

Appendix A

What Is Homeopathy, and What Are the Possibilities and Duties of Its Practice?*

By P. P. Wells

North American Journal of Homoeopathy 1878-1879; 27: 90-104.

Phineas Parkhurst Wells (1808-1891) was a third-generation physician who became one of the greatest teachers of Hahnemannian homeopathy. He was second to Lippe for being the most influential, reliable and knowledgeable Hahnemannian. He was also known to be an avid reader and to have a remarkable memory. He began practicing medicine as an allopath in 1833 and practiced most of his life in Brooklyn, New York. He was also known to be a very hard worker. When he began studying medicine under the guidance of an established physician, it was reported that it was his custom to rise at 4 o'clock every morning to study diligently until 12, "stopping only for a light breakfast."[†]

In 1841, he became interested in homeopathy and gave up his allopathic practice. As he wanted to study homeopathy, and the Allentown Academy had closed its doors in August 1841, he visited Hering in Philadelphia with a letter in hand from William Wesselhoeft, one of the Academy's founders. "When Hering found out what he wanted, he turned the key in his office door, refusing to see any more patients that day, and talked and talked and talked continuously until four o'clock next morning, giving forth all the time the most valuable information and just such as he wanted."[‡] Hering recommended that Wells first learn German to access all the original works of Hahnemann, as most had not yet been translated. Wells was already well-versed in languages, as during his medical studies, he had studied Latin, Greek and French, becoming fluent in French. Wells used Hahnemann's *Organon*, *Materia Medica Pura* and *Chronic Diseases* in their German version until the end of his career.

In 1859, he visited Boenninghausen in Munster. Boenninghausen took his case, as his friend Carroll Dunham had been unsuccessful in the

* The first part of this paper was written during the discussion of homeopathy in the winter of 1877-1878 in the New York Daily Times. It was offered to the Times for publication and rejected. Like the papers published in that discussion, it was written for the general rather than professional reader. [This footnote accompanied this article.]

[†] R. K. Valentine. In memoriam. *Medical Advance* 1892; 28: 227-230.

[‡] Ibid.

treatment of his mentor. “Boenninghausen took them, wrote out a long list of drugs, then another short, and another still shorter, until finally one remedy was left, and this was accordingly given with the most happy result in a short space of time.”*

Wells was a founder of the American Institute of Homoeopathy in 1844 and the International Hahnemannian Association in 1880, of which he was its first president. After a masterly analysis of the principles of homeopathic philosophy, he gave in his presidential address the keynote of the success of his life: “What, then, are the members of this Association to do, the results of which shall justify their existence as an associated body? We know of, but one thing, and that is *work*—earnest, honest, incessant work.”†

Toward the end of the 1886 IHA meeting that was held in Saratoga, New York, and as Wells was getting ready to leave, the then president H. C. Allen said: “Dr. Wells, on behalf of the Association, I tender you our sincere thanks for your attendance and for your words of instruction and counsel.” Wells responded with these very kind words, “I have hardly words, Mr. President, to express my gratification at the approval of yourself and our associates, and the more because I am quite impressed with the probability that this is the last meeting of our Association that I shall ever attend. The probabilities are before you assemble again, I shall be called up higher. I was not in favor originally of the formation of this Association. I thought my mission was rather in the old Institute which I helped to create and thought that there I should strive to bring it into a state of life and truthful activity from which it has departed, but I have changed my mind. I have given my whole interest and affection to this Association, and if I am never permitted to meet with you again, I would like to leave with those who survive me my testimony once and forever to the truth of the law that governs our Association, which has our utmost confidence, and to urge the Association if I am gone, to spare no effort, to count no exertion too much, which shall extend the confidence we have in our law and which shall increase our influence to induce others to come into active support of our truth. I thank you, Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen, for your kindness.”‡

At the 1890 IHA meeting in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, his good friend Bernhardt Fincke said, “I saw Dr. Wells yesterday and brought a message which he requested me to present: ‘Give my love to the International Hahnemannian Association as a body, and to every individual member. Tell them that the IHA is, at the present time, the stronghold of true and pure homeopathy and that upon every member

* Ibid.

