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SWAZEY (G.W.)

LIFE, DISEASE,
AND THE
LAW OF CURE.

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An Address delivered before the American Institute of
Homeopathy, at New Haven, Conn.

WITH A LIST OF MEMBERS.

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ADDRESS.



GENTLEMEN OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF HOMEOPATHY :

In the discharge of the duty which you have assigned me, I shall offer you a few thoughts upon the nature of Life—the nature of Disease—and the law of Cure.

Either of these topics should fully occupy the space usually devoted to an evening lecture, but they are so connected, that I cannot compass my object without raising distinct points of enquiry upon each of them, for the idea which we entertain of life, gives form to our idea of disease ; and upon these, or at least in harmony with our views of life and disease, we naturally construct a system of therapeutics and medical philosophy — or if without *any* theory of life and disease, we build a system of therapeutics upon facts and observation merely ; yet such a system must square with the great and immutable laws of life, whatever they are, or it will in the end disappoint its advocates, and prove that such facts were only of an isolated character, and that such observation was too partial to form an enduring basis of a system.

It is not without some hesitation that we attempt, in our humble capacity, to unbind such a bundle of mysteries, and offer you a solution of life, while the *savans* even, call it an enigma ; or that we undertake to give a definition of disease, which, as subtle as life, has been a theme of so much speculation and controversy, in the whole history of medicine. But we do not hesitate to propose and discuss a law of cure, which every day's observation verifies, which accords with our plain common sense, and which has now withstood the

severest trials of more than half a century. Taking it for granted that there is a law of cure, it may seem enough for all practical purposes, to know how this law operates, and to be able to apply it for the relief of suffering humanity; but as physicians, we are called upon by most pressing and weighty considerations, to settle principles, or at least to propose them — as students we are bound to investigate, fairly, deeply and constantly. An intelligent public demands of us to know not only the *how* of medical practice, but the *why* and the *wherefore* of diseases, as well as the fact of their cure. It requires of us to be *students* always. A leaf or an apple falling from a tree, is a simple fact, and how it falls is easily observed; but *why* it thus gravitates is another question, and one which once puzzled a great philosopher. How anything falls to the earth, or how various forces act and react, we learn by observation; but why in the economy of nature they act and react, as they do, is a question for our deepest study.

The importance of these questions, relating to life and health, must be acknowledged by all; by those on the uphill of life who have health to preserve, and by those on the decline, who would recover the boon which they have lost; but of greater moment, if possible, are they to the physician. He, by public confidence, has become the adviser of thousands, and the guardian of their health; upon his knowledge or opinions, often depend most valuable lives—the fondest hopes of parents and children, and dearest friends; upon him unavoidably rests the heavy responsibilities which attach to the most trying scenes in life.

When our bright hopes are forever crushed, and the grave which claims our dust, is closed upon the last mortal remains—when the form of the loved one is committed to the mold of the tomb and the revelling worm, we can then reflect, and feel how great is the value of accurate medical knowledge, and we can then measure our contempt for a physician, who by ignorance or indolence, or rashly, may

have dashed the cup of life's pleasure from our lips, and laid the joyous head of a priceless victim in ashes ; who by any fault, or omission, which careful study might have prevented, and which the grave can never reveal, has bowed down our heads in sorrow and mourning.

If the God of life and nature has provided a law by which his creatures may be healed when smitten down by disease, it is evident that that law will be found, if it can be found at all, in the direction of an inquiry into the nature of Life and Disease. In order to know what life is, it must be studied in its origin, its grades or forms, and its various uses. In order to know what disease is, life must be viewed in its different aspects, in its sun-side and night-side, in its abuses, and its struggles ; and by exploring the nature of life in its different conditions, its normal and abnormal states, we may possibly discover the law by which changes from one state to the other are produced. These changes from the state of health to disease, and from disease to health, are not the result of accident ; for in all the phases and dependencies of nature, even in what we call her freaks, there is no such thing as an accident. Every change is dependent upon some determinate law. If disease may arise by accident, so also may our lives begin and end in blind chance. A belief in accidents, in events or effects, not controlled by adequate causes, however insignificant such events or effects may seem, is little short of atheism.

If health is the result of some propitious cause, so is disease the consequence of a wrong, existing somewhere. An antecedent evil of some kind, has by degrees invaded the mind or body, or both, and so we conclude that the correction, the elimination, or casting out of this evil, and the consequent return to health, may be effected by *some* law made and provided, which we call the law of cure. If there is no such law, by which the healing art may be practised—by which the efforts of the physician may be directed in the cure of diseases, in truth “ Othello's occupation's

gone." But we assume, upon the credit of Homœopathia at least, that there *is* such a law, however strongly it may be denied by the advocates of fancy dosing and helter-skelter use of drugs, and that there is nothing of more consequence to the physician — nothing which the public should more imperatively demand of him, than that he possess a thorough knowledge of it.

The philosophy of our interior life—the life of the soul—may be considered a fitter theme for the moralist or divine than for a medical essay; but we cannot properly investigate the outer, or physical life, without interrogating nature of her laws at her inner court. In no other way can we estimate, or even account for, that dynamic power, that “*vis vitæ*,” which we well know mediately directs all the forces of health and disease in the body.

The knowledge of *first* causes we shall not aspire to, for in the nature of the case they must forever elude our search. ‘They are hid by a veil which wraps in its mazy folds him who attempts to rend it,’ yet we think we may press our investigations to the inner, as well as to the outer boundaries of the *finite*, and learn, if possible, why any *created* thing or power exists as it does:

A legitimate induction allows us in medicine, as in other sciences, in the words of Newton, “to pass from the complex to the simple, from movements to the forces which produce them.”

Our course of reasoning in thus presenting the claims of Homœopathia, may be stated in the form of a proposition, viz: The nature of certain movements which involve the idea of life being given, to find the nature of disease;—and the nature of life with disease being given, to find the law of cure.

We come then to the subject of our first inquiry, — Life. The question has sometimes been raised, whether life is the cause of organization, or the result of it. We do not consider it necessary to discuss the question at length here.

If a tree or plant grows and puts forth branches, and bud, and leaf, we claim the admission of an adequate force which underlies and produces these phenomena; and that force we call life. As the lifting of the hand shows the presence and determination of the mind, so the existence of trees and springing verdure, and all the various forms of animal life, show the presence and power of an invisible force, upon which their organization, and hence that of the whole vast universe, depends and reposes; and thus matter becomes the medium by which life's numberless forms are manifested.

Wherever life is exhibited, whether in arranging the particles of earth into crystals, in the germinating seed, in the opening flower, in busy insects, in animals, or in the master-work, man, we consider it one and the same,— a stupendous display of the orderly work of God. Though it is inaccessible in its first elements, and its plainest features are not entirely within our comprehension, yet it is of a nature that, by the aids at our hand, it may be analyzed in its gradations, or successive outbirths; its forms, or modes of manifestation, and its necessities or destiny.

By the term form of life, and life-forms, which we shall have occasion to use, we do not mean so much the *figure* which any living thing presents, as its essential determination or element. The form, or shape, by which life is manifested to our senses, may or may not be determined by the quality of the influent principle, as figures may be shaped and modified by artificial means, and still retain the same active quality. Thus the shape and appearance of our bodies may be changed by external causes, while the *human form* was and is determined by principles, which underlie all forms. Without discussing the question, we assume what probably no one will deny, that God *only*, has life in himself; that all other forms of life are only recipients of life from him, either directly or through proper mediums, and that man is one of these recipient forms, and essentially is a living soul, as he was pronounced at the creation.

The descent of the life-principle from one form into another form, as a cause descends into its effects, as from an interior force to an external manifestation, or from a higher to a lower plane, by degrees, thus from a spiritual essence to a natural or sensuous figure, exhibits to us one phase of life. But life in man, presents another quality, which is the life of the soul,—or inner man, in common with, ‘though a little lower than the angels,’—conjoined to the life of the body or physical life, which is in common with, though a little above the animal creation; or what is the same, an interior and an external form, both deriving their life from the same source, but in different ways,—one directly, and the other mediately.

It is evident that the life of the soul does not depend upon the life of the body, for if it did, it would cease to exist at the death of the body, which is not true. Again, in that case, the purer would be subject to the grosser—the effect would control its cause, which is impossible. It is also evident that the life of the body depends upon the concurrent life of the soul, as appears from the death of the body, which passes to decay when the soul ceases to animate it.

