HOMŒOPATHY

IN

MANCHESTER.

HOMŒOPATHY,

AS PRACTISED IN

MANCHESTER,

CONTRASTED WITH ITS ALLEGED PRINCIPLES.

BY

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"You must not blame the looking-glass if your face is crooked."—
OLD PROVERB.

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PREFACE.

It is not my purpose in the following chapters to enter on any extended discussion of the doctrines of homœopathy, but rather to give some account of the practice that goes under that name in this city and neighbourhood. I was led into this inquiry by circumstances that occurred fortuitously in my own experience; and which made a deep impression on my mind. I fell in with patients who had been under the care of homœopathists, but who, I found, had been treated in the usual way; and the patients so treated had not the slightest suspicion that they had not been treated homœopathically. One case in particular struck me. A young man with epilepsy put himself under the care of a homœopathist in this town, and was reported to me as having derived great benefit from homœopathy. But many months afterwards I discovered that the medicine he had been taking, was three grains of phosphate of zinc three times a day!

As I pushed my inquiry forward, and obtained increased information, it became plain that these were not solitary instances, but samples of a sys-

tematic practice. And it appeared desirable that the profession and the public should be made aware of them. Sir G. Cornewall Lewis classed homœopathy with the mock sciences; but that which is called homœopathy in Manchester, seems to me doubly a mockery—a mock practice of a mock science.

It is to be understood that the statements here made respecting homœopathic practice, have sole reference to this neighbourhood. Of what takes place in other localities, my information is too limited to enable me to pronounce with certainty; though I have good reason to suspect that what is true of Manchester, holds true likewise of a good many other places. In treating of the literature of the subject, I have been obliged to take a wider view, because the homœopathists of Manchester have not contributed much, and I congratulate them upon it, to that branch of homœopathic enterprise.

Manchester,
February, 1862.

INTRODUCTION.

When Hahnemann presented his system to the world, it was characterised especially by two doctrines. The first of these was, that in order to cure any disease, it was necessary to find a remedy which should produce in the patient an artificial or medicinal disorder similar in its symptoms to the natural one. The artificial disease thus induced—so the theory ran—would overcome, and eventually supersede the old complaint. Having achieved this purpose, it would itself subside, on the discontinuance of the medicine, and leave the patient happily rid of them both.

This primary axiom was enunciated in the Latin phrase, *Similia similibus curantur*, familiarly translated into "Like cures like."

The second cardinal doctrine of homœopathy was, that the medicine so selected should be administered, not in the usual quantity, but in infinitely minute proportions, or as it is commonly expressed, in *infinitesimal doses.*

In order to take away from the manifest absurdity of this second proposition, it was supplemented by the paradoxical theory, that a drug in the process of attenuation, whether effected by repeated dilution with alcohol and shaking the bottle, or by trituration with successive por-

tions of sugar of milk, acquired, by a mysterious act of dynamisation or potentization, an exaltation of its power which more than compensated for its diminished quantity.*

On these two doctrines homœopathy was founded; thus it was at first ostensibly practised; and thus it still exists in the numerous treatises which proclaim its tenets, and in the myriad shilling "guides," "stepping-stones," "text books," &c., which are laid like traps on the counters of homœopathic chemists, to catch the unwary.

Moreover, the public rest in the happy belief, that this is the homœopathy practised upon their bodies; and the medical profession largely shares in the same persuasion.

If it had been so, these pages would have remained unwritten; for I have small desire to break a lance with Hahnemann or any of his consistent disciples. His strange theories are no more to me than any of the other ill-founded notions—and they are not a few—which infest

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* "Medicinal substances do not manifest nearly the totality of the powers concealed in them when they are taken in the rough state, or as offered to us by nature. They do not exhibit all their virtues until they have been reduced to a high state of dilution by attrition and succussion, a very simple manipulation, which developes to an incredible point their powers, and brings into full action the forces which until then had remained latent, or as if buried in slumber. It is now well known that the best manner of using even a substance reputed feeble consists in taking for several successive days four or six little globules of the thirtieth dilution."—*Hahnemann's Organon, p.* 206—*Paris edit.*

medical science. But it has come to my knowledge, that the practice of homœopathy in our city is as wide as the poles asunder from the teaching of the books, and from the current belief concerning it.

My object is to communicate this knowledge to whom it may concern, and to contribute a chapter to the *Memoires pour servir*, that one day will be welcome to Dryasdust, when he shall sit down to write the history of homœopathy.

Before proceeding with my task, however, I have an explanation to make. Although *similia similibus curantur* is the fundamental doctrine of homœopathy, and is, indeed, embalmed in its very name, it is not for all that its most prominent feature to the perception of mortals. The law of *similia*, as the reader will find demonstrated in the second chapter, is little more than a sublime abstraction, incapable of any but the most imperfect and limited translation into practice.

The doctrine of infinitesimal doses, on the contrary, is one of mathematical plainness; and it is capable of easy and unerring application to practice. It might have been foretold from the beginning, that in consequence of this inherent difference, the abstract principle would abide in cloud-land; while the tangible rule would give body, complexion, and outward dress to the new faith, and before long attract to itself the exclusive devotion of its votaries. And so it happened. The tiny phial of tincture, with

its drop dose; the fairy tasteless globule; the sugar of milk powder; the cup of pure water;—these were palpable enough to the patient and to his wondering friends; but whether the treatment was in unison or not with the law of *similia*, how could they tell? This law could never be to them more than a form of words, altogether and of necessity beyond their appreciation. Whatever came in the little phial, or in the shape of a globule, or as insipid sugar of milk powder,—THAT was homœopathy to them.

It will now be understood why infinitesimal doses take the precedence in these pages. They come under consideration in the first chapter; and proof will be there adduced of their abandonment for palpable quantities by the homœopathic practitioners of Manchester. It will also be revealed how these larger doses are frequently—nay, habitually—concealed under certain symbols which render their detection impossible to the uninitiated.

In the next chapter the mystic law of *similia* will be expounded and illustrated. It will be shown that its professed adherents habitually transgress or evade it, and manifest an unlawful relish for the flesh-pots of ordinary practice.

The literature of homœopathy will receive such criticism as it deserves in the third chapter; and in the last the author will make a few reflections; then unveil a number of carefully nursed popular delusions, and finally take leave of the reader in a notable quotation.

HOMŒOPATHY IN MANCHESTER.

CHAPTER I.

INFINITESIMAL DOSES.

"A medicine of a positive or curative kind will, without any fault in itself, produce just the contrary of that which it ought to do, if given in excessive quantity, by producing a greater disease than that present."

"A medicine, though it may be homœopathically suited to the case of disease, does harm in every dose that is too large—the more harm the larger the dose; and by the magnitude of the dose, it does more harm the greater its homœopathicity."—*Hahnemann, Heilkunde der Erfahrung,* 1805, *and Organon,* p. 321.

"Mais nous avons changé tout cela!"—*Le Médicin malgré lui.*

By an infinitesimal dose is meant a quantity so small that the most powerful drug or poison administered in that proportion is incapable of producing any perceptible effect on the healthy individual.

A millionth of a grain—the third dilution of Hahnemann—is such a dose. This quantity of the most virulent poison known could be swallowed every five minutes, or indeed every minute, throughout the day, and for an indefinite number of days, without provoking any appreciable symptom whatsoever.

Hahnemann, after he had fully developed his system, used infinitesimal doses exclusively; and he resorted to quantities immeasureably less than a millionth of a grain —to the sixth, twelfth, and thirtieth centesimal dilutions. His favourite strength was the thirtieth dilution. The proportion of active medicine in this is so inconceivably minute, that if all the people in Manchester and Salford, reckoned at half a million, were to swallow a dose every minute of the day, and continue incessantly swallowing at the same rate, year after year, the whole population would not succeed in consuming a single grain in hundreds of millions of years! *

This, according to the founder of homœopathy, is the best dose in chronic and acute diseases. †

If we now turn to the books published for the guidance of domestic homœopathic practice, we find in all of them a table of the medicines to be used, with the dilution in which they are to be administered. Dr. Laurie, in his Epitome, has a list of forty-five medicines; of these thirty-seven are in the 6th dilution, and eight in the 3rd dilution. In six other domestic guides that I have examined, the dilution uniformly recommended is either the 6th or the 3rd dilution. In not one of them is there any mention

* A single grain of the active medicine would be swallowed, on the above supposition, (taking one drop or one grain of the dilution for a dose), in about 3330,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 millions of years!

† Hahnemann's Organon, p. 289.

of a dose stronger than a millionth of a grain.* Not a whisper about mother tinctures, tenths, hundredths, or thousandths—nothing under a millionth—and therefore nothing which is not strictly infinitesimal.

When, however, I came to inquire into the practice of our so-called homœopathic practitioners, I speedily discovered that they paid scant homage to the infinitesimal dose; and that they employed remedies either in the usual dose of ordinary practice, or if in smaller quantities, then smaller only by a half, a tenth, or a hundredth, instead of by a millionth, a million-millionth, or even some yet minuter fraction, as their books would indicate.

This prodigious discrepancy between the rule proclaimed as universal in their books and their actual practice, is something so totally new to us who hold to scientific medicine, that it excites the most lively emotions of wonder, and a sea of conjecture as to the meaning of it.

Consider now, what would be thought of a medical writer, who should recommend in his published works a drop of castor oil or a grain of Epsom salts for a dose; but who should, in his actual treatment of the sick, always prescribe a couple of table-spoonfuls of the former,

---

* For some reason, Camphor is held to be an exceptional medicine in homœopathy. It is almost always given in full doses of the mother tincture, and kept strictly apart from all other medicines.

or an ounce of the latter. This is a very faint illustration of what our homœopathists do. The doses they prescribe to their patients are a thousand, a million, ten million times larger than any recommended in the books put into the hands of those patients.

In sustaining this charge, I shall call to witness their written prescriptions, their own declarations, and the drugs sold over the counter, in the shops of homœopathic chemists.

I have before me sixty-seven prescriptions by the various so-called homœopathic practitioners of this town. A considerable proportion of them were obtained by myself from patients who had previously been under homœopathic treatment; the remainder I received through the kindness of friends. Nearly all have been collected in the last few months—the majority from private patients, but some from dispensary patients; and by the diversity of their authors, and the different circumstances under which they were prescribed, they are well calculated to convey a fair idea of homœopathic practice.

They present an astounding range of dose—from the full, indeed over-full, dose of ordinary practice, to the heights serene of the 6th dilution (a million-millionth). By far the greater number, however, are within reach of easy comprehension. The most rare are the infinitesimal, and for some time I was in despair of possessing any: at length I caught one; and when my collection was complete, I was master of eight.

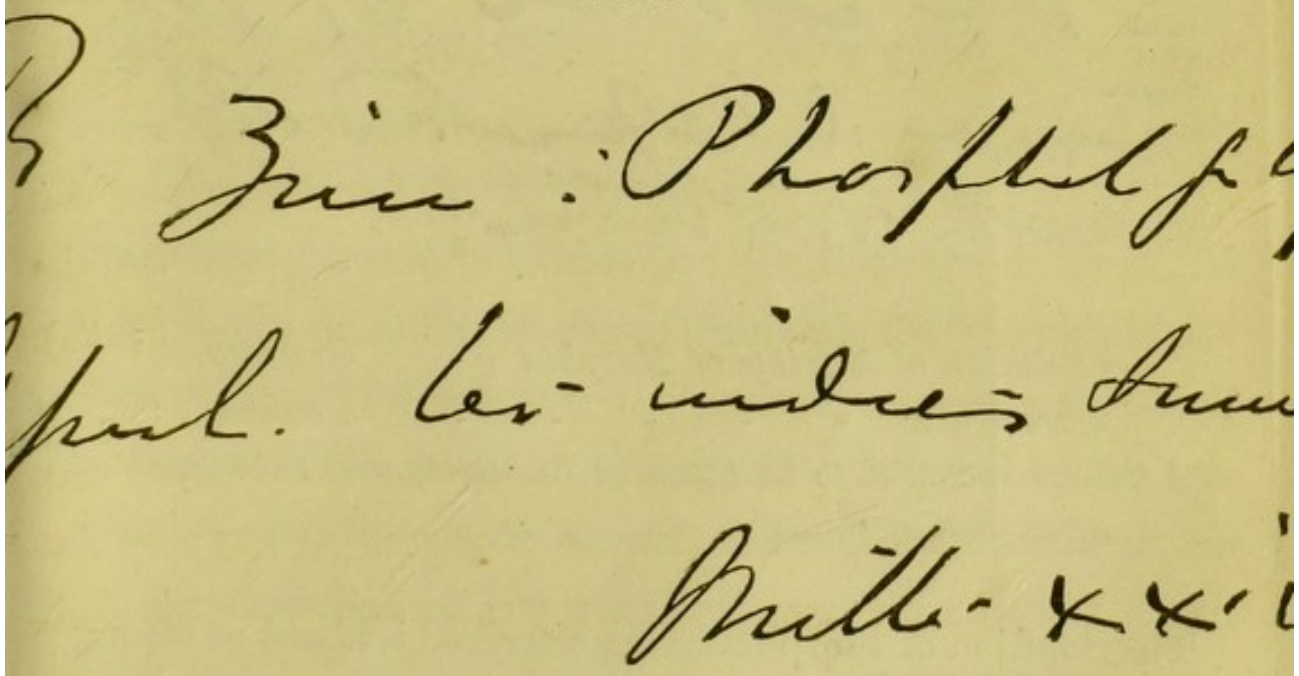
I now propose to examine these prescriptions, group by group, under their various denominations, and in the following order :—

Group 1. Ordinary prescriptions.
2. Mother tinctures.
3. Attenuation **A**.
4. Attenuation I.
5. Attenuation **B**.
6. Infinitesimal attenuations.

One or more illustrations in *fac-simile* will be given of each group, suppressing the initials of the prescriber and the name of the patient for whom the prescription was written.

I. Ordinary Prescriptions.—Let us first pick out those which resemble, in dose and style, the prescriptions of ordinary medical men, which any druggist could make up, and any physician or surgeon read. They are thirteen in number, and the following will serve for examples.

