

Homoeopathy.

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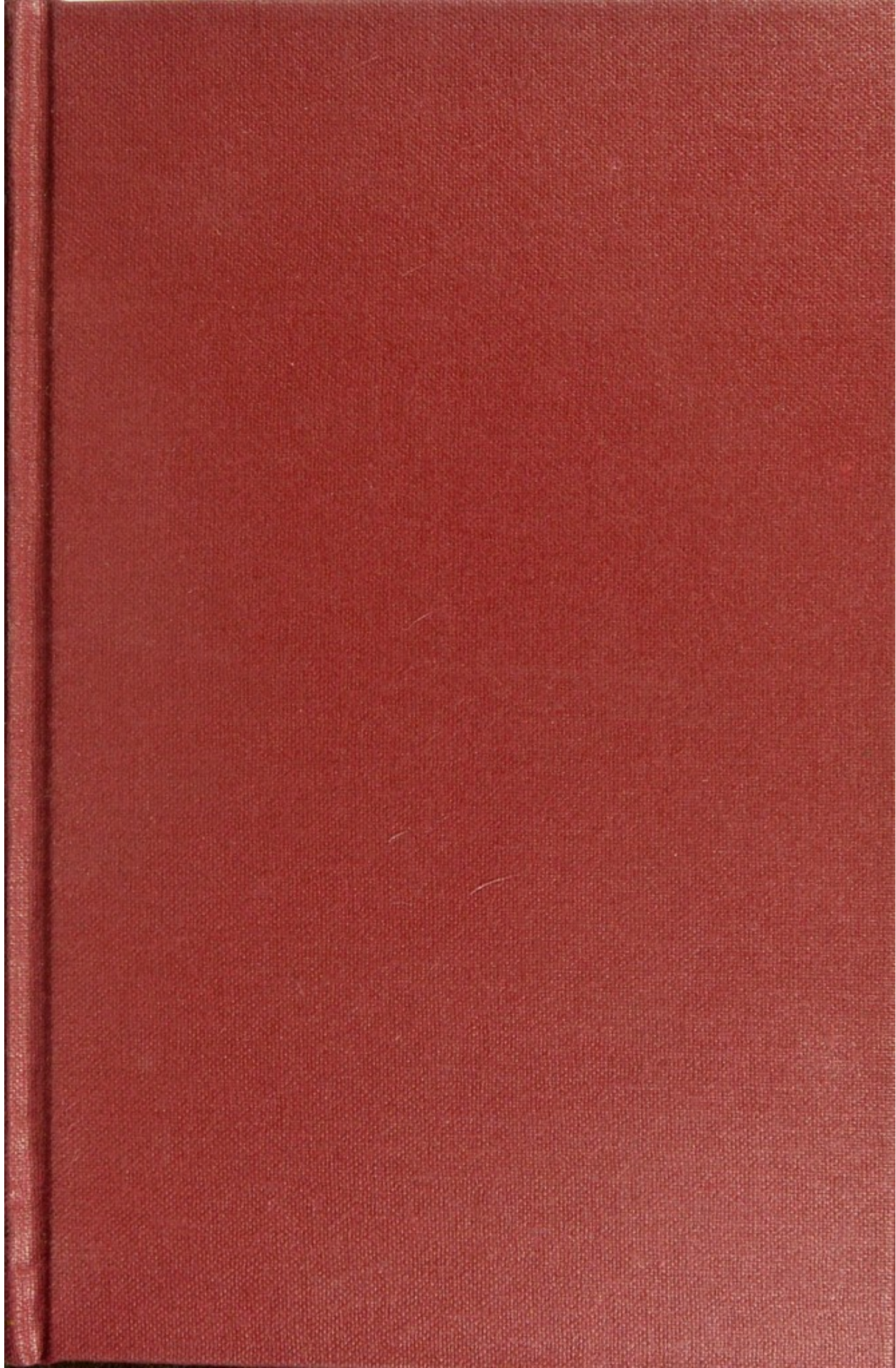
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A Treatise on the Principles and Practice of Homœopathy. By FRANCIS BLACK, M.D. 8vo. Pp. 239. London, 1842.

Report of the Edinburgh Homœopathic Dispensary, during 1841, 1842. By DRs RUSSELL and BLACK. 8vo. Pp. 52. Edinburgh.

What varied wonders tempt us as they pass!
In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,
Till the swollen bubble bursts—and all is air!

THE two works, the titles of which are given above, emanate from the same source, and are closely related. The small one acts the part of tender to the larger, which is the modern *navis stultifera*, and kindly, on the title-page, informs the readers where application may be made for freight, and the passage-money paid. And that none may lose the present opportunity of embarking on board the good ship, which bears on its prow the head of Hahnemann, and has for its epigraph that nucleus of German ingenuity and mysticism—"similia similibus curantur,"—it has its handbills made level to the meanest capacity, by giving the names of all diseases in English, both in the body of the work and in the index—for easy reference. This shows how well the proprietors understand who are most likely to be the passengers; and how thoroughly they are imbued with the shrewd notion of Lady Mary W. Montague: "We have no longer faith in miracles and relics, and therefore with the same fury run after receipts and physicians. The same money which three hundred years ago was given for the health of the soul, is now given for the health of the body; and by the same sort of persons—women and half-witted men."

As it is the duty of every one to raise their voice, when they see fellow-creatures in danger from any source, so we are constrained to warn these credulous persons that neither the little cock-boat nor the larger vessel is sea-worthy—and if after this they choose to venture on board, they must not be surprised if they perish in the Dead Sea, either whelmed by its asphaltic waves, or stifled by its sulphurous exhalations.