† Edmund J. Lee. In memoriam—P.P. Wells, M.D. *Homoeopathic Physician* 1891; 11:444-448.

‡ P. P. Wells. Discussion. *Proceedings of the International Hahnemannian Association* 1886: 17.

individually rests the responsibility of making it and keeping it what it is. For the working members are the organs of that body, which without there would be a mere frame or skeleton not amounting to anything. They must sacrifice some of their personal interest and attend the meetings, not only for a day or two, but for the whole time, if they mean to make the organization strong and a true representative of Hahnemannian homeopathy, following it up on logical lines. Should the IHA fail to come up to the trust confided to it, a whole generation may pass before a new effort can be made, for homeopathy can never be annihilated because it is the exponent of God's truth in medicine. Therefore beware and cling to the good cause dear to us all. Give my love especially to the president,* not because he does not know that I love him, but because he knows it. Brooklyn, June 23, 1890.' ”†

He was known by some of his colleagues as the “Old Giant.” He was always ready to help the younger practitioners, for whom he was considered their “truest and best friend.” To tell the importance he took in some of the younger generations of homeopaths, Edward Rushmore called P. P. Wells “Our father in medicine.”‡

Like Lippe, Wells wrote extensively on all aspects of homeopathy. He labored not only for himself but for the whole profession. Edmund J. Lee, Lippe's close student, said, “And no writer in all the field of homeopathic literature has written better, more forcibly, or more consistently than he, for during all those years Dr. Wells taught true homeopathy.”§

For many years in different quarters, there was a wish to assemble all his writings, as Lee wrote, “It is to be hoped that the most useful of them may yet be gathered together in book form for permanent keeping. Our school possesses no such essays from any other pen and hence cannot afford to allow these to be neglected and lost.”** For a long time, I cherished putting Wells' writings together, which will likely happen after the publication of the Lippe's books.

When he died, Edmund J. Lee, the former editor of the *Homoeopathic Physician*, said, “Another, almost the last, of the able men known as the “old guard,” has left our ranks for good, and none can point out his successor! For it is not overstating the truth to assert that no homeopath, since Hahnemann, has done more to teach the true

* In 1890, Joseph A. Biegler, the son of Augustus P. Biegler, was the president of the IHA. Biegler, the father, had studied directly under Hahnemann in Paris and later established Hahnemannian homeopathy in the central part of New York State, particularly in Rochester.

† P. P. Wells. A message. *Proceedings of the International Hahnemannian Association* 1890: 18.

‡ Edward Rushmore. Report of delegates. *Proceedings of the International Hahnemannian Association* 1890: 17.

§ Edmund J. Lee. In memoriam—P.P. Wells, M.D. *Homoeopathic Physician* 1891; 11:444-448.

** Ibid.

principles of homeopathy than did our venerable friend and teacher, P. P. Wells. The object of his teaching was rather to inculcate correct doctrine than to teach the *materia medica*, as did Hering and Lippe. He believed, and correctly too, that each practitioner should be taught how to study and apply the *materia medica* rather than to be taught the *materia medica* itself or its application to any special cases. No worthier or abler follower of Hahnemann has yet honored the ranks of the homeopathic school.”*

The object of this paper will be to answer these questions. The attempt can hardly be untimely when we are told effort is being made in England, under the leadership of one in a high official position, to virtually abandon what this word [homeopathy] represents, and when we have the approval of this effort by some in this country, who claim to be “familiar with the homeopathic system of medicine.” It cannot be impertinent to inquire what it is these gentlemen would have us give up. It can hardly be uninteresting if we can succeed in giving a clear and correct statement of what “this” is, which for more than half a century has been made an object of ridicule and misrepresentation, and faith in and practice of, which has been deemed a sufficient reason for heaping on men, otherwise intelligent and upright, obloquy without stint [very strong public criticism expressed feely].

Then it cannot fail to be of interest to know definitely what “this” is, which, notwithstanding the combined opposition of the entire medical profession as it existed when homeopathy was first proclaimed and which has been continued to the present time, has yet had steady growth in the numbers of its adherents, and in the confidence given to it by men educated in the sciences which belong especially to the medical profession, and also by the general public all over the civilized world, who have witnessed and experienced its benefits. That it still lives and flourishes is a fact. That it lives is solely because the truth could not be killed by the weapons so freely and unscrupulously used against it. It is certain no lie could have withstood them. What is this which lives and flourishes today, after enduring for more than half a century so great opposition and abuse?

