

**A few more words in explanation of "My homœopathy and Hahnemann's" :  
with an entirely new diagram / by Æsculapius.**

**Contributors**

Aesculapius.

**Publication/Creation**

Aberdeen : Robert Walker, 1868.

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/nn2bsx9f>

**License and attribution**

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

# A FEW MORE WORDS

IN EXPLANATION OF

“My Homœopathy and Hahnemann’s,”

BY

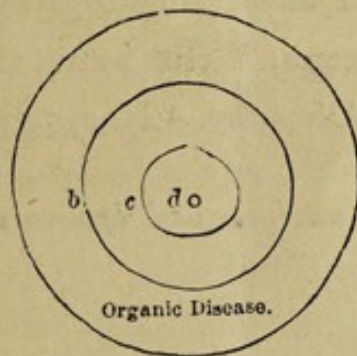
ÆSCULAPIUS.

*(John Mann Crombie)*

WITH AN

ENTIRELY NEW DIAGRAM.

Disease.



*b* Functional Disease.

*c* Disease curable by Homœopathy, employing Allopathic remedies.

*d* Disease curable by Homœopathy, employing its own remedies.

ABERDEEN:  
ROBERT WALKER, 34, MARKET STREET;  
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1868.

“ Some books are lies frae end to end,  
Wi’ mony a lie that’s self-condemned.”

“ In every point of view, Allopathy is a most pernicious system.”—  
*Reith, Homœopathy; its Nature and Relative Value*, page 15.

“ While, therefore, I adopt Homœopathy as applicable to a large  
number of diseases, I still retain all that is good in the old  
system,” *i. e.* Allopathy.—*Idem*, page 53.

Ἡμεῖς τοι πατέρων μεγ’ ἀμείνονες εὐχόμεθ’ εἶναι.

## INTRODUCTION.

---

A FEW words of explanation are required to enable the reader to understand the reason of the position assigned to Dr. Reith in these pages, and the style of criticism applied to his writings. With regard to the first point, it will be allowed by all to be quite legitimate to inquire into any part of a man's conduct—public or private—which he himself voluntarily submits to our examination. When such a subject is gratuitously thrust upon us, and with a view to enlisting our affections for any cause, or of influencing our course of action in certain matters of a primary importance to ourselves—there is no indelicacy in handling it in one's own way, so as to see all its sides ; for this is necessary in order to form a reliable conclusion. It is precisely on this understanding that I proceed to deal with Dr. Reith. He has come forward of his own accord to lay before us certain points in the history of his past life, and to intimate the line of conduct which he intends to pursue in future, and I take him simply at his word.

With regard to the second point—the style of criticism applied to his writings—it may be objected that it is too figurative to justify confidence in its accuracy. I do not here refer to the preliminary remarks I have to make on Dr. Reith's abuse of language, and the palpable contradictions that are instanced as pervading every page he has written—these, it is hoped, will be found sufficiently distinct. It is in discussing the value of Dr. Reith's Homœopathy, according to his own estimate, that I feel an apology to be due for the mode of illustration. To treat a scientific subject in such a manner so as to arrive at a scientific conclusion, would be ridiculous in the last degree ; but I deny that Dr. Reith's Homœopathy admits of scientific discussion. If it were open only to treatment of this kind, then it must have been for ever let alone, as it hitherto has been. I simply adopt the style of my author ; and the diagram employed to trace the gradual retrenchment of Homœopathy—according as Dr. Reith understands and defines it—within a more

narrow and still more narrow sphere of usefulness as its qualifications are investigated, while it affords some idea of my meaning, is not, by any means, so far-fetched as a diagram furnished by this gentleman in proof of what he regards as a fundamental doctrine in physiology. That the reader may satisfy himself on this head, I beg to refer to an essay contributed by Dr. Reith to the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, for February, 1868, and reprinted by him for separate circulation, where the diagram in question will be found to be seriously assumed as the ground-work of a fundamental scientific doctrine, according to which the lives of all of us are represented as dangling and dipping between this world and the next, under the spell of the vasor-motor system! In the same hands, the most recondite principles of Physiology and Pathology are reduced at one time to a simple balance, at another, to an elastic band.

Whoever is qualified to regard these things in their proper light, will excuse me for the manner of procedure I have adopted in treating of them. I have also to say, by way of caution, that no disrespect is intended towards the formula, *similia similibus curantur*, taken as giving expression to a coincidence in the action of a few drugs on the human system, in health and disease. The question of its being a law, is an open one; at all events, it is merely an empirical law, in the event of Dr. Reith's failure to raise it to the rank of an explained or deduced law. It is very desirable, indeed, that we should know in how many instances medicinal substances may produce, in the healthy subject, symptoms similar to those they relieve in the diseased. But an inordinate love for a large turn out should not be allowed to prejudice the scrupulosity with which a man of science selects the instances only that are genuine.

# A FEW MORE WORDS

IN EXPLANATION OF

## “MY HOMŒOPATHY AND HAHNEMANN’S.”

---

---

It must be pretty well known by this time that Dr. Reith, Union Place, Aberdeen, has recently advertised his method of treating disease as “superior to all other methods,” &c.\*; in fact, quite in the stereotyped fashion of the nasty doctors. The reception which we ordinarily give to such an announcement is to fumble the bill or the pamphlet as quickly and as quietly out of the way as possible, and to forget about it in all haste. But a moment’s consideration will shew that such procedure is not suited to the present case. Dr. Reith is not a miserable chuck-farthing sort of a quack, but a regular practitioner, and a man of considerable pretensions.

To be sure there are a great many points of similarity between him and the gentlemen of the non-descript craft, in regard to the manner in which they make their debut in public. And, if these points of similarity were tabulated in parallel columns, they would be found to have a wonderfully imposing appearance, and, indeed, would go a great way to make out a true case of identity. Thus, for example, as a peroration to his harangue, Dr. Reith insists on his personal experience, in *suo corpore*, of the blessed effects of his remedies†: the nasty fellows in question make this the prologue of their discourse. Again, Dr. Reith uniformly addresses the public in the conciliatory tones of business, appealing to them as an impartial tribunal, by which he will stand or fall, if they will only put him to the test, by making a trial of him for themselves;‡ less eloquently and with fewer sympathetic touches, so do the Castle Street physicians. Dr. Reith makes most delicate (?) appeals to all females, reminding them of their infirmities, and of their little children’s, if they

---

\* See Pamphlet on “Homœopathy: Its Nature and Relative Value.”

† Idem, p. 50.