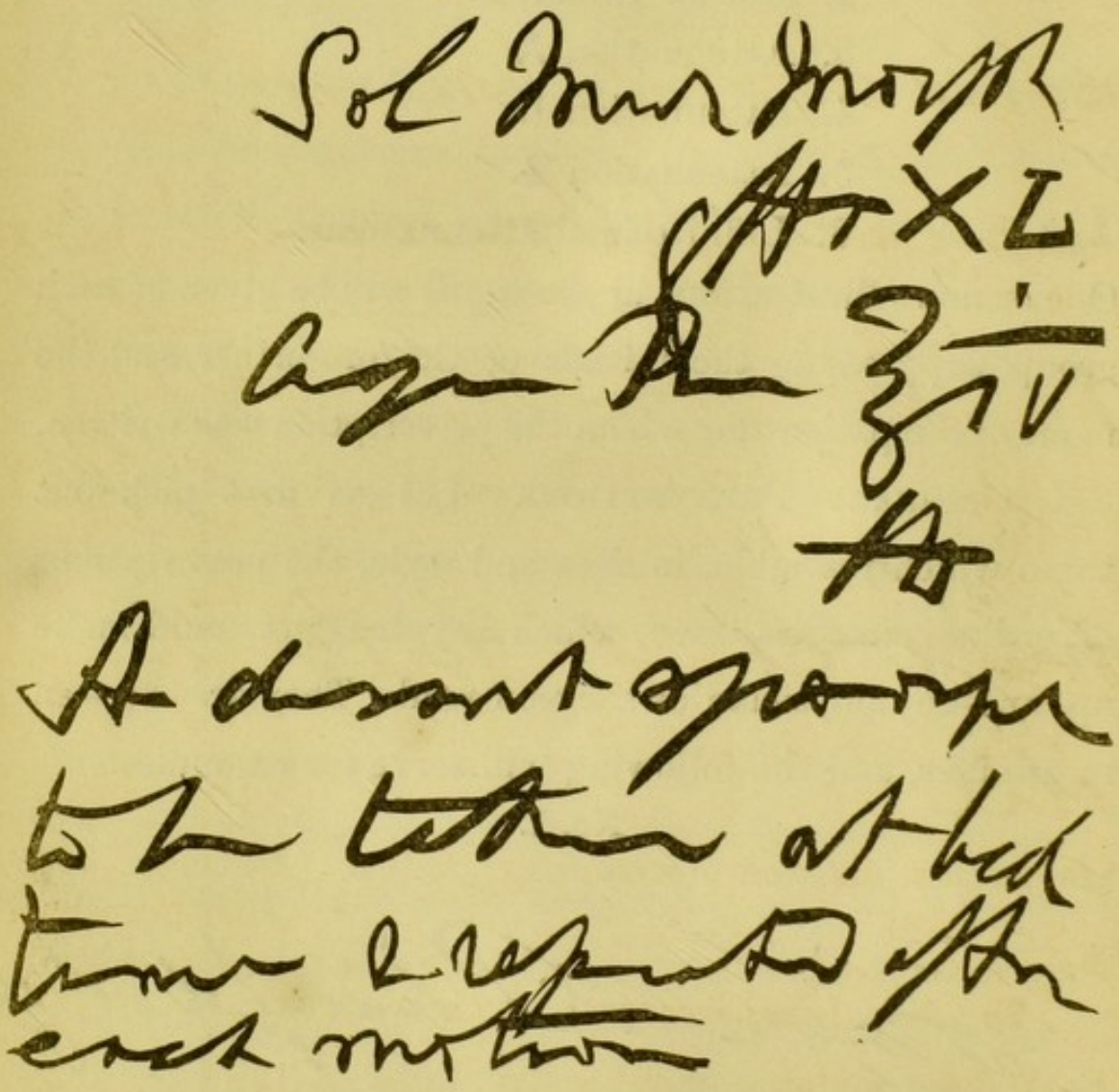
No. 1.



[*Phosphate of Zinc,* 3 *grains; to form a powder; one to be taken three times a day; send* 24.]

This is about the dose usually administered by an ordinary practitioner.

No. 2.



[*Solution of Muriate of Morphia* - 40 *drops.*
Pure Water - - - - - 4 *ounces.*
A dessert spoonful to be taken at bed-time, and to be repeated after each motion.]

The Solution of Morphia here prescribed is about as strong as laudanum, and each dose contains about three drops.

No. 3.

℞

Liquoris Iodidi Mercurii et
Arsenici (Donovan's) ʒij
Aq. puræ ℥vj

Capiat cochl. med ter
in die.

[*Donovan's Solution (containing Iodine, Mercury, and Arsenic)* - - - - 2 *drachms.*
Pure Water - - - - 6 *ounces.*
To take a dessert spoonful three times a day.]

Each dose contains about seven drops of the pure solution, which is quite as much as most ordinary practitioners like to begin with.

Occasionally a quantity of the unmixed drug is ordered without any written directions—these being given orally to the patient. In the subjoined example, one of our most active remedies—Wine of Colchicum—was so prescribed in the quantity of half an ounce.

No. 4.

℞

Vin Ferr Colch ℥ss

In No. 5 half a drachm of the Citrate of Iron and Quinine was similarly prescribed.

No. 5.*

Ferri C & et Quinin
℥ss

The patient in this instance informed me that he was directed to dissolve the medicine in a cupful of cold water, and to take a dessert spoonful every four hours—a quantity sufficient to satisfy most regular practitioners.

But it is only exceptionally that homœopathists assume the common style of prescribing; usually they adopt a method which is incomprehensible to the ordinary drug-

* This was ordered for a patient attending the Manchester and Salford Homœopathic Dispensary.

gist, by which large doses of powerful medicines may be, and are, prescribed in perfect concealment.

I am unacquainted with any treatise that supplies a key to this plan of prescribing; and although I have made diligent inquiry among members of my own profession, among chemists and druggists (not homœopathic), as well as in the families of those who employ homœopathic practitioners, I have never fallen in with an individual who had any knowledge of it. It is not, however, kept a rigid secret; and I found no difficulty, by searching in the proper quarters, in completely unveiling the mystery; and I now invite the curious to share the fruits of my investigations.

II. Mother Tinctures.—The most concentrated state of a drug dissolved in alcohol is called the "Mother tincture." This is a solution of the medicine in spirits of wine, and is usually, as I am informed, more powerful than the corresponding tincture of the ordinary druggist. It is known in prescriptions by the sign of the Greek letter ϕ. A drop of the mother tincture was the unit employed by Hahnemann in the preparation of his dilutions; and, according to the books, a millionth or a million-millionth of such a drop is the proper dose.

Hahnemann, as we have seen, did not prescribe the mother tinctures, and not a hint of such an enormity occurs in the books, but there are homœopathic practitioners in this town who prescribe them frequently, if not habitually. I offer two illustrations:—

No. 6.

MANCHESTER & SALFORD

HOMŒOPATHIC DISPENSARY,

37, LEVER STREET.

Caych &
China &

Dissolve each of the enclosed powders in a separate teacupful of pure cold water, and take a few spoonful turn about, a dose every 2 hours.

The cup and spoon must be perfectly clean, and the spoon must not be left in the medicine, but carefully wiped and put away.

[*Cantharides (blistering flies)* - - *Mother Tincture.*
Peruvian Bark - - - - - *Mother Tincture.*]

It will be observed that the medicines are spoken of as powders in the printed directions. This comes about in the following fashion: a few drops of the tincture are dropped upon eight or ten grains of sugar of milk; the sugar of milk absorbs the drops, and soon forms a dry powder; and this is afterwards either dissolved in water, as directed in the above prescription, or taken dry on the tongue. The number of drops is not specified, because,

as I am informed, it is the rule of the dispensary, unless otherwise stated, to add *six* drops to each powder.

The alternate administration of different drugs is a favourite plan with homœopathists, and answers the same purpose as the admixture of two substances in the same pill or bottle as ordinarily practised. Sometimes the two drugs so ordered are in different dilutions, or one is under the sign of the mother tincture, and the other in infinitesimal quantity, as in the following instance :—

No. 7.

MANCHESTER & SALFORD

HOMŒOPATHIC DISPENSARY,

37, LEVER STREET.

Conc
Sepia 3

Dissolve each of the enclosed Powders in a separate teacupful of pure cold water, and take spoonful turn about, a dose every 2 2 Ten hours.

The cup and spoon must be perfectly clean, and the spoon must not be left in the medicine, but carefully wiped and put away.

[*Hemlock* - - - - - *Mother Tincture.*
Sepia - - - - - - *3rd dilution.*]

It is noteworthy that the active drug Conium (hemlock) is in the strength of the concentrated tincture, while the inert Sepia (ink of the cuttle-fish) is in the third dilution (a millionth of a grain). Comment on such a combination is superfluous.

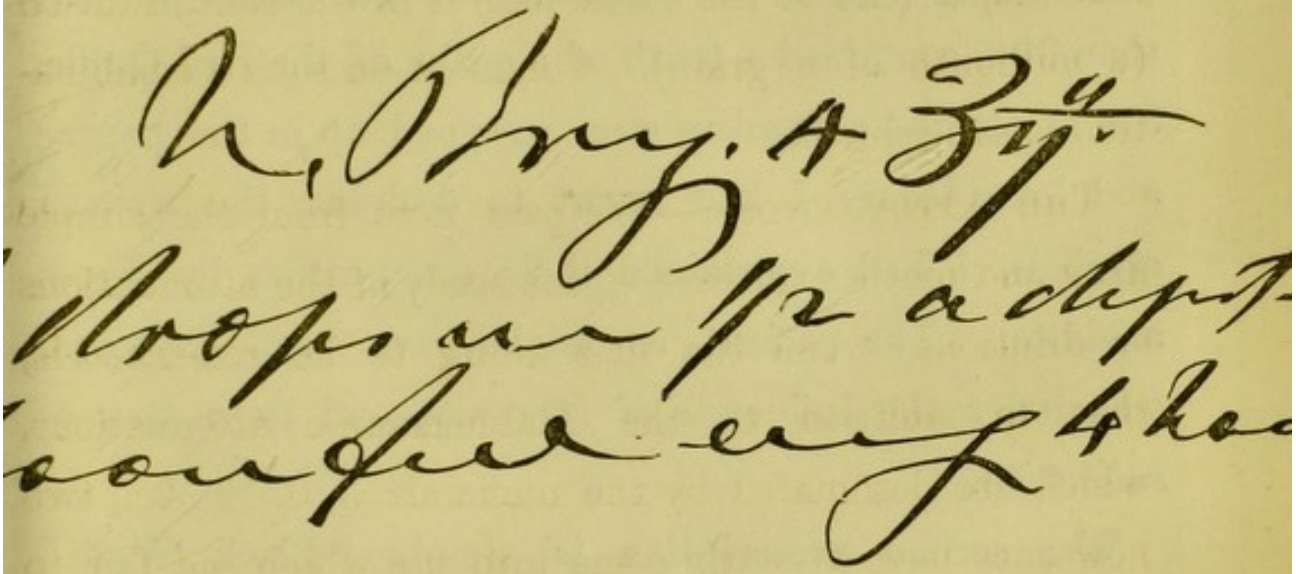
THE ATTENUATIONS.—We pass now from the simple drug and mother tincture to the study of the attenuations or dilutions. And the first thing to be remarked is, that in addition to the Hahnemannic attenuations, which are designated by the numerals 3, 6, 12, &c., two new ones have recently come into use which bid fair to oust the former altogether from the field. These are respectively known by the signs **A.** and **B.** **A.** contains *a tenth* part of pure medicine, and **B.** *a thousandth* part. Intermediate between these two lies the first Hahnemannic attenuation (I.), containing *a hundredth* part of pure medicine; and, of late, this has likewise been pressed into active service.

Here then we have three attenuations, which Hahnemann did not use; which the books ignore; and which are stronger by some thousand or million times than the usually recognised preparations. To a further examination of these, I now invite the reader.

(3.) ATTENUATION **A.** [one part of pure medicine, and nine parts of sugar of milk or spirits of wine.]—This is sometimes called the first *decimal* attenuation; and it affords a convenient medium for the administration of

powerful medicines in full doses—as some of the following examples attest :—

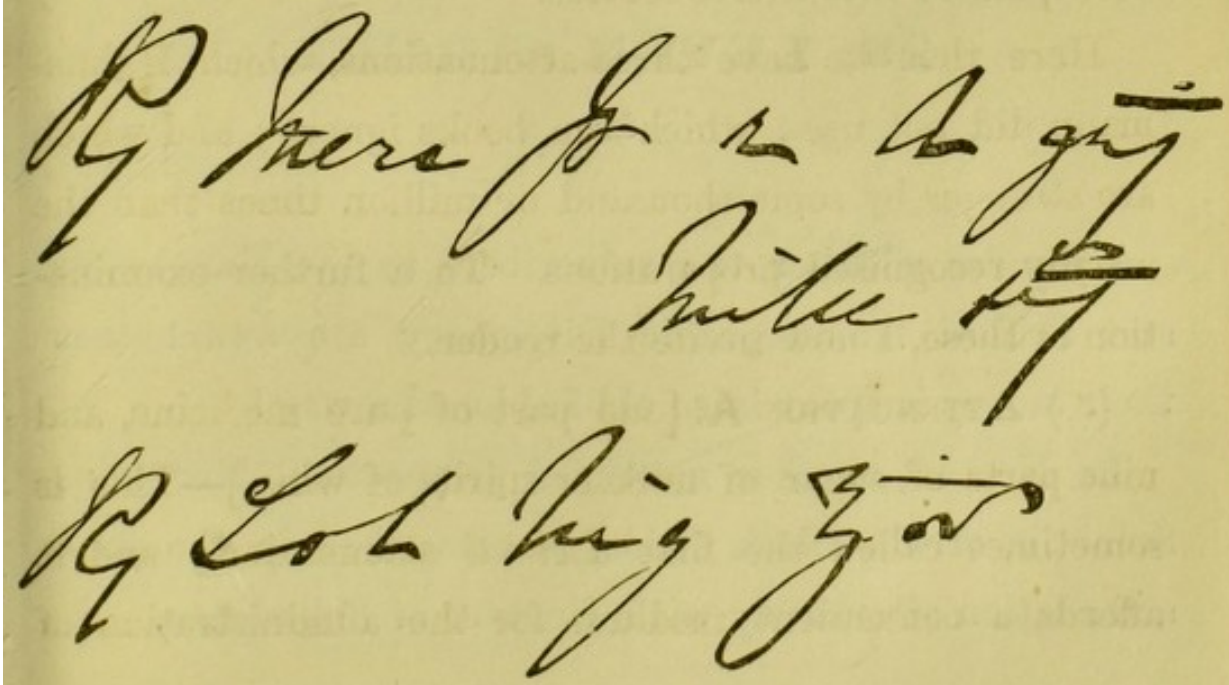
No. 8.



