

Epps (1)

WHAT IS HOMŒOPATHY ?

✓ BY

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Tut, man! one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be help by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

SHAKESPEARE.—*Romeo and Juliet.*

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NOTE.—An American gentleman, whilst travelling in Europe, happened to meet with this little treatise, in which the subject of Homœopathy appeared to him to be presented in a very striking and familiar manner, admirably adapted to arrest public attention, and give popular instruction on a subject which is of vital importance to all. Though not a physician, he was a firm believer in the homœopathic method of cure; his confidence in it being founded upon the salutary effects which he had experienced from it in his own person. Ardently desiring that other sufferers might be induced to participate in the blessings of this beneficent system, and believing that the circulation of this tract would conduce to that end, he has caused it to be re-printed. He desires no remuneration from the sale, but is resolved to devote the proceeds to the publication of some other tract on the same subject. If each friend of the cause, who sees the tracts, would purchase several copies for distribution, the outlay now made might suffice to keep up a continued series, to the time of that medical millennium which, sooner or later, will assuredly arrive, and be characterized by the general reception of the doctrines, and adoption of the practice, of Hahnemann.

WHAT IS HOMŒOPATHY ?

SOME venerable practitioner, with a mind completely pre-occupied with the prejudices of education, and influenced still more by the inveterate bias, arising from long custom, exclaims, in reply to the above question, "Nonsense—stuff—ridiculous nonsense:" and combines with the expressions, thus jumbled together, a character of countenance, so exhibitive of contempt, that the spectator, totally unacquainted with Homœopathy, would imagine that some palmistry, some universal specific remedy, was that which Homœopathy represents.

WHAT *is* HOMŒOPATHY ? however, repeats some inquisitive being, whom experience of the usual course which truth passes through in its progress, has taught that calling names is not an exhibition of knowledge, and who is, at the same time, well aware, that, in all ages, the cry from the advocates of established erroneous systems has been

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

He waits an answer : but he who decided the matter thus summarily, is silent : he knows not what Homœopathy *is*.

What, then, is Homœopathy ? is the inquiry of one, who seeks, in simplicity of mind, to know the nature of that, concerning which so many speak, and, in the praise of which, so many give testimony.

This question is now to be answered, and, in answering it, the various objections urged against this newly-developed, but, in nature, long-existent system, will be detailed and refuted.

Homœopathy, a word truly expressive, is compounded of two Greek words, ὁμοίος, homoios, *analogous*, and πάθος, pathos, *suffering*, or affection.*

* The following incident will serve to show the antiquity of the term. A person, whose education ought to have produced a higher state, was ridiculing Homœopathy as being one of the monstrosities developed in these modern times, and the term itself, also, as being so barbarous and new-fangled. It was observed, whether a monstrosity or not, Time, which tests all things, will settle ; but, as to the new-fangledness of the term, it was astonishing

Homœopathy is, therefore, something which has to do with suffering, and bodily suffering has always something to do with *disease*, and disease is a *deviation from health*.

Health being the *standard*, by which human existence manifests itself; being the *rule*, from which deviations or diseases are *exceptions*, it is quite evident that mankind have been, are, and will be, ever anxious, when subject to disease, when placed, in other words, in this state of deviation, to hail any means, by which they can be restored to the right line of happy, healthful existence.

They apply to the physician, who, by his various knowledge, has become acquainted with the human body. Thus, he, by his study of ANATOMY, has become acquainted with the *structure* of the various parts of life's wondrous machine: by the knowledge of PHYSIOLOGY, with the *uses* of those parts: by the knowledge of NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, with the influences of external and internal circumstances upon the machine having such duties to perform: by the knowledge of PATHOLOGY, with the changes, which take place in these parts, when subject to disease: and by the knowledge of *symptoms*, with the diseased states, which exhibit themselves by symptoms.

