its subordinate branches, I can only say, "so mote it be."

If, because I choose to select remedies for my patients upon a different principle, and to administer smaller doses than they, I am to be branded as an "ignoramus and quack"

by my old associates, I shall not cease to go forward in the way I have chosen, that pursued by such worthy predecessors as Dr. Eugene R. Smith, and Dr. William C. Dake, both graduates of the Medical Department of the University of Nashville, and both now successfully practicing under the Homœopathic "flag" in this city.

I shall exercise the privileges of a freeman in every sense of the word, defending myself when required against attacks from whatever source and in whatever form they may come, leaving the results for the judgment of an intelligent people who are not bound hand and foot by a low and sordid medical bigotry, characteristic of too many within the pale of "honorable medicine."

In closing, I will mention that my treason to the "flag," which the Nashville Journal says I have "abandened," is but in keeping with the sentiments expressed by some of the wisest and most experienced old school physicians in this and other countries.

Boerhave wrote: "If we compare the good which half a dozen true disciples of Æsculapius have done since their art began, with the evil which the immense number of doctors have inflicted upon mankind, we must be satisfied that it would have been infinitely better if medical men had never existed."

Pereira, the great writer on Allopathic Materia Medica, says: "We can hardly refuse our assent to the observations of the late Sir Gilbert Blane, that in many cases the patients get well in spite of the means employed, and sometimes, when the practitioner fancies he has made a great cure, we may fairly assume the patient to have had a happy escape."

Sir Astley Cooper said: "The science of medicine is founded on conjecture and improved by murder."

Sir John Forbes wrote: "In a considerable proportion of diseases it would fare as well, or better, with patients, in the actual condition of the medical art as more generally practiced, if all remedies, at least all active remedies, especially drugs, were abandoned."

Dr. Rush, the great American physician and scholar, wrote: "We have assisted in multiplying diseases, we have done more, we have increased their mortality."

Bichat, the great French writer, says: "An incoherent assemblage of incoherent opinions it is perhaps, of all the physiological sciences, that which best shows the caprice of the human mind. What do I say? *It is not a science for a methodical mind.* It is a shapeless assemblage of inexact ideas, of observations often puerile, of deceptive remedies, and of formulæ as fantastically conceived as they are tediously arranged."

Dr. Good asserts: "The science of medicine is a barbarous jargon, and the effects of our medicines on the human system are in the highest degree uncertain, except indeed, that they have already destroyed more lives than war, pestilence and famine combined."

Such was Allopathy, or "honorable medicine," in the generation or two before us, and such it is yet.

Who would be proud in standing beneath the deceptive folds of its flag?

On the other hand, the statistics which I have quoted, and the rapid rise and the increasing growth of Homœopathy, in no place and at no time going backward; meeting and conquering the most formidable ailments "that human flesh is heir to" in a manner unparalleled in the annals of medicine; sought after and employed by the most intelligent and thoughtful people in the most enlightened parts of the earth; practiced by men in every way equal and in

some respects much superior to the majority of physicians; unproscriptive, tolerant, progressive, and highly successful, Homœopathy floats a flag bearing at once the true insignia of medical science, and hope to the dwellings of the sick.

Under the folds of such a "flag," however characterized by the journals and faculties of what assumes to be "honorable medicine," I stand with pride.

My dear Dr.

I find that Mr. Bidwell has moved & the Museum part of N. Y. but I will obtain his address and send your letter. Even if he cannot get you the specimens you

that he can send
you such descriptions
as may be useful.
In the meanwhile I
will send a cart-
load of bitter-weed
in my wet clothes
Frank – tell Sarah
to go to Norah some
time on Monday and

get it for you. She knows where
work is. Sister Ellen asked me
don't send her love to her future
father-in-law if she was here.

Ever truly yours

I should send the drawing back to
you if I knew it, but unfortunately
when I saw the drawing in Mr.
Caldwell's book I did not take any
pains to notice it. It is in Rome
now I believe.