[*Tincture of Bryonia* **A**. *two drachms.*]

All prescriptions in **A**. are not so mild as this. The following was brought to me by a patient whose complaint will be divined at once by the professional reader :—

No. 9.



The first prescription directs one grain of the first decimal attenuation [**A**.] of the Red Oxide of Mercury (red precipitate) to be taken in powder. Each powder, therefore, contained a tenth of a grain of the Red Oxide. Six of the little powders were wrapped up in the paper; and long before I had learnt to decipher the written symbols, I had ascertained their composition by direct analysis. The patient, as might have been expected, was under the influence of Mercury, and *in a state of salivation.*

The second prescription is simply "Black Wash" (containing the *Black* Oxide of Mercury) ordered in the usual way. On the back of the paper was the inscription :—

MANCHESTER & SALFORD

HOMŒOPATHIC DISPENSARY,

29, LEVER STREET.

&c.

I wonder whether the subscribers to the Manchester and Salford Homœopathic Dispensary are aware that their money is spent in so old-fashioned a way!

In No. 10, another mercurial preparation, Mercurius Solubilis, or the Black Oxide, is prescribed in the same attenuation alternately with Tincture of Belladonna.

No. 10.

℞

Merc. Vol. A gr j in pul

Mitte xij

℞ T. Bell A gutt vj

Aq. pur. ℥ vj

Sig. a desert spoonful eve

4 hours a powder dry on

the tongue midtime betwee

[*Black oxide of Mercury* **A**.—*one grain in powder; send twelve.*

Tinct. Belladonna **A**.—*six drops.*

Pure water—six ounces.]

Each powder contained a tenth of a grain of the Black Oxide. In this and the preceding prescription, the doses of mercury are full ordinary quantities; but in the former the design was to affect the system, and in the latter to produce an alterative effect.

I have no desire to find fault with these prescriptions —one is glad to see a return to common sense; but after the obloquy that has been heaped on our heads by homœopathists for using palpable doses of mercury, it *is* somewhat surprising to find them pouring-in the most active mercurial preparations without stint or scruple to the full salivation of their patients.

(4.) ATTENUATION I. — The *first centesimal* dilution. [One part of pure medicine, and ninety-nine parts of sugar of milk or spirits of wine].

The two following examples illustrate the methods of prescribing this favourite dilution :—

No. 11.

℞ Bryon. ℥ij.
Arnic. ℥ij.

drops in 1/2 a tumbler
water, a spoonful every
other hour alternately
with 20-30 hours
this spoonful every
half hour — Pain
in comes & goes — acute

[*Tincture of Bryonia I.* - - - 2 *drachms.*
Tincture of Arnica I. - - - 2 *drachms.*]

No. 12.

MANCHESTER

Homœopathic Hospital & Dispensary

Bloom Street, Piccadilly.

1 China 1/=
2 Ignat 1/

Each of these powders to be dissolved in separate tea-cups, full of pure cold water, and one tea spoonful taken every 3 or 4 hours alternately.

The cups and spoons must be perfectly clean, or if put in bottles, they must be new, and never used for any other purpose.

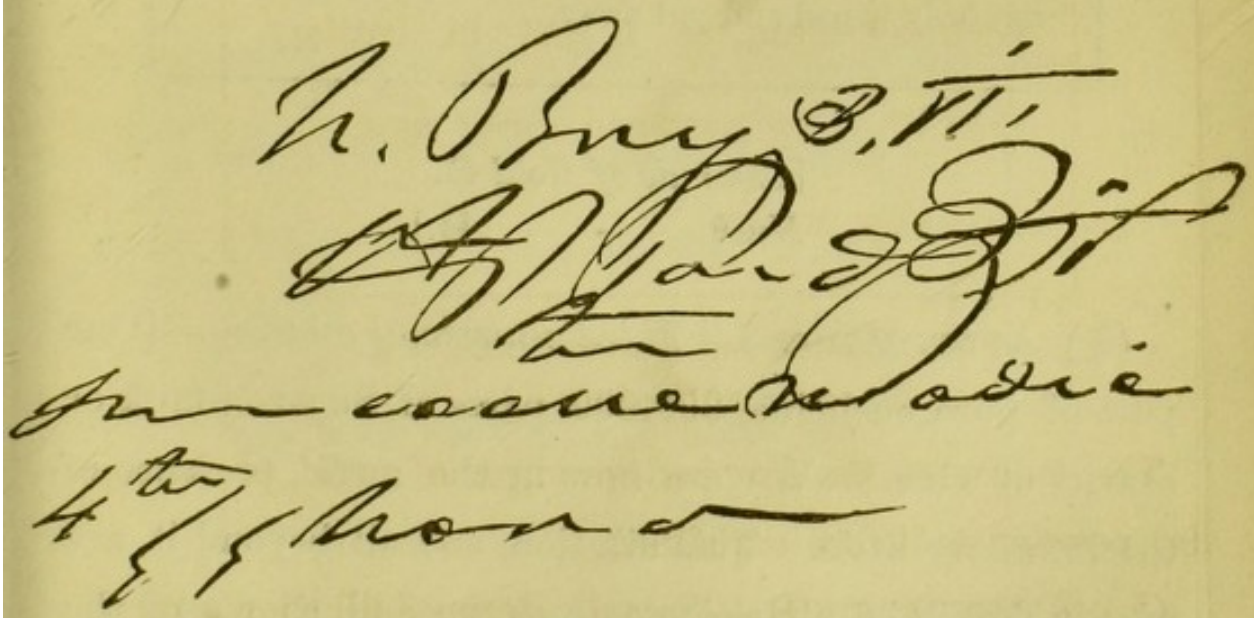
[1. *Tincture of Peruvian Bark I.*
2. *Tincture of Ignatia I.*]

The tinctures are dropped on sugar of milk, to form a dry powder as before explained.

(5.) ATTENUATION **B**.—*Second decimal* dilution. [One part of pure medicine and nine hundred and ninety-nine

parts of sugar of milk or spirits of wine.] We are now coming to very small doses—doses that are in the vast majority of cases powerless for good or evil. I am not, however, prepared to say, that a thousandth part of a grain of a very active medicine, may not exert a sensible effect if given frequently, and homœopathists sometimes repeat their doses in quick succession—every hour or even quarter of an hour. It would be easy to administer Strychnia, Arsenic, Red Oxide of Mercury, or any other equally powerful drug in the **B**. degree so as to bring the system under medicinal influence. Five grains of the **B**. triturations of one of these, or five drops of the corresponding tincture, would contain a two-hundredth of a grain of pure medicine, and if this quantity were repeated twelve times, the usual full dose would be attained. Examples :—

No. 13.



[*Tincture of Bryonia* **B**. -	-	6 *drops.*
Pure water -	- -	4 *ounces.*

A dessert spoonful every four hours.]

No. 14.

MANCHESTER & SALFORD

HOMŒOPATHIC DISPENSARY,

37, LEVER STREET.

Dissolve each of the enclosed Powders in a separate teacupful of pure cold water, and take a spoonful turn about, a dose every hours.

The cup and spoon must be perfectly clean, and the spoon must not be left in the medicine, but carefully wiped and put away.

[*Chloride of Gold* **B.**
Musk - **B.**]

(6.) Attenuation 3. *Third centesimal* dilution. [One part of pure medicine, 999,999 parts of Sugar-of-milk or Spirits of wine.]—We are now in the awful presence of the infinitely little. This dilution, and all beyond it, are wholly devoid of physiological power; and, as we of the rational school believe, wholly devoid of curative power.

I have only two papers exclusively inscribed with infinitesimal doses, and they deserve reproduction, if only for their rarity; here is one of them :—

No. 15.

MANCHESTER

Homœopathic Hospital & Dispensary

Bloom Street, Piccadilly.

Mercurius ℨ
Belladonna ℨ

Each of these powders to be dissolved in separate tea-cups, full of pure cold water, and one dessert spoonful taken every 4 hours alternately.

The cups and spoons must be perfectly clean, or if put in bottles, they must be new, and never used for any other purpose.

[*Mercurius* 3. *Belladonna* 3.]

This completes my gallery of illustrations. Annexed is a tabulated view of the prescriptions in my possession, arranged in the manner adopted in the preceding pages. The number of prescriptions belonging to each group is attached, so that the comparative frequency of their occurrence can be seen at a glance.

Total number of prescriptions - - -	67
Of these there are:—	
Ordinary ones in form and dose - -	13
Mother tinctures - - -	7
Attenuation **A**. (one-tenth) - -	14
„ I. (one-hundredth) - -	19
„ **B**. (one-thousandth) - -	6
„ Infinitesimal. 3 (one-millionth) -	4
„ Infinitesimal. 6 (one-million-millionth)	4

The table exhibits in a manner not to be mistaken, the imminent disappearance of infinitesimal doses from the prescriptions of our homœopathic practitioners. Only eight out of sixty-seven!—Shades of Hahnemann, what a falling off!

It is further to be noted that in four out of these eight, the infinitesimal dose was conjoined with the alternate administration of another medicine in the strength of the mother tincture; and the remaining four were on two papers; so that out of the entire

number, *only two patients* were treated by infinitesimal doses solely!

Those under the denomination **B.** must be regarded generally as containing doses intermediate between infinitesimal and palpable quantities. With feeble remedies, it is impossible to credit this dilution with anything more than a fanciful power; and even with the strongest, the dose must be frequently repeated if valid effects are to be obtained.

Excluding these, there remain fifty-three prescriptions —eighty per cent of the whole—which deal with palpable quantities, and many of them prescribe the full doses of ordinary practice.

These facts show that a revolution has taken place in homœopathic practice, and if as yet incomplete, one must be blind indeed not to see the inevitable tendency of events. As billions and millions have given place to hundreds and tens, so will these in their turn, as we see already done in part, give place to the effective doses of general experience.

The prescriptions here analysed are not selected ones. I have faithfully given an account of all that have fallen in my way, both great and small. It was my custom to ask patients who had been under the care of homœopathists to bring me their prescriptions of whatever sort; and when professional or other friends presented me with any, they were unable to decipher their symbols,

and therefore ignorant of their meaning, with the exception, of course, of those written in the usual style.

Instead of giving an undue estimate of the frequency of large doses in homœopathic practice, my belief is, that the list I have given, if anything, underrates them. Many facts within my knowledge lead to this conviction. We constantly find, on succeeding to the care of patients after homœopathists, the plainest evidence that strong doses have been administered by our predecessors. You cannot converse with a regular practitioner who has not had his experience of this. In one case, there is the history of salivation; in another, of powders producing sickness whenever administered; or the medicines themselves are there to tell the tale, and their strong tastes are witness enough that they have not been prescribed in infinitesimal doses.*

The employment of ordinary doses of castor oil is notoriously a common practice in some households of the faithful, and is sanctioned by some at least of our

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* The following incident occurred to myself. I was called to see a gentleman in Bowdon, who had been under the care of two homœopathists from this city. On his mantelpiece I found two phials, one of which had a sharply acid, and the other a saline taste. I could not discriminate the ingredients by the taste alone, but the patient soon set me right. "That," he said, "is nitric acid, it was ordered after I commenced to be salivated; the other contains iodide of potash, it was the first medicine I took."

homœopathic practitioners. Even compound colocynth pills—the oldest and commonest of purgatives—have been ordered to my knowledge by one of the same fraternity, and furnished by a homœopathic chemist. I will not weary the reader with the details of numerous other instances from my memoranda, but will content myself with stating, that in addition to the examples already quoted, I have proof of the following drugs having been administered in full doses :—cod-liver oil, carbonate of ammonia, rhubarb, quinine, sulphuric acid, nitric acid, ergot of rye, laudanum, spirits of turpentine, chloroform, croton oil, strychnia, arsenic, nitrate of silver, iodide of potassium, calomel, belladonna, taraxacum, oil of male fern ; together with iodine, nitrate of silver, and sulphur ointment for external use.

I pass now to the declarations of homœopathic practitioners. Three of them have admitted to me that they did not regard infinitesimal doses as an essential part of their practice, and that they resorted without scruple to full doses. One of them stated, in support of his assertion, that in a case of cerebral disease, then under his care, he administered two drops of croton oil (the usual dose is one drop), to obviate constipation, which, he naively added, had been induced by previous abuse of purgative medicines. To another patient—a child—he was giving two grain doses of iodide of potassium.

Another * encouraged my faith in his assurances by pulling from his coat pocket a little phial, out of which he had been distributing the blessings of homœopathy to his patients that morning. It contained a brown liquid, and was labelled "Nux." On his recommendation I tasted it, and was speedily satisfied, from its persistent bitter taste, that it was no infinitesimal dilution.

The third of my candid homœopathic acquaintances not only repudiated infinitesimal doses, but he repelled with vigour my insinuation that the public were kept in ignorance of the fact—adding, that he made no secret of his practice, and was not responsible for the misconceptions of the public.

Thus far my own experience. The information that has reached me of the expressed sentiments of three other homœopathic practitioners in this town, entirely coincides with the above.

I have, lastly, to give a brief record of my experience of homœopathic chemists' shops. One evening I entered one of these; and was at once struck with the immense quantity of books for sale; they were strewed on the counter and the window-front; and a large reserve stock was accumulated in a handsome mahogany bookcase. Of these books, more anon. I purchased a little volume for a shilling, and while I was turning over its

* This gentleman is since deceased.

leaves, a hypochondriacal-looking gentleman came in and asked for a "bottle of aconite." I was curious to know the strength of the preparation sold over the counter to the public purchaser, so I likewise requested a "bottle of aconite," and was immediately supplied with a phial of the **B.** dilution. I was informed that the mother tinctures of active medicines were not sold to the public, unless assurance was had that the purchaser knew how to use them. I afterwards visited the other shops, and called for a number of drugs—belladonna, nux vomica, opium, aconite, bryonia, &c., without specifying the dilution. The custom appeared much the same in them all; either I. or **B.** was supplied in the case of all active remedies; calcarea carbonica (chalk) was supplied in the third dilution (a millionth), and I was gravely informed that that was the strongest tincture to be had!

The **B.** tinctures were always colourless, and of a purely spirituous flavour. The I. dilutions on the other hand, appeared as weak ordinary tinctures possessing the taste of the substance dissolved, and having in the case of opium and aconite, a pale yellow colour.