Such, then, is the party to whom the afflicted with disease apply for aid: a person, who professes to be the possessor of *means* for the recovery of the individual diseased: in other words, of means for the restoration of the body from its state of deviation to its proper state, called health.

What, then, are these means? What these powers belonging to the medical art, which possess the beneficent agency of restoring to health, of stripping disease of its character, and of making life again assume its wonted reign in its appointed habitation.

These means are described as *medicines*, and bear the same relation to the body in a state of *disease*, as *aliments* bear to the body in a state of *health*.

When grouped together as a whole, these medicines are designated by the title MATERIA MEDICA.

These means, therefore, which the physician possesses, he, when called upon for aid in recovering health, uses for the

that he, a professed scholar, should not know that the term was at least 1800 years old, and further, that he, a reader of the Divine volume, thus described a term which was in the Divine writings. The reproof caused much indignation: in fact, he denied that any such term could have found a place in the Scriptures. A Greek Testament was opened; and the following passage was read to the dogmatic disputer:

Ἠλίας ἄνθρωπος ἦν ὁμοιοπαθῆς ἡμῖν.—James, v. 17.

Ēlias anthrōpos ēn Homoioopathēs ēmin: literally.

"Elias was a man of LIKE PASSIONS to us." He said nothing.

restoration of the body and its functions to the natural state. These means are the instruments with which he has to shape diseases into health; and his success in this humane and noble labour, will be exactly proportioned to the *right use of the right means*.

So apparent is this, that no illustration need be given: but the remark is made as preparatory to an important query, namely,

WHAT IS THE RIGHT USE OF THE RIGHT MEANS ?

In answer to this question, it will be taken for granted, that the physician has the right means.

Having the right means is not sufficient. He must have the knowledge of the right *use* of the means in his possession.

The object both he and the sufferer have in view, is the removal of disease: the means for realizing this object are medicines: the method of employing these medicines constitutes the use: the proper method presents the right use: the improper method, the abuse.

To ascertain, then, which is the right method, and thereby to enable the patient to select the physician who is most likely to be successful in restoring him to a state of health, it may be advantageous to notice briefly the different methods adopted, in the application of medicinal substances, to the relief of diseased states.

The methods, which medical men follow in applying medicines, or remedial agents, may be classed under three heads.

The *first* is that, in which the medical man endeavours to cure disease by prescribing medicines, which, acting directly on the diseased organ, will induce states *directly opposite* to those which the disease manifests.

As these medicines act by producing an affection, (*παθος*, pathos,) in appearance quite contrary (*αντι*, anti, against) to that, constituting the disease, this method is called the ANTI-PATHIC, or ANTIPATHY: a method expressed in the phrase, *contraria contrariis curantur*; contraries are cured by contraries.

Of such a method abundant are the instances. Thus, when a person cannot sleep, opium is given to induce sleep: a person has severe pain, opium is given to allay pain: a patient is costive, cathartics are given to purge him: if a patient has a strong, full, rapid pulse, with fever, *blood letting* is resorted to to lessen the pulse.

The *second* method is that, in which the physician endeavours to cure disease by *inducing a new disease* or affection (*παθος*, pathos) in some *other* (*αλλος*, allos) part of the body, so as to draw away the disease from the part first affected, to

the part acted upon by the medicinal agent. This method is called the ALLOPATHIC, or ALLOPATHY.

Of this method, the examples are as abundant as those of the first.

To take one: A person who has enjoyed good health for years, is seized with what is called a *determination of blood to the head*. The medical attendant prescribes a *seton* in the neck, which, he supposes, by inducing a new disease by the irritation which it occasions, will remove the determination to the head.

This method of treatment is very common, and, because, by the means used in this method, the original disease is supposed to be *derived*, or *revulsed* from the part, in which it was originally seated, this method is frequently designated as the *derivative* or *revulsive* method.

This method, also, because producing irritation in another part, is designated sometimes as *counter-action* or *counter-irritation*.

