

Address (An)

An Address

TO THE

FRIENDS OF HOMŒOPATHY

IN NEW YORK,

FROM

THE TRUSTEES OF THE

NEW YORK HOMŒOPATHIC DISPENSARY

ASSOCIATION.

IN CERTIS, UNITAS; IN DUBIIS, LIBERTAS; IN OMNIBUS, CHARITAS.



New York:

WM. C. BRYANT & CO., PRINTERS, 18 NASSAU ST., N. Y.

1852.

New York Homeopathic Dispensary Association.

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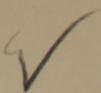
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JOHN T. S. SMITH, 488 Broadway.



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ADDRESS.

Few reforms which the world has witnessed have had to encounter an opposition so powerful in all its various elements, as that against which Homœopathy has thus far happily prevailed.

In the incidents of its origin and progress, it bears a striking resemblance to older doctrines now universally accepted; and the inference can hardly be deemed unreasonable which declares that it has proved, like them, unconquerable, because, like them, it is true.

But truth does not triumph, except by means of fit agents; and thus the history of homœopathy also presents a record of earnest self-devotion, constancy, and energy, in those who have labored for its diffusion, which shows that many of the followers of Hahnemann have not only embraced his doctrines, but have profited in no small degree by his personal example.

Nor will the thoughtful enquirer, while considering the progress of the system, in all parts of the civilized world, and who marks it everywhere gathering around itself many enlightened and truth-loving minds, fail to note, amongst the causes of its success, one which forms a remarkable feature of this contest of opinion.

He will perceive how rarely homœopaths have forgotten, even in the heat of controversy, and under all

the provocation offered by unsparing calumny and bitter invective, what is due to the dignity of science or becoming in those who step forward as expounders of a great truth. And while he gives due honor to the skill and energy of homœopathic physicians, and to the zeal of the lay adherents of the system, generally; he will not fail to recognize the influence which the calm, respectful and earnest tone, characteristic of the works of its most able advocates, has exercised on the public mind.

The contemplation of what has thus far been accomplished is indeed calculated to awaken lively feelings of gratitude in the minds of all who have intelligently embraced the doctrine of our Great Medical Reformer. And not only feelings of passive thankfulness, for in proportion as the lesson thus taught is rightly apprehended, will gratitude rise above a mere effervescent and barren emotion and become an exalted and powerful motive to emulate labors so blessed in their fruits.

The Trustees of the New York Homœopathic Dispensary Association have observed, with deep interest and satisfaction, the rapid progress which the system has made in the estimation of their fellow citizens, during the past three or four years; and they venture to believe that this circumstance is in some degree owing to the establishment of a Homœopathic Dispensary, which has not only rendered important services to the cause of humanity, but has enabled the Board from time to time to publish interesting and valuable statistics, in proof of the efficacy of the homœopathic mode of treatment.

The Board, however, have long perceived, that the time was fast approaching when such an institution

must fail to satisfy the more varied and urgent wants of a larger constituency ; and when it would become their pleasing duty to propose to the supporters of the Dispensary, and other friends, such a change in its constitution as should impart to it somewhat of the character of a Hospital or Infirmary.

Believing this period to have at length arrived, and desirous to proceed with due caution in bringing the question to a practical issue, the Board appointed a Committee of their body, early in June last, to consider the whole matter carefully, and to suggest the course of action which should appear most likely to further the object contemplated.

The following is the Report of the Committee, excepting only the practical recommendations contained in its third section, which it is deemed unnecessary to give in detail, as they have reference, solely, to the action of the Board. In expressing their cordial concurrence in the sentiments and conclusions put forth in this Report, the Board have to invite for them the earnest consideration of the friends they now address.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

NEW YORK, JUNE 14, 1852.

The Committee of the Trustees of the New York Homœopathic Dispensary Association, to whom have been referred certain suggestions for establishing a Homœopathic Hospital in this City, have much pleasure in submitting to the Board of Trustees, their following unanimous

REPORT.

Your Committee have carefully considered the important subject referred to them, with a view to determine,

- 1st. The reasons which render the establishment of a Homœopathic Hospital especially desirable.
- 2d. The practicability of establishing such an institution in this city.
- 3d. The measures which, supposing the project to be feasible, would be most likely to promote its speedy and complete realization.

In entering upon the first part of their enquiry, your Committee may be permitted a passing allusion to the existing Dispensary, in order to record the deep sense they entertain of the benefits which, by the blessing

of God, that Institution has been the means of conferring on many hundreds of the poor of this city.