Among other things, I was shown two mercurial preparations which attracted my attention. Both were triturations, and in the **A.** degree; in one, metallic mercury had been rubbed up with sugar-of-milk, so as to form a preparation very similar to our grey powder;

the other contained the black oxide of mercury triturated in the same way. Both were of a dark grey colour, and well prepared; they would be more agreeable to take than the ordinary grey powder—whether so useful is another question.

Arnica was always dispensed as mother tincture; it is however to be remarked that it is mostly used for external purposes.

Camphor is one of the most popular remedies in homœopathic domestic practice, and is invariably used as concentrated tincture. On what principle this preparation is always ostentatiously labelled *homœopathic* camphor, passes the comprehension of a plain man. Here is a copy of the printed label on a phial of simple tincture of camphor purchased in a homœopathic shop:—

HOMŒOPATHIC

Tinct. of Camphor.

DOSE.—Two or three drops in a little cold water, or on a little lump sugar.

The impudence and absurdity of this pretension can only be equalled by the simplicity of those on whom it is capable of imposing. This is not a solitary example of the

extraordinary elasticity of meaning with which the word "homœopathic" is endowed; we shall see a few more by and by.*

I have not fallen in with any prescription ordering globules or pilules, and the chemists inform me that the homœopathic practitioners of Manchester do not prescribe them; nor is it difficult to understand the reason why. Pilules and globules are medicated by being soaked in tinctures; and the quantity they imbibe is of course uncertain. This signified little so long as infinitesimal dilutions were in vogue, but with the adoption of stronger preparations, a more precise apportionment of dose became necessary, and this could only be attained by the use of tinctures and triturations (powders.)

Globules, however, have not disappeared altogether from domestic practice, though their employment appears to be on the wane. I have had an opportunity of examining several domestic collections of homœopathic medicines, and there, as in the prescriptions, I saw marks of a great change coming on; as yet, however, only in

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* I likewise observed that these shops were uniformly decorated with several busts or heads of Hahnemann—some of them of colossal dimensions. And I did not miss the moral—the prophet in honour: his doctrines and practice under foot. If the plaster were conscious, would not the effigy of the infinitesimal apostle quake to find itself surrounded with such potent preparations; and be horrified to see itself set up as a tacit sanction to practices which the living original so wrathfully denounced!

its initial stage. In some collections there were globules, pilules, and tinctures; in some tinctures only. The most prevalent dilutions of the last were I. and **B**., with a good sprinkling, however, of the 3rd. Of mother tinctures, I saw only camphor and arnica.

CHAPTER II.

SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTUR.

"Homœopathy, then, presents itself to us as a system of medicine of great simplicity, always the same in its principles and its practice, forming a separate whole, perfectly independent of other systems, and refusing to associate itself with the pernicious routine of the old school."—*Hahnemann's Organon*, p. 6.

To some it may appear that I have taken unnecessary pains to prove the abandonment of infinitesimal doses, seeing that the homœopathists themselves concede the point, and contend that homœopathy is not a question of dose, but a law of cure.

That is certainly so: the two are from their nature distinct. The law of *similia* is to be regarded as the *fundamental principle* of homœopathy, while the employment of infinitesimal doses is only the *condition of its application.*

But what if this be a condition so important, that, apart from it, the law of *similia* plainly manifests itself as a principle wholly useless, or of impossible application?

There is an obvious advantage in the severance of the

law of *similia* from the question of dose. It enables us to confront that law directly with acknowledged facts, untrammelled by the distractions of the infinitesimal dose.

It is necessary to remind the reader that the law of *similia* rests on the all-important assumption, that medicines given to healthy persons *do* produce symptoms resembling those of natural disease. This is a universal postulate in homœopathy; and no substance is held to have any homœopathic curative power unless it have this property.

Now to the majority of medicinal substances, more especially those usually designated inert, as silica (flint), carbo. veg. (charcoal), calc. carb. (chalk), &c., we altogether deny this power; believing—as I shall presently show with good reason—that Hahnemann and his acolytes either chronicled imaginary symptoms, or erroneously attributed to the medicines what was due to natural causes.*

But with regard to a few remedies, mostly of a

* In order to ascertain what symptoms any drug could produce, and accordingly cure, Hahnemann and his followers resorted to what are called "Provings." That is, the drug was given to a healthy person, and the effects supposed to be produced by it were accurately noted and chronicled. These formed a list of "artificial" or "medicinal" symptoms, and they constitute the bulk of the homœopathic materia medica. Any disease which presents symptoms similar to those "proved" with a particular drug, is supposed to be curable by that drug.

poisonous nature, it is agreed that they do fulfil the requirements of this postulate in a more or less perfect degree. I will now cite some characteristic examples, which are well adapted to furnish the conditions requisite for a homœopathic cure; and then examine how far the law of *similia*, apart from infinitesimal doses, is capable of useful or possible application in the treatment of disease.

I. Nux vomica, or its active principle, strychnia, when given to the extreme verge of full medicinal doses, or still more, in poisonous doses, produces a train of spasmodic symptoms, having a striking resemblance to tetanus or lockjaw. But nux vomica does not cure tetanus. We are here dealing, it is true, with a very formidable disease, but it is by no means an inevitably fatal one, and scores of recoveries have been recorded, but not one by nux vomica.* If there were any truth at the bottom of the law of *similia*, these are just the circumstances where its operation might have been expected to show itself in a decisive manner.

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* I had once the fortune to witness an attempt to cure tetanus by strychnia. The drug was administered in small medicinal doses, but such frightful aggravation of the symptoms ensued, that it became imperative to suspend the treatment to stave off impending dissolution. This experience is corroborated by Mr. Beever, who informs me that he once made trial of strychnia in tetanus. Under the influence of the drug the paroxyms became so violent that the patient was actually projected from her bed.

II. Belladonna produces dryness of the throat, and in rare instances a red rash over the body; in short, something which has a rude similitude to scarlet fever. But can belladonna cure scarlet fever? We know it cannot; the fever goes through its appointed phases, belladonna or no belladonna, the drug not having the least power to cut short its duration.*

III. A no less notable instance is the paralysis produced by lead, which is so similar to Wasting Palsy, and the paralysis following fevers, that medical men frequently mistake the one for the other; yet lead is wholly powerless, except indeed for evil, in Wasting Palsy, and in paralysis after fevers.

In these three examples there is a resemblance between the totality of symptoms produced by the medicine, and the totality of symptoms belonging to the disease.

In addition to cases of this order, there are others where drugs do not produce a totality of symptoms similar

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* This point has been repeatedly tested on an extensive scale. But perhaps the testimony of a homœopathic physician will carry more credit with some people than that of ordinary medical men. Dr. Elb (a homœopathist), speaking of the power of belladonna in scarlet fever, is of opinion that it affects "the concomitant symptoms only, but not the exanthem (the eruption), which runs its regular course; as measles, with or without pulsatilla, or aconite, will go through its different stages; and, in our opinion, the natural course of an eruption cannot be altered except by poisons."—*Brit. Journ. of Homœopathy, July,* 1855, p. 417.

to those of any distinct disease, but provoke some symptom or symptoms of an ordinary character, which cannot be called peculiar to any natural disorder.

Opium, for example, produces lethargy, coma, and insensibility—symptoms which are common to many diseases. Purgatives—senna, aloes, Epsom salts, &c.—provoke diarrhœa. Astringents, as opium, copper, and gall-nuts, induce constipation. Now, would any sane man venture to give the common doses of opium in the insensibility of apoplexy, or Bright's disease, or recommend purgatives in diarrhœa (where there was no undigested material to expel), or astringents in constipation ?

It is plain from these examples that the law of *similia* cannot be put into operation with safety, unless the dose be diminished until it ceases to do good or harm.

Hahnemann himself was fully aware of this. When he entered on his career of pretended discoveries, the first conception that entered his mind was, that, there existed a universal law of healing, of which the expression was *similia similibus curantur*. But when he came to put this new law into practical operation with common doses of medicine, he found that his patients grew worse instead of better ; and he would have been compelled to abandon his law at the moment of its birth, had he not fallen on the felicitous notion of lessening the dose until it was too minute to produce appreciable effects. It is a matter of history, therefore,—not a speculation,—that

homœopathy would have perished still-born had not infinitesimal doses nursed it into existence.*

But although in a few instances, as just related, drugs taken by a healthy person do engender some sort of similitude to a natural disease, in the vast majority of cases such imitation is quite impossible; and ninety-nine out of a hundred of the so-called "provings" of Hahnemann and his disciples are mere fictions, as daily experience goes to prove. Homœopathists sometimes taunt us: Why do you not put our system to the proof? My answer is: we put it to the proof ourselves, and see it put to the proof in others in multitudes of cases, and we witness no results. Every day both the public and the profession are re-enacting the "provings" of Hahnemann without perceiving the symptoms he describes. Let me take, as an example, common kitchen salt (natrum muriaticum.) This, when proved upon a healthy person, is said to produce above four hundred and fifty symptoms, and some of them of great severity. The following are a few:—

SYMPTOMS PRODUCED BY COMMON SALT.—Weak memory; reeling sensation, producing obscuration of sight; oppressive headache; stitches in the head; falling off of

* Dr. Horner observes on this point: "Hahnemann himself, at first, tried the accustomed or usual dose; but he was speedily compelled to reduce it, so powerful and harmful were medicines in their common doses, when given on the homœopathic principle."—*Reasons for adopting Homœopathy*, p. 9. *See also the quotations from Hahnemann at the head of Chapter I.*

the hair; redness and inflammation of the white of the eye; itching rash-like eruption behind the ears; bleeding of the nose; eruption on the vermilion border of the lips, smarting as if excoriated; deep painful fissure in the middle of the upper lip; hiccough after a meal; cramp in the stomach; violent hoarseness; bloody cough; forehead feels as if it would burst; frequent palpitation of the heart; violent drawing pain in the nape of the neck; painful cracking of the elbow-joint during motion; rash in the legs; amorous dreams; when laying the arms on the table the blood ceases to circulate, also in other parts of the body; warts form on the palm of the hand; all the muscles, especially those of the thighs and upper arms, are painful during motion, as if the flesh had been detached by blows! &c., &c.—*Jahr's New Manual, by Hempel and Quin*, vol. ii., pp. 299-322.

The conditions required in a good "prover" are, that he should be in good health, and be moderate in eating and drinking. I trust there are thousands of such in Manchester, who daily season their eggs, or their boiled and roast, with salt, and I would ask how many experience any of these four hundred and fifty terrible symptoms?

Silica, or flint—of which we are taking daily minute doses in every draught of water, and in every morsel of bread, is alleged to produce eighteen closely printed pages of prominent symptoms, and yet who feels them? Here are some of them:—

SYMPTOMS PRODUCED BY SILICA, OR FLINT.—Violent compunction of conscience about trifles; vertigo with retching; groaning shaking of the brains [whatever that may be] when stepping firmly, or when knocking the foot against something; disagreeable feeling, as if the head

were teeming with living things whirling around in it; frequent sneezing; toothache, especially when eating warm food; aversion to meat soup; screwing together in the region of the stomach; colic with constipation; inflammation of the inguinal glands; cough with vomiting when expectorating; tearing pain in the left side of the chest; violent pain in the small of the back; glandular swellings in the nape of the neck; tearing pain in the upper arm; sensation in walking, as if the calves were too short; swelling of the feet; painful cramp in the right sole, and especially in the big toe, during a walk; much yawning; bad dreams, with violent weeping; profuse general night sweat; itching and biting of the whole body, &c., &c.—*Jahr's New Manual*, pp. 798-816.

Carbonate of lime or chalk (calcarea carbonica), which is found in our ordinary drinking-water, and in the vegetables we eat, produces above one thousand symptoms; alumina 17 pages of symptoms, sulphur 32 pages, charcoal 16 pages, and so on for a number of other inert substances which we are in the constant habit of taking with our food, drink, or the air we breathe. And let it be remembered these are not the antiquated first provings of Hahnemann merely, but what are incorporated in the newest editions of the homœopathic materia medica.

On a basis like this is the superstructure of homœopathy reared!

If I were to characterize these provings in language expressive of my own opinion of their merit, I should probably be deemed slanderous—certainly prejudiced; but I will step aside, and make way for an eminent

homœopathic writer, who shall himself deliver judgment upon them,

"Suo sibi gladio hunc jugulo."

Dr. Charles Julius Hempel is honorary member of the Hahnemann Society of London; translator and editor of *Jahr's Materia Medica*, also of *Teste's Materia Medica*; professor at the Homœopathic Medical College, Pennsylvania; author of the *Organon of Specific Homœopathy*, and of a gigantic volume of *Lectures on the Materia Medica and Practice of Homœopathy*. This high authority deliberately expresses himself as follows :—

"My literary labours in the field of homœopathy have enabled me to become tolerably well acquainted with the truths and the fallacies of the huge and inattractive fabric of our provings; and the result of my long-continued, earnest, and conscientious studies concerning the adaptation of the homœopathic law of similarity to the cure of disease, so far as this similarity is based upon an actually known resemblance between the symptoms of the drug, and those of the disease, is this discouraging conclusion, that the homœopathic law of *like cures like*, is only an *apparent truth*, and therefore in many cases without any practical value."*

That is honestly spoken; Hempel shall next show us the edifying spectacle of a conscientious homœopathic physician at the bed-side of a patient :—

"The present homœopathic materia medica is composed of some three hundred drugs, all of which have been proved, more or less fully, on healthy persons. I shall hereafter have occasion to show that these provings are

* Hempel's Organon, p. 117.

exceedingly unreliable and illusory. But the homœopathist who has incorporated these provings in his materia medica, is of course disposed, and indeed, bound to be guided by his drug symptoms in the selection of a remedy for some particular case of disease. Now, let us open the ponderous volumes of the homœopathic materia medica, and we shall find that the symptoms of many homœopathic drugs are so nearly alike, that it is almost impossible to select a remedy, with anything like certainty, for any disease you may name. Let a physician who is not acquainted with the routine practice of homœopathy, undertake to cure a headache with the means offered him in his materia medica. A simple headache seems to be a very trifling affection, which ought easily to be cured, if there is any truth in medicine. Years of practice and observation have gradually developed a certain routine practice out of the crude ingredients of the homœopathic materia medica, and a physician who is somewhat acquainted with the established routine, will at once associate a headache with a certain group of drugs, such as aconite, belladonna, mercurius, nux vomica, pulsatilla, arsenic, and so forth. And he will not have any great trouble in deciding in favour of one or the other of these drugs; if one should fail, he can easily try another; the number is not very extensive, and by the time two or three members of the group have been tried, the headache has got well any how, and probably would have got well without the influence of the physician. But let a physician who has no sort of knowledge of the customary routine-practice of the homœopathic brotherhood, and who has to rely exclusively on his knowledge of the materia medica, undertake to treat this headache. What remedy is he going to prescribe? By what signs is he to discriminate between aconite and belladonna, mercurius or nux, arsenic or pulsatilla? How is he, satisfactorily to his own conscience, to decide in favour of any one particular drug among the several hundred from among which he has to select one, and either hit the right remedy, or else fail of affording relief

to his patient? All these drugs have a variety of headache-symptoms, and unfortunately most of these symptoms are so nearly alike, that, with few exceptions, it would be impossible to divine the name of the drug from the symptoms which are accorded as belonging to it in the materia medica. Take any thirty or forty of the leading drugs—platina, arsenic, calcarea, sulphur, alumina, natrium muriaticum, &c.—and you will find nearly the same pains recorded among the headache-symptoms, be they shooting, lancing, jerking, twisting, burning, stinging, screwing, constrictive, compressive, aching, or any other kinds of pain. And if, after comparing all these different drugs with each other with the most faithful perseverance, a physician finally decides in favour of a certain remedy, and administers it in the positive expectation of relieving his patient, how bitter must be his disappointment if no favourable change follows the exhibition of his drug! What is he to do now? He has made every effort to select his remedy in accordance with the perceptible symptoms of the case; he fails to discover a greater degree of similarity between the symptoms of the disease and those of any other drug besides the one he has used; nothing now remains to him but blind empiricism. His sheet-anchor having failed him, he has to try one drug, then another, until he finally, by some lucky chance, either hits on the right remedy, or until, which is much more probable, and is indeed much more frequently the case, the disease has in the meanwhile run its course, and arrived at its natural termination."—P. 125.