All the appellatives, given to this method, sufficiently indicate, that the object the physician has in view is to produce in another part of the body a *SECOND deviation from health* in order to overcome the *FIRST* deviation in some other part: that is, because there is a fire, burning fiercely in one chamber of the house, the physician lights another fire in another chamber, (the fuel being, let it be remembered, the house itself,) which, by burning *more fiercely*, will, he hopes, extinguish the previously existing fire.

Such, then, are *two* methods: and these two are those, which have been professedly followed by physicians in all past ages. Physicians have been allopathists, antipathists, or both.*

To Hahnemann, mankind are indebted for the discovery of a *third* method, which, when explained, will enable the reader to answer the question,

What is Homœopathy ?

One grand principle is manifested in the human body and its operations: a principle, recognized in past ages, but first developed by the celebrated John Hunter; a name, as Spenser says,

“Strung upon the bead-roll of time.”

* For a more complete exhibition and exposure of the unscientific nature of these methods, the reader is referred to the work entitled “Homœopathy and its Principles explained,” by John Epps, M. D.—Piper & Co., Paternoster-row, London. Second edition.

It is, THAT NO TWO *similar* DISEASES CAN EXIST IN A STATE OF INTENSITY IN THE SAME BODY AT THE SAME TIME.

Particularly important is it, that this word "similar" should be borne in mind: because many have argued, as if this illustrious physiologist had taught, that *no two* diseases can exist in the same body at the same time: a principle, which he did not maintain: whereas, the principle he maintained was, that no two *similar* diseases can exist at the same time.

This principle, as thus defined, forms the groundwork—the *theoretical* groundwork, of the third method, developed by Hahnemann, who applied this principle in the use of medicines, and in the explanation of their efficacious operation.

It is known by all, that medicines, being poisons, produce symptoms or states, which are not accordant with the natural condition of the human body, and consequently these states are themselves *symptoms of* DISEASE. The diseases, or deviations from the natural state, produced by the use of medicines, Hahnemann has designated by the title of *medicinal diseases*. Thus, mercury produces symptoms, when taken for a length of time, so similar to the disease called *syphilis*, that these symptoms have been described by medical authors under the title of *pseudo*, or *false* syphilis.

The deviations from health produced, on the other hand, by natural agents, such as scarlet fever, produced by the scarlet fever *contagion*: ague, produced by *marsh* vapour: he calls *morbific*, or *natural* diseases.

These diseases of both kinds have their presence demonstrated, only as presenting *masses of symptoms*, not in accordance with the usual phenomena, exhibited by the healthy.

Here, then, are *two* classes of diseases: the one class, the symptoms of which are produced by medicines; the other class, the symptoms of which are produced by other causes.

To cure the latter, namely, *morbific* or *natural* diseases, we must, Hahnemann maintains, produce the former, namely *medicinal* diseases.

So say, in part, the allopathists, and the antipathists also; but Hahnemann says, especially we must, to effect a cure, produce in the diseased individual a medicinal disease, *similar* in its symptoms to those exhibited in the natural disease.

To illustrate. Suppose I have a morbid disease, which presents as symptoms,

1. Shooting pain in the forehead.—2. Giddiness.—3. Sense of objects turning round.—4. Palpitation of the heart.—5. Sinking at the pit of stomach.—6. Feeling of emptiness at the pit of stomach.—7. Flatulence.—8. Rising of acid liquid into the mouth.—9. Constipation.—10. Pains in the

left hypochondriac region.—11. Sense of languor over the body.—12. Great weakness of the knees in walking or standing.

I must, to cure that disease, discover a remedy, which will produce—1. Shooting pain in the forehead : 2. Giddiness : 3. Sense of objects turning round : 4. Palpitation of the heart : 5. Sinking at the pit of the stomach : 6. Feeling of emptiness at the pit of the stomach : 7. Flatulence : 8. Rising of acid liquid into the mouth : 9. Constipation : 10. Pains in the left hypochondriac region : 11. Sense of languor over the body : 12. Great weakness in the knees in walking or standing. Or, if one medicine cannot be found to produce *all* these symptoms, I must select one, which has the power of producing the greater number of them, and afterwards a second, which produces symptoms in accordance with the remainder : and having administered this or these, I must cure my patient.

