

The errors of homoeopathy / by C.J. Barr Meadows.

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THE
ERRORS OF HOMŒOPATHY.

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SERVICE OF H. M.'S EAST INDIAN GOVERNMENT;
ETC., ETC., ETC.

Hominis errare, insipientis vero in errore perseverare.

LONDON:
HENRY RENSHAW, 356, STRAND.

1861.

R33045

P R E F A C E.

DID Homœopathy rely alone on reason for support, its very inanity would obviate all necessity of refutation; for, though belief in things incomprehensible may, and ever will, retain a place amongst mankind, scientific ignorance is fast dissolving before the light of knowledge.

But when its professors, forced to acknowledge its failure as a scientific truth, fall back on credulity and superstition for support, and holding up *Similia*—this modern serpent, like to its predecessor in nothing but the brass—claim its acknowledgment as a truth of divine origin, “a Great Something,” “God’s universal and inflexible law of cure,” etc., we feel it time to interfere; and though we must needs pity a system reduced to seek safety in something very similar to religious enthusiasm and blasphemy, we hesitate and postpone no longer its exposure.

Impressed with the conviction that those persons endowed with common-sense to whom this is particularly addressed, neither require, nor would read, a lengthened dissertation on such a subject, we have condensed as much as possible our remarks, and leave to our Homœopathic neighbours any more prolix exposition of their views, well aware of their great aptitude in literature as in medicine for dilution and attenuation.

CHESTER TERRACE,
EATON SQUARE, S.W.

THE ERRORS
OF
HOMŒOPATHY.

“HOMŒOPATHY is either a huge lie, or a divine truth!”
So writes Dr. Eadon. But what is Homœopathy? The invention, discovery, or hallucination, of one Hahnemann, a German, by whom it was promulgated as a new system of medicine.

He inculcated that, as various medicinal agents are capable of producing in a healthy person symptoms similar to those presented by disease, so every disease is capable of being cured by such medicine as would produce symptoms analogous to those by which it is

characterized. “*Similia similibus curantur*”—likes by likes are cured—such is the dogma.

Thus the fundamental principle of Hahnemann led naturally and of necessity to the enunciation of the efficacy of infinitesimal doses. “When Hahnemann first commenced to prescribe in accordance with the valuable law which he had propounded,—viz., ‘that diseases should be cured by like agents, which, when exhibited to the healthy in comparatively large and frequent doses, are capable of producing effects analogous (or similar) thereto,’ he employed the same doses as are ordinarily used in the old mode of practice ; but from the circumstance that these, *when given in accordance with the above law*, were repeatedly productive of serious constitutional disturbance, he commenced to administer the remedies in smaller and smaller quantities, until at length he fell upon the plan of seeking to moderate their activity by adding a non-medicinal substance to the medicine, in certain proportions, and then again adding and subdividing until the proportion of medicine was reduced to an extremely minute quantity. At first he limited himself in preparing these dilutions or attenuations (or

“potencies), to mingling intimately and carefully, by
“rubbing and pounding for a given period, one grain
“of the medicinal substance (as for instance sulphur)
“with ninety-nine grains of the non-medicinal material
“(sugar of milk), and prescribing a very small quantity
“of this preparation in the cases under his treatment ;
“but on finding that the medicine, even in this attenu-
“ated form, still repeatedly produced too powerful an
“effect, he further prepared a second attenuation, by
“taking one grain of the first, as above prepared, and
“adding it to and carefully mixing it with other ninety-
“nine grains of sugar of milk ; and then a *third*, by
“again taking one grain of the foregoing, and triturating
“it with ninety-nine fresh grains of sugar of milk. In
“the case of vegetable substances (such as Aconitum),
“he took one drop of the strong tincture, and mixed it
“intimately by powerful succussion with ninety-nine
“drops of pure alcohol, to form the first attenuation,
“and so on.

“Notwithstanding the minute subdivision of the
“medicine in the third attenuation, Hahnemann still
“found it occasionally too active, and was thereby
“induced to go on from attenuation to attenuation, in

“ the hope of arriving at a point at which the medi-
 “ cines might be administered without the risk of pro-
 “ ducing those painful and *dangerous* aggravations
 “ which followed the employment of the *ordinary doses*
 “ of such medicines as Arsenic, Mercury, Belladonna,
 “ etc., etc. But even the thirtieth attenuation (formerly
 “ the limit determined by Hahnemann) far from having
 “ lost all efficacy, is in reality perhaps more frequently
 “ productive of too energetic an effect than the lower
 “ attenuations (viz. the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th, &c.); pro-
 “ vided always, as before remarked, it is administered
 “ in accordance with the law of similitudes, alias the
 “ law for the selection of specifics.”*

Here we have acknowledged the fact that medicines,
 when administered on Homœopathic principles in large
 or ordinary doses,—such doses, in fact, as produce effects
 similar or simulating the symptoms of the disease for
 which Hahnemann recommended them,—are anything
 but curative in their action, causing rather “ *dangerous*
 aggravations.”