Homeopathy is simply one of Nature’s laws, enacted and made a part of the condition of man’s existence when he was created subject to pain and sickness. It is the law of the relationship between man’s pains and sicknesses and the agents by which these are to be relieved and cured. It being one of the natural laws, it must have had the same origin as other natural laws, and its operations must be as uniform and reliable as those of other laws. The object of this law is, given a sick man, to enable himself or another to find with certainty that agent which will cure him. That the finding of this boon [what is beneficial] may not be

* Ibid.

left in the darkness of guessing and blundering but be guided by the clear light of law.

So then this which doctors have opposed, skeptics rejected, wits [a person of superior intellect] and fools have ridiculed, is nothing less or other than the *law of specifics*. That which Sydenham, more than a century ago, recognized as the great need of his profession, the knowledge of specifics, and its great duty, to find them out, this law shows the way to that knowledge and the guide in the performance of this duty. There was in Sydenham's idea of specific medicine a radical defect. He contemplated specifics for classes of diseases, as for pneumonia as a class, for dysentery, rheumatism, and the like, which, in the nature of things, is impossible. The law does not lead to this, but to a knowledge of the specific for each individual case of these or other classes of diseases as it is present to be cured. So then the practice of homeopathy is ever and always the finding of the specific for the case now to be cured. And this finding is to be repeated in every succeeding case, individually, to the end of time, though the thousands of succeeding cases may be called by the same name. This is homeopathy, and this is its practice.

The law declares that the agent which produces in the living organism phenomena most like those of the natural disease to be the specific curative of that disease. The finding and administering of that which is most similar is the practice of homeopathy, not the giving of pellets or pills, large or small, of high or low potency, or of no potency at all. A man may be a graduate of a homeopathic college and put "Homeopath" on his sign and business card, procure his medicines of Smith or Tafel, give them in high or low potency or in the crude form, and never make a homeopathic prescription, but by accident, in his life. This is not the finding of that most similar agent, which alone constitutes the prescription homeopathic. All short of this, claiming for itself to represent this law is simply a practical false pretense.

If this be a true statement of what homeopathy is, it must be evident that in order to practice it, there must be such a knowledge of the effects of the agents employed on the organism as will enable the prescriber to know which is most similar when he finds it. But this necessitates ascertaining beforehand what are the effects of each agent to be employed in the treatment of the sick. The sum of the knowledge of these, as already ascertained by giving drug agents to persons in health and observing and recording the results that followed, constitutes the homeopathic materia medica. Only in this way could the requisite knowledge of them be obtained.

Then, having this knowledge and being about to use it for the cure of the sick, in accordance with this law, it is equally evident that, but *one agent* can be given at the *same time*. We do not forget that this has recently been declared "vague, valueless and unscientific." Vague, it certainly is not. Nothing can be more explicit. Unscientific, it cannot be if it is a necessity to obey one of Nature's laws. So, neither can it be valueless. Let us see how this is. The law requires that the agent be found

and given which, in its effects on the organism, presents the greatest resemblance to the facts of the disease to be cured. Now, as there are no two agents in the record of the materia medica that have been found to produce identical effects on the healthy, it follows there cannot be *two* that are most like the disease in these effects. Therefore, giving two agents at the same time is giving at least one, which is not *most like*, and therefore, giving it is an infraction of the law and, therefore, is unscientific. Now, in view of this law and its administration as presented here, what is there that should call forth the opposition of the medical profession? Why should it attach opprobrium [public disgrace] and reproach to its adherents?