Far, however, from considering that the friends of Homœopathy should regard the happy results thus achieved, as filling up the measure of their hopes and aims,—your Committee can only look upon them as an encouragement to higher efforts; and while thankfully remembering what has been done, they earnestly direct attention to the fact, that much yet remains to be done, not only to place Homœopathy on an equal footing before the public, with the medical systems it appears destined to supersede, but to develop and diffuse the full measure of benefit with which it is fraught.

To all earnest Homœopaths, who regard the doctrine of Hahnemann not as a toy with which they may blamelessly trifle, but as the expression of a law of nature,—of a truth, the diffusion of which must powerfully promote the material well-being of society at large,—the project of a Hospital, as a means to this end, must offer the strongest claims to support. It is easily shown, of such an Institution, that it would extend the sphere of our beneficent system to cases which lie beyond the limits of Dispensary practice: that it would supply the only evidence of its kind which cautious men of science will admit to be unquestionable; and that it would afford to medical students facilities for investigation, and for acquiring experience in Homœopathic practice, not otherwise attainable. Thus while possessing claims upon the benevolent superior to those of a Dispensary, by reason of its greater resources for alleviating suffering; a Hospital commends itself to the attention of the farsighted philanthropist by the influence it is calculated

to exert upon opponents of the medical profession, and through them on the healthy advancement of Homœopathy. Another consideration lying beyond these, is the moral effect which the very establishment of such an Institution would have on the public mind. It would be seen that the advocates of Homœopathy, with the boldness which ever characterizes a strong faith, do not shrink from the severest test to which their system can be subjected; that they do not confine themselves to ingenious speculations or well constructed theories, or rely on evidence liable to be disputed, but are content to peril their cause in a fair comparison with rival systems, and to appeal to tangible facts open to the most searching scrutiny. To the timid measures of a wavering faith, earnest thoughtful men do not give heed. Where they see an earnestness and a steadfastness like their own at work, their sympathies are strongly enlisted. It is well to reflect on the influence of a Hospital in carrying conviction to the minds of such as these; who by natural rank, and not by adventitious titles, are the leaders and guides of public opinion.

In concluding this part of their Report, your Committee have only to add their conviction, that the establishment of a Homœopathic Hospital is an object worthy of the most strenuous exertions of the friends of the system in this city.

Your Committee now proceed to submit their views on the second point of inquiry, namely, the practicability of such a project at the present time;—and they take this opportunity to acknowledge the important assistance they have derived from information laid before them regarding one of the two Homœopathic Hospitals, founded about two years ago in the English capital.

Allowing for certain differences of social constitution and condition between the two cities of London and New York,—which, however, rather seem to affect some of the details of the question, than to influence a general view of comparative advantages and difficulties,—it is impossible for your Committee to reflect on the results which the energy and prudence of our English friends have achieved, without drawing very great encouragement in weighing the possible issue of similar proceedings here.

Your Committee have no means of ascertaining with exactness the relative numbers of lay homœopathists in London and New York; nor can they determine with accuracy the difference in wealth and influence between the two constituencies. They are, however, credibly informed, that at the time the two Homœopathic Hospitals, now existing and thriving in London, were founded, the number of medical practitioners of the system, in that city, was not more than one-third of the number of Homœopathic practitioners at this time in New York: and the inference that the present constituency in the latter city is at least *as large* as that which existed in the former, at the period referred to, seems therefore a very safe one. Your Committee are also assured, that the London Hospitals owe their existence and support, and are practically under the direction and management of persons engaged in professional and mercantile pursuits; derive comparatively little advantage from the aristocratic patronage, of which, according to Old World usages, they partake in common with similar institutions; and receive no aid whatever from any national or municipal fund.

Your Committee annex to their Report some interesting and valuable statistics, extracted from the pub-

lished reports of the London Homœopathic Hospital for the years ending respectively 31st March, 1851, and 31st March, 1852. It will be perceived, on reference to these returns, that in both years a considerable balance of cash remained for investment, after providing for the necessary expenditure ; a circumstance your Committee are assured, is owing as much to the rigid but not niggardly economy observed, as to any other cause. A scrutiny of the items, shows, indeed, that they could not be adopted as absolute data for the guidance of those who seek to establish a similar Hospital here ; as a whole, however, the inference they afford is encouraging, especially as they are said to fall far short of the lowest estimates formed, when the proposition to found a Hospital was first agitated in London. To the medical reports of cases it is not necessary to allude, as they speak satisfactorily for themselves.

After a careful consideration of the foregoing facts, and in view of the rapid progress of Homœopathy in New York during the past few years, your Committee cannot hesitate to express their strong belief that a bold and earnest appeal to the friends of the cause in this city, seconded by a well organized plan for obtaining contributions, would be attended by complete success.