The following passages from the same experienced hand are even still more remarkable. The italics are my own:—

"This homogeneity of the symptoms not only runs through the symptoms of the head, but exists throughout the materia medica in the recorded symptoms of almost every part of the human body. The throat symptoms,

the symptoms of the chest, bowels, extremities, and those of the special senses, are in most respects so nearly alike, that those of one drug might easily be taken for the symptoms of another. What homœopathic physician would undertake to cure a case of constipation, or of the opposite state, diarrhœa, if he had no other therapeutic indication to depend upon than the abnormal conditions of the alvine evacuations, as recorded in the materia medica? *The same drug is invariably a remedy for constipation and a remedy for diarrhœa, a remedy for strangury and a remedy for the opposite state, enuresis; a remedy for a loss of appetite and for a ravenous desire for food; for excessive menstruation and for retention of the menses; opposite states, such as far-sightedness, near-sightedness; emaciation and adiposis; sleeplessness and drowsiness; desire for and aversion to food; excessive thirst or loss of thirst; pale or flushed face; dryness of or discharge of mucus from the nose; and a variety of other states, are almost invariably found among the symptoms of most of the important drugs in the homœopathic materia medica.*"

"Opposite effects never emanate from the same cause; and it is much more probable, that if a drug appeared to produce opposite effects at different periods, neither can be rightfully attributed to it. What has been the unavoidable consequence of this vagueness and sameness of the homœopathic materia medica? Simply this, that the materia medica is emphatically disregarded by most physicians; very few consider it worth their while to study this frightful and incoherent conglomeration of ill-defined, vague, and often unmeaning symptoms, and most physicians rely upon some practical manual or repertory to help them out in case of need. And by this means the practice of homœopathy has been reduced to a system of routine, similar in many respects to the much-abused and severely condemned routine practice of the old school."—P. 129.

"Let us examine this subject a little more closely, and it will at once become apparent that the material basis

of homœopathy, viz., the provings or drug symptoms which make up the homœopathic materia medica, so far from constituting a series of incontrovertible facts, is, on the contrary, liable to the grave and well-founded charge of being in a great measure *a tissue of fallacies, illusions, misapprehensions, absurdities, and childish observations.*" —P. 131.

Need I add any commentary of my own to this sweeping condemnation? Merely this: the law of *similia* is at once too narrow and too wide. If veritable drug symptoms and genuine analogies are insisted on, the law remains a dead letter; if, on the other hand, you are content with the provings of the materia medica, and with superficial or fanciful analogies, then any treatment whatsoever can be brought within its sweep.

Mais revenons à nos moutons; how fares the law of *similia* in Manchester? As might have been expected, it fares badly; how could it be otherwise? Infinitesimal doses have been exchanged for palpable quantities; and the drug symptoms of the homœopathic materia medica prove to be a pathless maze, where no law, even if it were a true one, could possibly operate.

The natural consequences have ensued; namely, a widespread adoption by homœopathic practitioners of the same remedies in the same diseases as the ordinary practice of medicine has sanctioned. Imitation is the homage that error pays to truth; and this tribute genuine science, sooner or later, rigidly exacts from every spurious competitor. Under one pretence or another, homœopathists

are beating back to the paths of legitimate medicine, and various devices are put forward to cover their retreat.

A common device is to give some character to the action of the drug which is supposed to withdraw it from the sphere of operation of the law of healing. One remedy is named *alimentary*, another is *auxiliary*, a third *physiological*, a fourth *chemical*, a fifth *mechanical*, a sixth *palliative*, and so on. Of late it has been a favourite device to endeavour to explain old-established methods of treatment, in accordance with the canon of *similia*. Reversing the Baconian method, the law is promulgated first, and then the facts are made to agree. With a law so accommodating, this is usually an easy task; and if facts DO prove obstinate, as facts sometimes will, then, —*tant pis pour les faits!*

But it matters little under what pretence it is done—if done it is; and if I succeed in showing that in the treatment of their patients homœopathists make wholesale drafts upon the resources of ordinary practice, it will be an additional proof, and to the unprofessional reader the best proof, how impracticable and unreal is Hahnemann's pretended universal law of cure.*

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* It will be seen, from the instances cited, that the cases where homœopathists have been found pursuing the beaten path of ordinary practice, are not merely cases of emergency, in which it might be supposed that a practitioner, at his wits' end, would resort to any palliation as a last resource, but also in chronic diseases, as

I now proceed to lay before the reader some authentic facts of this nature.

Many of the prescriptions in my collection were given for I know not what disorders; but with regard to others of them I possess exact information, and this affords the means of judging how far the treatment was in accord or disaccord with ordinary practice.

The first prescription registered in the preceding chapter contains three grains of phosphate of zinc, to be taken thrice a day. The patient was a young warehouseman, whose employers were known to me. His case had excited some interest and sympathy, and it had been mentioned to me as one of epileptic fits. Subsequently the patient consulted Dr. Browne, who verified the diagnosis. Where is the homœopathy of this practice? Zinc is an old and esteemed remedy for epilepsy. We have used it as sulphate, oxide, valerianate, and as phosphate, and yet a *soi-disant* homœopathist, who pretends to follow an altogether different law of cure, resorts to the same drug, in the same dose, and for the same disease!

An interesting series of prescriptions was placed in my hands by a youth suffering from hypochondriasis and spermatorrhœa. He had been under treatment at the

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epilepsy, consumption, constitutional syphilis, hypochondriasis, skin-diseases, ague, &c., and in acute complaints which are not usually dangerous, as primary syphilis, diarrhœa, constipation, &c.

Manchester and Salford Homœopathic Dispensary before coming under my care. The medicines that had been ordered him were iron, quinine, musk, chloride of gold, and sepia. The last being inert, and prescribed in infinitesimal quantity, requires no further notice. The rest were in palpable doses, and they belong to the classes chalybeates, tonics, anti-spasmodics, and alteratives, which are the remedies usually employed in ordinary practice.

Prescription No. 9, containing a full dose of one of the strongest preparations of mercury, was given for primary syphilis; I need scarcely add that this treatment is much older than homœopathy. The administration of mercury to salivation by the direction of homœopathic practitioners has come twice under my personal cognizance; and from information received, I know mercury to have been given in alterative doses, or so as to affect the system in the following complaints:—secondary syphilis, ovarian tumour, scaly cutaneous eruption, inflammatory sore throat, and croup.

It would lead to useless prolixity to relate in detail all the instances of this nature within my knowledge; I shall, therefore, throw into the form of a list a number of authentic examples occurring in Manchester, in addition to those already mentioned, in which homœopathic practitioners have followed the usual rule of ordinary practice in the treatment of their cases. In all the instances the medicines were administered in palpable doses:—

Arsenic, in Ague (author).

Arsenic, in Psoriasis (Mr. Beever *).

Iodide of Potassium, in Strumous Swellings of the Joints (Dr. Brabazon).

Iodide of Potassium, in Secondary Eruptions (author).

Iodide of Potassium, in Secondary Nodes (Mr. Lund).

Nitrate of Silver, in Nervous Disorders (Mr. Southam).

Belladonna, in Hooping Cough (author).

Ergot of Rye, to quicken Uterine Action in Parturition (Mr. Richmond).

Cod-liver Oil, in Consumption (author).

Morphia, in Diarrhœa (author).

Morphia, in Peritonitis † (Dr. Jepson).

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* I have, by permission of my informants, attached their names to the facts for which they vouch.

† The gentleman concerned in this instance has since left Manchester. In 1858, he conducted a homœopathic establishment in Salford; and the prescription he wrote for the patient in question, is, by the kindness of Dr. Jepson, to whom I am indebted for the following particulars, in my possession. It runs as follows :—

"R. Solut. Morph. Hydrochlor - ʒij
Aquæ - - - - - ℥vi.
Give a table spoonful every half-hour until relieved."

This tremendous dose (10 drops) every half-hour soon produced the desired effects. But the attendants not satisfied with this, procured a second bottle (without the knowledge of Mr. ————), and administered it as perseveringly as the first, until drowsiness passed into stupor, and stupor merged into profound coma, and at length, death. An inquest was held on the body on account of the suspicion of poisoning; and undoubtedly the woman died from

Castor Oil, in Constipation (author).

Croton Oil, in the same (author).

Compound Colocynth pill, in the same (Dr. Ward).

Extract of Taraxacum, in hepatic disease (Mr. Midwood).

Oil of Male Fern, in Tape-worm (author).

Quinine, as Tonic in Convalescence (Mr. Roberton).

Emetics, in Croup (Mr. A. Ransome).

Sulphur Ointment, in Itch (Mr. Beever).

Calomel and Morphia, in Ovarian Dropsy (Mr. H. Williamson).

Laudanum, in Flooding after Parturition (Mr. Skinner).

Iron, as a Tonic (author).

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the direct effects of morphia, albeit the peritonitis seems to have been of such severity that final recovery could scarcely have been expected from it. No blame was attached to the medical man, because had his instructions been literally carried out, no harm would have resulted.

I do not quote this case with a view of imputing censure to the medical attendant concerned; the death occurred no doubt from misadventure; but I quote it in order to show what justice there is in the plea sometimes put forward in favour of homœopathic practitioners that 'if they do no good, at least they do no harm.' The patient of an ordinary practitioner knows well enough that he is dealing with no fanciful weapons, and if unexpected incidents arise, he is on his guard; but not so the patient of a homœopathist; he imagines and understands that he is taking infinitesimal doses, which have a spiritual rather than a material power, and so long as the medicines are colourless and tasteless (as was the case in the incident just quoted) there would be nothing to awaken his suspicion.—Which of the two stands safer?

Citrate of Iron and Quinine, in Debility (Mr. A. Ransome).

Camphor, in Diarrhœa and Cholera.

I have placed camphor in this list because it is an old remedy for diarrhœa with atony, or tendency to collapse; and it so happened that in the only three cases of cholera which have fallen to my lot to treat since my establishment in Manchester, camphor was the remedy I selected, although quite unaware at the time that homœopathists used the drug in the same way, and put forward the treatment as something peculiar to themselves.

APPENDIX: *on Camphor and Cholera, and the treatment of Cholera in Paris and London.*—Homœopathists are never weary of reiterating the statements and statistics which, as they pretend, prove the superiority of their treatment of cholera. In twenty different popular pamphlets and treatises have I seen this pretension set up; and by mere force of iteration, homœopathists seem to have succeeded in persuading a section of the public that this is an acknowledged fact.

Nothing can better show the inconclusiveness of the evidence on which homœopathy rests, than the example with which we are dealing. A claim more unfounded than that of camphor to be considered a homœopathic remedy for cholera it is difficult to conceive. In their

published return on cholera,* there is a tabulated account of the cases treated and of the remedies employed. During the period of vomiting and purging, and in the stage of collapse, tincture of camphor was administered in two drop doses *every five minutes* for an hour or two, according to the severity and obstinacy of the symptoms.† How can this treatment be regarded as an illustration of the law of *similia?* I am not an advocate of *antipathic* treatment: but if I were I should not desire a better example than the present of the value of medicine given on that principle.

The direct effect of tincture of camphor in ordinary medicinal doses such as these, is to diffuse a general warmth, to quicken the circulation, and produce exhiliration, allay pain, and arrest spasm.‡ While the symptoms of cholera are, coldness of the surface, impeded circulation, depression of the nervous force, with pain and spasm. I know not how to characterize this treatment except as a direct contradiction to the law of *similia*, and a flagrant example of *contraria contariis curantur.*

But I have not yet done with the homœopathic treatment of cholera. It does not appear to be at all the same thing in Paris as in London. Dr. Perry of Paris,

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* See Brit. Journal of Homœopathy, Oct. 1855.

† The tincture of camphor used contained one part in six. It was therefore somewhat stronger than the tincture of the London Pharmacopœia, which contains one part in eight.

‡ See Pereira's Materia Medica, Vol. II., pt. 1, p. 1321; and Christison's Dispensatory, p. 257.

recommends a different plan. Dismissing camphor as only worthy to be used until other remedies can be had, he proceeds as follows:—

"As soon as possible the practitioner or attendant should cover as many parts of the skin as possible with pieces of copper or brass." * He then applies the specific remedies, arsenic, veratrum, and copper. These are administered in the usual medicinal doses. In addition to these he does not hesitate to give laudanum injections and opium by the mouth ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ of a grain).

Whatever may be said of veratrum and arsenic, I claim copper and opium as old friends. Both of them, in the doses recommended by Dr. Perry, have a direct effect in checking intestinal flux, and have been long used for that purpose.

Out of the five homœopathic remedies for cholera, then, we have three which are used in full ordinary doses, in direct contradiction to the law of *similia*, and in accord with that of *contraria;* but what matters it? Give arsenic or opium, camphor or veratrum, copper, or what you will; it is still homœopathy! Universal principle, verily!

