

Some unknown facets & writing of Constantine Hering

ABSTRACT: Ed: This article is an abstract from Knerr's writings, written in his diary when working with Hering as his close associate. It also contains many small cases of Hering. Source: A book "Faces of Homoeopathy" by Julian Winston, a contemporary Master whom I admire greatly. Julian died on June 12, 2005, as he lived, gracefully and with dignity, after writing his last editorial in Hom Today

Abstracted from the internet www.homeoint.org by

Dr Manasa Chetty MD (Hom) Consultant Homoeopath

Flat no: 401A, Majestic Heights, Hyderguda, Hyderabad-500029, Mobile-9949472271.

Author:

Dr Calvin B Knerr

Dr Calvin Knerr, graduated from Hahnemann Medical College in 1869 and became Hering's assistant. He lived in Hering's house and, in 1874, married Hering's daughter Melitta. While living in the Hering house, he kept a diary, and in 1940, when he was 93, the diary was printed under the title *The Life of Hering*. Upon Hering's death, Knerr became the literary executor of Hering's work and completed the 10 volumes of *Guiding Symptoms* by 1895. According to Knerr, the Hering household was always full of life. There were conversations constantly after dinner, either around the table or in the garden, under the grape arbor. Knerr describes a meeting of Hering and Dunham where Dunham asked questions, Hering gave answers, while Lilienthal (and Knerr) sat and listened.

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime".

It is here (Allen town academy), that men like the Wesselhoefts came to practice. One of these, the elder William, was a pioneer, who had stood shoulder to shoulder with Hering at the Allentown Academy, the first homoeopathic college in the world, where homoeopathic literature had its beginning, where some of the earliest textbooks, printed in German were translated and published for the benefit of its students. It was there that Wesselhoeft gathered the seeds of sound doctrine, which he later planted here in Boston, which has borne fruit; manifold and is still productive in the hands of his successors.

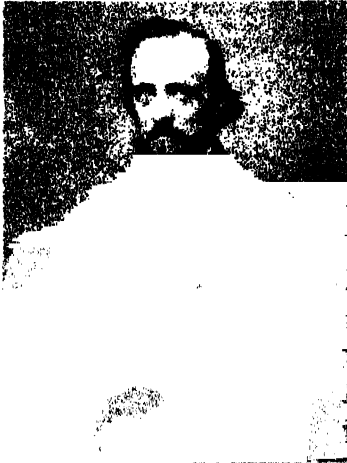
I owe my affiliation with my great teacher and honored father-in-law, which began directly after my graduation from Hahnemann College, in the year 1869, to the close friendship between Dr Hering and my great uncle.

As I look back upon the past from what must be near the summit of a long life, longer than what is allotted to most men, I realize that the years in which I sat at the feet of Hering were years of golden opportunity. From the moment of my entering upon my duties as assistant to the great master, I began to record in a diary the conversations of Dr Hering, his table-talk, the daily incidents that occurred in his busy life, his interviews with other physicians of prominence, who came to consult or to be instructed and entertained by the sage so widely known and respected. In the years that followed, eleven in all, the book grew to a fair size filled with a mass of daily notes of a kind that are calculated to interest the followers of Hahnemann, and particularly the neophytes in Homœopathy. I have in mind, to place before the public and the profession, a volume to bear the title. "Conversation and Philosophy of Dr Constantine Hering" in two parts to be followed by the "Lesser Writings" from Hering's pen, consisting of essays on *Materia Medica* and *Therapeutics* provings and history of provings; clinical observations; correspondence with eminent homœopaths of an early period; Hahnemann, Stapf, Jenichen and others in foreign lands as well

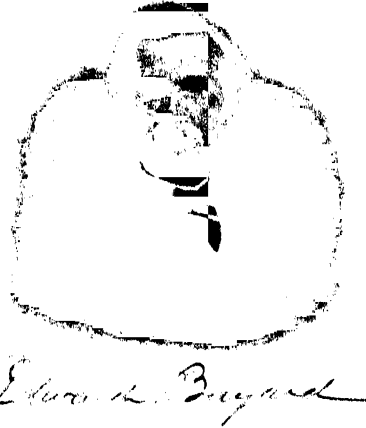
From the Masters

as that of a later period, letters from and practitioners in this country: Allen, Dunham, Bayard, Bell, Berridge (of London); Boyce, Bute (Hering's student and predecessor in North America the

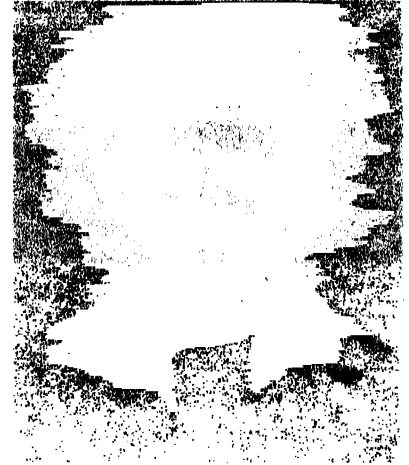
one who coped with the cholera in Philadelphia, before Hering's arrival). P P Wells, the Wesselhoefts, William and Conrad, and many more from different parts of the world.