The soul then, is the first or inmost form of life in man, and hence from it proceeds the body as a consequent or ultimate. But the soul is not life in itself, any more than the body is life in itself, according to our predicate, that the Creator is the only source of life, and hence the soul is at once a recipient form, and a medium of life to the body. Now the soul must have a form for the reception and transmission of its life, for life without *some* basis or form would be the mere negation of living; and as the soul is spiritual, its form must also be spiritual; hence we conclude, the soul has a spiritual body by which it effects a union with, and extends its life into the material body. Thus from reason, as well as from revelation, and the profound induction of St. Paul, we know there is a spiritual body as well as a material body.

We offer no speculations about any imagined body which is *to be*, intending to confine our argument to that which actually exists. The physical body then receives its life mediately, through the spiritual, and thus by a most intimate union in every part, we sustain the two-fold life of a soul and a body, and this is the position, from which we shall view man in connection with his diseases, and the application of the law of cure.

The organs of the body and the natural senses, which are all so perfectly adapted to their various uses, are to the spiritual organism and its perceptions, what expression is to thought—what execution is to design—what face is to face in a mirror; a reflection or correspondence.

As the body is composed of many members, and organs, and tissues, by parity of reasoning we conclude that its spiritual basis cannot be a metaphysical abstraction, but an assemblage and true organization of corresponding parts and organs. Thus the spirit of man has its eye, and ear, and brain, and throbbing heart. It sees, and hears, and feels, and wills and acts. It is not a vitality *of* matter, but a vitality *within* matter; in short a spiritual substance, of which the grosser body is only the lower form — the outer development, or covering.

The eye, although so delicately formed, and its parts so nicely adjusted for seeing, does not itself see; the ear, an organ of wonderful mechanism, catches sounds in every variety and degree, and yet it does not hear. Not a single muscle moves itself, nor does the brain of itself evolve one thought of all these bodily senses and motions; nor is this perfect form, with all its bones and muscles, and vessels and nerves, and organs, the man. They serve only for man's earthly tabernacle — a house for us to live in. It is our interior and spiritual self, that commands the lips to speak, and uses the eye to perceive through the medium of light; and the ear to perceive, through its adapted medium; and makes the brain its agent and monitor, over millions of sentient nerves.

The science of optics explains to us the painting of an image upon the retina, and beyond that, is at fault. It leaves the image thus formed in an inverted position, for the soul with its eye to correct. Acoustics tells us how a wave of sound follows wave, till the undulating air reaches the auditory nerve, but fails to inform us how this sentinel of the soul discriminates between notes of joy and the tones of grief.

We have spoken thus of the spiritual, as a constituent of the human organization, not only that we may see something of the nature of life ultimated in the body, but that we may get a starting point from which we may follow it into lower forms; for in pursuing this thought we shall find, that in the arrangement of nature, from the living soul to the least monad of matter, there are distinct grades or degrees of life; distinguished not as the greater is from the less—or the finer from the coarser—or the purer from the grosser of the same sort—but in a way that every grade of life has its own laws, and subsists in its own degree. Thus the soul has its own peculiar life, and the body has its life, an animal its life, a vegetable its life, and a mineral its life; each distinct in its sphere and uses, yet connected as effects are connected with their causes, and which can in no wise be resolved into their causes. As a cause always exists in its effect, and hence in all subsequent effects, so is the spiritual merged by orderly gradations into the last and least of all material things. Every object of our investigation therefore, should be considered first in its own degree, and then in its more extended relations; so far, even, that the Divine influx may be seen in every motion, in every growing hair, in every sparrow's fall; yet, we suggest, not as an arbitrary power, to prevent the disastrous effects which must naturally result from the abuses of the laws of life.

Let the higher and lower grades of life be distinguished by degrees, which we may call degrees of altitude or discrete, and we see how the higher descends into and becomes active in the lower, while the lower forms can by no means

be resolved or attenuated into the higher ;—no more than a subsequent can become its antecedent cause ;—no more than a thing done can return into the power which does it.

There is a species of philosophy which sublimes gross matter into subtle elements, and subtle elements into mind, and carries mind into the higher spheres, and volatilizes it and merges it into, and confounds it with a great positive, and overruling mind, which it calls Deity — a synonym for matter and motion in its first element. But the absurdity of the doctrine that matter may be resolved into spirit by some process of purifying or subliming, or that spirit can become matter by some process of condensing it, may be illustrated by supposing a drop of water to be expanded into steam and vapor, and into fluids more subtle and more rare, till its misty sphere outreaches the limits of our solar system. Would it thereby acquire a sentient nature, and answer to the laws of spirit ? It would rather be an annihilating instead of a vivifying process. And so with the idea of materializing the spiritual. Enquire how much of its ethereal mass, (if that be its nature,) could be compressed into a given space measured by feet and inches, and this refined materialism is put to a mortifying test.

When we come to speak of disease, it will be necessary to allude to the evil and corrupt forms of life. We do not propose to account for the origin of evil in the world, as the fact of its existence is sufficient for our argument, and we allude to it merely to show that the laws of its descent are the same as apply to life mediately derived.

That life which is derived immediately from God must be unstained till a free will perverts its uses ; and that which is derived through already corrupted channels must bear the stain, and may still further ultimate itself in evil forms. In this way only can we rationally account for the existence of ferocious beasts, and foul birds, venomous reptiles and the poison herb, all of which are forms of disorderly life ; for, to say in unqualified terms that any from of evil ever

originated in God, would be an impious imputation; and while we cannot admit the existence of any independent life, we conclude that such forms have had their origin in some form of life possessing the power and will to subvert its proper uses, and that power, so far as our knowledge extends, is given only to man.

If it is said that some destructive forms, as of beasts and birds of prey, and noxious reptiles, and poison plants and weeds, are mercifully provided in order to prevent an unlimited increase of other species, to preserve the harmony of creation, and not to destroy it;—we answer, in the present state of creation this is undoubtedly true, and that the fall of man has introduced this perverted state of things—this dire necessity—so that now, evils are permitted, and, in a sense, necessary, is equally evident; but we conceive the true philosophy of such a permission to be, that no evil is ever permitted, except for the wise purpose of preventing the greater ones, to which a perverted life continually tends.

Let it be observed that this material earth which we inhabit must have been preceded by a spiritual creation, if it be admitted that it was made for man, for it is an effect in which exists its object, as well as its cause—and that object was man. And, although in the order of creation, the earth was formed before man could be put upon it, yet as it was made for man—just as the man's body was made to put him into—and as it is manifestly absurd to ascribe any creation to God, without a spiritual basis, thus, without himself, and without life, we infer that in an important sense, the first material creation of our earth and its forms, including man as he was, proceeded as an orderly outbirth of the prior spiritual. From man, therefore, as a microcosm and chief center, the forms of life radiate to an extent in the macrocosm altogether inconceivable.

Life, then, is an energizing principle that can never be isolated, but is ever seeking a material substratum, or ultimate, in order to develop, in an infinity of successive grades,

its germinating and formative power. It is an active element that invests itself with a material covering, as a man clothes himself with a garment.

Now, as all the external things of nature exist from things internal, or spiritual, must they not represent them as faithful antitypes? And what are the internal things which the things of external nature represent, or correspond to, but the principles of things,—our affections and thoughts—some state or condition of the mind? How our affections, good or evil, operate to produce or sustain a sensible form in nature, we know as little as we do of the life of an acorn which includes an oak; or how warmth vivifies the unformed chick in the egg, or how the sunlight of spring reanimates dead atoms of matter. What power the spiritual possesses to ultimate itself in a sensible form, or how the soul of man can leave its impress upon the lower grades of life, is incomprehensible to us mortals. How life can make our muscles immensely strong, when an insignificant force would break their unnerved fibres asunder—how affinity like love brings some inert particles together, and repulsion like hatred makes others fly apart, are familiar, yet mysterious results, which prove, not less than the changing seasons, or the orderly motion of the planets, that the outer world is subject to laws and forces which only something prior and more interior, originates and controls.

Thus, a correct view of the nature of life is as essential to forming a correct idea of disease,—as a true chart is to the coast-bound mariner—as a reliable telescope is to the astronomer's observation of the stars, or as a powerful microscope is for the study of atoms; for disease can only be known and analyzed in its relative character and effects.

Disease is to life, what the false is to the true—a perversion; what a counterfeit is to the original—a spurious product. It is life in its abnormal aspect,—its healthy current diverted—its end and tendency subverted. It is the law of order in some part of the organism, broken and inverted.