‡ Idem throughout the entire Pamphlet.

have any, and quotes Scripture to them, and takes his language out of the mouth of the Good Physician.\* It is to be doubted if the other parties are capable of such master-strokes in driving home conviction; but it is well known they are particularly fond of women and children, and consider themselves extremely fortunate when they get to minister unto them. These are examples, and many more might have been added, of the similarity exhibited in both cases when the public have to be dealt with; compare now the attitude of the two towards the medical profession. Dr. Reith launches forth in the bitterest terms against the men of the orthodox school, and challenges any or all of them to battle.† Seldom has a reader to find his way through such an imbroglio of vituperation and condemnation on the one hand, and self-justification and laudation on the other, as the reader of the pamphlet on Homœopathy, before he finds out what his author is driving at. Now this is precisely the style of the *soi-disant* doctors—to the best of their ability—for they find that their remedies sell as much in consequence of the faults charged against those of their adversaries with the diplomas, as in consequence of the virtues ascribed to their own. And as regards the gallantry with which they throw down the gauntlet to the profession, it is scarcely a year ago since a certain person—who is now in jail for his originality in matters of this kind—defied all the doctors of this or any other University to gainsay his miraculous performances; and more recently still, another individual did the same heroic thing every Saturday night in Castle Street, until he was removed to the Lunatic Asylum. In fact, to engage in little stampeds, and wage guerilla warfare against the profession is the constant occupation of all quacks.

Now, it is fair to say that the resemblance in all these respects—and there are many we have not touched upon—is pretty close; yet, after all, they may be just so many mere coincidences and nothing more. It is just possible Dr. Reith's demeanour in these several little points may have arisen from the most honourable regard for the common good, without any selfish view to ulterior results whatever; inasmuch as his urbane and kindly invitation to the public, and to the ladies in particular, to come and be made whole, may be the native outcome of a divine generosity of soul, and his fierce and remorseless onslaught against his quondam associates, a necessary consequence of their utter vileness, and his own immaculate purity—

Great sufferings ask great passions to redress them,  
And whirlwinds fittest scatter pestilence.

But the utmost allowance that can be made for Dr. Reith's proceedings in all this has nothing to do with a very ugly circumstance which he has inadvertent'y brought to light in going over his confessions and

\* Idem throughout the entire Pamphlet.

† Idem, p. 52.

experiences. Most people are aware that for the last two years, as he says, he has been feeling his way very cautiously, like a prudent man, on the subject of Homœopathy. At length he finds that it is rather a good thing, and what is more to the point, he thinks he has succeeded in persuading others to be of his own opinion. When the matter is fully ripe, a sudden explosion takes place, and with it a great number of revelations come to light, which, but for the terrific violence of the catastrophe, would never have been cast up, from the secret depths, where they lay buried in undisturbed repose. The reference here is not to those telling quotations which Dr. Reith has adduced to shew off the leaders of the medical profession as prevaricators in its defence.\* Of course, had there not been some darling reason for it, medical literature would not have been ransacked by a medical man for such a purpose. And, by the way, it must be confessed men of high standing in the profession and others do sometimes give expression to perplexing statements, when they begin to talk tall-talk, about either the high or low position of medicine as a science. But, leaving the defence of Allopathy as a science to whoever likes to take it up, the revelations referred to are those which lay hid in Dr. Reith's own bosom, and which no one could have ever come upon by ransacking medical literature, until he generously offered his little share in the shape of "Homœopathy: Its Nature and Relative Value." Dr. Reith was regarded as a medical practitioner for a number of years before he came to be known as an Eclectic; but it was not known that until he became an Eclectic, a year or two ago, he held the practice of his profession to be mere gammon, and still continued to practice it. This, in fine, is the ugly circumstance that we stickle at, and, for our part, we think it sufficiently ugly. Dr. Reith may make it beautiful if he pleases, but there it stands (Homœopathy, pages 46-47), at present without any varnish. He did not give up *his* practice in disgust, but added to it as much as he could, by accepting the charge of an important public Institution, while all the time his mind was in no condition to wonder "why some able men gave up *their* practice in disgust."† This little episode from past history would have been passed over in silence—if for no other reason, at any rate, because it is not in very good keeping with the general strain of these remarks—had it not been for the shameless effrontery with which he insinuates that "all other practitioners" are necessarily driven to the same unbelief. He knows his own heart, and therefore he knows everybody's. He will not allow even those who were his fellow-students the credit of any virtue where he has none; for, because at that early day, he had a lurking suspicion that Medicine was all a delusion, therefore his class-fellows

---

\* Idem, pp. 7-11.

† Idem. Loc. Cit.

“often outwardly assented to opinions which in heart they despised.” This is the unkindest cut of all. Is this the art that youth is disciplined to, in the midst of its study of the Sciences, and in the acquisition of what men have hitherto regarded as an honourable profession? Perhaps such an opinion was never before muted by the most inveterate enemies of Medicine. Whatever people might have once thought about the slap-bang character of the Medical Student, the last thing to associate with that character would have been the cunning duplicity of a man of the world.

So much for the position assigned to Dr. Reith in these pages. It is, to say the least of it, not very creditable; but as its vouchers are within every one's reach, in the statements of the pamphlet on Homœopathy, by Dr. Reith himself, it is the position which every candid person has a right to say openly is his.

But what is the change that Dr. Reith has made in his medical tactics? Is he, repentant of the past, struggling with might and main to inaugurate a new era in human progress, which it becomes mankind to make way for at all hazards? Do the doctors stand in the way to the bringing in of this better state of things? If they do, the only imaginable method of dealing with them, is to get them out of the way as soon as possible, and give free course to this “bright improvement” that comes, in these latter days, to bless the world. But surely, before sending the poor doctors to take refuge in annihilation, and resigning ourselves to a new *regime* in matters of life and death, it is necessary to be furnished with some certain information of its character. It must be a matter therefore, at least, of curiosity, for the public to know in what respect Dr. Reith proposes to differ from the Faculty in the theory and practice of Medicine. Of course, if the speciality attaching to this new system of medication had been clearly defined by its originator, there would have been no occasion for any comment on this head from any other quarter; but the state of current opinion shews, beyond all doubt, that Dr. Reith has failed to convey a just impression to the public of what the distinguishing peculiarity of his medical doctrine really is. Yet, if he had a new system to propound, to signalise with precision its distinctive features—or, at least, to exhibit them by sufficiently well-marked characters—ought certainly to have been his chief care. But this simple precaution has been entirely set aside, and hence the ground of complaint of that part of the community who have a right to know in what the difference between him and the Faculty consists. The ambiguity, however, in which this point is involved is not all due to simple negligence; there are, at least, other two faults of a more unpardonable nature, that have had their share in the work of mystification. And before proceeding to determine as far as is possible from the pamphlet on Homœopathy in what respect and how far Dr. Reith differs from the Faculty, a brief

review of each of these in detail will serve to bring out some points that ought to be known.