Dr Carroll Dunham



Dr Edward Bayard



Dr G H Bute

From the manuscript of the first volume. Conversation and Philosophy of Constantine Hering, I have culled a few cases, hitherto unpublished, and some general remarks to illustrate Dr Hering's method of practice.

CASE I: Judge M, a prominent member of the bar and the judiciary, unusually bright and competent, was born a hydrocephaloid. His head remained unusually large in his earlier years, until he came under the care of Dr Hering, who prescribed occasional doses of *Calcareo-phosphorica* in a high potency. At intervals the boy with the big head, as his deformity was corrected, required to be fitted, with a smaller, not a larger hat, as is the custom with growing lads.

CASE II: A young Cuban was brought to Philadelphia for treatment. I was called in consultation with some allopathic physician who had the case in hand. I found a young man, with black eyes, a mere skeleton filled with air, unable to swallow a morsel of food without vomiting it up directly after. He cursed at doctors in general and swore that he would take neither, homœopathic

nor any other kind of medicine. I sent to the nearest confectionery shop for some plain cream of which I ordered a teaspoonful to be taken, with a little sugar every half hour. The patient took it. Next day he said he had not vomited once. I then increased the quantity of cream to dessert-spoonful doses, every hour. On the following day he complained of severe pain in the stomach. I felt a large lump there the size of a fist. This his physician had pronounced to be cancer. It was none. I gave him two globules of *Hyoscyamus* on the tongue. He had no pain after this. I now ordered a table-spoonful of beef tea to be taken on the one-half hour and the same quantity of arrow-root on the next half hour, turn about. The young man kept on gaining weight steadily and in a short time he returned to his island, a well man. When he received my bill, in the amount of one hundred dollars, he paid it promptly, at the same time telling me that I was the most sensible doctor he had ever met and at the same time the most stupid, because he had expected to pay me no less than a thousand! This patient recommended a great many others to me, from Cuba.

Hering did not contribute much of clinical material from his practice to our literature. He made constant use of cases cured by others. In fact he intended to write a book as soon as he could accumulate a thousand or more typical cases. This book was not written.

Hering never failed to write down the symptoms of his patients at their first visit and again at future visits, for which purpose he carried with him a small note-book to the bedside and in his office he used tablets of note-paper about three by four in size. While there had accumulated stacks upon stacks of such notes, carefully arranged upon shelves, not one of them could be completely deciphered to be of any use, not even by those among us who were familiar with his handwriting. Other papers of *Materia Medica*, though hard to read, are not beyond recovery. Since, after his death, I am probably the only person living who can read the papers, I have made it my business through the many years that they have been in my possession, to rewrite, copy and translate most of them. There is much material, all of it in ink which so far has withstood the corroding influence of time. The paper, of the best, also holds well. Good Lotzbecker snuff which the doctor used and let fall among his papers and the leaves of his books, has preserved them from decay and the ravages of the book-worm.

Hering says both Hahnemann and Stapf kept records of their cases in blank books, or ledgers, in which a single page was devoted to each patient. Between lines there was left room for remarks. The symptoms were numbered. After each symptom were placed the marks signifying better or worse, as the treatment progressed. Hering was the first to condemn the giving of castor oil on the third day after child-birth, which was almost universally done to produce a bowel movement with the lying-in. He claims that the seventh day after child-birth is the natural time for passage; if it does not come then he advises a dose of *Bryonia* or *Nux-vomica*. We see with satisfaction that practice of purging is being largely

ignored even by the ordinary practitioners of medicine.

Hepar-sulphur: Before the advent of modern surgery Dr Hering fought off lancing abscesses, which he thought bad practice and unnecessary if *Hepar*, in a high potency, were given to the patient. This suggestion came from him as early as 1827, while in South America. At about the same time Hartmann, in Germany, introduced *Mercurius*.

Kali-nitricum: A key note of *Nitrum* is: Drinking often, but little at a time. The patient drinks but little at a time because the act of swallowing interferes with respiration. Hering says this is Grauvogl's observation.