But the opponent may say, perhaps, it is not the law to which we object but the methods of its administration recommended by its promulgator and, notably, his dose. Here it is. Now we have come to it, and it must be confessed that the *a priori* argument here is in favor of the objector. It is no doubt true that when the dose recommended by Hahnemann is first suggested to any intelligent mind, it will seem absurd in the extreme. This is quite natural; it is so at variance with all previous experience and education as to doses of medicines. Where one has been accustomed to many grains of a drug as a dose and to receive this from prescribers in whose wisdom and knowledge he has had confidence, the idea of the very small fraction of a grain of the same drug, as recommended by Hahnemann, being more curative than those grains, will hardly be well received. The case is worse still with the doctor. He has given the many grains and thinks he knows all about it. The small fraction disgusts him. The marvel is, at the outset, how any reasonable man can have greater confidence in the fraction than in the whole. And then, of all things, in this very small fraction! It is impossible there can be any result from it. So, the writer of this paragraph has thought and talked. This being so, how could it come to pass that intelligent men should ever openly approve and practice this absurdity of Hahnemann's [energetic] dose? How could Hahnemann himself, for he was both intelligent and learned?

We reply: the dose in the case of the master was not the result of any theory imagined and elaborated in his study; it was not the child of theory at all, in any degree, in part or whole. The dose was imposed on him by the necessities of his practical experience. He began, after the discovery of the law of cure, with the same large doses he had been giving before, and he found that such doses of medicines, which in their effects were like the facts of the disease under treatment, were followed by increase suffering and danger to the patient. The necessity for the small dose then came from the *patient*, not from his doctor. The dose was diminished, and yet this undesirable result followed, and this was repeated till that degree of reduction was reached, which made the reception of the dose of the similar medicine no longer resulting in an increase in the patient's suffering. When this point was gained, he found and was astonished when he found, that the curative power of the dose so reduced was greater than that of the larger which he had been

compelled to abandon. The small dose was a necessity. Its greater curative power was a discovery. Both are facts and not imagination, as some have supposed.

In the case of the followers of Hahnemann who employ the smallest doses known to homeopathic practice, so far as I know, they have come to their use in spite of strong prejudices against them. They believed it was impossible these could have any influence on the organism for good or evil. It was only by actual experiments made by themselves or by witnessing the experiments of others that this judgment was corrected. They tried the small doses and found they *did* act and with better curative results than those larger. Years of continued experience have confirmed their confidence in this fact more and more. It has not been with them more than with the master a matter of speculation. It was first a matter of inquiry prosecuted with prejudice. Then it became to them *knowledge*. And now it is submitted that these are the men who are alone witnesses as to the power of these doses. These men who have tried them *know*. And compared to those who have not tried them and do not know, their testimony must be received. Those who do not know may talk “moonshine” and “impossibility” as much as they please, and when they have finished talking, it will only be—moonshine.

The fact of the action of these doses is one which must rest on the testimony of those who have used them in accordance with the requirements of the law of similars and not to any degree on the speculations or skepticisms of those who have not. But it has lately been said that homeopaths in England are abandoning the small doses and that many have done so in this country. This may be true, but it is a little difficult to understand how a man abandons that with which he has had nothing to do. It is a fact that the majority of English homeopaths never accepted the small dose as taught by the master. The same is true of very many of those in our own country. They are, therefore, excluded as witnesses in the case. I do not know of one in either country who, with sufficient knowledge of the *materia medica* to conduct an intelligent practice, according to the law as we have presented it, having once adopted the high and highest potencies in his practice, has afterward given them up. They have won the increasing confidence of all, so far as I am informed.

We have said homeopathy is one of Nature’s *laws*. In this assertion, we intend an uncompromising antagonism to the recent legislation, which reduces it to a mere “*rule of practice*.”

We distinguish between *law* and a mere *rule*, thus, *natural law* is *universal in its authority, extent and application*. It admits no suspension nor substitute. This law, then, to its extent, is equal to the whole domain of disease as met in the human organism. Being a law of nature, there must be, and is in it, provision for the wants and cure of all curable maladies, from whatever source or however called.* Like other

* It has been objected to practice founded exclusively on this law, that it is narrow in its philosophical basis; that it is confined to a single groove, or “dogma,” and, more than

natural laws, it must be equal to all the demands of the facts that called for its existence. Like the laws of gravitation and light, it must be equal at all times to the attainment of the ends for which it was created, and like these, it neither needs nor admits assistance from other rules or associate laws for the most perfect attainment of these ends. Like other natural laws, then, this is exclusive in its nature.*

It is another important element in the nature of law that it is wholly mandatory. It commands. It neither solicits nor permits.