It is somewhat curious that both the first Report of the London Homœopathic Dispensary, and that of the Edinburgh, should begin in the same deprecatory tone—begging not to be judged of by the results their pages disclose. Does this not imply a consciousness that the performances and the promises are rather disproportionate? If so, why publish? Does any skilful advocate ever adduce a witness, who he knows will break down in the witness-box, and so damage rather than help his cause? Certainly not. The inference is clear, that the real reason for publishing is different from the professed one. It is not to help homœopathy—but the homœopaths. We humbly hope to merit their thanks, by giving still farther publicity to their writings and statements—how far they will be benefited by this, others must judge.

They seem peculiarly to dread the shaft of ridicule being directed against them, and shrink from ridicule, though not from law. But we beg to remind them that the example in this matter was set by Hahnemann, as may be seen in Dr Black's quotation from him, on what he is pleased to term the "folly of drug-mixing." They have no right to complain, therefore, if their own weapons are turned against them. Dr B. indeed seems to find consolation in the saying, 'Let them laugh that wins;' "we have no objection," says he, "that our opponents humorously crack our nuts while we enjoy the kernels." (P. 130.) We grieve, however, to inform him, that the goose which laid the golden eggs is dead—killed by a late bulletin.

Dr B. urges as an apology for so early venturing to expose himself to the censure of the critic, the necessity which a rapidly advancing science presents for a frequent and systematic narrative of its progress. He would have done well, however, to have observed, if not the Horatian maxim, at least a prudent backwardness, till his ideas and language had become somewhat more lucid and precise. Thus in his preface, (p. vii.) speaking of the great homœopathic dogma, "*similia similibus curantur*," he terms it, "a simple and universal law, founded upon pure induction, therefore not invented, but discovered." Of course, if it be a law, it could merely be discovered, not invented by a finite mind. Newton discovered the law of gravitation, but when did he, or any of his followers, ever talk of inventing it? But what renders the language of the homœopaths, and their constant attempts to exalt Hahnemann, still more ridiculous, is the fact that whatever trifling portion of truth it possesses, was known and expressed before Hahnemann began either to dream dreams or to print them, with the interpretation thereof. Hahnemann has himself laboured hard to destroy his own claim to originality, by adducing as many examples as he can muster of diseases cured on the principle of *similia similibus*. A few more such we will adduce, and yet not think that thereby the principle is established as the universal one, according to which all diseases, and all stages of diseases, are to be treated. Admit it to be true,—are there no other laws? As well may we affirm that because there is the law of gravitation, there are no others. None of the followers of Newton were ever so besotted as to make such an assertion.

Here is one contribution: Fernel recommends to expose certain kinds of burns to the heat of the fire; and his expression is, *ignis ipse hic ipsius alexiterium*: this is a very good translation of the first line of the often-quoted passage in Romeo and Juliet,¹

¹ "*Benvol.*—Tut! man! one fire burns out another's burning;

One pain is lessened by another's anguish;

Turn giddy, and be helped by backward turning.

One desperate grief cures with another's languish:

Take then some new infection to the eye,

And the rank poison of the old will die.

Romeo.—Your plantain leaf is excellent for dust.

Ben.—For what, I pray thee?

Romeo.—For your broken skin.

from which it appears that Shakspeare, who was so many things without knowing it, was, among the rest, a homœopathist. If Hahnemann was forestalled by Shakspeare in the doctrine of *similia similibus*, he was equally anticipated respecting his infinitesimal doses, by another of our great dramatists, rare Ben, who, when delineating in the Alchemist the charlatans of his day, and their victims, drew one, whom they induced to believe in the efficacy of the "*infiniments petits*."

Not only are some of the dramatis personæ strictly identical with several of the present actors in the homœopathic drama, now enacting for the amusement of the public, as, for example, that of the great lay-apostle shadowed forth under that of Sir Epicure Mammon; but the poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling, foresaw, with prophetic accuracy, the establishment of the first homœopathic dispensary in Moorfields! Surly, another of the characters, who endeavours to open the eyes of Sir Epicure to the frauds practised on his credulity and his purse, was, without question, intended for us surly critics, who, like our prototype,—

" Faith have a humour,
And would not willingly be gulled."

Imagine then Subtle, one of the band of charlatans, giving to one of his accomplices the following description of Sir Epicure, the victim of their misrepresentation, and you have a scene of the present day:—

" Methinks I see him entering ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox," (*i. e. for all chronic diseases which have not originated in psora, or psychosis,*) " and plaguy houses.

Reaching his dose, walking Moorfields for lepers,
And offering citizens' wives pomander-bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir:"

Then hear Sir Epicure Mammon, rapt by his delusion, and you will involuntarily exclaim, O! rare Ben,—

Mammon. " But when you see the effects of the Great Medicine,
Of which one part projected on a hundred
Of Mercury, or Venus, or the Moon,
Shall turn it to as many of the Sun;
Nay, to a thousand, *so ad infinitum*:
You will believe me.

Surly. Yes, when I see't, I will.

Mammon. Ha! why?

Do you think I fable with you? I assure you
Not only can it do that, but by its virtue,
Can confer honour, love, respect, long life.

(Observe, reader, Hahnemann is 84, *argal* homœopathy *must* be true!)

" Give safety, valour, yea, and victory,
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man of fourscore a child.

Surly. No doubt; he's that already.