Hering laid great stress upon the following with a complementary medicine where the previous remedy had ceased to be beneficial after waiting a reasonable time, with a similarly acting medicine, preferably one from another group, as for instance *Belladonna* after *Rhus-tox*, *Pulsatilla* after *Nux-vomica* in many variations. The key to this will be found under Chapter 48. "Relationship in Guiding Symptoms", the Condensed *Materia Medica* and in the *Repertory* to these works. Certain remedies are inimical and should not be allowed to follow each other closely, as for instance: *Phosphorus* and *Causticum* also *Rhus-tox* and *Apis*; likewise *Nux-vom* and *Ignatia*. Only one of them can be properly indicated.

Aloes has its sphere of action in the pelvis. There is great congestion there, with a feeling of fullness, as if everything was tending there. Hæmorrhoidal tenesmus.

Hering got the *Arum-triphyllum*. (Jack-in-the-Pulpit) from an upcountry Pennsylvania German who had it from an old woman, in one of the valleys of Pennsylvania.

After a proving, it became valuable remedy in his hands for scarlet fever in its worst form.

Hering was called to see three children located in a basement on Cherry Street. The oldest child was in the last stage of the sickness, evidently dying. The second was in the second stage and very sick.



The third had just begun to sicken. He thought of the Pennsylvania German's remedy, the *Arum-triphyllum*, which he administered to each of the three children, in the sixth dilution. All three recovered.

The chief indications for the remedy are soreness of the mouth, cracked lips and salivation. He tried the remedy again soon after, this time getting an aggravation, probably due to a lower potency; higher ones were made use of later.

Hamamelis (witch hazel) was suggested to Hering by a consumptive at the point of death, named Pond, who controlled his hæmorrhages with the quack medicine, which he himself had introduced, and which made him rich, but which he kept a secret. Hering thought if a substance can stop hæmorrhages from a lung almost gone, it must be a good remedy.

The consumptive had a fair daughter who was impressed by the doctor. She revealed to him the formula. Her father had planted acres with the witch hazel, had built a distillery by which to extract the sap of the bush during the month of February, when it is strongest, just before the flowering season, when all plants are strongest in sap. Hering says if it had not been for consideration of the daughter, he would not have had any time for a man who discovered a healing remedy and guarded its secret for material gain.

Either everything is chance or all things that happen are governed by laws; otherwise where would a line be drawn between chance and rule?

There are four kinds of motion:

1. Up and down.
2. From side to side.
3. Forward and backward, the motion of the rocking chair.
4. And the swing.

The first is the motion of health, liked by babies. The baby jumper is an excellent invention for the nursery.

The second is not healthy, but not quite as bad as the third, which is most detrimental to women and children, causing all manner of diseases with

them. No person can stand a rocking-chair in the long run.

A fourth motion, that of swinging around in a circle, is the worst of all motions.

Hering believed (with Swedenborg) that the nerves contain a gaseous substance which circulates from the periphery to the centre through the sensory nerves and from the centre to the periphery through the motor nerves. In sleep this current is reversed.

Medicines placed upon the tongue are there changed to a nerve-gas, which is transmitted to diseased parts.

This would explain the lightning-like cures as mentioned by P P Wells and observed by others. Hering wonders if the metals contained in a battery are dissolved, disintegrated and thus pass on through the wires. He remarked, "Now we have only the effects from copper and zinc. Other metals might come into use."

The Rev John Helfrich, a lay practitioner, associated with the Allentown Academy, once contributed a case to the *Correspondenzblatt*, a cure with *Ipecacuanha* in which the patient had no symptoms of this particular remedy. Why did he prescribe the *Ipecac*? Because a number of other patients with the same sickness, had gotten well under it. He had stumbled upon the *law of treatment: the genus epidemicus!*

In cities we have not the same opportunity to observe this as in the country.

"If a wrong is done, either from malice or from ignorance. Nemesis is sure to follow. This would appear to be a law of nature." Hering believed, with Jean Paul Richter, that all things that happen, happen twice, the duplicator of events. It would seem to be scarcely sufficient to close these reminiscences of Dr Hering without saying something about the South American *Lachesis*. I will let that sainted homœopath and skillful practitioner of other days. Dr C W Boyce of Auburn, New York, do the speaking. Dr Boyce was an intimate friend of Hering, who made several long visits to Philadelphia, where the two spent days in each others society.

I quote from an Appreciation of Hering by Boyce, read at the Hering Memorial meeting in 1880 in which are laws that govern history as well as laws that govern space, planetary movements. I hold to the belief that history repeats itself and that everything happens in doubles. For example, this morning I had a patient who had a strange symptom not to be found in our *Materia Medica*. This afternoon there came another with the same strange symptom. The symptom is: He is constantly thinking of his sickness; cannot get it out of his mind!