In the first place, Dr. Reith does not choose to use words in their recognized acceptation, and yet makes no intimation to the contrary. He grants himself the liberty of imposing any signification his caprice for the moment approves of, on the common language of every-day life. It is easy to see that the man who thus sets at defiance the most indispensable conditions of all intercourse, is little prepared to enter on scientific discussions. Why does he proceed in this manner? It is hardly worth while inquiring. The irrepressible independence of spirit that has sent Medicine with a fillip to the grave, because her two thousand years of experience does not exactly tally with the experience of two years in the life of a young man, may be easily believed to find the most slavish and servile process implied in a correct use of language a yoke not to be borne. Yet this insuperable contempt for all authority, in the present instance at least, must be allowed to have over-reached itself. If the one condition on which a spade is to be obtained is to ask for a spade, the poor conceit which will not succumb to this condition, must, at all events, forego the advantages which the possession of a spade would have brought to the display of its independence. Now, there may be little doubt in Dr. Reith's mind about the advantage which discussion would have brought to him. He asked for it, and asked for it loudly, but he didn't get it; in so far, at least, as the press is concerned. For, it so happens, as everybody knows, that before any useful discussion can take place, there are certain conditions which the disputants must agree to: a faithful adherence to the authorized usage of language is the most indispensable of all. Dr. Reith is a most incorrigible transgressor in this respect, and, therefore, everybody declines to discuss with him. He is also given to contradicting himself, as I shall prove when I am done with the matter on hand. If he could only divest himself of his serene hauteur and assured self-sufficiency for as long time as might serve for a reperusal of "his published papers," he could not fail to come upon a reason, perhaps in every page, "why his writings were allowed to pass unchallenged in the medical press." As regards their being received at all, he need not plume himself very much on that fact; unless he chooses to forget himself, what he is very careful to keep in the recollection of others, viz., the extraordinary quantity of "rubbish that appears weekly in the orthodox medical journals!" But it would be unfair to say all this, and leave it unsubstantiated by the necessary proof. I can assure the reader there is no temptation to shirk this condition, the difficulty is to determine what examples to take and when to stop taking. But at the same time it is to be borne in mind, that as Dr. Reith is held to be a man of learning and ability by those who know him, otherwise than through his "published

papers," the curiosities of speech in which he indulges must be regarded merely as little freaks of genius, giving the loose to its love of freedom and originality. But, of course, for the purposes of discussion, it is all the same as if they were the result of sheer ignorance. Not that a little brilliant deviation from the strict proprieties of speech is altogether incompatible with the statement of scientific truth; as, *e. g.*, when Dr. Reith speaks of "medical agents exercising a remediable (*sic*) influence on disease,"\* we can guess his meaning without difficulty, although the expression is unique. But when the departure from established use begins to infringe upon the intelligibility of the discourse, genius may talk on beautifully, but there is an end to all discussion with genius. Who can be sure what Dr. Reith means when he speaks of the "application of drugs to therapeutics;"† of one of two causes necessary to the production of a certain effect, "being secondary in point of importance" to the other, in the production of that effect.‡ Again, in propounding his new views on inflammation, he delivers himself of the following remarkable announcement:—"Cold, or some other agent, first of all stimulates the vaso-motor system, causing spasm of the blood vessels. *Simultaneously with this, and perhaps in consequence of it*, there is derangement of the cerebro-spinal influence."§ Here we are left to speculate whether the author is hinting at the possibility of a new law of causation, according to which, the cause no longer precedes the effect—the correlation being one of simultaneity, and not of succession. As this is too much to put upon a philosopher of the 19th century, we are driven to the conclusion that our author is using "simultaneous" in a sense which he has not yet deigned to explain to us, and which he leaves, as he did in the case of the term Homœopathy, for us first to get sufficiently bamboozled with. To conclude with an example from the first page of the first fugitive publication that is marked with the name of Reith, notice the following:—"It is still a standing reproach on the profession, that after centuries of careful observation and experiment, so little progress should have been made towards that great object of medicine—the relief of suffering, and the prolongation of human life." Now, if we are not to be permitted to call Dr. Reith a fool, in plain terms, he must be supposed to mean by a "standing reproach," the very opposite of what it means among other men. After human ingenuity taxing itself for centuries in careful observation and experiment, it is to be reproached for not extracting more benefit than the inherent difficulties of the subject to which its energies were directed permitted that it should! The profession is to be "held up to ridicule," and "made the laughing-stock of an intelligent

---

\* Essay, No. 1, page 2.

‡ Idem, page 7.

† Idem, page 3.

§ Idem, page 10.

public," because its province being the study of the human body it has not yet sounded all the mysteries of that organism. What bunkum! Here is encouragement for young philosophers who are to give up every sentiment of humanity, and run the risk of Jack Ketch for experiment's sake. Is not Dr. Reith at the present moment calling upon men everywhere to experiment, promising them, on obedience, the most blessed results. Just as if he had profanely quoted a second time from Scripture, and said: "Repent and believe, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Experiment is the burden of his song. It has mightily changed in the fecundity of its results within the last two years, beginning with that memorable day "when, &c."\* if we are to be induced to follow in the wake of Dr. Reith. But I trust the reader must be getting tired of all this, and I shall only now present him with a single specimen of what may be taken as the converse of this libertinism in the use of speech, before I proceed to the contradictions proper.

Dr. Reith will not allow others to speak to him or about him in the language of ordinary men; he must have people to use expressions according to his signification long before he has given them any intimation of it. Thus, when it was known that he prescribed, on certain occasions, the millionth or less of a grain of corrosive sublimate or strychnia, somebody alleged that he dealt in infinitesimal quantities of medicine.† This he complained of in the bitterest terms as misrepresentation, giving us to understand that "infinitesimal," when applied to medicines, has no relation to quantity, but to quality! I promised to give but one example, but I cannot refrain from calling to mind the indignation with which Dr. Reith rejected the name of Homœopath as a sobriquet when used in the sense known to all mankind, while all the time he still retained it, tacitly affixing to it a sense, which, at a late period of his proceedings, he condescended to make public.

Now for the contradiction proper. Surely the most obstreperous libertinism might be expected to be controlled one moment by what it has pledged itself to the moment before. Mark the following:—"In every point of view Allopathy is a most pernicious system." (Homœopathy, page 15). "While, therefore, I adopt Homœopathy as applicable to a large number of diseases, I still retain all that is good in the old system," *i.e.* Allopathy. (Homœopathy, p. 53). To remark on the silly absurdity that is here paraded with such immeasurable conceit, would be an affront to common sense. But there are couplets still more amusing. The centre from which all disease derives its origin, is, according to Dr. Reith, "the joint cerebro-spinal, and vaso-motor nervous systems"—which is simply a scientific circum-

---

\* Homœopathy, page 47.