Mammon. Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age; make him get sons and daughters,
Young giants; as our philosophers have done,
The ancient patriarchs, afore the flood

But taking, once a-week, on a knife's point,
The quantity of a grain of mustard of it;
 Become stout Marses, and beget young Cupids.
 'Tis the secret

Of nature naturized 'gainst all infections,
 Cures all diseases coming of all causes;
 A month's grief in a day, a year's in twelve;
 And, of what age soever, in a month:
 Past all the doses of your drugging doctors,
 I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague
 Out of the kingdom in three months.

Sir, I'll do't. Meantime,
 I'll give away so much unto my man,
 Shall serve the whole city with preservative
 Weekly; each house his dose, and at the rate—

Surly. As he that built the water-work, does with water—”

But notwithstanding all these confident predictions, “the swollen bubble bursts—and all is air.” Such has been, and such will be the fate, sooner or later, of every bubble-scheme.

Sir Epicure, though mourning over the failure of his hopes, is not utterly cured of his superstition, and inquires—

“Is no projection left? Think'st thou
 Will nought be saved that is good for medicine.

Face. I cannot tell, sir. There will be perhaps,
 Something about the scraping of the shards,
 Will cure the itch.”

This, if true, would be very consolatory, seeing that so many diseases, according to Hahnemann, originate in the itch.

At last, poor Sir Epicure is thoroughly disabused, through the kind offices of Surly, and pronouncing the whole band to be

“Rogues, cozeners, impostors,”

he retires, in a transport of mingled rage, shame, and vexation, at having allowed himself to be so completely duped.

To notice all the errors, assumptions, and impudent statements in these two books, would greatly exceed our limits, but some of them shall be exposed.

The small craft, being the most mischievous of the two, shall first be sunk, and then we will pour a broadside into the large vessel. Erratum, p. 2, *pro* “Homœopathic treatment, for the most, does not affect any thing but the disease,” *lege* “Homœopathic treatment does not affect the disease.”

Some explanation of the statement at p. 4, is necessary, which we will kindly supply. “The difference between the homœopathic and ordinary practice is twofold; consisting, *first*, in what we do; and, *secondly*, in what we abstain from doing.” The first consists in professing to cure disease with inadequate means; and the second, as a corollary from the first, in abstaining from curing it.
 Q.E.D.

There is another point in connection with aggravation which deserves notice; but as we have to discuss this more at large with the captain of the large vessel, we proceed now to notice some of

their *cases*, on which they found a claim to have the health and lives of their fellow-citizens entrusted to them. Unprofessional persons may easily be misled by them, but they will not inspire confidence in the knowledge or probity of the concocters of this handbill, on the part of any experienced or well-informed practitioner. So little do they resemble cases reported by members of a liberal profession, that we could hardly convince ourselves that we were not perusing the specious advertisements of the proprietors of "Parr's Life Pills," or any other quack nostrum. The careful manner in which the names of the diseases are translated, and *printed in italics*, with the occasional use of this "stage trick" in the course of the narrative, as well as to form a very significant climax at the tail of a case, (such as at p. 29:—"She was again seen in the end of November, when she reported herself *perfectly well*,") clearly proves that it was designed for "women and half-witted men." Every regular practitioner knows that there is nothing more wonderful or uncommon in the cessation of such cases as nervous asthma, (p. 28,) or of psoriasis, (p. 43,) than in the union of a broken bone, and would scorn to print them as *his* cures, and degrade himself and his profession to the level of the lowest itinerant mountebanks and quacks. But we will give one of their cases at full length, exactly as it is nominated in the bond, and see if it redounds to their credit, as proving either their skill in diagnosis, or knowledge of the course of disease; yet they bring it forward as a pet case.

P. 11,—

"V.—*Meningitis, (Inflammation of the Membranes of the Brain.)*

"A. M., aged 4, a healthy-looking child, was in perfect health until the morning of the 4th of June, when he was suddenly seized with vomiting. We visited him in the afternoon, when he presented the following symptoms:—Constant nausea, with repeated vomiting; tongue clean; no pain or tenderness in the abdomen; complains of great pain in the head, which is very hot, as is also all the skin; face flushed; pulse 130, full and hard; breathing hurried; no affection of the chest. *Acon.* every hour for ten hours; then *Bell.*

"5th. After two doses of the *Acon.*, the skin became moister, and the vomiting ceased; little sleep, and very disturbed; frequent ravings during the night; convulsions and startings of the limbs, as if electric sparks were passed through them; face flushed; eyes fixed and bright; rolls and buries his head constantly in the pillow; great heat of the head; complains of excessive pain in the head; pulse 110, full; breathing less hurried. Continue *Acon.*, and then *Bell.*

"6th. Slept much better; no raving, or starting of the limbs; skin still hot; pain of head much diminished; appearance more natural; bowels opened; pulse 100, soft. Repeat *Bell.*

"7th. The patient up, and playing on the floor. Our surprise at so speedy a recovery was shared by a surgeon in the H.E.I.C.S., who attended along with us, in order practically to convince himself of the efficacy of homœopathic treatment. This case led him to a farther examination, which happily ended in conversion." P. 11.

So this case proves the superior efficacy of homœopathic treatment. Does it indeed, Master Slender? Verily, nobody can doubt your being full cousin to Justice Shallow!! It was clearly and manifestly a case of symptomatic irritation of the brain,

from some improper or undigested article of food in the stomach and intestines; and had an emetic been administered when "we visited him," followed by a brisk cathartic, "the patient would have been up and playing" on the 5th, as he recovered the moment his bowels were opened. So here were two days of suffering due to homœopathic trifling!