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* Dr. Perry's Cholera Treat.; see Brit. Journ. of Homœopathy, July 1855, p. 464.

CHAPTER III.

THE LITERATURE OF HOMŒOPATHY.

"'Tis not worth the reading, I yield it: I desire thee not to lose time in perusing so vain a subject: 'tis not *operæ pretium.*"—*Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.*

It is not my design to undertake a comprehensive survey of the literature of homœopathy, but rather to offer some remarks in illustration of the subject.

One of the most prominent characteristics of homœopathic writings, is their adaptation to the general or unscientific reader. Homœopathy claims to be a science; yet its advocates, dissatisfied with its reception by scientific men, have turned to the public for support. Now, that is a suspicious proceeding in a department of knowledge which, if a science at all, is simply a branch of pure natural science and natural history.

And further, a little consideration must convince any informed person, that medicine is for inherent reasons one of the most intricate of the natural sciences. Antecedent to her stand the incomplete sciences of organic chemistry and microscopical anatomy, which constitute

the basis of physiology. Physiology has to do with the laws and phenomena of living beings in a state of health, and at the present day it is only in the adolescence of its career. Medicine, again, is the most recondite branch of physiology; it deals with the aberrations—or, to speak more correctly, new combinations—of those laws of life which are themselves as yet ill understood.

Moreover, to appreciate and pronounce on facts relating to the cure of disease requires an extensive personal experience of the natural history and course of diseases, and a practical knowledge of morbid anatomy. The opinion of a parlour physician—one who is merely instructed in medical book-learning—has therefore little value; how much less the opinion of the general reader who has not made medicine his especial study! It is therefore, I say, a suspicious proceeding on the part of homœopathists, to appeal to the general public on questions which, manifestly, can only be decided in the court of science.

But this has been the course of medical empirics in all ages, and the fashion is not dead in our days. The two most persuasive means of getting the public to swallow a quack nostrum have been found to be: first to mystify the victims with a quantity of scientific twaddle, and then to ply them well with tales of marvellous cures. Tried by these two tests, the popular literature of homœopathy is, I am afraid, suggestive of unpleasant comparisons.

What do we see in operation around us? A widely ramified system of proselytism; in which not only medical practitioners, but clergymen, laymen, and even ladies are taking an active part. We see newspaper editors rushing hastily into the discussion; apparently so innocent as not to be aware, how jealously medical statistics got up for controversial purposes, ought to be received; and so ignorant, that they do not know how completely the conclusions from the statistics of homœopathists have been confuted—[*see note*].

NOTE ON HOMŒOPATHIC STATISTICS.

I have incidentally pointed out at the end of the preceding chapter how irrelevant to the question of homœopathic treatment, are the statistics published by homœopathists on cholera: the treatment having been, in fact, in no wise homœopathic.

To those who desire more detailed information on homœopathic statistics generally, I would recommend an admirable paper by Dr. Gairdner of Edinburgh, in the *Med. Times and Gaz.*, Apr. 3, 1852. He there compares the statistics of Fleischmann's Homœopathic Hospital, near Vienna, with those of the Edinburgh and other Infirmaries. The following particulars are from that paper:—

Nearly the same number of patients were admitted into Fleischmann's Homœopathic Hospital in the eight years 1835—43, as into the Edinburgh Infirmary in the two years 1842—3. The mortality in the former was 6·26 per cent., and in the latter 11·9 per cent.; so that at first sight there appears a very great difference in favour of the former; but when the nature of the diseases is examined, it turns out that a very large proportion of the cases admitted into Fleischmann's Hospital were of a trivial nature; while a corresponding proportion of those admitted into the Edinburgh Infirmary were of a very fatal nature; so that the comparison is altogether

If you enter the shop of a homœopathic chemist, you find before you quite a library of controversial productions—books, pamphlets, and tracts. Some are for gra-

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fallacious. If we collect together the 'necessarily fatal and very dangerous' diseases on the one hand, into *one* class; and the 'trifling and very rarely fatal' diseases on the other, into a *second* class—this fact comes out with great clearness. To the first class, 'necessarily fatal and very dangerous' diseases, belong—pulmonary consumption, organic disease of the heart, Bright's disease of the kidney, paralysis, apoplexy, organic disease of the liver, internal aneurism, diabetes, malignant tumours, cholera, and inflammation of the brain. Of these, 767 were admitted into the Edinburgh Infirmary, and only 170 into Fleischmann's Hospital. To the 'trifling and rarely fatal' diseases belong:—neuralgia, bronchitis, rheumatism, chlorosis and amenorrhœa, colic, diarrhœa, gout, headache, shingles, pleurisy, sore throat, influenza, and chicken pox. Of these, only 657 were admitted into the Edinburgh Infirmary, against 1360 admitted into Fleischmann's Hospital.

It thus appears that the very dangerous diseases were *four and a half* times more common in Edinburgh than in Vienna, while the less serious diseases were *twice* more common in the Homœopathic Hospital of Vienna than in the Edinburgh Infirmary!

Further,—Fleischmann's Hospital is comparable rather to a provincial than a metropolitan hospital (where the more desperate cases always run), being situated three miles from Vienna, and containing only fifty beds. Fleischmann's Hospital, as I have said, has a mortality of 6·26 per cent.; but in the Dumfries hospital the mortality is only 5·1 per cent.; Aberdeen, 4·66 per cent.; Inverness, 4·36 per cent.; Cambridge, 2·4 per cent,; Exeter, 3·2 per cent.; Canterbury, 2 per cent. In a list of thirty English provincial hospitals, there *are only two* in which the mortality *is not less* than that of Fleischmann's Hospital. Dr. Gairdner does not hesitate to express his belief, "after a careful consideration of the subject, that the mortality, under the circumstances is enormously high!"

tuitous distribution, others to be had for a penny, threepence, sixpence, a shilling, and onward—an endless variety, to suit every taste and every pocket. Peruse one of these, and but for the recurrence of the word Homœopathy, you could hardly persuade yourself that you were not reading the manifestoes of Morrison the Hygeist, Dr. Rooke, of Scarborough, who 'professes' the altero-tonic system, or some other advertising empiric. There is the same travesty of legitimate medicine; the same affectation of scientific profundity; the same array of wonderful cures; and the same ostentatious pretence of universal philanthropy.

I hope I shall not be accused of choosing an unfair sample in selecting Dr. Horner of Hull. In a letter to the Governors of the Hull Infirmary, giving his reasons for adopting homœopathy (which in my edition is represented to have reached a sale of 12,000), he counts his cures at 600. This is a feeble statement; the Hygeist numbers his at 400,000. Dr. Horner, of course, deals largely in marvellous cures.* The following may serve as a sample of what passes current as evidence with homœopathists:—"A boy nine years of age had had a

* The marvellous cure fallacy is one of the oldest plagues of medicine. Its history is very simple. Let a medical man or quack take advantage of the favourable turns of disease (which are often sudden and inexplicable), ignore the healing powers of nature attribute all results to his remedies, and he will soon fill his portfolio with marvellous cures.

severe cough for two years. He had been under medical treatment, and had taken a table spoonful of cod-liver oil three times a day during all that time; for having no appetite, it was nearly his only means of support, and he was worn and emaciated. The oil was not discontinued, but in twenty days his cough and expectoration were wholly cured by homœopathic remedies; his appetite returned, and he soon gained his flesh and strength. This was so unexpected by his mother (as well as by myself) that she took from his bed a poor crippled boy of about twelve years of age, and brought him to my house, saying, to my remonstrances on her bringing a child so crippled and apparently dying, that as I had 'made a miracle' of the other boy, I perhaps could give relief to this. With one leg pined and shortened, the chest distorted, being also humped on the back, and with as severe palpitation of the heart as I have ever witnessed, I thought the child was really in a dying state. Its head was supported by the mother's breast; while its prominent staring eyes, purple lips and cheeks, and the throbbing in the arteries of the neck, showed the extent of the heart's disturbance. I felt relieved when the child was safely taken home; and truly astonished when, in three weeks' time, it came, cheerfully hopping with its crutch, into my room, to thank me 'for mending' it. The admirable effects of the homœopathic medicines on the heart's action, &c., were evinced the first day of the boy's taking them; and the progress of improvement was never interrupted." *

These are verily notable results; nevertheless Dr. Horner must look to his laurels. His neighbour, Dr. Rooke of Scarborough, fairly rivals him both in style of reporting, and in success of treatment. This philanthropist's altero-tonic system cures all maladies—ague, bronchitis, asthma, consumption, indigestion, rheumatism, dropsy, cancer, gout, liver complaint, and a score

* Dr. Horner's Letter, p. 23.

besides, not with forty but two medicaments, the "Oriental Pills," and "Solar Elixir." Here are some of *his* miracles.

"On Saturday, January 9th, 1858, a lodging-house keeper in Scarborough personally applied to request me to visit, as early as possible, a young invalid lady who, with her sister, had just arrived at her house from the country. The former, she said, was much exhausted with her journey, and seemed to be in a dying state. I immediately called on the patient and ascertained that she had been suffering for several months under the symptoms of pulmonary consumption, and had been treated by a medical man for that disease. She had cough, purulent expectoration, pain in the chest, and hectic flush. The sounds heard within the chest by means of a stethoscope, indicated that both lungs were ulcerated. Her strength was so exhausted that she had to be carried to and from bed. . . . To my inquiry respecting the means which had been already used, I was informed that the patient had taken cod-liver oil and other medicines, without perceptible benefit."—Well, under the "altero-tonic" system, this desperate case improved so rapidly, that in four days the patient was able to walk up stairs to bed without assistance; and on the 1st of March, "the lady left Scarborough, all the symptoms being gone, and was perfectly well in every respect" *

But even this marvel yields to the following:—

"Mr. Noble, of Hackness, near Scarborough (parent of the eminent British Sculptor of that name) had a cancerous tumour for six years, which was exceedingly painful at times, so that it incapacitated him from following his employment. He applied to a medical man, who proposed to take it away by an operation, to which at length he partly consented, when he fortunately heard of these medicines (the 'Oriental Pills,' and 'Solar

* Dr. Rooke's Anti-Lancet, p. 138.

Elixir'), which he commenced forthwith to take, and used an outward application as directed. In a few weeks the tumour totally disappeared, and has not again returned, although it is many years since." *

Are the two not marvellously alike?

In one respect the Scarborough empiric has the advantage of the homœopathists. The homœopathists call us hard names because we decline to receive them into professional fellowship, and turn our backs on their pretty *niaiseries*. Dr. Rooke boldly takes his stand on his Giessen M.D., and tells you roundly that he will *not* register as a legitimate practitioner under the medical Act, because it is contrary to his conscience to practice according to the British pharmacopœia!

Now I would ask what end is served by this class of literature, which is poured out on the public in a continual flood? It cannot convince men of science; it would be an insult to address its vague rhapsodies and loosely recorded facts to such: what then?—it may *persuade* the uninstructed. And is not this its real purpose? Is it anything more than a masked system of advertisement?—less vulgar than that of the quack who publishes his shame in the daily newspaper, but more deceptive, because it has a thicker varnish of scientific pretence, and is thereby better calculated to delude the more intelligent.

It would scarcely be polite to dismiss the popular

* Anti-Lancet, p. 111.

literature of homœopathy without allusion to the Lilliputian volumes of domestic medicine, or as they are affectionately called "domestics," which constitute so important a furniture in the houses of the true believers. These pass under various names, and are generally to be had for a shilling. I picked up in one shop no less than eight varieties of the species—"Guides," "Working-men's Guides," "Hand-books," "Stepping-stones," "Text-books," &c.; and had I been so disposed I might have extended my list to twelve or fifteen. To mothers who aspire to physic their own children; school masters, and school mistresses who wish to do as much for their pupils, the "domestic" is an invaluable treasure. It is a most pleasant book to consult when you are ill. Suppose you are so unfortunate as to have the Gout; turn to the index, then to the page, and the story of your cure is told at once without circumlocution:—

GOUT.*

ACONITUM is required when the inflammatory and fever symptoms run high, and the pulse is full, hard and quick, especially in treating persons of full habit of body.

Dose—Six globules dissolved in three tablespoonsful of water, of which give a dessertspoonful every three hours.

PULSATILLA is useful when the pains shift from one part to another, and are worse towards evening.

Dose—Three globules in a dessertspoonful of water every four hours as required.

NUX VOMICA is better when the pains are worse towards morning.

Dose—As directed for Pulsatilla.

BRYONIA is preferred when the pains are increased by the least motion, and are, moreover, worse at night.

Dose—As directed for Pulsatilla.

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* Dr. Laurie's Homœopathic Guide for Family Use. *Facsimile.*

Or your child has that *mild* disease, Croup.

CROUP.*

HEPAR SULPH. is good in the earliest stage, before fever sets in, when the cough is hard and dry, or hoarse, hollow, and accompanied with wheezing; it is also useful in the more advanced stage, when there is constant rattling of of phlegm, excessively quick and laborious breathing, and when the patient frequently grasps at the throat, and throws the head back.

Dose—In the early stage, dissolve four globules in two tablespoonsful of water, and give a teaspoonful of the mixture every three hours; in the advanced stage, dissolve twelve globules in three tablespoonsful of water, and give a teaspoonful of the mixture every half-hour.

ACONITUM is required from time to time, when burning heat, thirst, short dry cough, and tenderness of the upper part of the windpipe predominate.

Dose—Dissolve six globules in two tablespoonsful of water, and administer as directed for Hepar S.

LACHESIS is necessary in those bad cases when drawing the breath becomes exceedingly difficult, the head is thrown back, the features are livid, the cough is stifled and husky, and the eye dull and glassy.

Dose—Two globules in a teaspoonful of water every quarter of an hour.

The different "domestics" resemble each other pretty closely in their general features. They open with a statement of the principles of homœopathy; this is followed up with a string of infantile reasons for preferring homœopathy to ordinary medicine; as for example:—"homœopathy is pleasanter than the old system,"—"homœopathy is cheaper than the old system,"—"homœopathy cures diseases which the old system cannot," etc. To these succeeds a list of twelve or twenty medicines, which are directed to be used

* Dr. Laurie's Homœopathic Guide for Family Use. *Facsimile.*

exclusively in infinitesimal doses. Next comes a list of allowed and forbidden diets; and lastly the body of the work, in which diseases and their treatment are handled after the above pattern.