A rule is partial in extent, authority, and application. In practical duty, a rule may be set aside in favor of another rule, or the circumstances of a case may warrant its entire disregard, however valuable it may have been in other cases. Or it may be only partially applied in any case, without dereliction of duty. Law demands obedience now and always. It neither provides for nor tolerates any neglect or infraction of its provisions or commands. Law is expressed by—*thou shalt*—or *thou shalt not*. Rule is limited to—*it may be well to do, or not to do*, this or that, and this because of supposed analogy of the case in hand to other previous cases, in which the applied rule had been beneficial or otherwise. Law demands *exact* compliance with its requirements and admits no deviation in favor of ignorance, indolence, prejudice, or personal preference—yielding to either of these, and the law violated, the fruits of practical obedience (practical successes), are, of course, wanting.

Another element in the nature of natural law is *permanency*. It does not exist today and cease tomorrow. It neither changes nor becomes obsolete. That which was law in the relationship of curative agencies and diseases at the beginning of the nineteenth century is law now and

all, that it deprives the practitioner of a valuable liberty to do whatever he pleases for the benefit of his patient, i.e., to give him the advantage of whatever he thinks will do him good. The true statement of the scope of the law is a sufficient answer to these and all similar objections that have been raised against it. Of that which is in its nature as broad as the domain of disease and contains in its record the sum of all that is positively known of the action of curative drug agents on the organism, can hardly be limited in its basis, and if a “groove” in any sense, is certainly not a narrow one. As to the liberty contended for, a practice strictly in accord with this law will leave few occasions for its exercise. [P.P.W.]

* The exclusiveness here asserted is as to *other natural laws* for the control of practical therapeutics and also as to means which do not come within the domain of this law, i.e., which have not been proved, and their action on the organism ascertained. It is exclusive as to other laws for the reason that no other is known that fulfills the requirements of a natural law. Homeopathy is not exclusive as to “medical science” in general or as to any branch of it. Neither is there, nor can there be, any possible antagonism between them. “Homeopathy, the Science of Therapeutics,” is, in itself, in perfect harmony with every branch of medical science and with all other natural sciences, and the more perfect these are, the more welcome to its fellowship and to become aids in its administration. A late attempt of a professed believer in homeopathy to represent this exclusiveness as antagonistic in any degree to its sister medical sciences is wholly gratuitous and difficult to excuse. Neither has any branch of science, medical or other, any antagonism to this natural law, the controller of the science of therapeutics. [P.P.W.]

will continue to be to the end of time.* This law can no more change than can the law of right and wrong or that of gravity. Is there, then to be no progressive improvement in practical medicine? It may well be hoped there is to be much. But this is certainly not to be sought nor gained outside of law nor by its transgression. Not certainly by amendments or supplements to natural law, emanating from human imagination, however bright and active, or from whatever of *ex-cathedra*† utterances of human ambitions or impertinences.

If this be a law of nature governing practical medicine, then improvement in this most important of practical sciences is only to be realized by a more perfect understanding of the law, a more strict compliance with its requirements, and a more perfect knowledge of the agencies which it employs in giving health to the sick and relief from pain. Improvement in therapeutics was sought outside of law for three thousand years. The result was certainly not such as to warrant a longer search in that direction. It follows, then, that to seek it by practically repealing the law is worse than folly and madness combined. To reduce the law to the low level of a rule, as to its control of practical thought and duty, is a crime for which our language fails to give a designation sufficiently condemnatory. It is a self-murder of science, so far as the body so resolving may be regarded as representing the science of therapeutics, and out and out murder of human beings, so far as this resolving may have control over the practice of others, who may by it be tempted to give up law for rule. Of this hereafter.

If proofs be demanded of the justice of the claim which we set up for the law of similars, that it is one of Nature's laws, they are many, convincing and sufficient. They abound in the continuous history of its practice by those who have strictly followed its instructions and complied with its requirements for more than half a century. It can hardly be necessary to give, to a candid mind, more than a few of the many facts of which these proofs consist of. To go further would exceed the limits of the plan in view in the preparation of this paper.