It will be admitted we think, that if man had by any means preserved that harmony of relation which existed between his physical and spiritual life at the creation, when the aspiration of his soul joined in with the melody of the morning stars, and there was no jarring sound from all the teeming forms of life, there would have been no disease to afflict our race. From first to second childhood—from the cradle to the cradling grave, the inner forces of man's life would have controlled the outer forms in harmony and uninterrupted health. Instead of dying as we do, diseased and prematurely, we should pass quietly away, as by a new birth, into the higher spheres; as the worn pilgrim goes to his rest; as the tireless sun sinks at close of day. How different from the common lot of fallen man! Instead of order, disorder reigns in the mind and body, even the earth is cursed and infested with the fruits of his sins. Antagonisms are rife and deadly poisons have taken form in every kingdom of nature. But though we are fallen and crushed with disease, the wrong will not, *cannot* triumph; even the external sources of our sufferings, the bane of our physical life, shall become means of a deliverance from the thralldom of our diseases. This exemption we think must eventually accrue from the knowledge and application for a few generations of any law by which the cure of disease is effected without detriment—without the introduction of new diseases, and by the discontinuance of that habit of wholesale drugging, and dosing, and poisoning by inches, which so embarrasses and hinders the more efficient work of nature, in resisting and overcoming the ills to which we are exposed.

As health is the term by which we express that pleasurable harmony between the mind and the body, — the inner and the outer man, — the "*mens sana in corpore sano*"—when the life current of the soul flows freely and delightfully into and through all the bodily organs; so disease is the term which we apply to the unbalanced manifestations of life — or more practically to the immediate causes of

derangement in the organic structures or functional relations. It is a dynamic force somewhere in the organism antagonistic to life and health. It is important to distinguish here between disease and the symptoms of disease, as between the internal condition and the external sign — as between an essence and an outer form — as between a thought and the act in which the thought is ultimated.

Medical writers have usually made some such distinction, but have generally inclined to limit our knowledge of diseases by a knowledge of symptoms, barring with stereotyped argument all enquiry into its real essence, considering the latter to be the known, and the former, the profound and ever-to-be unknown. But if we may search into the nature, and causes, and conditions of life—why may we not include the nature of disease, which is life in one of its most common aspects? The doctrine that the most palpable morbid symptoms alone are sufficient to convey all practical knowledge of disease, we admit, in general terms, but if we can get any farther insight into those symptoms which lie one within the other, as wheel within wheel, we shall not fail to make such additional knowledge practical.

One physician may end his investigation of disease in the most prominent symptoms, while another of better judgment habitually searches further, and the deeper laid springs and forces, and motions and sympathies, are to *him* more fully revealed—and still there is always left room to press inquiry under the head of *manifest* symptoms, which no one will doubt who has been accustomed to search for their causes, or to judge of 'coming events, from the shadows which they cast before.' In exploring states of disease, the physician, like the miner in California, must begin his work by 'prospecting,' and when he discovers the signs which indicate the buried object of his search, with pick and prong he must dig for it; symptoms, like sores, must be probed before we know what is at the bottom; and where is the limit to an analysis of our complicated and

interwoven sensations? Where upon the shore of a fathomless subject like this shall we fix the limit of our swelling and as yet inadequate thoughts and say, 'Thus far and no farther?'

In the vast sea of worlds there are distant planets which lie even beyond the reach of our imagination, but from the knowledge already acquired, our minds are invited and stimulated to further discovery, although the power of the telescope is already exhausted. If you would test the penetrating will of a true philosopher, ask him how small is the *least* animalcule, when by means of every improvement in the microscope we discover new ones and smaller, and he answers, I will look and tell you. The knowledge we can acquire of our spiritual organization, not less than the bodily, and *that only*, should limit the investigation of our diseases and determine the fitness and quality of the remedial means.

In distinguishing between a disease and its symptoms, we consider disease as an enemy assailing the organism, and the symptoms while they mark the track of the destroyer, as our spies and tell-tale allies. Thus our pains are not our enemies, but friends, whose warning voice may not always be safely hushed. This is a hard saying, we are aware, to those who have suffered much from such friends; but how would it be if we had no such friend? An organ might be destroyed by disease or external violence, and death even might ensue—soul and body might separate without a warning if the consequent pain or other analogous symptom did not speak to apprise us of the injury being inflicted. It often happens that when the ordinary means of communication between the mind and its bodily organs are lost—when the telegraph of nerves is out of order, that a fearful destruction is going on without our knowledge. The nerves of sensation are our watching sentinels; and through them, as through telegraphic wires, we are constantly informed of the state of things in the forces more interior than their

own subtle fluid, as well as in the grosser parts possessed by chronic ailments, as owls and bats possess old ruins.

In gout or neuralgia for instance, give to the nerve a tongue, and at every twinge it would cry out, here is a difficulty nature is trying to surmount, a threatened injury we are trying to avert—a torturing enemy we must resist—an imprisoned devil, we are trying to cast out, or conquer. Give speech to the stomach when sickened and retching and it would say, I feel a crushing weight of responsibility, and my accounts must be cast up with my landlord. It would complain *bitterly* of his abuses and *sourly* retort upon his rashness, his broken pledges, and eleventh-hour repentings, and would then go on struggling as with a struggling dragon.

The condition of which the stomach complains, is not always from recent injuries. It is a very patient and forbearing organ and sometimes will not complain till it is too late for us to render assistance: hence it is sometimes very unfortunate to have one of those 'good stomachs' so highly prized by epicures and gluttons;—so much coveted by suicidal dyspeptics, which will bear *everything* without complaining. Such stomachs are tongues that cannot speak. They are phlegmatic dolts who don't know when they are imposed upon.

In illustration of the process and progress of disease into an ultimate form, or as before described, the process of the spiritual clothing itself with the material, recent discoveries have shown in some cases of chronic disease, that an organ long occupied by its enemy and destroyer, has actually exhibited under the microscope, an organized vegetable growth, and in other cases animal forms sufficiently perfect to be ranked in their genera and species of the visible and material sphere.

Now if it is true as we have argued, and as Spencer expresses it, that

From the soul, the body form doth take;
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

so the health, and changes of health in the body, may arise from and depend upon the life currents which flow into the soul according to its attractions, and through the soul, as a dispenser of life, into the body. But our physical life does not depend exclusively upon the spiritual element, for the natural body subsists also by influx or supplies from its own sphere or plane—the material element—hence *external* avenues are open, by which disease may invade the body, which though not changing the essential nature of disease deserve attention on account of the more appreciable character, which external causes present to the senses. Thus as grain has laid in the pyramids of Egypt for many centuries, preserving the germ of its life, ready to be developed by the appropriate influence of earth, shower and sunshine, so there exists in the human system, now universally vitiated, certain states or tendencies to diseases, which we call predispositions, beginning with the first inception of life and remaining till its earthly state closes. These predispositions we consider diseases in their latent or undeveloped condition. They are various and specific in their character. For instance, a person may live his life long in contact with any and all other diseases without developing in him the small pox; but if the variolous contagion like a small and infectious seed, (how small?) is dropped upon the ready soil of our small pox predisposition, it takes root and in a few days springs up and bears its pestilential fruit. Here we see that two causes are necessary to the full development of disease—the remote cause or predisposition which is a taint hereditary and of course pertains to the interior or spiritual forces, and the exciting cause. That the co-operation of both these causes is necessary to produce this result is evident—for where a vicious taint or pabulum for a disease does not exist, its contagious exhalation is as harmless as the breath of flowers.

So it is with our susceptibility to many other diseases; such as Scarlatina, Measles, Chicken-pox, Hooping Cough,

&c. Our systems furnish a congenial soil for the growth of the foulest diseases ;—as by some mysterious elaboration of wrong acts or feelings, they supply a kind of peccant matter to feed a variety of inscrutable miasmas and contagions in the work of death. Some of them can affect us but once only during life ; which, in connection with what is known of vaccination as a mild preventive of one of the most loathsome diseases, opens a field of enquiry into the power and rationale of prophylactics, of immense interest to the medical profession, and of the greatest concern to suffering humanity. Without attempting to defend the common practice of vaccinating *everybody*, it is proper to remark here, that this prophylactic, whose discoverer was formally expelled from all the medical societies* that could reach him, for his heresy in believing and teaching it—this art of modifying diseases which was spurned by the schools, who knew of no law for such an alleged power, till by the inherent force of its truth it prevailed and overcome their opposition, involves the true law of cure ;—that this fact, now acknowledged from necessity by all schools, is claimed by the Homeopathsists only, as an illustration of their doctrine. This is one of the ‘stones which the builders rejected,’ and has long since been placed in the temple *we* are building.

It is well known that many persons are severely poisoned by coming in contact, or within even a short distance of some of the poisons of our fields and forests, while others can approach and handle them with impunity. Here the case is different from that of infection by diseases, but from this it appears that even the rankest poisons are not always active ;—they must meet a certain morbid condition of the body to which they can assimilate. So when the organism is ready for an impression, as it often is, in the most attenuated air may exist the active bane of our health, or the balm for our diseases—thus quality rather than quantity is the essential consideration when we are treating of dynamic

forces in which reside, in a practical sense, our diseases and hence the corresponding power of their curative remedies.

