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EDITORIAL

DR. MAHENDRALAL SIRCAR, M.D., D.L., C.I.E.

Born—2nd November 1833; *Died*—23rd February, 1904

IN MEMORIUM

I love and venerate Dr. Mahendralal, not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in the same soil which he belongs to, but because in him I find a hero, a valiant fighter for the cause of truth and suffering humanity and a man of forceful personality and of versatile genius. He was a jewel amongst his countrymen—that too, a superbly cut and highly polished one, shedding light and lustre through its myriads of facets. The story of Mahendralal, the brilliant student, the erudite scholar, the foremost physician of his time; and the story of his dramatic conversion to the practice of Homœopathy, his life-long struggle for the cause of his second love, and his tussle with the Calcutta University over his medical views which elicited from him his two famous letters which might well be described as the “Magna Charta” for Homœopathy; his monumental achievement for the intellectual upliftment of his countrymen in the foundation of the Indian Association for the cultivation of Science at Calcutta; and his historic association with Paramhansa Ram Krishna Deb—these stories justify the adage that truth

is stranger than fiction. Like his Guru, Samuel Hahnemann, it may be said of him that he was a scholar whom scholars dreaded to dispute; he was a linguist whose mastery over the ancient lore of Sanskrit was nearly as great as that over the English; he was a physician who was head and shoulders above his colleagues, and over all he was a philosopher whom adversity and difficulties could not detract from the path of rectitude and the pursuit of what he thought to be right knowledge. Men may come and men may go; princes may flourish or may fade; races may appear and vanish, and the mighty empires grow only to crumble into pieces according to the inexorable laws of nature, but there appear, from time to time in all ages and climes, some towering personalities who stem the tide of time, as it were,—whom death can not decay, tradition does not allow to sink their names into oblivion—and the history rather encourages to gather many stories round them to make of them legendary heroes for the posterity!

Such a giant was Dr. Mahendralal Sircar! Now that the stalwarts of Homœopathy have fallen one by one; now that the whole homœopathic profession of this great metropolis, the sphere of activity of this great man seems to be without its accredited leader; now that the question of State Recognition of Homœopathy is on the offing; now that the dominant school of medicine is out to strangle the practice of the Homœopathic system of treatment—we feel like crying at the top of our voice—Mahendralal! Thou should'st be living in our midst at this hour! Bengal hath need of thee! India hath need of thee!

In honouring him we honour ourselves; in remembering him on the occasion of his birth anniversary, we keep the torch of knowledge burning brilliantly which he has bequeathed us, his countrymen; in extolling his virtues we sing the glory of the 'Atman'—whom the sword cannot pierce, whom the fire cannot burn, whom the water cannot melt, whom the air cannot dry!