But in thus affirming the practicability of establishing a Hospital, your Committee desire to state explicitly, and to avoid the possibility of misconstruction, that they contemplate, at the commencement, an institution of no greater pretensions in kind and capacity, than those to which they have adverted as examples, viz : the two Hospitals in London. A substantial house, in an airy and convenient situation, and capable of accom-

modating from 25 to 30 patients, would fully answer their immediate expectations.

Your Committee proceed finally to state the measures which they would recommend to be immediately taken in order to realize the project in view with the least possible delay.

[Here follows a series of recommendations, which, as they have special relation to the proceedings of the Board, it is not necessary to particularize.]

In framing the foregoing suggestions, your Committee have endeavored to avoid entering into premature details:—They have confined themselves to the preliminary measures which they feel might advantageously be adopted. With a few brief words they now close their Report. As the subject under consideration has become more familiar, the momentous issues involved in it have been brought more distinctly into view, and the sense of its importance has commensurately increased. Under this impression your Committee venture to hope that their Report will be the initiatory step in a movement which will proceed henceforth with increasing energy, and know no pause until its purpose be fully accomplished.

Signed on behalf of the Committee :

JON. STURGES, *Chairman.*

Appendix to the preceding Report.

LONDON HOMŒOPATHIC HOSPITAL.

Statement for the year ending 31st March, 1851.

| RECEIPTS. | | EXPENDITURE. |
|--------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Annual Subscriptions, | *\$2950 | Fittings, Furniture, Opening |
| Donations, | 5460 | Hospital, &c., |
| Interest on Investments, | 35 | \$2420 |
| | | House Expenses, |
| | | 1120 |
| | | Stationery, Printing, &c., |
| | | 430 |
| | | Advertising, |
| | | 200 |
| | | Rent, Taxes, &c., |
| | | 580 |
| | | Salaries, Wages, &c., |
| | | 740 |
| | | Dispensary, including Medical |
| | | Apparatus, |
| | | 140 |
| | | Invested in Stock, |
| | | 2400 |
| | | Cash in hand, |
| | | 415 |
| | | 2815 |
| | \$8445 | \$8445 |

[*The £ stg. has been converted into Dollars for the sake of a more ready appreciation of the figures.]

| IN-PATIENTS. | | OUT-PATIENTS. |
|----------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| Received, | 156 | Registered, |
| Cured, | 97 | 1547 |
| Relieved, | 29 | Cured, |
| Deaths, | 6 | 554 |
| Quitted prematurely, | 3 | Relieved, |
| Discharged, | 1 | 407 |
| Under treatment, | 20 | Apparently incurable, |
| | — 156 | 13 |
| | | Admitted in-patients, |
| | | 25 |
| | | Died, |
| | | 3 |
| | | Result unknown, |
| | | 10 |
| | | Ceased to attend, |
| | | 178 |
| | | Under treatment, |
| | | 357 |
| | | 1547 |

Statement for the year ending 31st March, 1852.

| RECEIPTS. | | EXPENDITURE. | |
|------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance of cash, | \$ 415 | Furniture, Fixtures and Repairs, | \$480 |
| Donation and Annl. Subs., | 6300 | House Expenses, | 1650 |
| Ladies' Penny Subn. Society, | 590 | Stationery, Printing and Advertising, | 445 |
| Interest on Stock, | 90 | Rent, Taxes, &c., | 860 |
| | | Salaries, Wages, &c., | 990 |
| | | Coals and Gas, | 230 |
| | | Dispensary Expenses, | 95 |
| | | Public Dinner—contingent expenses, | 220 |
| | | | <hr/> |
| | | | \$4970 |
| | | For investment, | 2425 |
| | | | <hr/> |
| | <hr/> | | \$7395 |
| | \$7395 | | |

| IN-PATIENTS. | | OUT-PATIENTS. | |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| Received, | 213 | Registered, | 3008 |
| Cured, | 128 | Cured, | 682 |
| Relieved, | 52 | Relieved, | 1437 |
| Died, | 7 | Results unknown, | 465 |
| Dismissed for Irregularities, | 7 | Adm'd In-Patients, | 16 |
| Discharged unaltered, | 4 | Died, | 2 |
| Under treatment, | 15 | Unaltered, | 14 |
| | <hr/> | Under treatment, | 392 |
| | 213 | | <hr/> |
| | | | 3008 |

It will be clearly understood, after the perusal of the foregoing Report, that the project contemplated, and which it is the purpose of this address to submit to the friends of Homœopathy in this city, is, the conversion of the New York Homœopathic Dispensary into a Hospital, on the limited scale of the two Hospitals now in successful operation in London; retaining, however, the present provision for the treatment of out-Patients. It is also contemplated that the government of the new Institution, regarded as a development of the existing Dispensary, shall devolve on the Board of Trustees of the Dispensary Association, and their duly elected successors.