The first fact, and one which goes far in the proof we are attempting, is that in the prevalence of the fatal typhus which followed the disasters of Napoleon's Russian campaign in 1812 and was so general throughout Europe, Hahnemann was able, from a knowledge of the facts of the epidemic, to name, in his study, the curatives of the disease according to this law, with a certainty which was confirmed by

* It does not, therefore, follow that those remedies which cured diseases, called by a given name, a century or half a century ago, will, for that reason, cure them now. The elements of the disease may have changed in this time to the extent that the former similarity, by virtue of which they were cured, no longer exists. Still, the law remains unchanged, and now, by reason of this change in disease, calls for the discovery of other more similar remedies for their cure. This is illustrated by the history of the relations of Belladonna to scarlet fever. [P.P.W.]

† Statements made by people in positions of authority.[A.S.]

their successful use in the treatment of this historical fever.* It was this success that first gave homeopathy its European reputation. The cases treated by those remedies, as directed by Hahnemann, recovered with marvelous uniformity and in a very short time, and this to such an extent as to force the recognition of a relationship of law between the remedies and the disease on all intelligent minds who witnessed the facts. They saw and acknowledged that this uniformity of results could not be an accident.

The second historical fact which I shall notice is still more remarkable. On the approach of the first epidemic of Asiatic cholera to Northern and Western Europe in 1829, while it was yet far off and Hahnemann had never seen a case of it, he was able to name the remedies, which would be found both curative and prophylactic. And this only from the descriptions of those who had been observers of the dread malady.† Experience with these remedies in the presence of the disease abundantly confirmed the accuracy of his predictions, and this to an extent that all subsequent opportunities for observing and treating cholera have given us no improvement in the course recommended, under these unfavorable circumstances, by this truly great philosopher and observer.

Even in subsequent epidemics, this course has given successful results, which in comparison with any and all other methods of treatment go far, very far, toward demonstrating the principle on which this selection of remedies is evidence of a natural law, and not in any part a mere hypothesis or accident. The mortality by this plague has been reduced by about fifty percent on average by this course of treatment. In many localities, the reduction has been much greater. And even this result, remarkable as it is, was surpassed by the success that followed the use of the recommended prophylactics. The protection was so great as to completely demonstrate the existence of law and, in the process, the means by which the prophylactics were discovered.

In some epidemics and in some localities, the protection has been uniform and complete. In others, where attacks followed the use of the prophylactics, they were uniformly of a mild character. Can this have been an accident? And now wherein was the man, or the law which he

* *Allgemeine Anzeiger der Deutschen*, No. 6, 1814. [P.P.W.] (Hahnemann had been assigned to a typhus hospital in Leipzig, where he treated 183 such patients with typhus without losing a single case. He wrote, "Of 183 patients whom I treated for this affection in Leipzig, I did not lose one, which excited a great sensation among members of the Russian Government then occupying Dresden, but was taken no notice of by the medical authorities." (Samuel Hahnemann. *Materia Medica Pura*. Vol. 2. New York: Boericke and Tafel, 1881, 401.) He reported in the general press anonymously how to treat the ones affected with typhus. The editor of the journal added at the beginning of the article: "Since the author of this essay has not signed himself, I consider it necessary to add the remark that he is as truthful a man as he is an excellent and fortunate physician, who, by the application of this method of treatment, succeeded, during the most dreadful epidemic, in quickly restoring all his nervous fever [typhus] patients, with the exception of a single woman, who was without care and supervision, ed." [A.S.]

† Dudgeon's Lectures, 29. [P.P.W.]

thus proclaimed and demonstrated, proper objects of ridicule or reproach? It is not necessary to this argument to repeat in detail the comparative statistics of mortality by cholera in its successive epidemics, which so triumphantly prove the superiority of the homeopathic treatment over all other methods and so assuredly affirm homeopathy to be one of Nature's laws. These have been often published, and now it can only be helpful to allude to them to make them fresh to every memory.