† Homœopathy, page 44.

bendibus for the "nervous system."\* Then, in the very next sentence: "the latest physiological and pathological researches warrant us, I think, in laying down the proposition that most diseases are due to a morbid state of the nervous system; which morbid state either arises in the nervous system itself, or is induced, by the presence of a noxious element in the blood." If the Dr. was given to joking this is what we would call an Irish bull, besides a contradictory proposition to the foregoing. All diseases arise at their origin (in the nervous system), but some diseases arise previous to their origin (in the blood). Dr. Reith is characterised as a man "apt to teach," by one of his friends, the substance of his teaching being, according to the same authority, "baseless fabrics;" whoever considers the above allusion, will be inclined to think that he is sometimes apt to teach nonsense besides. Again, if the reader has not yet had enough, Homœopathy does not profess to cure organic diseases, yet the very first cure that Dr. Reith performed by it, was in the case of a patient with gangrene of the lung!† This, perhaps, will suffice, and convince the reader at the same time, that no undue ferreting process has been employed to hunt up specimens, such as manifests itself in the telling quotations of another man. Let the reader mark, that all the incongruities and absurdities remarked on are from the pen of an individual who professes to have made a discovery that places him in the first rank, not of *les misérables médecins*, who, according to him, are no longer a part of this world,‡ but of the savans and philosophers of this or any other age! In fact, he is, at the present time, steaming hot, because he has not already met with the apotheosis which his merit demands. He has the sublime consciousness of crowning a new system of medicine with the same glory that Newton had of crowning an old system of astronomy. Medicine is to be wrenched from the hands of empirics; and, seated upon the grand pedestal of the vaso-motor system, is to dispense health to the sick, upon a principle as certain as the rule of three! But this is only what is going to be when the laws of the "contractions and dilations of the blood-vessels" (for the mention of which I must apologise to the reader, as nobody who is not Reith can profess to know very much on the subject), have been fully carried out to their legitimate conclusions; for which purpose the gentleman in question is in want of a great many enthusiastic recruits, and a much larger number of living subjects, to act and be acted upon. And "I venture to predict that before long," from the bills that are circulating among "the friends of the family," and other small indications that may be sniffed in the air, a public subscription will be set on foot for the erection of a scientific institution for the treatment of disease according to this method.

---

\* Essay, No. 1, page 6.

† Homœopathy, page 49.

‡ Homœopathy, page 12.

I hope the public will come out liberally with homœopathic pence, seeing that they have had a timely intimation to lay a few up in store against the coming day.

But this is only what is going to be. Dr. Reith is at present an Eclectic—a term suggesting to us a number of imperfections, out of which the good has to be elicited, and not the Great Good which will one day displace everything, and remove the possibility of choice. It is with what Dr. Reith professes to practice at present that we are concerned ; we may all be murdered by Allopathy before true science comes to the rescue, at the sorry rate it now “drags its weary length along.” The victims are not numerous enough—there is a dearth of voluntary sacrifices—and Homœopathic Science is a Moloch not easily appeased. The Scientific Institution, of course, will give an impetus to this sleepy god to mend his speed, but, meantime, the Homœopathic pence are wanting. We, therefore, wish to know what Dr. Reith’s eclecticism is, in order to understand what we may expect from it, in this the day of our extremity.

To appreciate this system fully, we must, in the first place, trace the history of its development in its author’s mind. To do him credit, if it be but for once, he recognises the necessity of this condition, and therefore kindly furnishes us with the materials. The reader must not be over-sanguine, however ; the subtle nexus of its origin, progress, and perfection, cannot be made all equally intelligible. It is better to state distinctly at the outset, that there is, at least, one period where we cannot discern the stages that carry it forward to its lofty consummation, but through a misty twilight. This expression must be taken as preparatory for what is coming. I have begun to speak mysteriously, because there is a vision of some kind or other in the case, or what approaches to it as near as need be. Before unfolding this mysterious scene, however, it is expedient that the reader should distinctly understand that Dr. Reith had been, for a course of years, practising the do-nothing system among the sick, with many qualms of conscience, if not with “utter disgust.” Nothing could exceed the picture of complete helplessness which he presented to himself, as he stood by the bedside of his languishing and dying patients, while their dim eyes rested upon him as a deliverer. At this time, he was in a position similar to the man who cannot, or will not, throw a silken thread to save his drowning friend, while all the time he gives out that he has rescue apparatus and life-preservers within reach. When he was summoned as a physician, as he represented himself to be, he came, but it was as a solemn sentinel, to watch the sufferer’s exit from the world, and perhaps to inspect the “post mortem appearances !” “In these circumstances, I was compelled to give my assent to the opinion, which is now fast gaining ground, namely, that

disease is best left to nature. In this way I went on for years."\* Will you believe it, reader, that from this position of absolute nihilism in thought and action, as far as the alleviation of disease was concerned, there came a day, when "a law of cure in disease, as universally applicable within its own sphere as gravity or any other physical law," rose before his bewildered and benighted intelligence! It is here where we are disposed to believe the vision must have been interpolated. That the man who to-day is bereft of every trust in the efficacy of means to an end, and is as incapable of making an effort as a mass of sluggish jelly in the sea, should be transformed to-morrow into the man who is prepared to believe largely, and do mightily, without the intervention of an agency, whose operation scientific men do not profess to investigate—is altogether incredible. No such sudden revolution in a man's intellectual and moral nature is explicable on rational principles.

Now, let the reader recall the circumstance which "about four years"† ago introduced Homœopathy to Dr. Reith. It was not the writings of Hahnemann. When he had examined the literature of his profession, and found it "a jumble of conflicting recommendations,"‡ he did not turn to Hahnemann, and read the true gospel for the salvation of our poor bodies; yet it was written there in letters of gold; and what is still more surprising, greatly to the disappointment of the man who was in quest of it, when he came to know it.‡ Why? Because it deprived him of the glory of discovering the law, as well as finding its explanation "in a physiological basis." He would have to be a Tycho Brahe, a Kepler, and a Newton all in one. He must find out both the empirical laws of his science, and the universal law from which they may be deduced. At this time he tells us distinctly that he was an inveterate enemy to Homœopathy, because he knew it only as differing from orthodox medicine in the matter of infinitesimalism—just as everybody has done, from that day to this, and will continue to do for a long while to come.

It was what took place on the memorable day, when "a case died under my care in the Infirmary," that brought about the things wonderful to tell and to contemplate. It was "the post-mortem examination" of this case that "opened up to me a train of thought at once new and interesting." Now, "this train of thought" came over him either in the Pathology Class-room, or at home; but as this cannot be a point of any material consequence, I shall—for the reader's comfort—suppose that it was at home. Let us follow him thither in imagination, and endeavour to study him as "this train of thought"

---

\* Homœop., page 47.

† Idem, p. 47.