It will be now seen, why this third method of curing disease is called Homœopathy : and of which the law is explained in the phrase "*similia similibus curantur* : " likes are cured by likes.*

But, it may be asked, *How can such medicines be discovered?* because, if the diseases—the natural diseases, exhibit themselves by certain symptoms, how can it be established *that the symptoms, arising under the use of medicines taken for the cure of diseases, produce, even when given, these symptoms?*

This remark is valid. It shows the absurdity of judging of the pure effects of medicines by their effects on *diseased* persons : a method of judging as absurd, as that of attempting to judge of the effects and of the capability of a machine, in a state of order, from the effects produced by applying to it certain powers when it is in a state of disorder.

The preceding query has great interest associated with it. It leads so suitably to the notice of the noble, the humane, the hero-like conduct of the founder of Homœopathy, who may literally be said to have made his system

"Perfect through suffering."

What did Hahnemann do ? He developed and put into

* Many are so ignorant, even the Editor of the *Lancet* places himself among this class, as to talk thus—What, if a man is drunk, you would give him more drink to make him sober ; if a man is ill from eating too much, you would give him more to eat. Such persons confound *identical* with *similar*. No homœopathist maintains that he cures identical by identical ; but like by like. Thus to a man drunk the homœopathist would give a medicine, which has the power of producing in a healthy person symptoms similar to those which a drunken man exhibits ; and to a person, who has overloaded his stomach with food, the homœopathist would give a medicine which would cause in a healthy person symptoms similar to those presented in a person, who has overloaded his stomach.

practical application the grand principle, that to know the *real or pure effects of medicines*, we must try them on persons in a STATE OF HEALTH ; and Hahnemann tortured himself, as any one, by reading his *Materia Medica*, will perceive, to ascertain the effects of medicines, by experimenting on himself, he being in a state of health.

By a long, a thirty years continued series of observations on himself, his wife, his children, and his zealous disciples, the *pure effects of two hundred medicines* were ascertained.

He discovered THE medicinal disease that *each* medicine could produce, and thus obtained a knowledge of those agents, which will and must cure diseases produced by natural causes, when assuming the same features as those produced by the medicinal disease ; and thus has Hahnemann given a scientific certainty to medicine. He has established that the physician will be *certain to cure any disease*, (that is curable,) by prescribing the remedy, which, *in a healthy person*, produces by its action a *disease similar to that* manifested by the sick person ; and thus he has established, that the God of order has not allowed disorder to exist in this part of his creation.

He has enabled medicine to attain its rank among the fixed sciences, and to be no longer subject to the taunts which the thoughtless, and even the wise, have associated with its "*glorious (truly inglorious) uncertainty.*"

But, it may be asked, *How is it that the introduction of a new disease, though similar, can destroy a previously existing disease ?*

It may be supposed, that the addition of the new disease would, to use a common adage, be adding fuel to the fire ; would be *plus* added to *plus*, and that the remainder must therefore be *plus*.

The law, already detailed, affords the explanation of the negative of this supposition ; *the law that no two similar diseases can exist in the same system at the same time.*

The Homœopathic medicines may be further regarded as guiding the reactive powers of the system, and thus facilitating the cure of the disease.

But to the explanation thus obtained from a knowledge of this law, the *practical* Homœopathist can add an immense multitude of *facts*, demonstrative of this, that a natural disease and a medicinal disease, presenting similar symptoms, cannot exist in the body at the same time.

Two or three facts may be detailed with advantage.

Hahnemann was led to the discovery of the law of cure, called *Homœopathic*, by observing, that all the virtues ascribed to Peruvian bark, in curing *intermittent fever*, are effects which are produced in a healthy person by Peruvian bark,

when taken by him in that state : so that, Peruvian bark produces intermittent fever in a healthy person ; and it cures intermittent fever, induced by natural causes.