We presume that our readers are now sufficiently satisfied as to the kind of statistics now furnished, and to be expected in future, from Drs Russell and Black; many other cases—of phthisis for example—are cited in the Report, as instances of certain diseases, to which, from the symptoms described, they evidently bore but a slender resemblance. Clap-trap misnaming of cases is a stale trick with advertising empirics, and one which, though as little calculated as intended to mislead *the profession*, is well known to be eminently successful in gulling the *public*, and in leading the unwary to sacrifice their money and their health at the shrine of credulity and self-conceit.

We are unwilling to weary our readers, but we must go on yet a little farther with our exposure of this pamphlet; which, from what has been already said, and especially from the following case, appears to be too boldly styled a "REPORT."

"*Disease of the Wrist Joint.*—W. H., aged 53, a healthy-looking man, applied at the Dispensary on February 18th. He states that the affection of the wrist commenced two years ago, but can assign no cause for it. He applied to an eminent surgeon, who blistered the part at least twenty times, but with no benefit. After this he entered the Edinburgh Infirmary, which he left in August 1841, after having been sixteen weeks under treatment; but the disease increased instead of getting better. The treatment pursued in the hospital was application of mercurial ointment, from which he was salivated; then poultices and stimulating washes, together 'with a dose of salts when he chose to take it.' These means having failed, he was recommended to go to the country; but the disease got no better. He then returned to the hospital, when amputation was advised as the only means. This he refused to submit to, and left. He was recommended by a gentleman to whom he showed the arm to apply at this Dispensary. The right wrist presented, as he himself described it, the appearance of a 'boiled turnip;' much swollen, with the cellular tissue around hardened. There are two sinuses, which communicate with the joint, the one opening anteriorly, the other posteriorly. From these there is a copious yellow discharge. Unable to move the wrist or flex the fingers; any attempt to do so attended with pain. He got *Sil.* 2 doses; and on the 28th Feb., *Phosph.*

"On March the 1st, the hardness round the joint is beginning to diminish, and the joint becoming more flexible. *Sil.*

"7th.—*Assaf.*

"12th.—The posterior opening has healed; from the anterior a small piece of bone has come away; the swelling much diminished, and the joints more flexible.

"16th.—Increased discharge from the anterior opening. *Hepar S.*

"19th.—Discharge diminished; the wrist presents a much more natural appearance; the pain on motion is much less; and the flexibility increasing. *Assaf.*

"25th.—No pain in the joint; is able now to use it a little; can even lift a bucket of water. *Sil.*

"He thus continued to improve under the use of *Sulph. Sil. Hep. S.*; and on the 19th July it was pronounced cured. The man went to the harvest; and up to this date, the 17th November, has continued well, engaging daily in his occupations."

From the reference made to the "eminent surgeon" and the Royal Infirmary, this narrative was, by some acquainted with that institution, referred to William Heslop, residing in 28 Jamaica Street, who had been treated, both in and out of the Institution, by Dr Duncan. We resolved to institute a thorough investigation into the case, as various versions of it were in circulation. We called upon W. Heslop, along with Drs Duncan and Douglas Maclagan, and after examining the wrist, and hearing the story of the man, we were quite satisfied that the case, as given in the report, was a tissue of the most reckless mis-statements, being in many minor, and in all essential points, at variance with truth. We do not say that Drs Russell and Black have *intentionally* given a false account of this, or any other case,—perhaps they dreamed that the man was cured and went to the harvest,—but without presuming to read the intentions of fallible men, we state the naked truth, *that the wrist is not yet cured, and that the man never went to the harvest, just because it was not cured.*

Perhaps we have said enough of this case, in thus establishing its falsity in essentials; but it may be well, before leaving it, to state the *whole truth* regarding it. The man has been constantly, for the last four years, under Dr Duncan's observation, who informs us—and his statement is exactly that of the patient himself—that during that period his disease has experienced various remissions and exacerbations,—the former taking place sometimes spontaneously, and at other times apparently from the treatment resorted to. The disease appeared first in the palmar fibrous tissue, and afterwards extended upwards to the wrist, involving the bones. The case now goes on as formerly. At intervals, abscesses form, assuming, for a time, an alarming appearance; but after a time, the wrist returns to its former state. This state of matters will probably go on for some time to come; when possibly, at last, the dead bone will be thrown off, and nature will effect a cure by ankylosis. What a pity that such a spontaneous cure—so probable a termination to the case—did not take place when the man was under treatment by the Stockbridge apostles of the star of truth; and then with some plausibility, though with no honesty, they might have blazoned forth the happy event as due to their infinitesimal doses.

The previous treatment of the patient as reported is substantially incorrect; at all events, we could not gather, either from the narrative of the man, or from Dr Duncan, that mercury was ever prescribed or used, so as to produce a salivation. As to the statement within inverted commas, intended as a slur at the medical management of a great and noble public charity, we ask, Who of all the physicians and surgeons of that institution ever consigned salts, or any other medicine, to a patient, "to take it when he chose?" We are intimately acquainted with the system which obtains in that institution as to the prescribing and administering of remedies, and we do not believe that the story of the

salts is true. Then, again, we ask, Who advised amputation? Dr Duncan assures us that *he* never did. In reply to a question put by us, the man said, that the sole cause of his leaving the hospital, was domestic affliction at home. So much for the terror inspired by threatened amputation. Once more we ask, Who informed the homœopathic physicians that there were two sinuses communicating with the joint? As they never probed one or other, it must have been "the star of truth." If so, we advise them, in future, to rely on the evidence of their senses, rather than on the revelations of "the star." The anterior opening only communicated with the joint. Dr Duncan states, that from time to time various openings formed, all of which after a time closed, excepting the one which communicated with the diseased bone. Long before the 17th November, the man had lost all hope of relief from the homœopaths; and on that date the wrist was not examined by them, as one would suppose it had been, from reading the passage quoted above. As we already stated, *the man is till this day uncured*,—the wrist is stiff,—the sinus discharges, and leads to the bone,—in fact, the case is not, and never was cured. This vaunted cure of disease of the wrist-joint, so *circumstantially* narrated, turns out, then, to be a mere fiction,—a day-dream,—but one, alas! having, like other dreams, an unsubstantial basis. The other "*cases*" are, we doubt not, equally indebted to the imagination of the ingenious authors.