Such being the nature of life and disease, it remains to inquire upon what principle the cure of disease is effected.

Any proposed rationale of a law of cure implies an antecedent doctrine of disease, which, as we have remarked, must also depend upon a theory of life; so when medical theorists search for the properties of life with the scalpel, their knowledge ends with the last visible fibre;—when they determine the *curative* qualities of medicines with the retort and chemical re-agents;—when they measure the power of a drug to cure the weak invalid, by its power to kill men in health, vital dynamics are apt to be overlooked. Anatomy, Pharmacy, Animal Chemistry and the speculative gyrations of a nervous fluid, become the outposts and boundaries of their therapeutic system. When the brain has been skillfully unfolded, and the finest tissues in the body are spread out under the microscope, and the last fibre of the muscles is no longer divisible; when the least globule of blood is accurately measured and the nervous fluid, like electricity is held captive at will, and the means are discovered of making life sway to and fro like a swing; when sedatives can be graduated by the scales for too much life, and tonics for the life too low; when astute doctors have invented a variety of opiates to stifle the pains of the suffering (and otherwise dumb) nerves;—irritants for lazy organs, deobstruents for every clog, placebos for all nameless ills, and the stomach can be kept from bursting or collapse upon the stop cock and safety valve principle;—when all this is accomplished and the requisite skill of mixing bane and antidote in every conceivable proportion and in ‘*secundem artem*’ confusion, is so easily acquired that M. D. might as well signify *made in a day* as Medical Doctor, we are fully prepared for that cold reception which always awaits the herald of reform. The announcement of a law of cure, which these ‘scribes and elders’ have not yet believed, will of course be opposed and ridiculed.

We shall not here attempt to answer or forestall the objections which an innovation upon the as yet prevailing medical practice exposes us to, but go on to deduce in as plain terms as possible from the premises already given, a law of cure. But as a correct inference will not of itself confirm the truth of our premises—so if we make a wrong conclusion it must not necessarily invalidate the truth of them. If they are found to agree logically, the position of Homeopathy may receive new strength. If they do not, let it be regarded as a work left for some one more successful—or some better directed effort to test the alleged truths of our science by the application of first principles; for without such a test and support no science can long maintain its claims; and whatever system has such support, can never fail however much the doctors disagree.

There is a force in the human organism which physicians have always acknowledged, called the *vis medicatrix naturæ*. It is commonly called the efforts of Nature, preserving and promoting health in the system. Let us here define Nature to be that uncorrupted force of life derived in laws of order from God, which tends to mould and fit and preserve every organ for its intended use. By continued accretion and elimination it tends to keep up that harmony of action in all the parts, which we call health; and thereby to afford a free and unobstructed medium or channel for life to flow down from the Divine fountain into lower forms of creation.

When this life current into and through the organism is obstructed, the body is diseased or at once becomes so. By this resisting state, the proper balance of the vital forces is lost; some organs or parts are overworked, and hence, do bad work while others are too sick to work at all; the quality of both increment and excrement is changed, and without some regulating or compensating power, which at times is more than nature, operating under embarrassments, can furnish, 'the silver cord is loosed,

the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel is broken at the cistern.'

Now so well satisfied are all minds that Nature is a safe guide, that no physician can claim the confidence of his suffering patient, without at least *acknowledging* that his main effort in the cure of disease, is to assist her efforts and to act upon her indications. To assist nature, then, is to make more certain the cure of all curable diseases—and it only remains for us to know just what nature is doing in any given case, how she does it, and what means will best co-operate to perfect her salutary work.

If, then, the symptoms in a given case are to be regarded as the signs of what nature is doing to preserve our lives, as we have argued, we naturally enquire whether, in order to co-operate with nature in the process of healing, to which suffering may be incident, we should expose the sick to a further aggravation of their pains? We answer, yes, if need be, in the act of exciting a stronger recuperative power, or by rendering assistance in a painful work that must be accomplished at all events, but not by producing any additional symptoms, by drugs or otherwise. For instance, in the incipient stage of common fever, we encourage complaining nature by remedial assistance, to work on resolute and fast, in order to produce that crisis in a few hours, which might be delayed through as many days of suffering if left to her unassisted efforts. So in a case of Necrosis, or carious bone, when by violent efforts and rending pains nature is attempting the removal of the diseased part, we would cut down upon it, and by removing it at once, accomplish in a few moments of aggravated pain, what the natural and unaided process would hardly effect in as many weeks.

But in pursuing this subject to questions concerning the amount of medicine necessary to induce the curative action, (which cannot be better answered than by one's own careful observation)—we shall find that in assisting nature in

the cure of functional diseases it is not necessary to increase the patient's sufferings by any *new* impression upon the system, while that already existing may be brought to the most speedy termination the nature of the case admits of, by much less medicine or 'tea drinks' than are generally used. Aggravations which we sometimes see following the minute doses of our practice, depend mainly upon the extreme sensibility of the organism to which the remedy is applied, and show how accurately the medicine is adapted to the disease. Such aggravations, however, are almost entirely unnecessary but they are fortunately of small consequence for the 'vis medicatrix' with her plastic power speedily rectifies any *small* mistakes, and those made with our attenuated doses are apt to be *very* small. The most lasting effect of such aggravations is in the unanswerable argument they afford for the activity of our extremely small and 'sugared' doses.

Generally, it is as if the pain, like a faithful sentinel, stands watching, and waiting, and calling for assistance, at the approach of which the disease flees or surrenders, and the pain quits its post till aroused by another emergency. Now how otherwise can we aid in accomplishing the work which nature has begun, but by acting in the same direction with her own recuperative power? Certainly not by opposing and thwarting her efforts, for that would be the same as adding power to the disease, and if cures ever result from such a practice, the *true* explanation is, that the tendency to health, or effort of nature, is the stronger force;—and the cure follows *in spite* of the doses used to defeat her, and the disease combined.

We do not say that all the phenomena of disease are signs of nature conquering, for often in the same case are mingled such symptoms, with others, which, with fearful indications, show nature once strong, now exhausted and conquered. And without having attempted to describe disease in its many changes and phases, we briefly repeat, that by carefully watching the efforts of nature in throwing off

disease, and directing our means of cure to the same end, guided by her unerring indications, and the profound philosophy of her laws, we do a more effectual work than we can possibly do in any other way towards relieving the sick, and ridding our race of diseases, else nature herself is making a grand mistake.

Now if organized forms are the types of the life which is ultimated in them, and consequently the organized body of man is the type or correspondent of its life, which is the *soul*, and hence is from the soul—and if, in the descent of life, every form which it takes becomes a medium of its active principle into lower forms; and if it is also true that in every effect there exists its cause; hence, that in every lower and subsequent form there exists something of its antecedent or higher form;—it is evident that in the forms of life below man, there exists in them all something of man, as their mediate cause;—and furthermore that the existence of life in all the animal, vegetable, and mineral varieties, depend in the order of God's works and laws upon the existence of man, and thus represent in wonderful minutiae the all of man—the quality of his affections, his joys and sorrows, not less than his physical organism and the diseases which pertain to it—his desires not less than his deeds.

There is something more than poetic imagery in that beautiful sentiment so often woven into the poetry of nature by her truthful bards; that the little flowers, and birds, and all the forms of jocund life, are the forms of our loves—the external correspondence of our passions and emotions.

“In eastern lands, they talk in flowers,
 And they tell in a garland, their loves and cares;
 Each blossom, that blooms in the garden bowers,
 On its leaves a mystic language bears.”

If one flower, or herb, or living thing by the laws of its life represents or corresponds to something in the mind, it may be true of all nature, in her inconceivable variety of forms—and thus may our diseases, like all else that pertains

to us of life, be imaged forth in subordinate forms. The discordant sphere tends to a material ultimate not less than life in its original impulse. We do not intend, nor could we follow back the causes of disease to the first cause of life, and mingle good and evil in the same and only fountain which is pure; nor is it our purpose to enter upon any discussion of the origin of evil. Its existence is sufficient for our argument and we do not reason for those who deny it.

There is a poisonous herb called Belladonna, or deadly nightshade. How came this, we ask but as the vegetable ultimate and representative of something bad, which is of course, some bad passion or principle? Its poisonous quality which is from its life, seems to justify the inference that it did not originate in anything good, for the same reason that we conclude the origin of any evil thing, is not in a good principle.