"I was asked the other day whether it was not very provoking, as well as discouraging, to meet with ungrateful patients.

"Ingratitude we meet with everyday, said Our Lord. Our Master was covered with it. Surely God has more cause to complain of ingratitude than we have!

"Kepler, the great German astronomer, was a Protestant. He with his family and friends had to leave their possession in Austria on account of religious persecution. He was followed by riders, sent out by the king, who asked him to return. Kepler said: "If I go back, my friends will have to return with me!"

"Kepler was once asked how he could wait so long and so patiently for his theories to be accepted and replied, "The Lord has waited a long time for people to understand the harmony of His creation! Why should I be impatient?". Dr Hering had named Boyce the man who saved *Lachesis*. This was after the bombastic and superficial Hempel had declared the remedy "inert, in fact, no remedy at all"

Boyce says "Often, as I came to Dr Hering's house he would exclaim, Here comes the man who saved snake and how he took the poison and how he had proved it. We were to go to the Academy of Natural Sciences together and see the original snake.

The name of Dr Hering is so closely associated with *Lachesis*, in my mind, that when one is mentioned, the other is almost sure to come up with it and to a great extent, with me, homœopathy

depends upon *Lachesis* for its glory.

I had a case of typhoid fever which had continued unchecked for twenty-one days. At this time there seemed no chance for the patient to recover. Hope had been abandoned, when, during the night following the twenty-first day, *Lachesis* was given every two hours. Next morning, there was a complete change for the better. The tongue was moist, the delirium greatly lessened. From this time on, convalescence progressed, until health was restored.

This case was never forgotten, but it was a long time before I saw another such result. It came, however, in a case of gangrene. A woman discovered a small black spot on the calf of her leg, which gave her a great deal of uneasiness, and it rapidly increased in size. When I saw her, she was in bed and the spot measured three inches in diameter; it was rapidly increasing in size and she grew sicker and sicker. *Lachesis* was given and in a few hours the progress of the disease was checked. In a few days the entire piece of flesh which was affected fell out, leaving a hole reaching to the sheath of the muscles; but this healed kindly in a short time.

Again followed a time of professional drudgery, without striking results, when again I was startled. A woman, who was nursing a child, was aroused at midnight by the cry of fire. She had only time to grasp her child and rush out of the house in her night-clothes. It was winter-time, and she went into snow to her knees. She stood about in this undress until the house was consumed before seeking shelter. The result was that she did not get out of bed until the following summer, and then only by the help of *Lachesis*, which, in nine days, not only took her out of bed, but set her to doing her housework.

In about another month another great calamity seemed to be impending. My eldest daughter was taken with diphtheria. It went on to the Croupy stage. This was at a time when I had never seen a case recover in which the larynx had become involved. The disease had first shown itself on November 1st. You all know how this disease

progresses and how anxious we all are when we have such cases to treat. This one progressed until the eleventh day, slowly but surely getting worse, when I wrote to Dr Hering, giving minutely the symptoms and condition, saying that on the thirteenth day, when I knew he would have the letter, I would telegraph the symptoms, if the patient were still alive. This I did, and soon had the reply: "Give *Lachesis*".

In December, 1863, another claim came to me in my immediate family. To give a correct account of this case I must copy it as reported at the time. "A child of twenty-one months, with light hair, blue eyes and light complexion, took cold on Christmas day. During the night of the 26th there was fever and rapid respiration. At 11am on the 27th, the child had a spasm lasting fifteen minutes. From this time until January 8th, there was continued fever, greatly increased at night, with a pulse of 150. The respiration per minute were seventy on actual count and at no time less. Generally there was a red spot on one cheek, which frequently changed sides. When one cheek was red the other generally was pale. All of this time the left lung was impervious to air. Auscultation revealed slight bronchial respiration but no vesicular murmur. The right lung was not implicated; there was constant cough, yet much increased at night. The case had gradually, but surely, got worse up to January 8th, when the right lung began to be affected. On this day the child became uneasy and restless, throwing itself about in all directions and positions in its efforts to get breath. The face grew dark, there was constant spasmodic cough with labored breathing, the little thing in its agony striking at the mother for control. When it fell asleep for a few seconds at a time, the throat became so dry that a condition resembling croup came on and all the sufferings were increased. This fearful condition was rapidly hurrying the little sufferer to its grave. All the remedies prominent in similar conditions had been given, including *Lachesis* 200, without result. At this juncture *Lachesis* 12 (three pellets) was given, dry, on the tongue; immediately (the

pellets had not entirely dissolved on the tongue) the cough stopped and the breathing was relieved for four hours. At the end of this time the cough gradually returned with all of the sufferings (in a diminished degree) when another dose of *Lachesis* 12 produced the same decided relief this time lasting for sixteen hours. Four doses in twelve hours so changed the condition that the child slept nearly all of the night and air passed freely again to all parts of the previously obstructed lung.