Such being the case, and the fallacy of the new
 theory so sadly apparent, it is not to be wondered at,

* Dr. Laurie's Epitome of Homœopathic Domestic Medicine.

that, in infinitesimal or impotent doses, he sought to hide the self-evident contradiction of his own invention.

But here again arose another difficulty: how to gain belief in inert quantities of medicines? To avoid “dangerous aggravations” of the disease, the dose must be inoperative; but how gain credence in the curative properties of an infinitesimal dose?

Mark well the species of argument by which this is sought to be explained! “The advantage of the above
“ mode of preparation is not confined to the *tasteless-*
“ *ness* and *smallness*, yet sufficiency, of the dose; for it
“ is, moreover, placed beyond the pale of dispute that,
“ as a very general rule, this minute subdivision and
“ segregation of the particles renders the medicines
“ *more efficacious* than when they are administered in
“ a cruder form, even though in accordance with the
“ law of similarities.

“ Further, an acquisition of very important medica-
“ ments is thus obtained, and which would otherwise
“ have remained as useless to the homœopathist as they
“ are to the allopathist—we allude to such substances
“ as *Charcoal*, *Lycopodium* (chiefly employed by our

“ allopathic brethren as a non-medicinal covering for
“ pills), *Chalk, Platinum, etc., etc.*, which in their
“ native state possess little or no medicinal power, but
“ nevertheless become valuable and powerful medicines
“ after trituration.

“ The fact that the *attenuations* are, generally speak-
“ ing, of greater efficacy in the treatment of disease
“ than the primitive unattenuated or undiluted medi-
“ cinal substances, has led to the supposition that the
“ medicinal particles are not only rendered more
“ potently curative, and, it may be added, more capable
“ of being absorbed into the system, by being so
“ minutely subdivided, but that a medicinal property
“ is thereby communicated to the entire mass of
“ the vehicle (or matter with which the medicine is
“ mixed up, viz., the sugar of milk, or the spirits of
“ wine) ; and consequently, that the doses employed in
“ Homœopathy are in reality not so extremely small as
“ would seem apparent. The transmission of medi-
“ cinal virtue from attenuation to attenuation has been
“ considered by many to depend on magnetic influence,
“ and the preparation of Homœopathic medicines likened
“ unto that of artificial magnets. A natural magnet

“ can effectually magnetize thousands of bars of steel,
“ and these in their turn can be made to impart their
“ properties to an unlimited number of others. Again,
“ as in the process of rendering the tempered steel
“ magnetic, it is *essential to rub it with care in a cer-*
“ *tain direction* for the purpose of endowing it with
“ the same properties as the loadstone ; in like manner,
“ unless the homœopathic remedies are prepared in the
“ *peculiar mode recommended by Hahnemann* and others,
“ their integrity is prone to be seriously impaired, if
“ not utterly destroyed.

“ Without wishing to place any particular stress
“ upon the circumstance, the author may yet be per-
“ mitted to wind up this subject by appending what
“ may be considered as a sort of rough analogy to the
“ maintenance of medicinal power throughout a series
“ of homœopathic attenuations ; viz., when, in the
“ making of bread according to the usual method, it is
“ impossible to procure yeast, or any other substance
“ which is capable of producing fermentation, as is fre-
“ quently the case on board ship at sea, it is customary
“ to retain a small portion of the dough which has
“ previously undergone fermentation, (from the action

“ of yeast or other leaven which has been the medium
“ of accomplishing the desired object in the first in-
“ stance), in order that it may be thrown amongst the
“ flour and water required for the next batch, to com-
“ municate its borrowed properties to the mass, and so
“ on successively for a considerable period. May it
“ not be questioned here also, by those who are always
“ so ready to sneer at the Homœopathic attenuations,
“ how much of the *original leaven* could there be
“ detected in the ultimate mass of matter which has
“ been caused to ferment by the agency of the small
“ piece of dough kept back from the preceding
“ lump?”*

So that we are expected to understand that infinitesimal doses are more powerful, because more readily absorbed into the system, than ordinary doses ;—now if dilution facilitates absorption in this manner, how is it that contagions are universally allowed to be rendered more or less active in proportion as the ventilation is efficient or otherwise? “The most important practical
“ results of the experiments made by Dr. Haygarth, and
“ others, for determining the absolute distances to which

* Dr. Laurie.

“ the power of the contagion extends in different dis-
 “ orders, was, that *where ventilation is complete*, in other
 “ words, where the gaseous poison is freely diluted with
 “ atmospheric air, the sphere of its operation is very
 “ limited.”* But were it otherwise, we are told that
 the less easily absorbed, and consequently less powerful,
 ordinary doses, are obliged to be diminished to prevent
 their “ too energetic effect.” Ordinary doses are too
 energetic and cause “ dangerous aggravations ;” there-
 fore dilute, and so give them more potency to prevent
 this result. Surely stricture of the œsophagus has no
 place in the nosology of Homœopathy !