Although the species of any plant may be sustained by the germinating power in its seeds, (which is only one of the qualities of its life,) yet it continues not less to represent the principle from which it sprung. Now if the nightshade is allowed to produce its effects on the human system, we find them to be those of a violent poison, resembling most nearly the usual symptoms of a disease, which we call Scarlatina. We say then briefly, that it represents or corresponds to that disease, or to its common symptoms as is shown by such a test of its properties, which indicates the quality of its life, and why then may it not be the material type and embodiment of that immaterial force or condition which constitutes Scarlatina in its latent state? They are at least alike in the effects they develop in the organism. If it is said that the poison of the nightshade or other substances is not a positive quality but only a relative effect, inasmuch as some animals may eat of it without harm, and some insects make it their only food, we answer, that it is only in its relation to other forms of life, and thus chiefly to man, that we need to consider it—that we do not expect any agent, however poison in

its nature, to destroy that life to which it has no inherent antagonism. The animal life which is sustained by the nightshade, is probably as poison and evil as the herb it feeds upon.

Things false and evil as naturally assimilate as things good and true. The law of attraction being universal is as active in principles and interior forces as in outer forms, and thus that state of life which is disease, producing certain symptoms, and its poison counterpart, which under like circumstances will produce similar symptoms, cohere of necessity. It is not a mere form of expression, when we say that our sympathy is drawn towards a suffering fellow; that virtue is attractive to the good and that vice attracts the viciously inclined, for by this we mean that there is something of the one in its instant and instinct activity that joins itself to something of the other. The life currents which underlie all forms, even of our thoughts, are directed by their attractions.

The law of cure is the law of eliminating diseases from the body, yet not as if they were crude matters, to be drawn out from bleeding veins, to be leaked out by setons, or ejected from the stomach as enemies esconced in that deep and dark cavity;—not as if they were cold and shivering things, to be driven out by kindling the fires of blisters and moxas;—not as fires that any amount of water can extinguish;—nor as imps to be routed by 'dead shots' or coaxed out with placebos—but as we have argued, occult forms of evil, related to the whole body as the life is;—dynamic forces of corrupting and destructive tendency, which bar some part or organ for a time from the transmission of a healthy current of life from its pure sources.

There is a case and cure, which everybody has heard of, which is somewhat illustrative, whether we attempt to account for the operation of the curative power which was exercised upon it or not. It is that of a poor but notable woman who is said to have spent all her living upon physi-

cians, and according to experience not uncommon, to have suffered many things of many of them, and for twelve years was nothing better, but rather grew worse. This diseased woman met the sphere of one from whom as from a pure fountain of life always flowed that 'virtue' which the devils even could not abide. That sphere became active upon the willing mind, and thence upon the impressible organism, and her disease left her. In a word, the hindrances which had so long existed to the reception and transmission of its proper life were removed from the diseased organ, by means which the occasion afforded;—it began its healthy work and she was at once made whole.

The familiar case of another woman may also instruct us in the true nature of disease. She was bowed together, and for eighteen years could in no wise lift up herself. She too was cured like the case just mentioned by the exercise of an unusual power, but mark the expression of the great Physician, touching the nature or rationale of the disease which had bowed her down. He designated her as one whom '*Satan has bound, lo these eighteen years.*' We need not disagree upon the term Satan, for it is unimportant in this connection, whether it means one evil spirit or an aggregate of them, whether a 'fallen angel' *without*, who was commissioned to bind, or a fallen state *within*—a perverted force operating to bind her. In a general sense we consider it to mean at least, something more than an external circumstance, something that pertains to the spiritual or inner life, and operates in an orderly way upon the physical organism, distorting and rending the body, not unlike some of the diseases of our own times.

We have now briefly considered the nature of disease. Life we have tried to scan, descending by degrees or through successive mediums, from its pure and ineffable source, through man, and into ultimates, till it comes to sustain the poison and corrupt forms which man's sins have engendered. We have considered the '*vis medicatrix naturæ*' as our true

guide and helper in the science of healing—we have shown how the law of attraction or assimilation may apply between similar dynamic forces, as between diseases and their ultimates, and hence to the use of medicaments which co-operate with the efforts of nature in the system, and we think we may fairly conclude that diseases which are cured by the use of medicines, are cured by virtue of the power which the medicines possess to draw diseases unto them, and thereby, to assist nature in her effort to cast them out of the citadel she is bound to guard. Now that medicines of a nature similar to any given disease, may be taken in sufficient quantity to produce similar symptoms upon a healthy person is very evident, and it is equally plain that disease requires a similar force to attract it, whereby it follows that remedies are best adapted to cure a diseased organism which will produce similar symptoms upon the healthy organism—and this is the law of cure.

This is the fundamental doctrine of Homeopathy. This is the principle so ably and successfully defended by our Hahnemann. This is the grand idea that guides the Homeopathist in the practice of his profession, and which bids fair to revolutionize all the routine, time honored and fancy systems of drugging. It is the 'little leaven' which was hid in the archives of medicine from the time of Hippocrates to Hahnemann. It promises now to leaven the whole profession. The medical journals from the east and the west show us how it ferments—even those most phlegmatic and conservative bodies—the State Medical Societies are beginning to rise in their doughy importance.

It is proper to remark here that the distinctive doctrine of Homeopathy is very frequently misrepresented, and altho' we do not intend to question the motives of any one for so doing, the occasion suggests an expression of regret, that the standard Lexicon of our language, which this city has the honor of presenting to the world—has not given a definition of Homeopathy from Hahnemann its erudite founder,

instead of one from a public journal, given to the unworthy work of defaming him. Its orthography and pronunciation we may adopt from respect to such good authority as Webster in those matters, but we can by no means admit that Homeopathy is a system which requires us to produce in the patient one disease in order to cure another, according to the authority just quoted. It requires only the use of remedies which *would* produce similar symptoms, when given in larger doses than is necessary to produce a cure, and no good Homeopathist would justify himself in giving medicine sufficient to produce a new disease in a patient already sick enough.

How it is that medicines act upon diseased organs when used in doses too small to produce any new symptoms will be considered in another place.

Now although the law of cure just stated may be an inflexible and demonstrable truth, it does not follow that every cure of disease must have been, or must be homeopathically produced, for that would imply that a cure could not be effected without medicine, which is contrary to every day's observation. We know that Nature is always working cures whether assisted by medicines and other means or not. The term Homeopathic, we think should refer exclusively to the use of medicines in diseases. All other means and appliances though properly within the range of our practice and frequently affording a partial illustration of the law of cure, lie without the pale of the homeopathic maxim in its critical meaning. All means to promote health which harmonize with the recuperative power of nature harmonizes with the homeopathic law if that is true, though possibly not operative under the law; therefore we should not disregard any useful adjunct of medicines which are known to be non-medicinal and safe, merely because we are not able in the present state of our knowledge to lay to it as with square and compass, the law of 'similia similibus' and more especially when we consider that Nature herself

does not operate homeopathically in the cure of diseases. This may sound oddly to the unreflecting, after what has been said, but we have considered the 'vis medicatrix naturæ,' and the disease as mutually resisting forces, while the disease and the remedy which is of a nature to produce similar results, as harmonizing forces. The homeopathic relation is that which exists between the remedy and the disease by reason of their similar action. The remedy operates to develop or withdraw the disease by a kind of absorption, while Nature is the expelling and resisting power, and by the introduction of a remedy which is *like* a reinforcement of the already existing evil, she is excited to a more vigorous reaction against it. A stronger dissimilarity to the disease at once takes place, which furnishes an explanation of some of those aggravations as well as of the speedy cures we so often witness.

Among the adjuncts of medicines which are not to be regarded as merely palliative, we may notice water. Common experience dictates the application of cold water to parts burning with inflammation or high vascular excitement, and this use of water is acting in the same direction with the vital forces. The aid which we render, is, by eliminating a greater amount of heat than would be done without this assistance, and thereby in some cases preventing internal congestion. The resistance which the parched skin offers, occasions a feverish restlessness, and the action of water by virtue of its cleansing and conducting rather than by any medicinal properties, facilitates the 'similia similibus' effect of the Aconite or other remedy which is indicated in such cases. In the use of warm water the effects often resemble those of cold. The warm water upon an inflamed surface, operates continuously with its heat, and by moistening the skin its increased heat opens the pores and facilitates the process more rapidly. It is therefore more debilitating than the cold, which by stimulating and contracting the skin at first, drives back this current of vital heat, which

soon reacts with greater energy to overcome any obstruction. In either case the more attenuated fluids which have become foul in the course of disease, rush through the relaxed pores, and from the removal of this obstacle to the current of life outward, without offering the least impediment in any other direction, the whole system becomes quiet. Under such aids it is plain that any remedy which the prime symptoms indicate, will act with more prompt and salutary effect.