One extract more from this "Report," will suffice to show the arts of its concocters, and their object in circulating it.

"DISEASES OF WOMEN.—If an ordinary practitioner were asked what class of affections he can least certainly control,—although, perhaps, the question might make him pause, as there crowded in upon his recollection a confused multitude of baffling diseases,—yet we venture to predict, that the answer would be, uterine derangements. Of medicines that act with certainty on the uterus, he would say, we are totally ignorant, and there is no class, in the treatment of which we run the risk of doing greater harm, and have less confidence of doing good. The measures we employ are all very indirect, and from their indirectness require to be proportionally severe. The consequence is often disheartening, seldom satisfactory.

"On the other hand, we, as homœopathic practitioners, should say, that there are few classes of affections which we undertake with greater confidence, and the result of which is more satisfactory." P. 25.

For this, we appeal to every person of sense and principle, if they do not deserve to be denounced as unscrupulous libellers and assassins of the characters of the members of an honourable and useful profession. No doubt they undertake these, or any other cases, "with greater confidence."

Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,
and because

Fools will rush in where angels fear to tread.

While on the subject of the "Diseases of Women," we feel called upon to declare, that the rules laid down, (page 130 of Dr Black's *Principles*), for examining a female patient, violate every

rule of medical ethics, which enjoin the utmost respect for the natural delicacy of the sex. These rules exhibit a disgusting pruriency, in perfect keeping with the general want of delicacy of continental nations, and the imitation of which will be one of the blessings we shall owe to homœopathy and its followers.

So much for the Edinburgh "Dispensary." The proprietors and stage managers of the London one¹ boast of the contributions received for its support; but were these a thousand times greater, they are no more evidence of the truth of the homœopathic dogmas, than was the silver cradle offered by a worthy alderman of London, for the reception of the expected Shiloh, a proof that Joanna Southcote was filled with any thing else than wind and conceit. Bishop Butler was right when he affirmed, that nations were liable to paroxysms of insanity as well as individuals, and this judgment he formed, without having had the benefit of witnessing either the French Revolution, or the present homœopathic or hydropathic epidemic monomanias.

Dr Black will find that his large book is a greater evil, as it presents so many more assailable points. It is indeed such a tissue of inconsistencies, that almost every page presents matter for comment and correction. A very few only of these can we give in our narrowing limits.

"It is admitted, (by whom, pray?) that enantiopathic practice may in many cases palliate, but it never cures directly; it may relieve, but always at the expense of the patient, as the remedies are administered in large doses.

"Take, for example, a person labouring under some violent neuralgic affection. Small doses of a sedative, say opium or its preparations, are given. The pain is relieved, but next day it returns; the dose must be repeated. Day after day it is not only repeated, but increased. What is the consequence? The sufferings may be relieved; but the drug, in addition to removing pain, acts otherwise,—it disorders the digestive organs, causes headache, constipation, &c., rendering the patient miserable, so much so, that the relief is far from being equivalent to the disordered health."

This specious paragraph is placed at page 2, where it is most likely to be read by those to whom the volume is presented; for we have intimate means of knowing, that far more copies of homœopathic treatises are given away than are purchased, upon the established principle of "a sprat," &c.

In reply, we beg to treat him to the following case of neuralgia, which being that of a surgeon well known in London, can be authenticated, and is not like an A. B. case. It is that of Mr Spry of Charter-house Square, reported by Mr Skey, (*Medical Gazette*, vol. xix. p. 183.

¹ It is amusing to perceive the arts they resort to, to fill their "empty beds." * * * When the wards of the institution are not filled up by the nominations of annual subscribers, chronic cases are received "upon payment of L.3, 15s. per month, or 2s. 6d. per day." We expect soon to see the windows, like those of the low lodging-houses, decorated with the following *affiche*:—"STRANGERS TAKEN IN, AND DONE FOR."

“About the month of August 1835, he was recommended to try the effect of the aconitine, five grains of which were rubbed down with five drachms of cerate. The first application subdued the pain in a partial degree. It was applied, according to the degree of pain, either once or twice in the day, for six days only, when the pain ceased entirely; nor has he suffered from relapse to the present hour, a period of fourteen months.”

What, we ask, has homœopathy done for the Marquis of A——’s neuralgia?

A case of the most intense suffering from neuralgia that we ever witnessed, is well known to those who loudly vaunt the superiority of homœopathy. Yet have they never attempted to alleviate the patient’s sufferings. Why? Because they know well that their infinitesimal doses would do infinitely little, and bring certain discredit on them; and, moreover, the patient being poor, no money could be gained by a “promise to cure;” though these promises are made readily enough where the patients have purses, and are willing to pay, as well as smart, for their experience. Which, then, appears to the greatest advantage? allopathic practice, or homœopathic professions? We pause for a reply. Perhaps the following will do, (from Dr Black’s own book, p. 8,) till they supply us with a better:—“It is not cheapness that supports the impudent charlatan.”