To attain the object in view, it is proposed :—

- 1st. That a collection be set on foot, amongst the friends of Homœopathy in New York, to raise funds in donations and annual subscriptions, for the establishment and support of the projected Hospital.
- 2d. That all sums, so collected, be paid to the New York Life and Trust Company, to the joint account of B. R. WINTHROP, JONATHAN STURGES, and THOMAS DENNY, ESQs., Trustees of the New York Homœopathic Hospital Fund; there to accumulate until a sum shall have been raised, sufficient to justify the Board of Trustees in proceeding to realise the wishes of the subscribers.
- 3d. That a suitable house be ultimately hired, capable of accommodating from 25 to 30 patients, with their needful attendants, and that it be furnished with a strict regard to economy as well as convenience.

It is proper to add, that a committee has been appointed to draw up a code of Rules and Regulations for the proposed Hospital: these, when they shall have passed under the revision of the Board, will be published for the information of the subscribers.

Having thus put their project before the public, and explained the grounds on which they believe it to be entitled to the support of the Homœopathists of New York, the Board of Trustees have little more to add, beyond the announcement that donations and subscriptions will be gladly received on its account by all the members of their body, and also by the medical officers of the Dispensary, whose names and addresses, with those of the Trustees, are given in the list facing the title page. It is their hope that the numerous friends of the cause in this city will manifest their sympathy with the present movement by a cordial and active co-operation with its promoters: remembering that where many are engaged in bringing about a single result, the labor of individuals is proportionately light. If each, as it has been well observed, will collect from all who may be willing to give, any sum, however small, the aggregate collection, with the larger contributions that may be confidently expected, will constitute a fund amply sufficient to give birth to the undertaking. Once in operation the Institution will doubtless assert its own claims to public support, by means of the facts it will speedily accumulate.

But, in making this suggestion, the Board desire to be understood as in no way recommending a mode of solicitation which implies that any personal favor is asked or conferred;—such a course would neither accord with the dignity of the cause advocated, nor with the motives of advocates who have no private interest

at stake in the issue. It is desirable that what is bestowed should be of the nature of free-will offerings, owing much to the good will and nothing to the weakness of the donors.

“In conclusion,” to quote the language of a great philanthropist “it only remains to urge upon those who recognize the doctrine, the responsibility which that recognition involves. It is not enough that they should use the truth and congratulate themselves on the personal advantages they derive from it. It would never have reached them but for the labors of others, and these they are bound in turn to take up, so that the light which has been freely bestowed upon them may be as freely communicated to their fellows. It is a common thing for persons to dream of the good they would do, if they had but the ‘opportunity;’ but opportunity always lies at our feet, if we had but the will to see it. At all events, let those who recognize Homœopathy never trust to the plea that the means of usefulness have been denied to them. They must reflect that a great Truth has been given to them in charge; that this truth is not destined to perish; and that if those who have been called to carry it forward falter in their task, the opportunity now their own will be snatched from them and given to others. If they avail themselves of its benefits, and deny it before the world, or coldly withhold acknowledgment of their belief, they will doubtless find their reward in the consciousness that they have maintained their popularity, and discreetly sacrificed the future to the present. As slaves of opinion, however, it is their fate, unfortunately never to know rest; they must shift their course with its shifting tides, and always be on the watch, lest at one time they commit themselves by denying, and at

another, by acknowledging too much. While, on the other hand, he who relies upon truth, regardless of all else, occupies the same position when it becomes universally admitted, as he filled when it was universally contemned. He has, moreover, the consciousness of a task fulfilled; and, looking back at the close of life, to the time when the doctrine it was his privilege to receive was first struggling into view, and tracing it in its gradual extension over the earth, he is able to ask himself, with a glad certainty of the reply, ‘What has been my portion in this great work?’”

Signed on behalf of the Board,

B. R. WINTHROP,

President.

New York, Aug. 31, 1852.



NOTE.—Those friends to the cause who may be willing to aid the present movement, by privately collecting the voluntary contributions of their friends and acquaintance, are requested to pay the amounts so received, from time to time, to one of the Trustees of the Dispensary Association, accompanied on each occasion by a memorandum of the names of the contributors. A list of donations and subscriptions received will in due time be published.