The third fact that we shall present differs from the two preceding in that it pertains to diseases in general, while they each have to do with only one individual form of an epidemic. Kurtz, medical and civil counselor to the Duke of Anhalt Dessau, gathered the results of allopathic treatment of diseases for ten consecutive years in hospitals in England, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Bohemia, Bavaria, Austria, Hungary, Silesia, Russia and Italy, and found the published reports of these hospitals disclosed a mortality of between ten and eleven percent, of all cases treated.

During the same years, there were hospitals where diseases were treated exclusively by the homeopathic method in Germany, Austria, Bavaria, Silesia and Hungary, in the same cities where the allopathic hospitals were located, whose reports illustrated the above average mortality was ascertained. These homeopathic institutions had to do with the same epidemic influences as their Old School neighbors and, in general, with the same class of population and diseases. The reports of these institutions disclose a mortality of between four and five percent, of all diseases therein treated during these same ten years,* the difference being something more than 50 percent, in favor of homeopathic treatment. Can so great a difference have been an accident? Does it not rather affirm the treatment to have been an offspring of law?

In private practice, the facility for obtaining correct and reliable information is less than that afforded by hospital records. Private practitioners are not accustomed, as a rule, to keep a written record of all cases they treat for a series of years, yet in one instance at least this has been done through a long life.† This honored physician practiced allopathy for thirty-three years and treated in this time 75,360 patients, with a loss of 6.7 percent. He practiced homeopathy for seventeen years and treated 27,078 patients, with a loss of one in 105.5, or less than one percent. The losses of three other homeopathic physicians in the same city, at the same time, were nearly the same as Mühlenbein's. The general allopathic practice in Brunswick for the years 1835, 1836 and 1837 resulted in a loss of nine and a half percent, or something more than eight times as great as that of homeopathic practice in the same years, in the same city, a difference altogether too great to be accounted for by any plea of accident. It sustains with emphasis the claim we urge

* *British Journal of Homoeopathy*, Vol. I., No. 7. [P.P.W.]

† Mühlenbein. Physician and Privy Counselor to the Duke of Brunswick. [P.P.W.]

for homeopathy that it is indeed one of Nature's laws. We have no doubt there are in this and other countries practitioners of this method whose record, if it could be had, would show equally favorable results.*

But it may be asked, are there no other natural laws of healing than that of similars, by which we may be guided to the selection of specific curatives in treating the sick? I cannot say there are none. I can truly say I know no other. Does the enquirer? If there be another or others, which can demonstrate a better practical record than that which has come to us from a strict obedience to the law of similars, I should like to know it. I am ready to abandon this law any day when I can be shown a law with a better record. In the absence of any knowledge of any other law, I am bound to obedience to that which I do know, especially when I remember its hospital record shows a possible saving of 52 lives out of every 100 lost in allopathic practice and in private practice a possible reduction of loss to less than one percent.

We do not forget that the resolution by which the New York State Homoeopathic Medical Society perpetrated its suicide appeals to "*experience*" in its plea for the right to disregard this law and to substitute for it whatever means may be imagined to be sustained by this well-sounding word. We accept this appeal. We give the above records of hospital and private experience under the guidance of this law and challenge better guidance or the use of whatever other means not sanctioned by the requirements of this law. Until a better law with a better record is shown, the advocate for abandoning this occupies no enviable ground.

It is not forgotten that a claim has been set up for *contraria contrariis* as one of Nature's laws of healing. A moment's reflection suffices to show the claim to be absurd and false. What is the contrary of typhoid fever, pneumonia, pleurisy, peritonitis, rheumatism, neuralgia, whooping cough and a multitude of other maladies that afflict our race? There is none. Then this claim fails in one of the essentials of natural law—*universality of application*.