Mercury, it is well known, is a specific for syphilis : and, it is equally well known, that mercury, when carried too far in its employment, produces effects upon the body so similar to those constituting the natural disease, called syphilis, that the disease is called pseudo syphilis, or false syphilis ; in other words, mercury produces a medicinal disease, *similar in its symptoms to the disease which it cures.*

Nux vomica, taken by a healthy person, produces a certain kind of palsy ; nux vomica, taken by a person palsied in a certain way, cures him.

And so with many other medicines, of which Homœopathic practice affords continually recurring demonstrations.

But, it may be objected, surely it *must be dangerous to prescribe in a disease*, the symptoms of which are so violent as to threaten death, any medicine which will *augment those symptoms*, as the Homœopathic medicines do ?

To this it may be answered, that nature goes through this process herself. Whenever a morbid disease exists in an individual, the powers of life labour to throw off this disease. The distressing symptoms, the diseased manifestations, connected with this reaction, go on augmenting, and the patient gets worse and worse, till, at last, the *crisis* arrives ; that is, the point at which the reaction of the powers of the system and the action of the disease attain the greatest intensity, and then, sometimes, the patient recovers ; more frequently, however, especially when the powers of the system are *unaided*, or *improperly aided*, he dies. What then does Homœopathy ? She guides, by her means, the reactive powers of the system to establish the crisis on the side of health, and thus realizes a favourable result to the crisis.

Another question here arises, *How can it be told that, in prescribing a medicine, so as to excite a medicinal disease, AN AMOUNT of the medicinal disease may not be excited, which may be as injurious as the original natural disease ?*

This question, scientific and rational, requires an answer : such answer affording an opportunity of developing another feature in the Homœopathic system ; namely, the EXCEEDING MINUTENESS OF DOSE.

Among the results of the allopathic and of the antipathic practice, many are the effects, sometimes life-lasting, occasioned by the *over doses.*

Many patients, who have been relieved of violent constipation by *croton oil*, have had fatal constipation induced by the dose which relieved them.

Many patients, who have been cured of syphilis by mercury, have had the *secondary* symptoms of syphilis, as they are mis-called, produced by the mercury.

Many patients, who have been bled copiously for affections of the head, have had permanent affections of the head produced by bleeding.

Hahnemann knew these, and multitudinous similar instances, and guided by experience, he found that, to cure a natural disease, according to the Homœopathic system, it is essential that *that amount*, and no more, of the *medicinal* disease should be produced, which is equivalent to the removal of the morbid or natural disease. To produce a greater amount, would be to injure the constitution, and to waste the remedy: to produce a less amount, would be *not* to cure the disease.

A most interesting series of experiences* led Hahnemann to *diminish the doses* of medicine, until he attained that degree of minuteness of dose, in which the medicine is efficacious to the production of the amount of the medicinal disease necessary to remove the malady without injuring the constitution by its after effects, even should those after effects appear.