“Much talent and time have been deservedly employed in describing the chemical properties, the appearances and origin of drugs; but no proper experiments have been made of their physiological action, or their pathological effects. Medicines have only been tried upon the lower animals, and always in poisonous doses; but such experiments are liable to error, and are only useful if they confirmed experiments on man himself.” Pp. 8, 9.

Again, at p. 57, is ascribed to Haller, the merit of suggesting, and to Hahnemann that of performing experiments on the healthy subject, to ascertain the actions of medicines! To these *assertions* we oppose the *fact*, that Dr Alexander of Edinburgh performed on himself numerous experiments, the result of which he published in 1768. His work was commented on by Thomas Prosser, London, 1769. A second edition, enlarged, was published by Dr Alexander in 1771, the same year in which Haller’s *Pharmacopœia Helvetica* first appeared. So important were Alexander’s essays deemed, that they were translated into German, and published in Leipsic in 1773. Yet Hahnemann, who was well acquainted with them, impudently arrogates to himself the praise of being the first to practise this plan, and his ignorant followers join in the ascription. Moreover, Dr Stark of Dublin made many experiments on himself, both with food and medicines, and the results were published in 1788, before Hahnemann became “pregnant with a celestial fire,” and in 1790, like the mountain in labour, “gave birth” (we use Dr Black’s words, p. 18) to the little ridiculous mouse—*similia similibus*. We refrain from adding *curantur*, for that is the very point at issue.

If Dr Black will look into Wibmer’s work, “*Die Wirkung*

der Arzneimittel und Gifte im gesunden thierischen Körper," he will find, that numerous experiments have been made, not only on "the lower animals," but on man; all which are carefully classified. Yet, notwithstanding this refutation of their assertion, we have no doubt but that it will be repeated in the next homœopathic advertisement or book :

Destroy his fibs and sophistry—in vain—
The creature's at his dirty work again.

Some most fatal admissions are very unwittingly made by every writer on homœopathy, from Hahnemann down to Dr Black. Thus Hahnemann indulges in an explosion of heavy humour on the "folly of drug-mixing." Yet in his cases treated by former practitioners, who (like Molière's pupil, who had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it) had been innocently practising homœopathically, he finds that hyoseyamus retains its peculiar powers, when it is required to bolster up the homœopathic Babel.¹ So also mercury.² As a combination of the latter, we recommend to them Singleton's "golden" eye ointment, as they have an eye to all the preparations of gold, which may enable them to see the beam in their own eye, which they would do well to remove before they point to the mote in ours. Farther, we would have them be well assured that their "modern instances" are apposite, before they cite them. Thus the application of snow to frost-bitten parts is not good.³

How exquisite is the following *wise saw*.

"The old practice of applying rose-water externally in ophthalmic diseases, looks like a tacit avowal, that there exists in the leaves of the rose some curative power for diseases of the eye. This is founded upon the homœopathic virtue which the rose possesses, of exciting by itself a species of ophthalmia in persons who are in health, an effect which Eclitius, Ledel, and Rau⁴ actually saw it produce." P. 23.

Oh! ye rose-fanciers! little are ye aware that, by indulging

¹ "The mixed preparations, which were employed for a long time with the greatest success by Hecker in a case of spasmodic constriction of the eyelids, would have proved ineffectual, if some happy chance had not included hyoseyamus." P. 220.

² "Hecker used various medicinal compounds successfully in a case of caries succeeding small-pox. Fortunately, a portion of mercury was contained in each of these mixtures." P. 232.

³ "The Esquimaux have a very effectual way of restoring the circulation, which is by laying a *warm* hand on the place affected. We had always been accustomed to rub the part with snow, which frequently caused irritation, and left the part so tender, as to render it extremely susceptible of other attacks."—Captain Lyon's Private Journal. London, 1824. P. 124.

⁴ Who are these worthies? Dr Black's pretensions to literary research are amusing, and as great, as is his ignorance of the literature of medicine. We do not so much refer to the authorities (?) cited in the text, as to such displays of ignorance and pedantry as the following. At p. 184, the editor of the Medical Gazette is taken to task for not designating Andral, Andral Junior. The ignorance is Dr Black's, for "*Andral, fils,*" is THE ANDRAL. Detharding is called Dellharding, and old Basil Valentine, Basilius Valentinus. The references in the foot notes are chiefly copied, though this is not stated.

your taste, ye are spreading inflammations of the eye, worse than the Egyptian ophthalmia. Your flower-gardens must be put down by act of parliament, as has been the practice of inoculation. The last instance referred to by them, in proof of one of their dogmas, viz., the power of belladonna to act as a prophylactic to scarlatina, is not very convincing, since, though administered to 1200 soldiers, of these 12 took the fever, and 6 out of the 12 died. This is above the average mortality in those seized, and we have no proof that the others would not have continued exempt without the employment of the drug. While its prophylactic power is questionable, its deleterious are certain; for Gölis (see his *Treatise on Hydrocephalus*.) states, that the children in Vienna, to whom it was given as a means of escaping scarlatina, fell victims to water on the brain within twelve months.

We now approach a subject of the tenderest kind and most painful nature. We grieve to announce it, our pen refuses to proceed,—but—but—it is our unenviable task to declare it,—there are dissensions among the homœopathists.

Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?

Yet, what wonder? It is natural for Lilliputians to dispute about little matters.

“What dilution should be administered,” says Dr Black, “is a question still in a measure *sub-judice*, and which has given rise to many an unseemly discussion, the acrimony of which would lead us to suppose that it was a vital point in homœopathy, and that the selection of the dose, instead of being subordinate, was paramount in importance to that of the remedy.