‡ Idem, p. 47.

breaks in upon him. The day is closing as he retires from his incubation on "the appearances presented at the post-mortem examination," and the leisure hours of evening are now his own. Fancy, then, the physician in his arm-chair, slip-shod, and by the fire, ruminating over the helpless labours of the day. The vastness of human misery, in more than its Miltonic varieties, are before him, and his whole soul is sicklied o'er by this pale cast of thought. At length, utterly oppressed by the universal heaviness of this leaden view of human life that hangs upon him—a mighty carcass irretrievably going to decay—his mind seeks refuge, and insensibly passes to other vast subjects (for the Dr. has a predilection for the sublime, and is tall in everything) scattered through time and space, such as the law of gravitation, or some of the other huge regulations of the universe. This relief is all very good for a while, but as a matter of course, it cannot serve for a whole evening; and naturally enough falling back into the sombre theme of his original meditation, he is about to be again exceeding sorrowful, when suddenly a thought rises in him. Instantly his listlessness and passivity of mind gives way to wakefulness and attention, and there gradually develops itself a distinct proposition, combining the separate elements of his reverie into one grand whole. His eyes are upturned, and whether still entirely in this world or not, he calmly and reverentially soliquises thus:—"Has the Creator appointed a law of cure in disease, as universally applicable within its own sphere, as gravity or any other physical law?" Here is the welling up of that "new and interesting train of thought." Now, if it were permissible to imagine that any of those shadowy shapes, whose vital motion is now become a kneaded clod, but who in the days of the flesh, had some slight experience of the doctor's scepticism towards medicinal remedies—if, I say, it were permissible to imagine that any of these may be hovering around the arm-chair—might not such a query from such lips, electrify their greedy ears? Here is the man, who, while they, miserales, were yonder (pointing in a certain direction) was as much a shadow as they now are, in all that regards the activities of belief and action, in the business of his life among men, suddenly demanding "a law of cure in disease, as universally applicable within its own sphere, as gravity, or any other physical law!" Still have they not kinsmen in the flesh, and is not all mankind a brotherhood, bound by an indissoluble union; and will they be less propitious then "to this train of thought," because it was set on a little at their expense? "The importance of such a law, did it exist," can they even now deny? What, though this person was liberal towards them in their own hour of need, in less than an infinitesimal degree? Doubt not, gentle reader, they vanish again into thin air, sincerely wishing that Heaven may be as liberal as he is now. But to return to the physician himself. In what way, and by what assistance

he was carried through the difficulties, that to a man of his knowledge must have appeared at first sight dead against such a magnanimous law, it would be improper to inquire. Suffice it to say, that in spite of the hitherto impenetrable phalanx of hard facts "that centuries of careful observation and experiment" have left intact, the physician rose next morning with the indelible conviction that "nevertheless, such a law does exist;" and from this time forth his intellectual and moral nature take a new turn.

Now, it must be confessed that this is exactly the *deus ex machina* method of accounting for a very natural and extremely probable occurrence—viz., a medical man's becoming acquainted with the Hahnemannian law of *similia similibus curantur*. But observe, the fault is not on my side; it lies with the man who reads the law, not in the pages of Hahnemann, but in the curious "appearances of a *post-mortem* examination." Is it not likely, too, that the man who has been, I will not say, imposing upon others for a course of many years, may at length come to be imposed upon even through his own ingenuity? And why should the ways and works of a man who comes at everything by a different channel from other people be allowed to pass unquestioned? Is it because he will have himself regarded as a tall man, "within his own sphere"—a Gorgon among the tritons? This is the very reason why he should be thoroughly, fearlessly, and unsparingly investigated. It is the thing to give an animus to the work that no other stimulus could supply. For our own part, we are not ashamed to say, even in this age, that we have a reverence for authority—but it must be authority; we will not, in our thirst for knowledge, bow before any Cretan in intellect and morals, who comes with a muddy thimbleful of what is new in the shape of a theory. But, perhaps, we are aiming at a visionary target. Perhaps, after all, the gentleman who was said to have been cured of headaches by homœopathic medicine, was not perfectly cured—perhaps there still remains something seriously wrong with that head, which the Allopaths or somebody else will by and by have to see to. If it be so, and we decline to offer our opinion, all that has been said, and still remains to be said, on the subject under discussion, we will gladly allow to fall to the ground. But, meantime, this investigation is not without its value. The madman who deals blows among his neighbours in every direction, is, very properly, put under physical restraint; and he who utters calumny against a well-defined body of men, for reasons which his own imagination alone supplies, if that imagination be a morbid one, it is a very fair thing to let the public know it. The man who can be successfully shewn to be guilty of the fooleries now under review, is already a harmless creature in society.

Having thus hinted at the inexplicable manner in which Dr. Reith arrived at the well-known law (?) of *similia similibus*, we have got the

starting point of his progress towards his eclecticism, and indeed, as is very fortunate, have not much further to go until we arrive at its termination. It having been revealed to him by a vision or otherwise, that a great deal might be done for human misery, as far as disease is concerned, and being put in possession of an instrument that, notwithstanding its decent, still left something to be desired, he again casts about in his capacious mind for something supplemental. To his astonishment, no doubt, on a second thought, it occurs to him that after all there might be something good in the old system. He returns to the *indigesta moles* of murderous implements and deadly machinery, and drags forth—eclecticizes, so to speak—all that is good. Thus furnished, he walks forth majestically from unbelief and do-nothing, to heal mankind and shame away every malady (and the cause of a great many of them) from the face of nature.

Dr. Reith's eclecticism may, therefore, be represented by the following formula :—

“My Homœopathy” + “All that is good in Allopathy” = “My Eclecticism.”

Now, as we are not concerned at present with “All that is good in Allopathy,” which, if it be but little, may surely be put to the credit of those from whom it is taken ; the element whose value we wish to ascertain is “My Homœopathy,” for it is this to which Eclecticism owes all its virtue. This I propose to do by constant reference to its author's own estimate, and these references the reader may verify from the Pamphlet on Homœopathy now before the public.

From the grandeur of the association with which this species of Homœopathy was first introduced to our notice, viz., the law of gravitation and the other great laws of the universe, some may not have noticed a little speck on this Homœopathy, which in time turns out to be a very curious speck. The longer it is looked at, the larger it grows. Every particle of matter is under the influence of gravitation. Is every disease under the influence of Homœopathy? It is too flattering-sweet to be substantial. Remember, Homœopathy is an imperfect instrument, and although it has the impudence, so to speak, to pretend to be as universally applicable as the law of gravitation, it is only “within its own sphere.” This proviso is the little speck. A man who has acquired a great love for mites, through constant use of his microscope, may say, if he chooses, that a mite is as mighty an animal as an elephant, “within its own sphere.” Precisely so with this Homœopathy and Gravitation. The one has an infinitely large sphere, wherein it is universally applicable ; the other an infinitely small sphere, wherein it is universally applicable—a homœopathic sphere, in fact. And it is amusing to observe the curious anti-climax involved in the process whereby this magnificent altitude, by the side of gravitation, dwindles steadily away, as the author's disquisition on

Homœopathy advances, until, finally, it sinks beneath the notice of all but the microscopic eye of a Homœopath.