But liberty is claimed to do for his patient whatever in the judgment of the physician will do him good. We go as far as the farthest in our advocacy of the largest liberty to do what is right. There is, or ought to be, no liberty for the physician to do wrong. If there be a law of nature that is an adequate guide to the doing of that which is right, he has no liberty to set this aside and proceed without law or other guidance than

* Dr. George August Heinrich Mühlenbein died on the 8th of January 1845, at the age of 81 years, in Schoningen, in the duchy of Brunswick. It will enhance our estimate of the remarkable record of the first seventeen years of his homeopathic practice if we remember the poverty of the resources of the homeopathic physician of that time, as compared with ours at the present. There were then no more than sixty or seventy remedies satisfactorily proved, on which he could draw for his cures. We have added to these some six or seven hundred, more or less successfully proved, which are now available to us in our daily practice. It would be truly grateful to us if we could believe our practical record to have been an improvement on Mühlenbein's in the ratio of our greater number of proved remedies to which we have access. [P.P.W.]

his own impressions in favor of this or that. But “experience and observation”—these must be sufficient guides—sometimes. Must they? Whose “experience and observation?” What is the “experience and observation” that claims the right to set aside a natural law and decide issues that properly belong to it alone? Whose is this “experience and observation” for which this authority is claimed, and on what foundation does this asserted superiority rest? Was not the appeal to the “experience and observation” of 3000 years when men attempted the defense of bloodletting in the treatment of inflammatory diseases? And have not the “experience and observation” of Dietl proved that of every twenty-two deaths from pneumonia so treated, fourteen were killed by this treatment.* Has the appellant a longer experience or one more confidently trusted than was this of bloodletting?

If he forsakes law for the guidance of any so-called experience, let him remember this history of bloodletting, and look well to the foundation of any which tempts him to this course, which, however plausible, may end in a crime as great as that detected and exposed by the experiments of Dietl.† We have accepted the appeal to “experience and observation” and confidently rest in the assurance that the records of both hospital and private practice sustain before it the superior results of practice founded on law. The allopathic practice has for its foundation this “experience and observation,” or it has none. We have shown its shortcomings in comparison with a practice guided and controlled by law.

But shall I not be at liberty to do anything for my patient which will cure him best? Certainly. And it is because true experience and observation have proved that diseases are best and most certainly cured by a strict conformity to the requirements of this law that we insist earnestly on its authority and on the duty of all to whom a knowledge of it has come to give their patients the benefits which authentic records prove to be most certainly realized by strict obedience to its requirements. It is because diseases are more safely and surely cured by homeopathic methods and means that we protest against its law being supplanted by any rule less authoritative and means less potent for cure.

* In 1848, Joseph Dietl of Vienna published a book, *Aderlass in der Lungenentzündung (Bloodletting in Pneumonia)*, in which he reported significantly lowered mortality in pneumonia patients from 20.7 percent to 7.4 percent when bloodletting and drugs were replaced by hygienic measures. He was severely ostracized for reporting the results of his experiments, but about ten years later, bloodletting had almost disappeared. [A.S.]

† Of all practical fallacies, this, which sounds so plausible and even reasonable, is one of the greatest. Take the history of medical theories in all the past centuries, all or nearly all of which are now abandoned as absurd, but few of which survived the lives of their promulgator, and yet each of these, for the support of his theory and the recommended practice founded on it, appealed to experience. When theories were opposites, the appeal was still to experience. When Broussais would have pneumonia treated by repeated bleedings (“*Saignez, coup sur coup*” [*Bleed until better*]), he appealed to experience as sustaining this course, which Dietl has since demonstrated to have killed about 70 percent, of those who died under its administration. And so the appeal has ever been to experience, and experience has ever, or too often, been a cheat. [P.P.W.]

We protest against endeavors to discredit this law by its professed friends, either by adverse legislation or neglect of its authority in their practice, and we claim that our protest is fully sustained by the records of practice which it has wholly guided and controlled.

We protest against the claim set up for liberality by those who proclaim their readiness to substitute for this law, in their practice, other means and methods which the records prove to be less efficacious in curing the sick than those sanctioned by this law, affirming that by this substitution they deprive their patients of fifty-two percent of their chance of recovery, as proved by the record.

Finally, we protest in the name of this law, against the pretense to the community of its practice, by physicians who habitually disregard it and all its methods and requirements and resort to means wholly outside its domain, thus depriving their patients of the benefits which the record proves them to be entitled to, and which a truly homeopathic practice assures to them, and demand in the name of humanity that such physicians cease their deceiving, and no longer use the name they dishonor by this course, and that they stand and be recognized by that which truly characterizes them—*Eclectics*.