The *second* plea put forward to substantiate the
 efficacy of infinitesimal doses, is the supposed commu-
 nication of properties from the medicinal substance
 to the non-medicinal vehicle, so that “ the doses em-
 “ ployed in Homœopathy are in reality not so extremely
 “ small as would seem apparent.” The logic of this is
 about on a par with that of the preceding proposition.
 What, in the name of reason, is the use of all these
 rubbings with care in a certain direction—to the left,

* Lectures on the Principles and Practice of Physic, by Thomas
 Watson, M.D., Physician Extraordinary to the Queen, etc., etc., etc.

we presume—if, after all, the medicinal property is communicated to the entire mass? Surely it would save a vast amount of time and trouble to omit the complicated process and administer the original substance!

But how is this imaginary communication of properties sought to be accounted for? By imagining a process similar to fermentation, or an action like unto that of communication of magnetic influence from the loadstone to bars of steel; so that the clients of the Homœopaths are again offered a selection of suppositions—*they pay their money and they make their choice*. Magnetic influence, however, it should be remembered, is not a property communicable from the loadstone to indifferent substances. An iron ore itself, iron alone is capable of borrowing its properties. So also with yeast or leaven: a substance in the act of decomposition, it is reproduced by its admixture with, and action upon, a liquid or substance, *of which its own constituents* form an integral part, its addition to other matters wanting this essential—similitude of constitution—is not followed by any such augmentation or multiplication, even though fermentation be produced. Thus, the addition of yeast to a solution of sugar (such solution

being free from gluten), will give rise to alcoholic fermentation; but, instead of being augmented during the process, the yeast will disappear. Does, then, this similarity of constitution exist between alcohol or sugar of milk and *all* the Homœopathic medicinal substances? Certainly not. This assumption of the transmission of properties is but, in fact, a reproduction and revival of the theory of transmutations which, in ages past, existed in the visions of the alchemists. Reason and science have long since proved that chemical decomposition is the only transformation possible in nature; whilst identity of property is an impossibility, unless combined with identity of composition.

Personal experience being at all times preferable to precept or to theory, let the man who believes otherwise make the experiment; let him try if, with the most careful rubbing and preparation, he can succeed in communicating the physical and chemical properties—upon which their medicinal action depends—from arsenic or gold to the unlike vehicle, sugar of milk. One grain of gold, and one ton of the vehicle, should exhibit him a Cræsus, or should prove him—something else.

Vaccination also is claimed as “an operation purely

Homœopathic," and also, probably as an instance of the potency of minute doses. To explain the fallacy of such an assumption, it is necessary to understand the nature of the vaccine virus, and its mode of action.

First, then, Variola or Small-pox is one of those diseases to which we apply the term "zymotic;" that is to say, it is occasioned by a virus or poison introduced from without into the system, where, coming in contact with *its own original elements*, it communicates to them its particular action, viz., fermentation or decomposition.

This process of alteration once commenced, ceases not until the whole of such ingredients contained in the body are involved; nor does the disease or constitutional disturbance induced, terminate, until such altered matter is expelled.

These elements, which originally entered into the composition of the blood as component parts, once eliminated, it follows that no contagion, natural or artificial, can again give rise to the disease; unless, indeed, these self-same ingredients should be spontaneously reproduced, and, after the lapse of time, again become subjected to the action of the poison to which they hold such definite relationship.

Cow-pox and Small-pox are essentially the same disease—the vaccine virus the same as the virus of small-pox, but rendered mild by passing through the system of the cow; so that in the operation of vaccination we introduce a modified variolus poison into the blood, by which means a modified fermentative action is induced, and the elimination of those peculiar elements necessary to the propagation and multiplication of the Small-pox poison being effected, no infection need afterwards be dreaded: the combustible matter absent, ignition is impossible.

This explanation of the nature of the vaccine virus at once explains how so small a portion of the matter used in inoculation is capable of giving rise to effects tantamount to those that would equally ensue were the agent exhibited in larger quantity. With regard to the assumption of vaccination as a Homœopathic measure, what possible connection can there exist between its prophylactic or preventive action and the *cure* of Small-pox? For *were it* curative in that disease, it would still be no proof of Similia, but rather would tend to shew that sames were cured by sames; whilst, if “likes by likes are cured,” and if even Cow-pox is not identical

but only similar to Small-pox, then should the former be *curative*, and not preventive only, of the latter disease.

Few men have suffered more in the cause of humanity than Edward Jenner. In life the subject of ingratitude and neglect—in death he should at least be free from thus having posthumous honours thrust upon him, and his name emblazoned amongst infinitesimal celebrities as a practitioner of Similia. Thus runs the proverb, “De mortuis nil nisi bonum.”

But, alas! *we are remembered* that certain therapeutical agents are removed beyond the reach of *our* ill-used patients; however, let them not be downcast at the melancholy announcement—in ordinary doses “they possess little or no medicinal power,”—*the Homœopaths* administer their remedies to remove similar symptoms to those produced in health by their exhibition—*ergo*, as in health they produce no symptoms, so there can exist no disease for them to cure.