I consulted Dr Hering on one occasion with reference to a patient in whom I had an especial interest (it being my other and better half) and after making a careful and critical examination, he invited me to his private study to review the case further and proceeded to make an exhaustive investigation. His manner of study, his thoroughness in analyzing a case (so in contrast with many whom I have met in the profession possessed with more of assumption than wisdom, who would deign to study a case only as a marked exception) impressed my-mind forcibly as to the necessity of a thorough and accurate knowledge of pathological conditions, symptoms and remedy, before prescribing. In the course of that investigation, he remarked to me:

"Let us apply the triangular test and if we find three important or characteristic symptoms, pointing to one remedy, let me assure you that we can prescribe it with almost unerring certainty. I have tested its application in hundreds of cases and when clearly defined, it seldom fails to fulfill its mission".

As an aid to my investigations, I have kept faithfully in view the illustration of the triangle, the trinity of symptoms, in the selection of a remedy, with the motto inscribed within the boundaries of its lines and angles, so appropriately expressed: "By this sign we conquer".

Friends, it requires the highest order of both physical and moral courage, to risk life calmly in trying to succor others. Witness the heroic act of a man alone in a room, when all the attendants

have fled, with a box he has just opened containing the most venomous serpent, the largest of its species, from whose glands after the most mature deliberation, he is about to extract the deadly poison. See the nerve of the man, who, alert as is the snake, seizes it just below the head with a firm grasp, when its folds uncoiled, with reared head and flaming eye, forked tongue and naked fang, it is anxious to strike the intrepid soul, who, at the risk of his life, seeks from its venom the healing balm for earth's sufferers. Watch him adjust the pointed stick between the opened jaws of the serpent whose bite is certain death, and whose impotent rage secretes the deadly saliva, while he tantalizes it till it can distil no more poison, when into a jar of alcohol he thrusts the monster nor relaxes his grip of steel till life is extinct. The poison, caught till on a watch-glass, is transferred to a mortar and rubbed with sugar of milk, till his purple and bloated face and swimming brain, suspend his eager operation. He swallows the preparation with measured regularity to produce upon himself the effects of the venom. (asking his wife to note carefully all his symptoms). Observe him toss in his fever, note the loquacious delirium as he flits from subject to sub-

ject, note the suffocation, the frantic struggle for breath, while he clutches and tears, from throat and breast, all clothing; mark his mental condition, the anguish and apprehension, and ask yourselves for whom, for what purpose he does this and then answer -is he not a hero?

Posterity may keep in mind that a man like Hering, incomparable, eminent, totally unselfish, lived and labored to the last breath of his life to establish a safer and a better system of medicine for which science must forever be beholden to him.

I will close with a question which possibly few, or none of us present, will be able to answer off-hand.

Hering asks, "Who were the first homœopaths mentioned in the New Testament?" The answer is given by St Paul who in Acts, Chapter 14, verse 15, says, "We are homœopathic," the Greek word signifying of like passions; in German "ähnlich leidende!" of like suffering.

Hering laughs and says, "That is something the Old Man (meaning Hahnemann, whom he adored) did not know".



Letters to the Editor

I have since received your new Carcinosis II issue. It is great and a bumper issue. I really enjoyed it.

I suggested to Dr Rama Hariharan to start a separate section on Acute prescribing in our journal as Acute Corner as against constitutional prescribing as 80% of the cases in a clinic will deal with such acute cases and considerable experience of yours and others will definitely help the new entrants as well as others to learn and improve on their skills in prescribing. Success in such prescribing will bring more people to Homœopathy. She agreed and she can definitely give some cases for each issue. dr Padmaja can also contribute a lot apart from Dr Bhavini and Vibha. You may like to think about it.

With regards *Kasiviswanathan*

EDITOR: Just for this purpose we have started s Sure-shot section in the njhonline. For putting in the journal we have to wait for 2mths to put up cases. Plus there is the shortage of space in our issues too. Whereas on the online it can go up immediately and we can add daily. Right now we are adding one new case 2 / week. This will showcase the stuff homœopathy is made of in treating acute emergencies too and chronic cases but with quick relief. We have already put up some 30 odd cases in the last 3 mths. We request all to send cases with proof- if required, send the sonography or other reports. We will scan and put them up.