The first slice cut off from its sphere of usefulness is to be measured by the following remark—"Homœopathy does not cure all diseases, certainly not organic diseases."\* Now, if it be true that organic diseases constitute at least two-thirds of all nameable diseases (for no disease can properly be said to be known that is not organic), the author has made a very great surrender in this admission. And if it be also true that just as physiology and pathology advance, so does disease more and more unfold its organic nature, so that diseases at one time regarded as merely functional, are now known to be organic, it will be seen that the very sciences which Dr. Reith professes to love so tenderly, are the very instruments which, on his own shewing, are continually mincing away the utility of the practice which he would have us believe he adores. Indeed, the most scientific investigators of disease, without any hasty generalising, seem to incline to the opinion that every disease is organic, and it is only on this assumption that *post-mortems* are desirable. If every manifestation of life requires for its production an organism, as diseases are manifestations of life, although abnormal manifestations, it follows that they also require an organism, and an organism changed in a degree bearing some correspondence to the changed manifestation. In other words, the known phenomena of physiology and pathology warrant the conclusion that the unknown phenomena are of the same nature. The known phenomena of pathology and physiology are produced by an organism: it is inferred that the unknown are produced by the same means. All diseases, therefore, according to this view, are organic. Dr. Reith, however, may object to this inference, and maintain that the data from which it is drawn do not warrant it, in order to save his new system of medication from the complete discomfiture, which his own admission would, in such a case, bring about. As there is, besides, a classification of diseases at present recognised by physicians, into *functional* and *organic*, this advantage shall be allowed him; and Homœopathy shall be followed into the region of functional diseases, in order to ascertain how it acquits itself in this limited area. But we will not follow it thither, without first remarking that, we are passing from the region of the known (the organic) into the region of the comparatively unknown (the functional). We all know that great mysteries may be wrought in the dark, and by very curious methods. When the spirits are to be rapped upon, the light has to be extinguished, because we may rap to Doom's-day, without any "manifestation," unless we comply with this condition. Homœopathy can produce no effect on organic disease, which is known really to be disease, but it

---

\* Homœopathy, page 38.

takes up the case of functional disorders, which, just in proportion as they are functional, are less of the nature of disease at all.

For the purpose of tracing the gradual collapse of this species of Homœopathy from the magnificent proportions it assumes in the first pages of Dr. Reith's Pamphlet, to the beggarly condition in which his final estimate of "its relative value," leaves it, the diagram on the cover will be found useful. The outermost circle is supposed to include the whole range of disease. The second circle, in like manner, embraces all the so-called functional diseases. Now, it is within this second circle that Homœopathy must retire, when it disclaims all power over organic disease, which is supposed to occupy the space between the first and second circle. We have, therefore, to ask the author of the Pamphlet if his Homœopathy is competent to deal with all the diseases that lie within this boundary? Certainly he would not be an Eclectic if it could, and accordingly we are informed that, not only is it incapable of curing all diseases, but it is "*far from curing all curable diseases;*"\* that is, functional diseases. So that, even when pressed within the narrow limits assigned to it, by its inability to cope with anything but functional disease, Homœopathy is far from being able to maintain its ground without assistance. The ally that is called in to keep the diseases in order, which it cannot itself manage, is, of course, the poor old soldier, Allopathy. "In certain cases, I consider Allopathy to be properly indicated."† This is a very shabby way of recognising the services of one who is qualified to do what his master is "*far from*" being able to do. And just suppose, now, that Allopathy were to resent such treatment by a dignified refusal to lay a hand on these incorrigible diseases, or what is as likely, that Homœopathy, in a fit of madness, discharged a servant so much superior to itself, what would Homœopathy do when left to depend entirely on its own strength. It must leave these intractable fellows to have their own way, and direct its energies to the maintenance of its authority, where there is no such insurmountable opposition. Homœopathy, therefore, left to itself, must retire within the third circle, which is supposed to be placed at a distance from the second, corresponding to the "*far*" of the author of the Pamphlet. Beyond this limit, Homœopathy dare not venture, and therefore, all disease without, so far as this corrective is concerned, may do its worst. If that system of treatment, "*which is pernicious from every point of view,*" therefore, be abolished, there will always remain in the human body, according to the testimony of its destroyer, curable diseases, without the means of cure. It is a question, therefore, whether the human body personified, or Allopathy, should shudder most at the contemplated destruction of the old school.

\* Homœopathy. page 38.

† Idem, page 53.

Now, would any one believe that even within this miserable dominion, Homœopathy, according to its own advocate, should be capable of governing only through deceit? That even here, it is only in so far as it follows the method of its despised and rejected ally, Allopathy, that it has any chance of keeping disease in subjection? The author of the Pamphlet in question comes out with a few very curious confessions, so that there is nothing to wonder at in the following,—“A large amount of homœopathic practice is conducted by very substantial quantities of medicine.”\* This means, of course, that in the very circumscribed practice to which Homœopathy is limited, a large amount of it is performed by “very substantial quantities of medicine.” Of course, it may be a question whether Dr. Reith in this place is talking like an ordinary man, or like the inhabitant of a microcosm; as, however, he has emphasized his “substantial” by the significant little word “very,” we may venture to assume that the quantity indicated is equal to an ordinary Allopathic dose. Thus, within the little area which Homœopathy calls its own, a large proportion of its work is done by exactly the same means as in ordinary practice. In so far as the patient is concerned it is not Homœopathy—the Homœopathy is all in the mind of the practitioner. This is another of those puzzling enigmas which it has been our duty to unriddle, since we entered upon this altogether mysterious subject. The key to the difficulty lies in the circumstance that the drugs are administered upon a different principle. It is the theory, not the practice, that in these instances creates the astounding distinction between the Homœopath and the Allopath. The one gives you 25 grs. of Pulvis Julapæ Co., if you have a capacious stomach, on the principle of *similia similibus*; the other 25 grs. of Pulvis Julapæ Co., all things else being the same, on the principle of *contrarii contrariis*. You, in your unprofessional simplicity, are at your wits’ end to know why persons so similar in their proceedings have such an antipathy to each other. It all arises from the difference of opinion as to how the Julap does its work, when it gets down into your stomach. There is a farther difference, however, in the case of Dr. Reith’s Homœopathy, which must be very carefully noted, as it is his Homœopathy, and not Hahnemann’s, that we are investigating. His system “is not a dose, but a principle.” In fact, the dose may be anything or nothing, for the potency all resides in the principle. The dose is a mere hoax; but, curiously enough, as the patient’s constitution has to be hoaxed by the principle into a sanitary condition, the hoax cannot be played off in the simple manner it might be, if the patient’s mind alone had to be hoaxed. The hoax must accommodate itself to the state of the patient’s bodily organs, in order to enable the principle to effect its cure.