The insupportable argument of infinitesimal sufficiency, and the evident ill effects of the system when carried out with ordinary doses, leave the disciples of Hahnemann in a predicament, resembling somewhat

the uncomfortable position of Midas when judging between Pan and Apollo. Like him they desert the sciences,—have they a like reward?

Minimum doses are evidently very convenient in practice, and very unnecessary in theory; and we have two divisions of the Homœopathic world, comprising those who accept the infinitesimal theory, and are skin-proof against any amount of reasoning or ridicule, and those who, discarding this portion of the creed of their “immortal master,” care not for “dangerous aggravations,” provided it proves to their own profit and edification—which no doubt it does.

But there is a third and still more remarkably ingenious method by which to escape from between this Charybdis and Scylla in the road to Homœopathic distinction. Thus a gentleman of this persuasion manfully defends his sect: “The practice of medicine, according
“ to the law of similars, alone constitutes Homœopathy;
“ whether the medicine be given in large or in small
“ doses has nothing to do with the question of Principle.
“ The dose given may be a *globule*, or a *pill the size of*
“ *an orange*, or a mixture with a single drop of the
“ mother tincture, or one with two-thirds tincture and

“ one-third water ; and yet the practice in each alike
“ is Homœopathy. The medicines may be given in
“ their poisonous forms, or so dynamized that the
“ poisonous quantities may be reduced to their mini-
“ mum point of intensity, while, during the process,
“ thousands of new surfaces may be developed, pos-
“ sessing transcendental recuperative powers : and yet
“ medicine when given in either of these two forms—
“ the crude or the dynamised—if administered accord-
“ ing to the law of Similia, would be strictly in accord-
“ ance with Homœopathy. The medicines may be
“ given separately, or those which are analogues in
“ alternation, either with a long or a shorter time
“ intervening, and, if administered on the law of simi-
“ lars, this practice would be perfectly Homœopathic.
“ The same medicine which is given internally may be
“ applied externally or locally, so as to be taken up by
“ the absorbents ; and yet, if given on God’s inflexible
“ law of ‘ similars,’ this practice also would be legiti-
“ mate Homœopathy. The medicine may be given by
“ olfaction, as was often done by Hahnemann ; or
“ ordered to be taken by this self-same Hahnemann,
“ as in the case of his friend the Rector of Wickwar,

“ in two-grain doses and each mode is purely Homœo-
“ pathic, and was the practice even of the great founder
“ of Homœopathy himself. The Homœopathic law—
“ to practise according to which is alone Homœopathy
“ —hath its adjuncts and accessories. But these
“ adjuncts or appendages are not that Great Something
“ of which they are the mere adjunct or appendage.
“ One might as well confound the trappings of a horse
“ with the horse itself; the material body with the
“ mighty internal spirit which is its great motive
“ power; the planets, with the great central sun
“ around which they revolve—as confound the law of
“ healing—God’s inflexible and invariable law of Cure—
“ with a number of adjuncts or accessories which ex-
“ perience has suggested, the better to work out the
“ law with greater effect, and make more apparent to
“ the minds of men that its origin is divine.”

In a word, Homœopaths may administer ordinary doses of medicines *which they* consider to produce symptoms like to those presented by the disease, but when these give rise to “dangerous aggravations” they are to be diluted to that degree that they no longer produce their ill effects. Truly a most satisfactory

reading of the "divine truth," promulgated by the "immortal Hahnemann!" The Rational system of Medicine is true Homœopathy whilst its measures can in any manner be construed as Similia; but infinitesimals are preferable when Similia otherwise applied would cause "serious constitutional disturbance."

The attenuations being thus accepted or rejected as they are essential or otherwise, let us turn our attention to the principle—that "Great Something"—"God's inflexible and invariable law of cure," about which there is or should be no discord amongst the *followers*: "Similia similibus curantur"—likes by likes are cured. Then to cure a symptom, or a disease presenting a set of symptoms, it is but reasonable to suppose that a medicine should be given *in such a manner* that it would in a healthy person cause a state resembling that we desire to remedy.

But unfortunately the medicines which are said to produce symptoms having some degree of similarity to those of the idiopathic or natural disorder, *so given*, cause "dangerous aggravation," instead of amelioration. What then?—dilute, diminish, give a smaller dose;—still aggravating "aggravation" is the result; again

diminish, then again dilute, until at length it no longer produces these effects—*now*, the disease no longer made worse, may or may not get better.

But would this diminished dose produce symptoms analogous in a healthy person? By no means. Where then the like that is to cure the like? Rather is it not evident that the more *unlike* the original dose—that supposed capable of giving rise to symptoms resembling the disease—the more it is calculated to serve as a Homœopathic (Hahnemannian) remedy?

No argument seems required to show that, however much likeness there may have originally existed between the symptoms of the disease and those produceable by the action of the remedial agent in its undiluted state, that such similarity has, by excessive dilution of the medicinal substance, long ceased to obtain. Verily, if we are wrong, oh, Paterfamilias, look to your brewer's bill; expend no more your hard-earned cash on treble X; buy single, dilute it well, and learn to know, that its fifth, fifteenth, or fiftieth attenuation, has the same properties, actions, and effects, as your best October.