“One party have maintained that the high dilutions, for example, 30, are the best in all cases; another party have considered the lowest as only serviceable, and that the practice of the former was nothing better than a ‘*médecine expectante*.’ The discrepancy of two such opposite opinions may be partly explained by the circumstance, that the former class have had generally chronic diseases to treat, the latter acute; and also that, in a number of cases, where the medicine is well chosen, the difference of dilution is really imperceptible, and the 30th succeeds as well as the 3d.” P. 145.

Who can doubt it? or that none at all would succeed as well as either?

So that homœopathy, instead of being, as its followers would have us believe, “*simplex, duntaxat, et unum*,” is a very arena for the display of “unseemly discussion.” Some daringly assail the doctrine of aggravation, upon this point, differing from their great master,—he “over whose head the star of truth shone brilliantly.” Some adventurously frame a “reformed homœopathy,” as if the original had not issued, like Minerva from the brain of Jupiter, in complete armour.

Some deem him wondrous wise,
And some believe him mad.

These fallings out suggest a proverb, which is too obvious to require farther allusion. It is not for us *tantas componere lites*, but to

moderate the violence of their "unseemly discussions," we would recommend the disputants to take forthwith a little "bryonia ii.," as this is appropriate to those whose "disposition is violent and choleric."¹

One of the chief grounds of these "unseemly discussions," is that of the notion of "aggravation.

"Before proceeding farther," says Dr Black, "the subject of aggravations must be alluded to. Exacerbation of the existing symptoms, after the administration of a homœopathic remedy, sometimes occurs, but it is far from necessary to cure; and in some cases, when most violent, is attended with no benefit." P. 146.

If aggravation of the existing symptoms be not necessary to cure, how does the medicinal disease overcome and extinguish the natural? Is not this one of the feet of the Hahnemann tripod? It is thus the disciples kick the sick lion—their master. Verily, Job showed his superior shrewdness when he exclaimed, "Oh, that mine enemy would write a book!" knowing how apt a man is thereby to make an ass of himself! Read the following:—

"Aggravations have been observed after the administration of both high and low dilutions. It is worthy of notice, that the occurrence of exacerbations of the disease is more frequently referred to in the practice of those who employ the high dilutions, than in those who give the low. The latter, however, have recorded many instances, in which the employment of a low dilution was attended with manifest danger, and in many cases where the low increased the evil, the administration of a higher was attended with advantage. Dr Müller, referring to the practice of Leipsic Hospital as bearing upon exacerbations, says, 'It appears not a little extraordinary, that they now see nothing of these aggravations, of which only two years previously they were able daily to adduce several examples.' The explanation of this change he properly seeks in the preconceived notions of the practitioners." P. 146.

The one are as imaginary as the other—a phenomenon nowise unusual with day-dreamers—themselves creating what they see. Judge of the medical attainments of those, who set themselves

¹ But, perhaps, the lycopodium, or *club-moss*, would be more strictly HOMŒOPATHIC, not only because when low people fight, they generally do so with *clubs*, but because it has, if taken by a person in health, (if you believe the "star of truth,") the power of causing "thoughts preventing sleep; a capricious and irritable temper; morose, uneasy state of mind; a tendency to seek quarrels," &c. Now, we know that at this moment several of the homœopathic practitioners are "in a very uneasy state of mind, and have thoughts preventing sleep, ('Macbeth has murdered sleep!') and have shown a tendency to seek quarrels." See the *Medical Gazette*, vol. xxxi. p. 662, for the report, by a homœopathist, of the case of a lady of rank, recently deceased. Lastly, there is another reason for recommending lycopodium. We find it stated by a writer on the "pathogenetic effects of some homœopathic remedies," p. 176, among the symptoms this produces, is that of "seeing only one half of an object perpendicularly." This property decides the doubt in favour of lycopodium, for, as the homœopaths never see more than one half of a subject, under its use they may perhaps see the other. There are two subjects, however, of which their minds grasp the "totality,"—a fee, and the gullibility of the English. Is it strange that foreigners continue to flock to England, from the belief, prevalent from Hamlet's time, "that all the people are mad here?"

up as guides not merely to the public, but to well-informed men, by this:—

“It sometimes happens that the administration of a remedy is followed, not by an increase of the disease, but by the appearance of symptoms unconnected with the affection under treatment. We have seen, in a phthisical patient, hæmoptysis occur on three occasions, after the administration of phosphorus, and which never followed the employment of the other remedies. Hirsch has observed the same.” P. 147.

Hæmoptysis unconnected with phthisis!!! We must certainly go to school again!

After enumerating the articles of their materia medica, (p. 71), we have the following:—“Some other medicines, such as *actæa spicata*, &c., are now expelled from the materia medica, their pathogeneses being the invention of a Dr Fieckel.” Really! How do we know that the others are not pure inventions of Hahnemann and the other day-dreamers? What are the characteristics of a true pathogenesis? Had the numerous symptoms, enumerated as resulting from only one or two of the medicines tried, been real, is it possible that any human frame could have endured such protracted torture? The statement carries its own contradiction on its face.

To those, who like ourselves, have perused many homœopathic treatises, it is unspeakably amusing to observe what a variety of explanations are given of the (alleged) efficacy of the globules. The increase of surface resulting from the trituration with sugar of milk, is the one chiefly dwelt on by Dr Black, and he cites the observations of Professor Döppler in confirmation of his views. From him, he extracts the following choice *morceau*:—

“Proceeding on the moderate assumption, that by each trituration the particles are reduced to the hundredth part of their previous size, we shall find the surface of a medicine, originally a cube of an inch, will become, at the third trituration, equal to two square miles; at the fifth, to the Austrian dominions; at the sixth, to the area of Asia and Africa together; and at the ninth, to the united superficies of the sun, the planets, and their moons.”