Other means of assisting the action of medicines and affording merely temporary relief from pain, belong to the legitimate homeopathist not less than to any other physician. In abandoning the practice of a system which in our humble judgment has no law to guide it, higher than the law which governs the fashion of our garments—we may not be supposed to have abandoned the use of our common sense ; nor, having laid the selected fruits of our past experience upon the altar of Homeopathy do we expect to abjure the offering. Such a knowledge of the curative law and the efforts of nature, as will protect them from any violation by the exercise of our judgment in applying them, is all the restraint we acknowledge in the use of water, and heat, and cold, and some other means of palliating the pains we are called to witness. This is a matter of too small importance for further notice, and but for the too common impression that Homeopathy acknowledges nothing, and allows nothing in the way of professional ‘aid and comfort’ but its little pills—that the use of anything but drops and globules, in the line of medicines, is a leaning towards other systems—a yearning for the ‘leeks and onions of Egypt’—we should not have introduced the subject at all.

We are aware of the objection that will spring up here in the minds of some, that if Nature, who is our guide, does not operate homeopathically, as just suggested, in her work of cure, we are consequently upon the wrong ground in our efforts to assist her ; but there is plainly no force in the objection. Does not a locomotive which *pushes* a train of

cars, co-operate with the one which at the other end *pulls* it? So the driving force of nature, and the drawing force of medicines, harmonize in their practical results in our mode of practice. But it may be claimed that it would be equally good practice, if not better, to assist nature with a steady pushing power,—all driving and no drawing,—to reinforce her with a strong “*vis a tergo*” and let the disease shift for itself—at all events to give nature a better chance by clearing out all obstructions. But is there not danger that in the general sweep, even the ‘hooks we hang our hopes upon’ may get broken amongst the rubbish? If the alimentary canal were nothing more than a sink drain or a piece of old stove pipe, we might not demur to such treatment, but observation compels us to deal more carefully with a thing so frail yet so useful to us as the body we live in. A medical author of celebrity once wrote a book earnestly cautioning all who valued their lives and health, against the danger of “taking the air which bloweth through a hole”—and as we believe the old doctor wrote advisedly, so do we, more carefully, avoid all those greater dangers which arise from any more violent impressions upon organs whose functions are so easily deranged, that the free air of heaven cannot always be safely allowed to blow upon us.

But these rude and crude and violent ways of assisting nature which are yet in common use, deserve some consideration, and more, from the sad fact that they have so many and such worthy advocates. These are our friends of the old school, were our colleagues and of course ‘honorable men,’ but of no faith in anything but ‘general principles,’ that great and warm blanket of noncommittalism, under which the fancy is apt to grow faster than the judgment, and nature’s laws become as pliable as that elastic maxim of their school “*contraria contrariis curantur*”. That this maxim, indefinite as it is, defines their position as well as anything can, we do not doubt. It means that diseases are to be treated by medicines which have a contrary

power, but in what should consist the contrariety is not expressed. It seems to be well enough understood, if it be taken to mean everything—to cover the whole ground not included in that definite and palpable formula of the Homeopathic school—‘*similia similibus curantur.*’

Now does this doctrine of curing diseases by contrary forces—this ‘*contraria contrariis*’ of the old school, express a precise law, or a loose liberty?—a rule of action, or under the broad authority to oppose diseases, a license to meet them by any mode of attack,—by any choice of arms? The teaching of the maxim ‘*similia similibus,*’ is to cure a disease by a remedy which produces the most precise similarity of action upon the healthy system, and thus by an affinity established in the order of things, instead of attempting to drive it out by forces suggested by an ever changing fancy. Such habitual guessing dishonors the claim which is made for a *science*. A little of this, and a thing full of that, with sufficient of the other, makes a dose to be sure, a very effectual dose possibly, but the professional liberty to make or give such disgusting and hap-hazard mixtures, to those who are already sick enough, is an assumption as disgraceful to the claims of science as it is bold.

What, in all candor, is the criterion for selecting a remedy for the sick under such a formula? Are they not left altogether and entirely to the empyric method? And yet that school indulges most hearty opposition to medical empyricism. But we have only to speak of *our* law of cure and exhibit that in its true light.

The doctrine of the Homeopathic school, as remarked, is expressed in the term ‘*similia similibus curantur*’, which means that medicines which produce upon the healthy body certain symptoms, will cure a disease which presents similar symptoms; and though it might be difficult to frame a phrase more fully expressive of the law of cure,—yet by strict interpretation it appears to be true only in a qualified sense. When we speak of sunrise, and sunset, we express the appa-

rent though sufficiently practical truth, but not the philosophical fact ;—for really the sun does not rise and set as it appears to ;—so strictly speaking, there is nothing in which the curative power resides, but in that current of influent and uncorrupted life which flows on and flows ever, from ‘ Him who healeth all our diseases’ and but *mediately* in the ‘ vis medicatrix naturæ.’ Medicines by withdrawing the obstacles, provoke and support the curative power which they do not in themselves possess. Indeed the properties of most of them are poison and destructive ; but like instruments in the hand of the artizan, they are made more or less efficient and useful according to one’s skill in preparing and using them. It is with a medicine at work in the body, feeling out the region it must occupy, and the organ it must work upon, as it is with the terrestrial magnet, which feels only for iron and ferruginous substances. It is evident that the sphere of the magnet infringes constantly upon a variety of *other* spheres without producing any sensible effects, and so may it be in the action of medicines upon the diseased organs.

If a medicine having a specific quality by which it becomes active, seeks a reciprocal force in the organism, all the other forces may remain undisturbed, unless the power of the medicine is sufficient to disturb the healthy functions ; which we think is not only unnecessary in the cure of diseases, but embarrassing to the effort of nature. It is well known that different medicines operate upon different tissues, and organs and parts, and hence that every medicine or simple substance possesses a determinate and limited sphere in its effects. Now so far as there is any connection between the disease and the remedy, consisting in its similar action, it may cure it.

If the power of the medicine and the disease are similar, the medicine as we have shown applies itself as if by an elective affinity, to the disease or to so much of it as its sphere can reach, and removes it from the body. As the

vaccine virus acts specifically upon the predisposition to small pox, (which must be regarded as a *quasi*-disease,)—not yet developed,—and removes it, so that the organism no longer stands in the same relation to that disease; why may not other morbid or medicinal agents possess a like power to modify or control other diseases? And if that power is exercised by virtue of a similarity between the morbid humors and the morbid agent in one case, why may it not be in others?

If their action is dissimilar, and the remedy is strong enough to impress the healthy organs, it is of course at work upon one part while the disease is at work upon another, in which case the healthy functions may suffer as much from the medicine, as the disordered ones do from the disease.

Homeopaths are sometimes asked whether medicines of an action altogether dissimilar to the disease, may not in some way assist in a cure. We will admit they may, provided they co-operate with the efforts of nature, not only apparently but really, bearing in mind that the apparent truth is not always the real truth, as we have just stated.

Now nature may *appear* to destroy, and cast off one organ in order to save another, but in truth, the destructive work is not the effort of nature. Her power is seen only in *preserving*, and if the life of the body is saved with the loss of an organ, we behold her efficient work in opposing the enemy that would have prostrated the whole man, and not in the destruction of the organ. So if medicinal agents are used with the intent to assist nature, how can they co-operate with her or even act safely, if they are capable of producing a new train of disturbing symptoms? And such we conceive to be the case with all medicines whose pathogenic effects are not similar to those of the disease, and with them also if used in large doses. Where is the room then for the *curative* action of any remedy besides that which is Homeopathic to the disease?

That medicines may act upon the fluids or solids of the

body, chemically, mechanically or derivatively, we do not deny, for such effects are always before our eyes when we come in contact with the 'old practice'; but it concerns us more in this discussion to know how medicines act *upon diseases*, than how they act in the production of drug-symptoms. That they do not act chemically upon diseases, is evident from the fact that disease has no appreciable chemical quality to be acted upon, and yet, the use of some alkali to cure acidity of the stomach is very common practice; and there the treatment ends; as if neutralizing an acid *product* of disease, was curing the disease itself.

A medicine may act chemically upon the *product* of disease, as upon the blood which is deficient in its oxide of iron, and restore to it, its florid hue and possibly its invigorating qualities, but how long will it remain so while the disease by which it became deteriorated is not removed? Again, what is it but the verriest charlatanry, to pump stuff of one kind and another into a sick man's veins to change the chemical quality of his blood, according to 'regular' practice, when all the time you are doing this and afterwards, the disease, which is vitiating it, is as active as ever? That medicines do not act upon disease mechanically, is equally evident, from the fact that disease has none of the properties of matter and accordingly does not answer to the laws of matter. The 'mechanical obstruction' we hear so much about, is the product of disease, for the removal of which, Nature with wise forecast has made most ample provision, in what may be called, the compensating organic forces. The 'derivative' treatment is a practical denial of the specific, and it also implies the use of enough medicine to sicken the healthy organs, and therefore we object to it. We have not time to expose its glaring absurdity, nor its common mischief;—suffice it to say that when a patient is salivated, or blistered or bled, he suffers a simple specimen of the derivative treatment.