A few globules equivalent to a millionth part of a

grain of Belladonna, will, if taken by a healthy person, produce just no effects at all ; how then, on the principle of Similia, are they likely to prove of service in scarlatina, or other disease having a symptomatic cutaneous eruption ? In large doses it is true that Belladonna may cause a rash upon the skin, with redness and dryness of the throat and fauces ; and so would, indeed, give rise to symptoms *thus far resembling* scarlet fever. The Homœopaths, however, do not so exhibit it, but order it in quantities whose effects upon the healthy subject would be nil,—inappreciable, or at any rate, by no means similar.

“ Alas ! to think how people’s creeds
Are contradicted by people’s deeds ! ”

Again, What is likeness ? Merely an arbitrary and indefinable quality. A sixpence and a half-crown piece are, in many respects alike ; yet offer the former to a Hansom cabman in lieu of a two-shilling fare, and see if its effects upon his general œconomy at all approximate in similarity to the action of the *larger* coin. The carnivorous propensities of certain little creatures, impolite to name, give rise to sensations and appearances not unlike symptoms of disease ; whilst the common

stinging-nettle, coming in contact with the skin, produces an eruption so similar to urticaria (nettle-rash), as to have furnished the very name for that disorder. Yet, in their wildest moments, the most bigoted of Homœopaths would pause, we imagine, ere he ordered these as remedial agents.

Nor do Homœopathic medicinal agents,—not even Charcoal or Lycopodium,—differ materially from ordinary substances exhibited in infinitesimal quantities. Should the reader wish for personal experience of the effects of the millionth part of a grain of Charcoal or of Arsenic, he may, with perfect safety, swallow the dose, nor fear injury, however delicate his organization.

“ When, in the treatment of a disease, the wrong
“ remedy has been selected,—*i. e.* a remedy which is not
“ in accordance with the said law (Similia),—no effect
“ will be produced, even though the entire contents of
“ one of the small bottles usually contained in the Ho-
“ mœopathic boxes of medicine have been swallowed.”*

In spite of this testimony to the harmless nature of Homœopathic remedies, we have a few words of caution to offer those fervent converts and amateur physicians,

* Dr. Laurie.

who walk abroad, seeking, not whom they may devour, but some one—any one—willing to devour their globules. You may not, it is true, prove active agents of destruction; but your benevolence and enthusiasm will not always prevent your actions, passive though they be, from aiding the destructive onroads of disease and death.

We would not willingly wound the feelings of any; but, reader, should it have been your misfortune to have attempted the alleviation of disease with the most harmless of globules, and, after all, to have suffered the mortification of having to call to your aid Allopathic interference; still worse should that Allopathic interference have been postponed until too late; we beg of you, pause ere you again prescribe, nor suffer valuable time to pass in futile and trifling interference, when early and rational aid may prove efficient.

Disease may be said to consist in some deviation from the natural sensations or actions of the living body; such functional disorder being either independent of, or accompanied by, organic alteration.

These deviations from healthy or natural conditions depend upon derangement of vital force, and constitute

examples of altered vital action ; they may arise from causes directly affecting the suffering organs, or such as primarily influence the nervous centres, or produce disorder of the circulating fluids.

The symptoms of disease in any tissue are always examples of increased, decreased, or deranged function ; and these alterations in the functional activity of organs and tissues will, if violent or long-continued, give rise to mischief in the part affected.

Medicinal substances also possess the power of producing phenomena of a corresponding character with disease ; thus their action is modified by the same causes—degree and continuance ; they each give rise to alterations of vital action (which are exhibited in symptoms), and be this evinced in superfunctional activity or the contrary, reaction is equally a consequence or effect.

This similarity of action between therapeutical and natural agents is, however, no argument in favour of Similia. Two like forces acting in the same direction do so with increased power : thus medicines having a similar action with the disease give rise to “ dangerous aggravations,” and it is only when two

contrary forces of equal power are *opposed* that equilibrium is perfect.

Alternation of effect is common to both disease and medicines; the secondary effect, or stage of re-action, being exactly opposite in character to the primary action. Therefore, as during the progress of a disease its action is changed, its effects and symptoms different, so a remedy similar in action to the primary stage of disorder may prove beneficial when reaction has taken place; or a remedy of like nature to the secondary diseased action may prove curative *because contrary* in the primary stage; but there will still be no greater contrariety between the primary and secondary actions of the disease, than between the nature of the remedy and that stage of disorder in which its power is curative.