* Hahnemann supposing that Belladonna, because it had the property of producing an eruption similar to that of scarlet fever, would also cure this disease, resolved to make trials with the remedy. He gave it in very minute doses, according to the prevailing views, viz: in the 1-8th, 1-16th, 1-20th of a grain of the extract, or a single drop of the juice. The result was salutary in many cases, but not unfrequently instead of the cure, he observed an aggravation of all the symptoms of the complaint. To this augmentation of symptoms, however, there commonly succeeded a rapid crisis and perfect recovery; sometimes it yet proved so troublesome, as to call for the employment of antidotes. This almost constant aggravation of the disease by the remedies, which were chosen according to the new law, threatened to embarrass very much their trial, if not to render it wholly impracticable. To avoid these disagreeable results, Hahnemann adopted the most simple and natural expedient, viz. that of lessening the dose. He united one grain of the extract of Belladonna with a hundred drops of spirits of wine. Of this mixture one drop (which of course contained 1-100th part of a grain) he afterwards gave, in the suitable cases for a dose. But to his astonishment he observed that *this drop acted too forcibly*. He now made the great stride, which none previously to him had done; he took a hundred drops of spirits of wine, added to them one drop of the tincture, obtained as described, which contained 1-100th of a grain of the medicine, shook them together, and now had in every drop of the new mixture, therefore, the 1-10,000th part of a grain. If the 1-100th of a grain was quite an unusual dose, Hahnemann went far beyond the limits of previous experience in his second operation, viz. that of administering the dose in the 1-10,000th part of a grain. When he gave one drop of this second preparation in a case adapted to the remedy, he expected a very slight and inconsiderable effect. In the great majority of cases, indeed, a more rapid cure followed it than in the case of the preceding preparation, but, to his great

Many confound these minute, or as they are sometimes called, *infinitesimal* doses with the Homœopathic law, and attack the law because of the small doses ; whereas the small doses are only practical improvements, introduced subsequently to the discovery of the law, and resulting from a cautiously developed experience. If any can show that greater success attends the use of larger doses, larger doses will be adopted.

In relation to such doses, it may be remarked, that a *millionth* part of a grain is deemed by the most skilled of Homœopathic practitioners a large dose.

Many think it impossible, that such a small quantity can produce any effect upon disease, and inquire, *How is it possible ?*

astonishment, much more frequently the same impetuous aggravation of symptoms. In short, it was not to be mistaken : the virtue of the medicine had by no means been taken away in these high dilutions. How striking soever this phenomenon was in itself, and however wonderful and strange it must have appeared to Hahnemann, it had, nevertheless, been indisputably the result of his manipulations ; and as a quiet observer of nature, he proceeded, hand in hand with experience, still further. He added one drop of his second (the ten thousandth) dilution, to another one hundred drops of spirits of wine, shook them together, and thus procured a *third* mixture, in which each drop contained but the millionth part of the first grain of the extract of Belladonna. On administering this new preparation to his patients, he did not yet witness the expected decrease of medicinal energy, the remedy remained as active as before, and in sensitive children it operated frequently in quite as exciting a manner as the extract had at first ; nay, it appeared as if it operated with even greater violence than before—and therefore rendered necessary the exhibition of an antidote. Hahnemann, who knew that the secrets of nature had not yet been fully unveiled to us, and that any thing new and important, though ever so striking, *if its truth be attested by repeated experiment*, ought to be investigated, continued to prosecute this great discovery. He added one drop of each successive dilution to a successive portion of one hundred drops of spirits of wine, and united them by shaking. He perceived in the progress of these manipulations, that every successive dilution was still operative, and though attenuated a hundred fold at every step of the process, yet by no means did it become in the same proportion a hundred fold less efficient ; in fact, each dilution differed in activity very little from the dilution immediately preceding. He continued, therefore, these processes with the medicine, until experience taught him, that it had, at length, become entirely mild in its operation. The troublesome increase of the morbid symptoms became gradually less and less considerable by dilution, nevertheless the succeeding salutary effect remained equally decided, and even the extreme dilutions themselves were always sufficient to effect a cure. Remarking even from the thirtieth dilution, in very sensible subjects, an increase of the symptoms ; he diminished the dose from one drop of this dilution, to a small portion of a drop. He discovered a mode by which a drop could be accurately divided into any desired number of parts, and from the 1-100th, and even a smaller fraction, decided effects were witnessed from the medicine.

All other medicinal substances were found by him to be susceptible of a preparation similar to that of Belladonna. Not only those belonging to the class of narcotics, which, in quantities, operate confessedly as poisons, but all other medicines, which are ordinarily regarded as innocent, he was obliged in the same manner to dilute in order to convert them into mild remedies in the cases suited to, that is Homœopathic to their use.