Those who have followed the fluctuating lights of the profession, at one time embracing the 'Humoral' pathology,

and at another, become 'Solidists,'—once, fully committed to the Brunonian theory, and now, advocating Broussais—are not expected to believe in the specific method of Hahnemann, for the *fashion* of that is not liable to change; but whoever has faith enough in the science of medicine, to demand of it any *certain laws*, must believe in the *specific* power of remedies, whether he knows how to apply them or not.

An objection to the doctrine of specifics, which arises at once, is drawn from the fact that our curable cases are not all cured, although we may claim to possess specific remedies. The reason why they are not cured, we are frank to acknowledge. We do not know enough yet; we have not enough specifics that have been proved as medicines should be proved, upon persons in health and of both sexes, to meet the great variety of complicated cases, and interlinked symptoms, we have to contend with. If there is any fault it is *ours*, and we will not deny the principle, to save making this confession. But this is the field of our scientific labor; and if the history of the past is any criterion by which to judge of the future, we shall see, we *must* see the splendid triumph of giving to the science of medicine a rank among the *certain* sciences; a position which no one would think of claiming for it now. If the host of willing martyrs which our 'new school' has furnished, for the proving of poison medicines upon their own bodies, in order to know their specific effects, and thus, to confer the blessings of health upon the sick, is any sign of success to the cause, its triumph is certain or there is nothing reliable in the progress of medicine; and if there is not, we are at least sure of the gratitude of posterity, for such hearty and efficient labor, in proving that the grand desideratum of medical science, which idle votaries have from age to age *hoped* for, is at last found out; though it be a mere phantom, or a bubble which has burst upon our touching it.

But we insist for the present, at least so long as we know

what we *do* know, that all medicinal substances must in the nature of things possess some specific properties, though very frequently not seen on account of the common misuse to which they are liable ; and hereby we see the propriety of administering but one remedy at the same time, whatever our system of practice, or whatever the intent in giving it.

Now if medicines have each a specific quality and effect, we suggest without further argument, that the nature of that quality, and the groundwork of that effect, have at least been partially explained in the foregoing remarks. If they have no specific action, there is to our knowledge, no certain basis upon which the science of medicine can be founded ; and if so, must it not in the end like a pretending and unsettled vagabond, be denied access to the hearths and houses of intelligent people ? The 'coming of the Doctor' will then strike a dread and terror to parents as now to children, and his 'awful doses,' from going down hard as they do now, by an effort and fortitude that would have done honor to John Rogers or St. Stephen, will not go down at all. Not only the lips and teeth of the patient will be compressed firmly against the nauseous, or poison and withall uncertain medicine, but the outer door of the house will be bolted against it.

In thus presenting the law of cure, we have ventured to propose a somewhat novel groundwork, for the science of Homeopathy, but we have raised no question that can in the least invalidate the high claims it has always maintained. We have attempted to defend by an appeal to the laws of our being, that doctrine which has claimed and obtained our fullest confidence, by observation and most rigid experiment. Whether we have furnished the true exposition of the law of cure, or not, is a matter of comparatively small consequence to us, so long as the *practical* truth of the principle remains capable of demonstration. There are many facts which are more easily illustrated by experiment, than explained in their legitimate connection with other facts, especially to those whose minds are habitu-

ally occupied with other thoughts and associations. Homeopathy addressed to those who have not abandoned the use of drugs, is one of them. Although the Homeopathic practice is by no means a new thing, and may not appear altogether unreasonable in its pretensions, yet men's views and habits and feelings, are apt to take form in the mould of their father's judgement, and very properly is such an innovation questioned, and doubted, and held at a respectful distance till its claims are more leisurely considered.

We have made no mention of the amount of medicine necessary to affect the diseased and sensitive organism, because it forms no part of the subject under discussion; but we fear our motives would be questioned if we fail to notice that great bugbear of small doses (infinitesimal?) upon which so many wags have spent idle breath, so many jokes have been lavished, and so much paper and ink wasted. To some it would seem like dodging the question, for us to speak any wise of Homeopathy, and not in the same breath say something of its 'little pills.' Again a very respectable class of honest opposers want it distinctly understood, what inefficient little pellets and powders, and weak drops our patients are treated with. They often declare themselves ready to prove to the astonished novice, that these little doses are so foolishly simple that a 'whole case' of them may be 'swallowed at once,' without harm; so we will briefly notice these little ('mighty little') doses. The Homeopathic law, which by right we call *the* law of cure, inasmuch as no other definite law of cure has ever been proposed, as we have stated it and as far as it is yet understood, refers only to the *kind*, or selection of medicine, which should be used, while we are guided in the size of the dose by careful observation, experience, and judgment; by the testimony of the most reliable and most successful practitioners, by a tender regard for the good of our patient, and with a sharp eye upon the efforts of nature.

But the all important question must be answered,—which

is, how can so little effect so much? How can a portion cure me, which might not at least half kill me? How can serious diseases be controlled by influences or powers which we cannot perceive?—and yet does not everybody's experience prove that they are so controlled? Who perceives the atmospheric changes which indicate an approaching storm, so soon as those suffering from neuralgia, or rheumatism, or asthma? Electrical changes, sunshine and shade, shifting winds, the dews of evening, vapors, and odors, are among the most inappreciable, yet powerful agents to affect the invalid. Pleasant and unpleasant emotions, odors and unseen spheres are always having an effect upon the healthy and must they not much more upon the sick? The authority of Broussais will not be doubted who says, "there is no secretory organ, the action of which cannot either be increased or diminished, or else the product of which cannot be altered by the influence of thought, in that state of exaltation called passion." Tears are more or less acrid and burning according to the passion that creates them. The various mucous secretions are increased, diminished, and thickened or thinned, during high excitement of the feelings. Now by disease any organ is made more sensitive to all impressions. The healthy eye enjoys the fullest light of day; while disease renders it unable to bear the least ray, without severe pain. Again, there is nothing less sensitive in the whole body than the bones in a healthy state, and nothing half so tender as they are in some states of their diseases, so that it appears not improbable, that diseased organs may appreciate a medicine so attenuated that the sight or taste cannot detect it;—and it is to be observed that in the selection of medicines, the rule of 'similia similibus', enables us not only to aim directly at the diseased structure, but to make an impression *only* upon the diseased and sensitive forces. The administration of remedies with this view and upon this principle, is a very different matter from allopathic dosing and drugging. We have no need of the

effect of medicines upon the healthy functions, except for the purpose of proving their pathogenesis, and that we never do upon the sick. It will be seen then that we need but little medicine to accomplish our purpose, and the question returns, How much? We answer, so little according to common experience, that scales nor drop glasses are of any service in measuring it. Again, medicines acquire a new and increased power by trituration, which we believe is admitted by all physicians, as in the case of the mercurial preparations, and we have no balance for estimating such a power, but the unbalanced forces within the body, as indicated by the sensations. But if any one insists upon its weight as a necessary proof of its power, we suggest that the 'scales' which he may take from his own eyes will 'serve him a turn' in the investigation; at least *we* have found it so, but that must be left entirely with him who wishes to weigh the matter. This power which we think is obtained from medicines by trituration and succussion, has been called Medicality upon which, retained in a proper vehicle, more than upon any sensible quantity of crude material, do we depend for a curative action. Let it be estimated in its relation to disease as magnetism would be if it were shown that diseases were controlled by the magnet, which, let it be remembered, is as inappreciable to the senses (except in its effect) as spirit itself. But the very existence of this power is disputed by our opposers, and alas! is it not because we cannot *weigh* it out to them? It would indeed be a fruitless attempt to settle the question of a dynamic power by the 'scruples' of such philosophic doctors. In like manner was the power of prophylactics denied and ridiculed by 'the craft,' and the persecuted but now idolized Jenner, forthwith expelled from medical societies for daring to announce its discovery.