Let us suppose that the system generally is suffering from the effects of some morbid influence, as typhus fever. This will be denoted by symptoms differing not only as to the severity of the infection, the age, strength, and constitution of the patient, etc., but more particularly according to the stage of the disease. Thus if in the first stage we shall observe the varied

symptoms denoting excitement of the vascular and disturbed functional activity of the nervous system, "the patient is hot, flushed perhaps, and thirsty, and "he has a frequent and hard pulse. Besides this he "manifests indifference and stupor; his senses are "blunted; his intelligence is diminished."* Does it not strike you at once that these, the ordinary symptoms of the first stage of typhus, are precisely similar to those following the imbibition of a large quantity of stimulants? Should we, then, fly to these as remedies on the principle of Similia? Decidedly not. Exhibited *now*, they would without doubt produce a most dangerous aggravation. True, we do administer stimulants in typhus, but it is when the action of the disease is changed in character, and the symptoms exhibit quite opposite phenomena; when nervous debility has succeeded to nervous excitement; when there is no longer evidence of increased but rather of diminished vascular action; when, in short, symptoms are present diametrically contrary to those following the exhibition of stimulants in health.

Medicinal substances we have before mentioned as

* Dr. Thomas Watson.

having a primary and secondary action, such actions differing more as they are exhibited in greater or less quantity, and under varied circumstances.

Let us for example take Opium. Given in a dose sufficiently large it produces sleep. Will, then, a large dose, such in fact as would give rise to symptoms similar to those present in an apoplectic comatose condition, improve or restore a person so situate? Or will a small dose, such as would act as a stimulant and excitant in health, be a fitting quantity to compose the wakeful victim of delirium tremens? Constipation is the ordinary consequence of the administration of this drug; it may, however, under certain circumstances, and in certain definite conditions, produce an entirely contrary effect. Again, it may give rise to or relieve sickness, cause or cure headache or delirium, augment or diminish secretion, etc., etc.; its action depending upon the how, when, and wherefore of its administration. Thus, to say that any medicine is of necessity curative, under all circumstances, in any disease, is simply nonsense.

Let us take an example of the practical working of Similia; or, more properly speaking, let us endeavour

to obtain an insight in to the nature of Homœopathists' ideas of similarity. "The peculiar property," writes Dr. Laurie, "which Cantharis, or Spanish blistering fly, possesses of creating a severe burning pain, followed by the effusion of watery fluid beneath the scarf-skin, bears so close an analogy to the effects of a burn or scald, with the formation of vesication or blisters, that we can readily conceive it well adapted, according to the Homœopathic law, to be an admirable remedy in lesions of the said description."

At first sight this appears exceedingly feasible; but when we come to the practical application of this "admirable remedy," we are somewhat startled at our directions and its mode of action. We are to use "the second attenuation of the tincture of Cantharides in weak brandy," and pieces of linen saturated with this *highly vesicant* and attenuated tincture "ought to be as frequently renewed as the patient desires," it being of great importance in severe cases, that the continuous application should be proceeded with throughout the first night after the accident." Now, when we consider that the second attenuation of the tincture of Cantharides contains something less than one drop of

the original tincture to the pint, and when we know that weak brandy, applied in the manner directed, quickly evaporates, we see at once that this great *Homœopathic* remedy resolves itself into a simple evaporating or *cold lotion*.

Again, as an instance of the varied action of remedies depending upon the mode of their application, and as also showing the *ingenuous* and *reliable* nature of Homœopathic assertions and provings, let us suppose a person to have been exposed to such an amount of cold, frost or snow for instance, and for such a length of time, as to have caused what is commonly known as frost-bite. Now, for this condition the proper treatment consists in the application of such means as are capable of producing a moderate degree of reaction, and to accomplish this object we commence by *rubbing* the frost-bitten part with snow, and as vitality returns we substitute cold water for the snow, and employ a greater amount of friction, and so on, until sufficient reaction has taken place.

Now, this is one of many Homœopathic practices imputed to us by the disciples of Hahnemann. You apply cold, say they, to cure a condition produced by

cold. What reasoning!—what scientific knowledge!—what wisdom! to uphold a “divine truth.” Know ye not, *ye profound and learned doctors*, who claim such deep insight into the principles of Nature, that cold is but a relative term? Are you not aware that friction calls forth caloric? And can you not perceive that we use the snow and the water to counteract and moderate the *heat* produced by friction? Heat, therefore, it is, we bring to bear upon the frozen part, moderated by the cold water and the snow, lest excessive reaction should give rise to inflammation.

But were it otherwise; did we indeed cure cold with cold, what has that to do with Similia? You yourselves ignore curing sames by sames, lest you be requested to remove diseases by the aid of those very agents affecting their production, and are necessitated to the indefinite distance of similarity; yet you would hold forth as an instance that “likes by likes are cured,” the imaginary case of cold being cured by cold. Oh! fie!—at least be honest, though you seem to own

“Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise.”

Here then, it is, that practitioners of Rational Medi-

cine differ from the disciples of Hahnemann. They study the action of morbid agents on the various tissues ; learn from Physiology and Pathology the alterations in function and structure arising from disease ; and from these data elucidating the reason of these changes, seek in the *known* and *proved* action of remedies, to prevent, resolve, or palliate, the abnormal conditions which give rise to symptoms.

“ Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through Nature up to Nature’s God.”