Pro—di—gi—ous! as Dominie Sampson would say, who was well acquainted with the Hahnemannic principle of separating the syllables to increase the effect. Lord Byron once wished, that

——— “women had but one mouth,
That he might kiss them all at once from north to south.”

We know not what kind of mouths the believers in homœopathy may have; their *swallow*, however, must be tremendous, considering what doctrines and globules are gulped down. Professor Döppler, in the following language, cunningly insinuates, that after all, the globules may be inert,—“We have said sufficient to show, that if medicines act in virtue of their mass, the doses used in homœopathy must be quite inert; but if in proportion to their surface, they may be of tremendous potency.” Even the homœopathists themselves are beginning to desert the standard

of their master,—“Olfaction is a mode never to be resorted to; it is extremely uncertain, and possesses no advantage.” P. 161. So here is one bubble burst. Have the patients, credulous as they are, begun to *snuff* the absurdity of it?

But what is giving up this out-post, to the surrender of the citadel, the conceding the whole question in the following passages?—

“But at the same time that we consider homœopathy the most successful system, we admit, that there are some few cases in which we must have recourse to other measures. For example, in cases of poisoning, it is necessary to have recourse to emetics, or the stomach-pump, and then to counteract the effects of the poison by homœopathic means. In asphyxia, syncope, and such conditions, when the power of reaction is almost destroyed, it is necessary to have recourse to speedy stimuli, stimuli which cannot be afforded by homœopathic medicine. Numerous cases are on record of asphyxia of children being relieved by chamomilla. Petroz has given *bovista*, with great success, in asphyxia from the vapours of charcoal, and the *solanum mammosum* in asphyxia from drowning. Many cases have been given of apoplexy cured by *nux v.*, opium, belladonna, *cocculus*, &c. *In all these cases, however, a certain amount of reaction was manifested,*”

i. e. the patients were recovering before their *nihili-pilifying* treatment was begun. Observe the Jesuistry of the following:—

“But in cases where life seems almost extinguished, the ordinary measures must be employed. Nay, according to the opinion of some homœopaths, there are instances in which blood-letting acts beneficially in rousing the vital activity; but this reaction once established, we fall back upon the employment of specific remedies. When offending matter exists in the stomach, or intestinal canal, the first step is to get rid of them by an emetic or gentle aperient, such as castor oil, and then to treat homœopathically any effects they may have caused.”

That is, all that is really required is to be accomplished by allopathic means, and then homœopathy is to step in, and modestly claim the merit of the cure. Having so often disagreed with our author, it is truly refreshing to find a passage in which we cordially agree with him,—agree with him as completely as adjective with its substantive, and as we are sure every person will do,—except those so deservedly denounced.

“There is a class of practitioners who merit the indignation of every right-minded man,—a class who, viewing medicine only as a trade, a mere barter for pounds, shillings, pence, (aye, even pence, think of that!) act obsequiously as the patient wishes; at his desire their practice is either homœopathic or allopathic; such unprincipled conduct admits of no apology.” P. 163.

How grievous it is to think that any of the students of the *reine arznennüttellehre*, the *materia medica pura*, that employs a mortar of sugar of milk to grind the globules in, lest aught impure should mix with the primitive material, to think that any of them should so

Fall under the power of avarice—that demon bold
Who ranges earth with never-dying force,

as, for the sake of filthy lucre, Judas-like, to betray their mas-

ter,—the venerable the much-enduring,—Hahnemann. *Proh! pudor.* Nevertheless, they act wisely in their generation, for they can read the signs of the times, and know well that the days of homœopathy are numbered. They have discovered that the gullible persons among the people of England, constitute what the mathematicians term “a fixed quantity.” They have little cause to be proud of their adherents, since, on inquiry, they will be found either to have deserted some other cause, some “universal” remedy, such as Morrison’s pills, or white mustard seed, before joining the homœopathic standard, or, what is of far greater concernment to the dealers in “small notions,” as the Americans would call the globules, are ready to pass over to any bold charlatan who will offer them any thing new; exactly resembling those described by the poet:

——— At night,
Some praised at morning what they blamed,
But always think *the last opinion right*;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their sides.

That the homœopathic practitioners are thrust down from the high places they had once scrambled up to, is well known. Their reverend chaplain boasted a few years ago, that “queens” were its nursing mothers. Here he unfortunately reckoned without his “host;” for our patriot king soon drove them out with words more becoming a sailor than a prince.¹ We never find a “bulletin” (a document the homœopaths will be shy of in future,) respecting that illustrious lady, signed by any of them,—as good sense has triumphed over national feeling. A gallant marquis went lately to great Malvern, to see what the “water doctor” could do for his “uncured” neuralgia. But “a heavy blow and great discouragement” has been dealt to them by the decease of a lady of high rank.

A German historian, speaking of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, says truly, that more terror was inspired by the death of *one* person of such exalted rank, than would have resulted from the execution of hundreds of a lower. So this tragic event has done more to open the eyes of the credulous people of this country, than a hecatomb of inferior victims. It is easy to foresee that homœopathy, as an engine of empiricism, is on its last legs, and that it will find its true euthanasia in hydropathy,—by which we shall get rid of a pestilent humour, just as our ancestors freed themselves of a brawling disturber of the public peace, by means of the ducking-stool.

¹ King W—— said “he would have no d—d German nonsense in his Palace.”

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