The first answer is, that the experience of upwards of *five hundred* physicians, during the last thirty to forty years, has established that Homœopathic medicines *do act* in these and less doses. The Homœopaths say, “come and see : judge for yourselves.”

Another answer is, that, though the dose be small, the very minuteness of division of the particles of the medicine realizes this, *that the points of the contact between the medicine and the nervous system* are numerous. The methods, adopted in the reduction of Homœopathic medicines, so extend the surface by attenuation, that the ten-thousandth part of a grain (when Homœopathically attenuated), may be easily conceived as presenting a *surface* much larger than one grain, pulverised only to the extent which allopathists adopt.

To take a common illustration. Let us suppose that a square solid inch of gold is introduced into the stomach : the only part of that gold that can act upon the nervous system of the stomach is *that surface*, namely, the inch square that lies in contact with the stomach. Now, let us suppose that this solid square inch of gold is beaten out, so as to present a superficies equal to a million superficial square inches, it is quite evident that the action of one-millionth of this surface will be equivalent, if introduced into the stomach, in medicinal effects, to that of the solid square inch of gold : for it presents as many points of contact : and, what is more, in this state of minuteness, the medicine is more easily absorbed.

And, in connexion with this, it is interesting to notice the fact, that all the metals, when Homœopathically triturated, are *soluble in diluted alcohol*,—a fact, testifying to this : that *new physical or chemical powers* are *developed* by the attenuation. Why should not the same extend to the *medicinal powers* ; at least to their augmentation ?

A third point, connected with the smallness of the dose, is, that the medicines, *as prepared by the Hahnemannic method*, are in the highest state of activity. Each preparation is the *developed activity* of the plant, or of the medicinal products of whatever kingdom that product may be.

It is pleasing to read the methods of preparing medicaments according to this method. So superior are they to the common method ; so scientific, that even had Hahnemann done nothing else, his labours in this respect will immortalize him as a pharmacist.

A fourth point connected with the smallness of dose is, that many substances, viewed as not strictly medicinal, are acknowledged to act *in an invisible degree of dilution*.

Can any one tell the degree of attenuation that the particles of musk, disengaged from a grain of musk for years, attain to? These particles, infinitesimally small, scenting all the articles placed in the same repository! Has any one ever calculated the degree of attenuation that the odoriferous particles from a rose, or from a portion of lavender, must attain?

Both these produce a recognizable effect upon the nervous system connected with the nose.

Why should not effects be produced by medicines, acting in an infinitesimal state of attenuation, upon the nerves, specially those of the stomach? That such effects are certain to be produced, is rendered very likely by the *immense number of nerves* supplying the stomach, these rendering the stomach intensely susceptible. But even such is the power of their operation on the nervous system, and such is the intimate connexion between all parts of the nervous system, that Homœopathic medicines act very powerfully, if placed upon the tongue, or even if inspired.

A *fifth* point worthy of notice, in reference to the smallness of dose of Homœopathic medicines, is the attention paid by Homœopaths to the *removal of every circumstance and every substance*, which may interfere with the operation of the medicines.

With this view they order the medicine to be taken *fasting*, that is, at intervals between meals, so that no food will be in the stomach; and, thus they insure the application of the whole medicinal surface to the nervous system surface of the stomach.

The difference of effect, thus produced, may be easily understood by remembering the effect produced by a glass of wine on a stomach empty, and a glass of wine introduced into a stomach filled with food.

In relation also to this point of view, the Homœopaths adopt a *rigid system* of diet: not a starvation system, but a *non-medicinal* system of diet: that is, they require that the patient should take good digestible food, but, at the same time, should avoid spices, stimuli, strong flavoured meats, or foods—everything, which has medicinal qualities superadded to its nutrient properties.

They enjoin also a proper *mental diet*; the neglect of all excitements of a stimulating nature; the cultivation of the

higher feelings ; change of scene, if possible ; exercise in the fresh air, &c.