Not so the followers of Hahnemann. They profess to be guided and to judge from symptoms only, forgetting that *similar* symptoms may be indicative of many dissimilar conditions ; whilst, lighted by that *ignis fatuus* Similia, they administer remedies which they choose to think capable of producing like symptoms in health, but which are equally liable to give rise to effects of an entirely contrary nature.

“ Here she beholds the chaos dark and deep,
Where nameless somethings in their causes sleep,

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“ Here one poor word a hundred clenches makes,
And ductile dulness new meanders takes ;
There motley images her fancy strike,
Figures ill-pair'd, and similes unlike.”

But not content with the endeavour to palm off their “ Great Something” as a scientific system, they wish to take still higher ground, and claim for it acknowledgment as a truth of Divine origin.

A truth to be divine must be of universal application; less than universal, it ceases to be truth. Is, then, Similia a truth of universal application? Will any known medicinal agents induce a diseased condition similar to croup, diabetes, carditis, hæmoptysis, pneumonia, peritonitis, orchitis, jaundice, etc., etc.? And if so, will such medicines cure these diseases? Who will dare to answer this straightforwardly in the affirmative? Are these diseases then, incapable of relief or cure from medicine? By no means, but Similia is evidently a very imperfect principle.

Again, I ask the Homœopaths a question. Is colchicum of benefit in gout, or quinine in ague? If so, how is it that you are unable to cause with these medicines, given in any manner, symptoms similar to

ague or to gout? Are there then two *and two contrary* principles in Medicine?

“Homœopathy is either a huge lie, or a Divine truth.”

But we shall no doubt be asked, how is it that cures *are* effected under Homœopathic treatment, if its principles and its practice are so entirely opposed to reason and to common-sense?

Not for one moment do we deny that recoveries may, and doubtless do, take place in Homœopathic practice. But, gentle reader, if you are a convert to Similia, more particularly if you have—or, what is much the same thing, if you fancy you have—been benefited by an infinitesimal dose, are you prepared to hear it hinted that you would probably be in an equally satisfactory state of health had your globules been omitted?

Time, Faith, and Nature, rank foremost amongst curative agents; essential to all systems. Homœopathy has much to be thankful that they exert their kindly influences alike impartially in favour of scientific Medicine, and the vilest Empiricism.

Truth to say, Civilization, which has done so much towards ennobling mankind, has brought with it not

only greater appreciation of the refined and the intellectual, but, from the excitement and over-straining of the mental faculties to which it has given rise, in the pursuit of knowledge, of pleasure, and of wealth, and from the unnatural and artificial habits it has encouraged, it has laid the foundation of much bodily disease.

Allowing these facts, it is not difficult to understand how avoidance of undue excitement, and the return to habits and pursuits of a natural character, by removing the causes at work in the production and maintenance of disease, may not unfrequently, alone, or under any expectant mode of treatment, prove capable of relief and cure.

“ Know, all the good that individuals find,
Or God or Nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason’s whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.
But health consists with temperance alone.”

We know that Homœopathic practitioners have a most decided objection to acknowledge the greatness of their obligations to abstinence and dietetic regulations, though they strongly insist upon the necessity of

following certain rules whilst under their system of treatment; they would have their patients to consider the avoidance of certain articles of food, etc., as necessary to the action of their remedial agents—in other words, that they place their veto against them, because they would counteract the effects of some potent globule; whereas these very errors of diet are not infrequently *the cause* upon which the disease is dependent.

Amongst the *few* things these gentlemen proscribe, may be enumerated, green or strong black tea, coffee, malt liquors, wine, spirits, and stimulants of every description; lemonade, acid, or alkaline drinks; natural or artificial mineral waters; pork, young meats, ducks, geese, eels, salmon, shell fish; all kinds of salted, pickled, potted, or smoked fish; stimulating soups, high seasoned or rich made-dishes; onions, garlic, eschalots, asparagus, radishes, horseradish, celery, parsley, mint, sage, mushrooms, tomatoes, cucumbers, beet-root, and cresses; acids, mustard, pepper, pickles, salads, and melons; nuts of every description, confectionery, pastry, and honey, etc., etc.

Abstinence to the above extent, especially in the case

of those who are given to the luxuries of the table, cannot fail *in all cases* to produce no inconsiderable effect or alterative action in the system ; whilst in the minor or more trivial disorders, and in those arising from the ingestion of indigestible substances, the avoidance of these agents is no doubt *alone* capable of ensuring a natural and favorable termination.

Orthodox practitioners are not unmindful of the value of temperance, but differ inasmuch as their prohibitions in diet are not quite so indiscriminate, but guided rather by the nature and circumstances of individual cases.

But Faith, and the effects of the imagination, we opine, are the chief benefactors of these wondrous globules. We smile at the remembrance of our forefathers' credulity and superstition ; but it is very questionable if their belief in talismans, amulets, and charms ; in love philters, and nativities, the king's cure, or the rubbing and tickling of Greatrakes ; to say nothing of the liniment of Long, the painted nails of Perkins, and the mummeries of Mesmer ; were more ridiculous and puerile than the many impostures of our own times.