In some of them there are added to the infinitesimal treatment, "General Directions;" and under this heading you may sometimes detect the *real* treatment of the case very much in accordance with ordinary practice. For instance, to cure a whitlow, you are to take mecurius and hepar; but you must also attend to the "general directions:"—"Soak the finger in water as hot as can be borne, and kept so by being renewed from time to time; or apply cold water dressings. When matter has formed use a hot poultice!" *

In the "domestic" the science of medicine is chopped so small that the youngest child, if he can but read, may cure, without misgiving or difficulty—himself, his little brothers and sisters, and all his playfellows to boot. And let it not be supposed that the "domestics" are the work of individuals in the lower grades of the homœopathic fraternity, disowned by the more respectable members; on the contrary, their authors are the *élite*—the physicians and surgeons to homœopathic dispensaries—men who are supposed to be the depositories of whatever honour and dignity may belong

* Dr. Morgan's Text-book, p. 179.

to the brotherhood; and yet they have not forborne to prepare these morsels of sham medicine, four inches and a half by three, to gratify the morbid appetite of ladies and gentlemen who have a passion for becoming amateur physicians!

There is one delightful feature in popular literature of homœopathy; and that is its perfect inward concord. Homœopathy appears there, as a finished temple of science, where all is certainty and exactitude—principles settled—practice uniform—results invariable—no disputed points—no diversities of opinion. It is but a dream, however; when you turn to that small section of homœopathic literature which is solely meant for the eye of the homœopathic practitioner, you are rudely awakened to the dissonant reality.

In the pages of the British Journal of Homœopathy, in the Reports of discussions in the congresses of homœopathic practitioners, in the works of Hempel and Henderson, a far different picture is presented. Harmony and unanimity are no longer visible; in their stead reign discord and contradiction. Legitimate medicine is sometimes reproached with its differences, but they are small compared to the perplexities in the homœopathic camp. Our differences lie mostly in the selection of our medicines; on matters of dose and administration we are in comparative concord; but homœopathists differ flagrantly on every point where an issue can

be raised.* Let me point out some of these discordances.

1. On the amount of the dose, homœopathists differ almost as widely as the limits of mathematical calculation permit. One party, of which Dr. Epps may be taken as representative, confides entirely in infinitesimal doses; another, and apparently a rapidly increasing party, of which our Manchester homœopathists are members, has discarded the infinitesimal dose, and returned to palpable quantities.

2. Some homœopathists adopt Hahnemann's theory of "potentization;" others reject it, holding that the attenuations are merely dilutions, and not potencies.

3. One section maintains that the higher the attenuation the greater the potency; and consequently, in acute

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* I do not stand alone in this opinion. Sir Benjamin Brodie, in his famous letter to Fraser's Magazine, observes: "I have made myself sufficiently acquainted with several works which profess to disclose the mysteries of homœopathy, especially that of Hahnemann, the founder of the homœopathic sect, and those of Dr. Curie and Mr. Sharp. The result is, that, with all the pains I have been able to take, I have been unable to form any very distinct notion of the system which they profess to teach. They all, indeed, begin with laying down, as the foundation of it, the rule that *similia similibus curantur;* or, in plain English, that one disease is to be driven out of the body by artificially creating another disease similar to it. But there the resemblance ends: Hahnemann treats the subject in one way, Dr. Curie in another, and Mr. Sharp in another way still."

diseases, when active remedies are required, the highest attenuations must be used, while the lower ones are reserved for chronic cases. Another section holds the exact reverse of this, contending that it stands to common sense that the lower attenuations are the more powerful, and therefore better fitted for acute diseases; and that the high dilutions, being feebler, are suited to the less urgent symptoms of chronic complaints.*

Then there is a third opinion:—that you can never tell beforehand what dilution will agree, and that individual peculiarities must be taken into account. With some patients the high dilutions act more powerfully than the low; with others the low are more active than the high.†

4. Many homœopathists regard the administration of one remedy at a time as a point of cardinal importance. Hahnemann held this view;‡ and Mr. Sharp devotes an entire essay to the subject. He considers this as one of the distinguishing features of homœopathy. "Each drug," according to him, "has a mode of action peculiar to itself, often called its specific action. To obtain the full benefit of this action, it must be given alone; any combination must necessarily interfere with, and may

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* Brit. Journ. of Hom., July, 1855, p. 465.

† Monthly Hom. Rev., March, 1861, p. 108.

‡ Hahnemann observes: "In no case is it requisite to administer more than one single simple medicinal substance at one time."—*Organon*, p. 319.

altogether neutralize the effect we wish to obtain."* But the homœopathists of Manchester have thrown this rule to the wind. Among the prescriptions recorded in the first Chapter, No. 4 contains quinine and iron, not to mention citric acid; No. 2 contains iodine, arsenic, and mercury (Donovan's solution); a third, in my possession, combines nux vomica with opium, and these two drugs contain between them no less than nine different crystalline principles! Indeed the large majority of the prescriptions that I have seen contain a plurality of drugs.

5. But it may be objected, 'These differences, although important, are upon secondary points, and not upon the fundamental principle. When you come to examine into the choice of remedies for particular states of disease, having the "universal," "infallible" law of *similia* for a guide, you will find certainty and unanimity.' Not a whit: there is the same distracting discrepancy here as elsewhere.

It is not to be wondered at that we, who do not pretend to have discovered a universal law of healing, but follow painfully in the path of experience, should exhibit a considerable diversity in the choice of our remedies; but it *is* unexpected, looking at it *à priori*, that homœopathists, guided, as they pretend to be, by the "unerring" law of similarity, should exhibit at least equal diversity with ourselves; albeit the demonstration, as I hope I

* Sharp's Essays on Homœopathy, p. 182.

may call it, of the unsubstantiality of this law in the preceding Chapter, will not have left the reader altogether unprepared for the real state of the case.

I have already directed attention to the differences in the treatment of cholera in Paris and London: let me now present a few additional instances.

In chronic catarrh of the bladder, Dr. Hastings* effected a cure by pareira brava; Dr. Pope† by belladonna; and Dr. Henderson‡ by mercurius.

Acute articular rheumatism is one of the most easily recognised diseases, and, as compared with others, one of the most uniform in its course. Here, if anywhere, one would expect a uniformity of treatment. In vain; Dr. Henderson§ cures his cases with bryonia, aconite, and belladonna; Dr. Henriques‖ employs bryonia only once, and belladonna and aconite not at all. His remedies are sulphur, china, arnica, rhus, and antimony. Dr. Black,** in addition to most of the above, gives pulsatilla, spigelia, arsenic, mercury, lachesis, colchicum, and nux. Lastly, Drs. Wurmb and Caspar,†† in forty-seven cases, resorted to aconite, bryonia, pulsatilla, mezereon, colocynth, rhodo-

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* Brit. Journ. of Hom., Oct., 1855, p. 593.

† Brit. Journ. of Hom., July, 1855, p. 481.

‡ Henderson's Practice, p. 211.

§ Loc. Cit., p. 89.

‖ Brit. Journ. of Hom., Jan., 1854, p. 35.

** Brit. Journ. of Hom., April, 1853, p. 230.

†† Brit. Journ. of Hom., April, 1853, p. 220.

dendron, ledum, ruta, colchicum, staphysagria, china, mang. caust, sulphur, mercurius, spigelia, euphrasia, lachesis. And the cheering result of their abundant experience is, that "nothing has been achieved up to the present time for the treatment of rheumatism!"

Again, take the treatment of dropsy, with albuminuria (Bright's disease.) Dr. Kidd,* having failed with cantharides, relies on turpentine; which, as he believes, is the true homœopathic remedy for the disease. Dr. Epps † succeeds with cantharides and tinctura acris. Dr. Pope ‡ treats the same complaint with arsenic; Dr. Nankivell § with hellebore and digitalis. In the same disorder, following scarlet fever, Dr. Frost || relies on cainca, arsenic, and apis; while Dr. Stewart ** treats it with arsenic, bryonia, cantharides, and mercurius.

In tic douleureux, Dr. Henderson †† uses aconite; Mr. W. Morgan ‡‡ confides almost wholly in belladonna; Dr. Humphreys §§ cures a case with bryonia; Dr. Schrön ||| succeeded only with stramonium.

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* Brit. Journ. of Hom., Oct., 1855, p. 565.

† Brit. Journ. of Hom., Oct., 1855, p. 660.

‡ Brit. Journ. of Hom., July, 1854, p. 485.

§ Monthly Hom. Rev., July, 1861, p. 329.

|| Monthly Hom. Rev., Aug., 1861, p. 378.

** Brit. Journ. of Hom., July, 1855, p. 521.

†† Henderson's Practice, p. 99.

‡‡ Brit. Journ. of Hom., Oct., 1855, p. 585.

§§ Brit. Journ. of Hom., July, 1853, p. 483.

||| Brit. Journ. of Hom., Aug., 1853, p. 292.

Moreover, these discordances are observed not only in comparing the practice of one homœopathist with that of another, but likewise in the practice of the same individual.

I will instance Dr. Henderson, one of the most esteemed of their writers, and justly so: one who is likewise commendably free from the folly of marvellous cures. Dr. Henderson * treats with belladonna a large number of different and unrelated complaints—inflammatory sore throat, epilepsy, articular rheumatism, chronic dyspepsia, erysipelas of the face, hydrocephalus, chronic vomiting, irritable bladder, and headache. How can belladonna be homœopathic in all these?

Again: he relates several cases of suppressed menses in which pulsatilla succeeded in restoring the flow; and immediately after a number of cases where the same medicine arrested a too abundant flow—two exactly opposite states cured on the principle of *similia* by the same medicine!

6. It must be remembered, further, that homœopathy started life with a peculiar *pathology*, as well as peculiar therapeutics; but the present race of homœopathists have silently allowed that to drop, and they now profess the views usually taught in the schools.

7. What are we to say likewise to the essential differences that prevail in the application of the law of

* Homœopathic Practice, *passim*.

similia. Some follow Hahnemann's original views, and regard the outward symptoms as the sole guide in the selection of the remedy; others, with more reason, contend that the nature of the disease should be taken into prominent account.* These latter call their view *specific* homœopathy, and speak of the former contemptuously as "symptom doctors."

8. Then, lastly, some believe in "medicinal aggravations," as they are called; others regard them as only so much Hahnemannic moonshine.

In fine, it is difficult to understand how even an unprofessional person can rise up from the perusal of the esoteric literature of homœopathy without this conviction: that homœopathy is not a true science, but a spurious imitation—devoid of a single datum on which its expounders agree—an entanglement of contradictory notions held together by a name.

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* See Hempel's Organon of Specific Homœopathy.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT IT ALL COMES TO.

"Vox et preterea nihil!"

THE facts related in the foregoing pages have revealed an extraordinary and unexpected discrepancy between the treatises, pamphlets, and systems of domestic medicine which expound the doctrines and practice of homœopathy to the public, and the treatment of the sick by the homœopathic practitioners of Manchester.

In our city homœopathic practice is an odd patchwork, composed in part of the usages of legitimate medicine, in part also of a meaningless routine, which has as much to do with the law of *similia* as Tenterden steeple has to do with the Goodwin Sands. It is a practice in a state of transition, partaking still, in some particulars, of the traditions of Hahnemann, but progressively losing its identity, and sinking by degrees from the irresistible gravitation of facts into the channels of regular medicine.

The history of homœopathy has been a remarkable one; it is the exact reverse of the history of every really great discovery; which begins as a germ and expands into a tree. Hahnemann introduced his system to the world

as a full-blown flower; but after his departure it neither preserved its bloom nor swelled into fruit. On the contrary, one by one its petals dropped, deeper and deeper rotted its core, until to-day there is little left of it but the scentless stem.

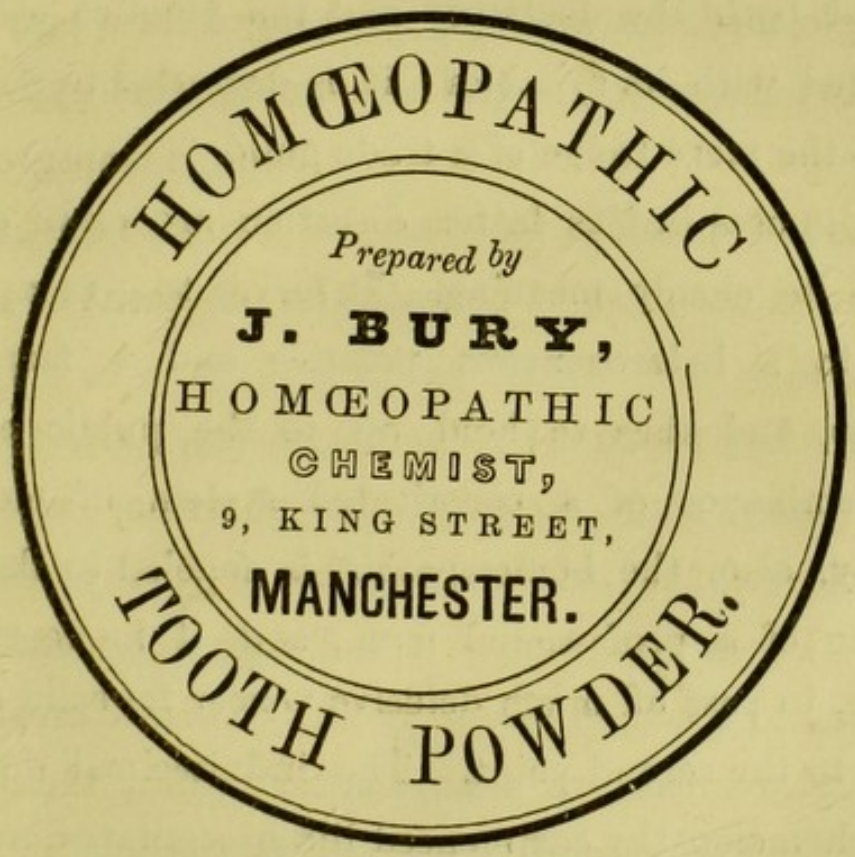
Quitting the metaphor: what have we witnessed? We have witnessed the original doctrines of homœopathy despised and trodden under foot. Infinitesimal doses have been deserted for palpable quantities; with them have necessarily disappeared the theories of potentization, of medicinal aggravations, and medicinal antidotes; the single medicine has been exchanged for a plurality of remedies; the grotesque Hahnemannic pathology has been quietly ignored; and the law of *similia* is transgressed as much as it is possible to transgress a rule so abstract; or it is buried out of sight beneath the pavement of a sterile routine.