Prophylactic, is the power of preventing a disease by means used beforehand, as in the case of preventing small pox by the minutest particle of vaccine matter. Through the persecution of its discoverer it has become a settled question, and

the prophylactic power is now so well understood that nobody any longer denies it. So too with the force that moves the blood through the arteries and veins. That was not known before its discovery by Harvey, who, upon announcing it to his colleagues, was straightway voted by them a quack and impostor. And with other powers or forces which have from time to time been discovered in connection with medicine, we claim for Samuel Hahnemann the discovery of the power of Medicality, or the art of preserving the medicinal power of drugs developed from the crude material by trituration and succussion, in a non-medicinal vehicle,—not a concentrated power, as of an extract, but a ‘potency’ derived from forcible diffusion and attenuation. It is unnecessary to show more in detail, as we might easily do by a great variety of familiar illustrations, that we are always, in health and in sickness, affected by many imponderable agents, for it will not be denied—and why not then by our attenuated medicines? To deny the existence of a power because we cannot subject it to some palpable test for the senses, is to deny all that is true in the works of God about us and within us. It is true we need some demonstration of a power supposed to exist, and when it is demanded of Homœopathy to prove the effect of her inappreciable doses, she points to the grand results,—to the statistics of her cures, and then to the grateful and ready testimony of thousands, who, having first tried many other means of cure, are best qualified to judge, and if that is not enough, the objector should go with some good physician upon his daily round, and let his eyes be his witness. If one class of physicians claim a curative power for their medicines and offer statistics of cures as evidence, so may we. If they demand of us in return to show the statistics of our *slain*; a fair reckoning up of the proportion killed outright with medicines, directed by unskillful hands;—we answer with conscious pride, that we have handled none of that unfortunate class. But some are missing, who ought by some means to have outlived their

disease? True, possibly, and we may be charged with 'letting them die,' but then you will admit they were fortunate in being allowed to die a *natural* death, and the account, in numbers, still stands largely in our favor.

It must be obvious to all who reflect upon the causes of the great changes which are constantly going on around us, that the mightiest powers of nature are noiseless and still; and that we are learning to direct and manage some of these forces. While our messages are flying over the land in the twinkling of an eye, without so much as jarring the wires they travel on, and the heads of students and philosophers are filled up and overrun with the new truths which come rushing in upon their slow brains—there are a respectable number of medical reformers, who by means of the Homeopathic art of preparing medicines and selecting them for the sick, are proving their curative power; and by means of a subtile force hitherto unknown, which is so nearly allied to the magnetic,* as to elude all chemical tests, are getting such a mastery over diseases as was never obtained before.

But the arguments furnished by the experience of thousands of physicians, and hundreds of thousands of living patients, must go for what they are worth under the circumstances they meet with. The truth is, the mass of the people do not yet believe in the efficacy of inappreciable doses of medicines in curing the sick, and the best answer we can offer to the question of fact, is to show by attested facts and by analogy how it may be, that notwithstanding all the common and superfluous ridicule of the idea when we attempt to apply it in treating diseases, these strong and muscular frames of ours are sensibly affected by causes, subtile, intangible, and inappreciable, and as far removed from the cognizance of our senses as the spiritual is from gross matter;—as the cholera miasm is from a chemical analysis by spec-

* See Mr. Rutter's account of Magnetoid currents and newly invented Magnetoscope.

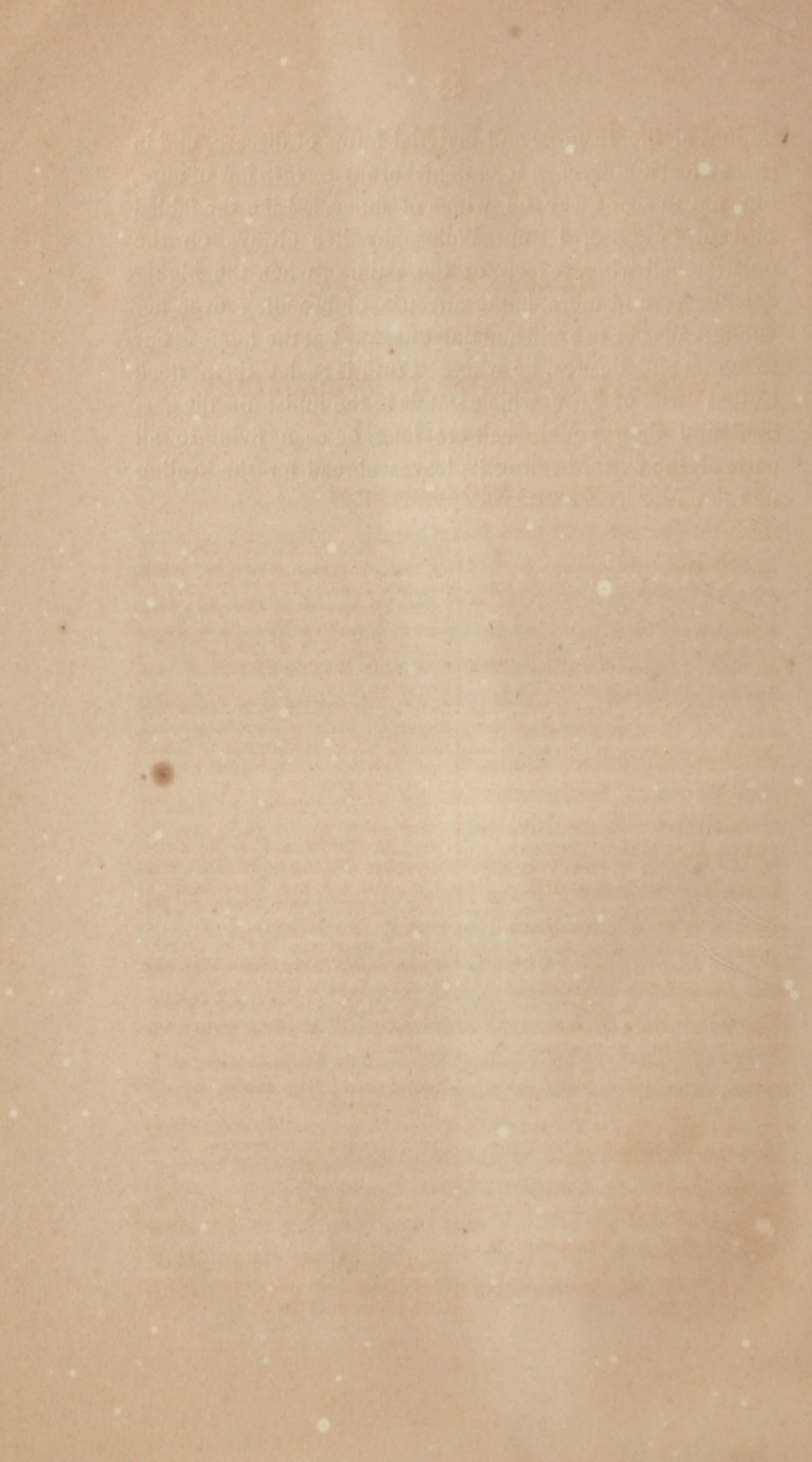
tacted doctors. Such facts will serve at least to illustrate our assertion that medicines do act in the minute doses to which Homeopathsists in their free judgment usually confine themselves, though inadequate to prove fully the truth of it, without repeated and various personal observation.

The current belief that Homeopathic physicians generally give most minute, almost infinitesimal doses of medicine, is correct. It has never been denied, though from its frequent and earnest reiteration, one might fancy it had always been a disputed point. The strength of medicines in common use, varies from the strongest tinctures and crude substances to attenuations as high as the 30th, and 100th, and 1000th, even. It is pretty generally believed that the higher dilutions are best adapted to chronic diseases and the lower ones, to acute attacks, but this is a matter of judgment; while we study and wait for the further developement of some law which shall guide us as unmistakably in the use of the different attenuations, as the maxim "*similia similibus curantur*" does in the selection of the remedy.

From the positions which different branches of the medical profession occupy, we are constrained to say in conclusion, that if any responsible physician should think best to give no medicine at all, let him say so and do so, and there ought to be tolerated no power on earth that would reproach him for it,—no fetter that would bind his freest thoughts and actions, but his conscience—and more, if a patient chooses to die a 'natural death' under the conviction that drugging doctors 'kill more than they cure,' (in favor of which opinion so much good authority might be quoted,) it is a right which ill becomes any intelligent or modest practitioner to deny him.

But arguments all aside let our works prove the truths we affirm. As reformers of the much abused art of healing, the trammels of old prejudices must be broken, but though our thoughts are unchained, they should not be left unguided. Let them leave the beaten paths, which are laid in the crude

notions of life, in gross and material forms of disease, and in that stoical indifference to, or denial of any *certain* law of cure, but not to soar away on wings of fancy. Like the fabled bird of Paradise, let our Philosophy live always on the outstretched wing, except at those times, when the higher enjoyment and more important use of brooding over her young, calls her to a still and quiet nest. Let the home of our thoughts and desires, be where Truth is;—let them flock to that 'tree of *Life* which stands in the midst of the garden' and their young shall ere long, be seen flying to all parts of the earth, bearing its leaves abroad for the healing of the nations.



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The asterisk (*) denotes *deceased*.

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