That many of these so-called systems have partaken,

may, do partake, much of the ridiculous is certain; yet, because, rather than in spite of this, they have proved in their day successful. "These apes' tricks are the main cause of the effect, our fancy being so far seduced as to believe that such strange and uncouth formalities must of necessity proceed from some abstruse science. Their very inanity gives them reverence and weight."*

Whatever can impose upon the mind belief,
 May to the body prove a source of good,
 For 'in one interest body acts with mind.'

Although from amongst the ignorant and the feeble-minded, Homœopathy, like all other false systems, must ever look to recruit its ranks, yet there remains another class of persons, whose very education, strange to say, renders them obnoxious to the wiles of falsehood and of quackery. An imposture not only requires for support much specious reasoning, but its acceptation is mainly dependent upon the partial knowledge in the possession of its dupes;—believing themselves wise they feel themselves competent judges upon any subject, and the pseudo-science put forth as argument by the

* Montaigne.

promulgators of some new doctrine, touching some chord in the circle of their acquirements, overpowers by its vibration their sense of prudence. One fact which they have learned, as for instance the transmission of magnetic influence, impresses upon them the conviction that the argument it is made to favour must be true.

Thus it is with the converts to Homœopathy: they read and listen to certain scientific facts—tortured and twisted to agree with Similia—until, from knowledge of the truth of the examples, they place implicit confidence in the theory deduced. The greater their acquaintance with other branches of Science, the more they are enabled to comprehend and appreciate the truth of facts; but, totally ignorant of the principles of scientific medicine, they know not that these are entirely inapplicable as examples of actions they are required to attest. Let such enquire and study the principles of Medicine; the scales will then drop from their eyes; ignorance banished, they will understand and see, and imposture stand revealed in all its unblushing impudence.

As we have so generously acknowledged an efficacy in Homœopathic treatment, (not in Homœopathy), we

would crave attention to a few words in favour of the "old method."

Allopathic practice, by which term we mean the practice of Orthodox Medicine, is not infrequently credited with a mortality "not all its own." Few persons are content to rely on globular medicine when undoubted indications of danger present themselves. It may, they think, do well enough when there is little the matter; but when critical symptoms appear, they fly by instinct, as it were, to the old system! That this application to scientific medicine is sometimes unavailing, is not so much a reproach to orthodoxy, as to that system through which much valuable time and opportunity has been sacrificed—the season of action—whilst yet energetic measures might have proved successful. It is a frequent boast of Homœopathic practitioners that their success under the new, is much greater than that they enjoyed under the old system of practice. We are quite ready to believe that some of them may, *in more ways than one*, have been unsuccessful in Allopathic practice; but let them not imagine that *this truth* is capable of but one interpretation. An old wife given to quackery gains more or less repu-

tation according to the instinct she displays in the selection of suitable cases, whilst the greater her success in their treatment—or, what is more nearly the truth, the less killed by her specifics—will depend materially upon the greater or less potency of the remedies employed. The intellect which can grasp *and believe* the Hahnemannian doctrines is scarcely of that order the most fitted to understand and apply orthodox medicine. Edged tools are unseemly for children; to a master they may prove instruments of value; the unlearned in their use may find them dangerous.

Allopathic remedies and doses are not only powerful to cure, but, misapplied, equally powerful to kill.

Enough, if not more than sufficient, has been said concerning the theory and practice of the Hahnemannian disciples, and were it on this alone that the Homœopathic professors founded their title to consideration, we had finished. Not so, however: the majority, alas! depend for respect upon licences and diplomas from those very colleges whose teachings and principles they affect to despise.

They feel that the public know and respect the

Allopathic credentials; nor do they fail to appreciate the value of instruments which connect them, no matter how remotely, with the "good men and true," whose signs-manual they bear—names alike brilliant in literature, honoured in medicine, and endeared to science.

Let these gentlemen remember how these testimonials were obtained—let them call to mind their then voluntary profession of Allopathic principles, nor forget the solemn promise they registered, to uphold and maintain the dignity of the institutions from which these emanated—then, considering the manner in which their actions have borne out their professions and fulfilled their trust, let their consciences acquit them—if they will.

But, if in their method there resides that intrinsic merit they profess, why not cast from them these badges of connection with a system which they contemn and affect to despise? No law exists to prevent any one from calling himself a Homœopathist, or practising as such: let them, therefore, avow themselves openly;—surely they need not shame of so great a master!—and boldly affixing to their doors "Mr. So-and-So, Homœopath,"

trust in their system and the respect of a British public for patrons, and in British credulity for fees.

That they might thereby be disabled from granting the necessary certificates of death, is the only reasonable objection that can be offered to this suggestion. Be that as it may, Allopathic qualifications are unfittingly made use of to guarantee the legality of Homœopathic practice.

Thus have we robbed Similia of its trappings,
Its base assumptions, and presumptuous ravings ;
And viewing thus its native nothingness—
Behold *this "Great Something"*—NAKED LIES.