---

\* Homœopathy, page 58.

Consequently, sometimes "very substantial quantities of medicine" are given, sometimes infinitesimal quantities, sometimes none at all, and the principle works equally well in all these cases and in every possible intermediate variety—

Omnis Aristippum decuit fortuna et res.

But when ordinary doses are administered, unprofessional people may be treated by a Homœopath of Dr. Reith's school, and never know that he is a Homœopath, until they discover that they have been cured by the principle of *similia similibus*. A story is told of a gentleman who was once *similia similibused* in this manner, and who is said to have thought it very queer when he was let into the secret. He had been taking, as is not unusual with sick people, his little powder or his little pill, or his little draught, quite in the orthodox fashion, and when he came all to rights again, he very good naturedly concluded that the doctor and the druggist had been of some service to him; but lo and behold it came out that his delivery had been wrought simply by a principle. He was, as has been said, not a little taken with this conceit, and at an assembly convoked for the purpose of dealing with an enigma in medical affairs, he stood up and very gravely affirmed that "Homœopathy is a principle, not a dose;" and sat down by saying, that if ever he was taken ill again, and Allopathy were not at home, he would prefer Homœopathy. This little incident very fairly illustrates the statement that, even among the few diseases where Homœopathy, according to Dr. Reith, professes to be master, its control is exercised only through deceit, for its tactics are not those of Homœopathy but of Allopathy.

But, suppose now, and it is the last time that such an effort shall be required, that Allopathic druggists refused to dispense anything but Homœopathic doses to Homœopathic doctors, what would this necessitate? Homœopathy deprived of an artifice by which it had maintained its authority over certain diseases, would have to give these up, and again retreating to a distance, corresponding to "the large proportion," would find itself hemmed into the microcosmal space, situated in the centre of the area occupied by disease. With the sphere of its operations thus narrowed, we may leave Homœopathy to triumph alone in its glory. Every physician will admit that there is a fractional modicum of disease which may be successfully treated by placeboes of any kind, and as Homœopathy supplies as innocent a device as may well be desired, toleration for Homœopathy and the Homœopaths is here permissible.

This is the position occupied by Dr. Reith's Homœopathy that was comparable to Gravitation when it was first announced. Of course, the representation is merely figurative, and cannot be taken as a strictly trustworthy account. But anyone can see that this system, with all the exceptions, restrictions, limitations, and reservations that its author

chooses to put upon it, must be reduced at length to a very pigmy condition, notwithstanding its greatness at the outset. Homœopathy does not cure all diseases—it does not cure organic disease—it is very far from curing all curable diseases—of those which it does cure it cures a “large proportion” by means of Allopathy—the rest it cures by infinitesimalism. Is it exaggeration to say, the residuum, after so many reductions, must be very small indeed, and for practical purposes equivalent to a cipher? To assign, therefore, at least, its approximate value to the unknown quantity in the equation with which we started, we have

$$0 + \text{“All that is good in Allopathy”} = \text{“My Eclecticism.”}$$

The important part of Dr. Reith’s practice, therefore, consists, simply, in “all that is good in Allopathy.” There is, thus, really nothing novel in it; not even when we regard that minute part which we have found it impossible to assign any value to. Dr. Reith himself on this point, says—“I have not given a single opinion (to Homœopathy he means) which was not held by Hahnemann long before, with the exception of the physiological basis.”\* The physiological basis indeed! If it had not been for this miserable tad-bit of a theory, the public would have never heard of Dr. Reith’s Eclecticism. His practice is old, and it is common; circumstances which it was necessary to conceal by new names, and a fine flow of rhapsody about ignoring creeds, and knocking down authority, and trampling prejudice to death, and whatever else might serve to hoodwink those who love everything that comes to them as new, and hate everything they find out to be old. It is impossible for a man to get a hearing in these days if he has only theories to propound; and, therefore, chiming in with the practical tendencies of the age, Dr. Reith gives out that he has hit upon some safe and speedy means of cure. And yet his method and the method adopted by the whole Faculty are identical, if we are to trust his Pamphlet. He is an Eclectic, and chooses whatever is best for the case in hand, whether from Allopathy or Homœopathy. And what physician is there who does not use every means which Nature has put it in his power to use, scientifically or otherwise, for the relief of human misery? I do not say, that this is the respectable course which Dr. Reith actually pursues. This would be a slippery subject to speculate upon. Dr. Reith professed once before, by one of the most solemn professions that man can make to men—the daily actions of his life—to be practising orthodox medicine, while all the while we know from his own confession, he was practicing nothing, but I had almost said ———, although I will not. All that is meant is simply that it is this respectable practice that the Pamphlet

---

\* Idem, page 54.

sets forth as his, when interrogated by a little cross-examination. The reason why he could not practice his eclecticism quietly, decently, and in order, like an ordinary member of the profession, was just because he had discovered a great theory, which great theory was destined to make him a great man. It is the physiological basis that is at the bottom of the whole matter.

Now, although the reader has heard enough about theories since we began, to wean him from theories for a length of time to come—he has not yet heard Dr. Reith's theory. It was not him that discovered the law (?) of *similia similibus*, although he discovered it for himself, and was sorry that Hahnemann had discovered it for us nearly a century ago. The great thing which he imagines he has done for this law, and for which he expected the universal homage of mankind, is the dignity he has conferred on it by raising it from the rank of a mere empirical law, to a deduced or explained law, by giving it a "physiological basis." To illustrate the point, we may say that he fancies he stands in the same relation to the law of Hahnemann, that Newton stands in relation to the laws of Kepler. In Kepler's own day, the laws of the planetary motions were empirical, or founded on observation, but when Newton established the law of gravitation, it was found that Kepler's laws could be deduced from it with mathematical precision. It is needless to say how much their superiority, as regards the certainty of their occurrence, according to calculation, was thus enhanced. In Hahnemann's own day, and up to the memorable day "when," &c., the law of *similia similibus curantur* rested simply on experience, and, indeed, on experience too limited—from the nature of the case—to constitute a law at all; but on that day the law of the *vaso-motor* system was discovered by Reith, and from this law could be deduced, according to its author, in the most logical manner, the law of *similia similibus curantur*. Now, if such had been the case, the greatest credit would have been due to Reith for his discovery. It certainly would have been a triumph for Homœopathy, that its principle was no longer dependent on a very doubtful experience, but had been scientifically deduced from a primary law of physiology. There is no man, medically inclined or otherwise, who could have resisted such proofs of its reality. But supposing that opposition to its reception did arise, what was the duty of a philosopher in such circumstances? Certainly to *bide his time*. The world rarely loses an atom of what is true; although the cupidity of some, and the stolidity of others, may for a time stand in its way. The life of every philosopher whom we know of, gives evidence of a calm reliance on this truth. But, *O tempora! O mores!* witness this philosopher. As soon as the idea has got access to his own mind—in a way that scientific ideas are seldom got—that he had made a great discovery, he must have everybody forthwith believe the same thing. He proposes to his pro-

fessional brethren that they should strip themselves of all their old ideas, to test the truth of this one; that they should undertake a re-examination of the whole subject of Medicine; that they should commence, *de novo*, as if there never had been a Celsus or a Hippocrates.\* In addition to all this he directs them to commence a series of cruel and dangerous experiments. They decline either to believe or act as he dictates. For a time he contents himself "with explaining his views publically and privately, and meets their objections" as became a philosopher, "in a free and candid manner." Still they are obdurate and refuse to gulp his doctrine or go in for his experiments. At last he finds it all in vain—they will not submit to his vaso-motor theory, nor make a mockery of sickness by leaving it to infinitesimalism. He becomes exasperated, sets them all at defiance, and hurried on by the furies, like Juno in her rage and despair,