And what remains? There remains, *first*, the name homœopathy, and, *secondly*, the pharmacy which the exigencies of the infinitesimal dose originally called into being. These two represent well-nigh all that is tangible, in our town, of Hahnemann's elaborate creation.

Though recreant to their master's faith, the disciples of Hahnemann cling like grim death to their Shibboleth —homœopathy. This is their rallying cry and watchword; their magic wand, by touch of which everything is transformed into its own nature, and becomes thence-

forth homœopathic. And a most rare medley of procedures, opinions, and material things, thus changed, now take order among matters homœopathic. I have, in previous chapters, pointed out some of these curiosities; I am here tempted to signalize one or two more.

We have seen that tincture of camphor, when it has once crossed the magic counter of a homœopathic chemist, is no longer plain tincture of camphor, but HOMŒOPATHIC CAMPHOR! A little scented chalk under the same circumstances, becomes



Cocoa is similiarly translated from its vulgar state into Homœopathic Cocoa! Nay, even an enema syringe, consecrated to base uses, is not insusceptible to the same

divination, and becomes quite another thing as a HOMŒOPATHIC SYRINGE! *

In the face of facts like these, and others before noted, I have been not a little embarrassed to affix a meaning to the term homœopathy, commensurate with its multitudinous applications. To begin in the beginning, we are agreed that it is derived from the Greek; and so far good :—

"Avec du grec on ne peut gâter rien,"

but further than that I have been unable to go. The word has no longer any etymological signification, having survived both the doctrines and the practice originally associated with its syllables; it is degraded to an empty name—the mere badge of a trade guild.

But its uses in this latter direction are clear enough, maugre its cloudy meaning. It serves to give apparent unity to a heterogeneous practice and a farrago of opinions, and thus to hold up to the public eye the vain semblance of a constituted system of medicine. Thereby, also, the homœopathist is enabled to claim the standing of a professional man; and, if he be given to writing, to pass off much delusive veneer for solid science.

But to the second point. The infinitesimal dose with which homœopathy commenced life necessitated, as I have just hinted, a different manner of preparing and dis-

* I am indebted to my friend, Dr. Thorburn, for the discovery of the homœopathic syringe. It was communicated to him by an experienced monthly nurse.

pensing medicines, in other words, a new and peculiar *Pharmacy*. In this way arose the famous globules, now grown old-fashioned and almost obsolete; the charming little powders, one inch by half, with faint sweet flavour of sugar-of-milk, and the dainty phial of limpid tincture. This pharmacy has been from the beginning the potent advocate of homœopathy. If these tasteless medicines had power, it needed no further argument of their superiority to the "nasty" doses of ordinary practice. But what a comment on the hundreds of cures said to have been effected by them is their abandonment by those who have the dearest interest in adhering to their use, and those, too, who have had the amplest opportunities of testing their value!

This revolution in the dose has, of course, not been without its effects on the pharmacy; but it was of vital importance to keep these at the lowest possible point. The homœopathic pharmacy was the outward and visible sign of the new faith, and, indeed, the only evidence of its reality to the public. A break-down here would incontinently have dissipated the illusion, and shed a flood of light on the emptiness within. It became, therefore, an anxious problem, to exhibit the largest amount of dose with the least departure from the usual features of homœopathic medicines. The problem has been adroitly handled; and if not solved with entire success, it has been so far solved that a very large result has been obtained. By adopting

the use of the mother tinctures, and the introduction of the first decimal (**A**) and first centesimal (I) attenuations, in lieu of the infinitesimal dilutions, large doses of arsenic, mercury, copper, zinc, aconite, belladonna, nux vomica, morphia, camphor, turpentine, iodine, and other powerful remedies, may be freely prescribed and dispensed, under the guise of drops and tiny powders, without awakening inconvenient inquiries.

Homœopathists likewise continue rigidly to exclude all colouring substances, aromatics, and flavouring materials from their prescriptions.*

They are also chary of extracts, black draught, infusions, decoctions, together with those turbid whity-brown or greenish mixtures, concerning which I am very much of the opinion of the author of the Ingoldsby Legends:—

> "I care not who knows,
> That there's nothing on earth I detest like a dose,
> That yellowish-green-looking fluid, whose hue
> I consider extremely unpleasant to view."

There are, indeed, some medicines which have been found indispensable in homœopathic practice, such as

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* This exclusion had quite another purpose in the mind of Hahnemann. He relied solely on infinitesimal doses, and strictly adhered to the single medicine. He therefore avoided any admixtures, lest they should contain minute quantities of active substances which would interfere with his single remedy. But the adoption of palpable doses, and the use of two or three remedies at a time, have rendered these reasons no longer applicable.

castor oil and cod-liver oil, which must be given in bulk, and which no cajolery has yet succeeded in depriving of their primeval nastiness.

Nevertheless, on the whole, the original character of the homœopathic pharmacy has, by these means, been cleverly preserved, in spite of the increasing dose; and it still offers a strong contrast—at least in externals—to the pharmacy of the ordinary druggist.

I am far from blaming homœopathists for their efforts to make their medicines pleasant; it is very desirable, for more than one reason, that medicines should be easy to take, and no pains should be spared to effect that end; but it is idle to hope that medicines generally can be made tasteless and colourless without sacrificing their efficiency.

And here our homœopathists find themselves in a difficulty; they have a character for insipid medicines to keep up, and they have lost faith in infinitesimal doses. Like most people in a dilemma, they adopt a middle course, they trifle awhile with the case; prescribe the **B** dilution or perhaps I., secretly trusting that the forces of nature will compensate for their inactivity; but—and I am not painting from imagination—when the malady becomes grave, and threatens an untoward conclusion, they rush in haste to the stronger doses, now indifferent to their taste and smell: too often however, the golden opportunity has slipped; a danger which a few days

before might have been averted by active treatment, has now gathered such head and force that mortal skill avails nothing, and precious life falls a sacrifice to a triviality.*

The temptation thus to trifle with disease is especially strong in the ailments of children. Mothers are delighted to have tasteless medicines for their little ones, who sometimes set up a back of rebellion against an unpalatable dose. It spares them the grimaces and apparent suffering of the child, and the exercise of a little firmness on their own part. Here too this mock treatment has the most delusive appearance of success, inasmuch as the healing powers of nature are quick and strong, and spontaneous recovery swiftly overtakes the thousand ephemeral ailments incidental to early life. But when the dispenser of the tasteless drops or powders, takes the credit of the cure to himself, he is audaciously, I had almost said impiously, laying claim to the work of a mightier hand. It is, however, precisely here that this practice is the most unsafe; if the disorder takes a se-

* Sir B. Brodie expresses the same sentiment in stronger terms: "There are numerous cases in which spontaneous recovery is out of the question; in which sometimes the life and death of the patient, and at other times the comfort or discomfort of his existence for a long time to come, depends on the prompt application of active and judicious treatment. In such cases homœopathy is neither more nor less than a mischievous absurdity; and I do not hesitate to say that a very large number of persons have fallen victims to the faith which they reposed in it, and to the consequent delay in having recourse to proper remedies."—*Letter to Fraser's Magazine.*

rious turn, it rapidly runs its course; and a few hours of trifling may be repented of once, and—that will be always.

The misapprehensions prevailing in the minds, even of intelligent persons, respecting homœopathy and the practice that goes under that name, are so many and so gross, that I should have been quite at a loss to account for their growth, had I not been led to explore that marvellous industry—the popular literature of homœopathy, which has succeeded, because unopposed and uncontradicted, in abusing the minds of a section of the community.

It is a common impression that the favourite homœopathic remedies—belladonna, aconite, camphor, nux vomica, etc., were originally introduced by homœopathists, and still continue their exclusive property. A lady, for whose child I prescribed belladonna, gravely intimated that she was not aware I practised homœopathy! A most intelligent gentleman, and one versed in popular homœopathic literature, told me that he witnessed a "flagrant case of homœopathic treatment on the part of an ordinary practitioner." Well, what was it? "Why he applied the tincture of aconite to a patient's face for tic douleureux," and he added "I said nothing but I laughed in my sleeve"!!*

* The internal use of aconite dates chiefly from the publication of Storck's Essay in 1762; and it is not a little remarkable that we employ aconite to quiet the heart's action, and diminish the force and rapidity of the pulse. Indeed there is scarcely any fact in therapeutics better made out than this power of medicinal doses of

These drugs were in use long before Hahnemann dreamed his dream. There are others, as bryonia, which were formerly employed, but have fallen into disuse of late, because other medicines of similar but superior activity have taken their place. As to sepia, lycopodium, silica, and the like inert substances, we willingly concede their exclusive use to homœopathists.*

Another delusion is the notion that homœopathists are a persecuted body of scientific men. Much dust and clatter has been raised there-anent; without any necessity, however. It is an excellent thing, in these days, to be even *really* persecuted; and still better to obtain

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aconite. Consequently the use of this drug in inflammatory complaints, where there is a full and rapid pulse, looks much more like *contraria contrariis* than *similia similibus;* and the "homœopathic lancet," as aconite is sometimes called, has a marvellous resemblance to an "antipathic" blade.

* The "provings" of these substances were conducted with the high dilutions. Hempel's opinion of their value is evidently much like my own. He observes: "Before going to bed in the evening, a few globules of the third, sixth, twelfth, thirtieth, sixtieth, or two hundredth attenuation are taken dry on the tongue; and if next morning the prover wakes up with a sick headache, or is troubled with the nightmare during the night, or perhaps with a little pinching or griping in the bowels, it is invariably the few globules that did all this mischief; whereas it is infinitely more probable that the globules were perfectly innocent of all this terrible work, and the real cause of the trouble ought to have been traced perhaps to a cup of tea of inferior quality, or a little stronger than usual, to the fatigue of the previous day, to a little excess at dinner, a bad cigar, a little exposure, and the like."—*Organon of Specif. Homœop.*, p. 150.

the credit of it without the *désagréments*, and this the homœopathists have managed to do. Homœopathists have *wilfully* separated themselves from regular practioners by laying claim—with what justice has been seen in the foregoing pages—to a wholly different and exclusive mode of treating disease; and if we refuse to acknowledge them as professional brethren, it is because there is a profound suspicion throughout the profession that what goes under the name of homœopathic practice is a sh—, well, an unreality—what men of business would call a "trick of trade" to catch the breeze of popular favour. To have condoned the movement would certainly have checkmated some who now grow fat on public credulity; it would also have gained for the profession a transient repute for liberality; but it would have been neither an honest nor a dignified course. And when '*fuit*' shall have been written across the history of homœopathy, those who now are ready to charge us with prejudice will then be compelled to approve our constancy. The profession, in the face of its immediate interests, has entered a protest against those who are bringing science to the level of a commercial undertaking. This is *not* a question of medical doctrine. I am enabled to speak with some authority, and I do so with pleasure, of the views of the profession in Manchester on the subject. At a meeting of the Medico-Ethical Society, held in the Waterloo Hotel, April 22, 1858, it was laid down as a principle that

differences in medical doctrine were no bar to professional intercourse; but that any body of practitioners who set themselves apart to defame and misrepresent the mass of their medical brethren; who for the sake of attracting public notice, proclaimed themselves adherents of an exclusive faith, and countenanced the diffusion of a literature which could only answer the ends of an advertisement, thereby tended to degrade the profession of medicine, and forfeited their right to professional fellowship.

This is not, I submit, a hard measure; and it is dealt out impartially to all irregular practitioners of whatever creed.* Men who pretend to cure all diseases by the movement cure, the whey cure, animal magnetism, hydropathy, homœopathy, allopathy, or any other 'pathy must, wilfully or ignorantly, be shutting their eyes to known facts; and ages of experience warrant us in the suspicion that the enthusiasm and philanthropy in which they flaunt, are but a judicious cloak for their love of pelf.

Legitimate medicine has a bosom large enough to receive all genuine facts bearing on the treatment of disease. It is sheer folly in these days to pretend that she is unwilling to accept every aid from whatever

* It is well known that there are among us practitioners, held in honour, who entertain some peculiar views, not generally accepted; and a gentleman, recently deceased, held a whole pate-full of opinions, which no mortal else endorsed; yet he was welcomely met in consultation. It is also no secret that there are others holding unimpeachable doctrines, whom many gentlemen decline to meet on account of professional misconduct.

quarter coming. If she err at all it is on the other side having rather "itching ears" for any new thing. The feeling in the profession is perfectly catholic; we acknowledge and recommend in appropriate cases, a resort to what is called hydropathic treatment, mineral waters, galvanism, and even the movement cure; but when any one of these *parts* sets up a claim to the *whole* of medicine—we reject that claim.

A third delusion, and one which has been most diligently fostered, is, that legitimate medicine is *allopathy*. We wholly repudiate that title. Allopathy is but a nickname invented by Hahnemann, and adopted by his followers, for the purpose of placing homœopathy before the public eye in more distinct contrast to ordinary practice. Scientific medicine makes no pretension to have discovered any universal law of healing—she is wedded to no therapeutic law; her only guide is experience, which she holds most precious. Any remedy that can make good its claim to confidence on this ground finds ready acceptance, whatever theory be set up to explain its action. If quinine be proved to cure ague and remittent fever, quinine shall be our remedy; but whether its action be allopathic, antipathic, homœopathic, magnetic, chemical, or specific, that is a question that must stand over for final decision to a distant, perhaps a far distant day.

My task is ended; and I own that it has not been altogether a pleasant one. Nothing but strong conviction

and a sense of public duty have induced me to relinquish, even for a few months, more congenial pursuits, for the sake of doing battle with a thing of straw. I take comfort, however, in the reflection that eminent men, both in the profession and out of it, have not thought it beneath their dignity to raise their voice in warning or in denunciation against those who, impatient of the sober veracities of science, run after impossible marvels, and lend themselves to the schemes of pseudo-scientific dreamers. "If medical men, highly educated, and occupying a distinguished social position, have been seduced from the sober paths of their profession into new and ephemeral systems, which fashion sanctions and imposture sustains, we need not wonder at the temporary success of wilder theories, where the illiterate are the adepts and the ignorant are the victims. It is among the middle and the upper classes chiefly that this credulity and love of the marvellous is most conspicuous. It is rank and luxuriant among the votaries of gaiety and idleness, who are incapable of continuous thought, and who have therefore no faith in those forces in the material world, and in those cosmical laws which are in daily operation around us." *

* Sir David Brewster's Address on the opening of the present Session of the University of Edinburgh.

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