“ Ah,” cries some objector, “ THE DIET DOES THE GOOD ; THE MEDICINES ARE NOTHING.”

What is this but *assertion* ? it is worth nothing. The Homœopathist might just as well assert that the medicines do everything. In the one assertion, he is as much justified as the other is in the other, if assertion decided the question.

In fact, the assertion that the diet does everything, and the medicine nothing, is the complacent activity of the asserter's self-esteem, which leads him to the following syllogism :

Medicines *must* be given in such a dose, according to *my opinion*, to produce any effect :

Homœopathists do not give medicines in this dose :

Therefore, Homœopathic doses of medicines do not, cannot, produce any effects.

Such reasoning shows great prejudice ; that is, the prejudice arising from the fact, that because he, the dogmatist, has not seen the medicines given in such small doses, *therefore* medicines cannot be given effectually in such small doses.

This prejudice would have made the dogmatist an equally obstinate objector against any doses *but* infinitesimal, had his experience been always of Homœopathic doses.

For such reasoners, why should Homœopathists care ? Their respect for such may be equivalent to the respect which the man, who smelled the infinitesimal part of a grain of musk, would entertain for the man who denied that he could smell so small a particle. The one, who smelled the musk, might say to the other, “ try and smell.” The Homœopathist says to the dogmatist against small doses, “ come and try small doses ;” but he too often turns on his heel and retires : declares it cannot be, and he will not see it to be.

But, add the objectors, *the effects, which are not ascribable to the diet, are ascribable to the IMAGINATION.*

Let the following case be explained by the imagination advocates. An infant, eight or nine months old, is presented to a Homœopathist, with all the symptoms of inflammation of the lungs, and, in four days the child is well ; and yet that child, in attaining the cure, takes not more than a few doses of two distinct Homœopathic medicines, the two not amounting to more than the ten-millionth part of a grain.

Every Homœopathist has seen such cases. I treat my horses always with Homœopathic medicines, and in millionths of grain doses, and they have had no medicines but Homœopathic for the last seven years : and I have not lost a horse.

Where is the imagination in these cases ?

But such cases cannot occur, says the objector. But when

denying, as he does, the word of the asserter, that such cases do occur, he gives up his character as a gentleman, and all further argument is excluded. With him delay must take place, till he learns the law of politeness and of decency, in the recognition that the word of a man of honour is not to be met by a rude denial: and that as much respect is due to the assertion of another as to that of himself.

But there is a *sixth* point of view in which these minute doses may be viewed.

In disease, *the organ diseased is extremely sensitive*; and, it is generally allowed, that such as is the ratio of the sensitiveness of an organ, such is the ratio of the impression, produced by means acting upon that organ.

When the eye is *inflamed*, mark the effect of *light*; then the infinitesimal portion of a ray of light is injurious. Total darkness is required.

Besides, whenever any organ is diseased, the remedial action, when the proper remedy is chosen, is directed towards that diseased organ. The Homœopathic medicine may be regarded as being exclusively directed, by the curative powers of the system, to the diseased part, and thus producing those extraordinary results, which are daily seen to arise from the use of Homœopathic medicines.

To conclude this brief statement regarding Homœopathy. It will be seen, it is to be hoped, that

Allopathy is the practice of the not wisely bold;

Antipathy is the practice of the not wisely timid;

Homœopathy is the practice which, begotten by experience and developed by intelligence of the highest order, has demonstrated and will further so demonstrate its efficacy, that all conscientious practitioners will, in time, adopt it as the only one worthy of men, guided by science.*

* For farther explanation of the subject, see Dr. B. F. Joslin's Principles of Homœopathy, in a series of Lectures, containing: 1. Obstacles to Homœopathic investigation and belief. 2. Evidences of the power of small doses and attenuated medicines, including a Theory of Potentization. 3. The use of chemical and mechanical means, and large doses, in connexion with Homœopathic Practice. 4. The Law of Cure; and 5. Pure Homœopathy."

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