Flexere si requeo Superos, Acheronta movebo,

he publishes "this Pamphlet," and appeals to the public as an "impartial tribunal."

Now, as to "this physiological basis"—what is it? Let the reader who is desirous of knowing, take up the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, for February, 1868, and hear Dr. Reith for himself.† To follow him through a labyrinth of unsupported hypotheses, and pure assumption; to point out, that granting all he requires of us, his deduction is an absurdity, could serve no good purpose whatever. Let us knock away one block on which the foundation of the whole argument rests, and then we shall have left it, by fair dealing, in the position assigned to it by one of Dr. Reith's friends, already alluded to,—"a baseless fabric." Dr. Reith assumes that "all diseases have their origin in the nervous system."† He has not a shadow of proof for such a sweeping generalization. It is a pure assumption. But this is the point from which he sets out, and, consequently, however fine all the rest of his reasonings may be, they simply go for nothing; as far, at least, as "this physiological basis" is concerned.

But Homœopathy does not stand or fall with Dr. Reith. He has added nothing to it, he can take nothing away from it. Vastly superior in every point of view, poor Hahnemann, notwithstanding all his crudities and absurdities, was an honest man. When he became a sceptic in regard to Medicine, he washed his hands of physic, and sat down with a German's will to translate books. And, although he did believe that the smell of gold was a cure for headaches—and who that translates many books can escape such a disorder?—he would not come at the remedy by any indirection. Perhaps "in this way he went on for years." *Requiescas in pace*, noble Hahnemann! Let some

\* See Essay, No. 1.

† Essay No. 1.

who are Homœopaths, and the prey of recurrent headaches, pause and contemplate Hahnemann.

But there are Homœopaths who smile both at "My Homœopathy and Hahnemann's." Scepticism in Medicine, like scepticism in Religion, is still an inconvenient thing for those who are possessed by it. He is held to be a hard-hearted man, who professes to believe that there is nothing for the sick but time and nature. A euphonistic and meaningless term, to give expression to negative belief, is what politeness requires. Homœopathy sounds well, and naturally enough, the unbelievers "cave-in here."

In conclusion, one word about experiments. I have said Dr. Reith calls for *cruel and dangerous experiments*. For the whole bulk of the profession to become experimentalists, in the way that Dr. Reith advises, could only result in mischief pure and simple. Without saying anything derogatory to medical men, there is not one, perhaps, out of a thousand, who could break entirely with the past and tread new and unknown paths with advantage either to science or his patients. Any one who knows the precautions required to give value to an experiment of any kind in order that every misleading circumstance may be eliminated, will allow that the human body, presenting the greatest complexity of circumstances in nature, is certainly not a fit subject for every one experimenting on who is simply qualified for practising medicine. It only shews the utter ignorance of the conditions of an experiment in the man who asks for such a thing. If he will not treat disease until he can treat it with mathematical precision, it is much to be feared he is still a do-nothing. And if people in some quarters would cease their tall-talk about medicine being a science, when they are in good humour, and about its being everything but a science when they are in bad humour with themselves and everybody, they would do an infinite amount of good to their humbler brethren in the profession, who are content to do what they can for the relief of human misery, scientifically or otherwise. There is some difference between being original and independent, and it is only a pity that the one virtue should be discredited by so much affectation of the other, which is indeed a "*rara avis in terris*;" Dr. Reith and his Homœopathy notwithstanding. His two years of experience is a sufficient warrant for any one to go by who is willing to risk it a little with his patients. One experiment, he thinks, will put an end to unbelief. *Ex uno disce omnes*. It is a very simple thing to give an infinitesimal dose of medicine to a patient who is labouring under a mental delusion. It has, perhaps, the negative virtue of doing no harm; but if homœopathic medicines are to be put to the test, they must be used when there is something to combat; and a man's reliance on the system will never be complete until he has proved its virtue in extreme cases. Dr. Reith began by applying it to a case of gangrene of the lung—a very fair case for a

commencement, indeed! Yet, if the patient had died, Dr. Reith would have said he died a natural death. If, however, an infinitesimal quantity of medicine may cure, is it not also allowable to suppose that it may kill? But, taking the rational view, that less than the millionth of a grain of strychnia, or any other medicinal substance, must have an action practically null and void, is it an innocent thing to experiment with such trifles when one is called upon to act? If the physician be summoned to a patient at one of those exigencies in human life when the confidence of friends resign entirely to his care the object of their tenderest regard, this is just the time when he can make the most telling experiment; but the time when every sentiment of humanity most forbids him. The patient is supposed to be dangerously ill, which will give a fair chance to Homœopathy to show to its best advantage, and he is entirely in the doctor's hands, which secures that every iota of his directions shall be attended to. Would it be a simple thing, now, to give an infinitesimal quantity, say of tincture of digitalis or of opium, if the most trustworthy experience directed that a full dose should be administered? What would the experiment effect for science? If the patient dies, the doctor cannot conclude against his remedy; if he lives, he cannot determine in its favour. A single experiment in such a case goes for nothing. And yet, how great is the significance of a single life to its possessor, and those who are bound up with him in the same bundle of joys and sorrows, of hopes and fears? Might not any man tremble to tamper with the slender chain that binds all these together, and the more so when he is called upon, in the name of all that is sacred, to prevent its dissolution by whatever means he knows to be best. Let Dr. Reith inform us how often we may set at nought the primitive instincts of our nature, in behalf of science falsely so called? To drop infinitesimals into the mouth of a sick man, "to stand with our arms folded at his bed-side," and "issue daily bulletins of his disease," may be with him an innocent philosophy and science, but I address myself to an "intelligent public" and demand, could there be anything more inhuman, could there be anything more diabolical?

ERRATUM.

Page 6, line 7, *for* "medical agents," *read* "medicinal agents."

REVISED

Page 6 line 7 for "and" read "and"