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REIGN OF LAW IN MEDICINE.

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BEING THE HAHNEMANN ORATION FOR  
THE YEAR 1885.

(REIGN)

BY

D. DYCE BROWN, M.A., M.D.,

LECTURER ON PRACTICE OF MEDICINE AT THE LONDON SCHOOL  
OF HOMOEOPATHY.

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It may be thought that, when publishing my Lecture, I ought to have enlarged on certain points which are hardly more than alluded to in it. I decided, however, to retain it as delivered, otherwise the size of this little work would have been so increased as to lose the character of a single lecture.

D. D. B.

29 SEYMOUR STREET,  
PORTMAN SQUARE, W.,  
*January 1886.*

David baran Mukgi -  
1 College Row, Calcutta.

THE  
REIGN OF LAW IN MEDICINE.

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GENTLEMEN,—

The fact of this Lecture, which I have had the honour to be appointed to deliver, being named the “Hahnemann Oration,” indicates that it is not merely intended to be the introductory lecture to the winter session of the London School of Homœopathy, but that the founders had a wider aim in view, namely, the perpetuation of the memory and of the work of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of that system of medicine of the truth of which we are firmly convinced from personal, practical experience,—the discoverer of that law which this same experience has proved to us to be not only a law, but *the* great law of therapeutics.

Nor is this grateful task an unnecessary one. The simple fact that Hahnemann's great and transcendent merits as an original observer, as a patient and careful therapeutic investigator, and as a scientific thinker, are recognised even now by only a minority of the profession, renders our setting forth his true *status* a duty which is incumbent on us. Were we to neglect the performance of it we should be false to our profession, indifferent to the welfare of the sick, and regardless of the fame of him to whom, in therapeutics, we owe nearly everything, and who stands out conspicuously as the greatest medical hero of the century.

In taking up this position I do not detract from the greatness of other medical heroes, as Harvey, in whose memory an annual oration is also delivered, or Sydenham, or Hippocrates. Those men do not lack for full recognition of their talents and of the benefits they bestowed

on the profession. But while honouring these great men, the old school do all they can to detract from the merits of a man greater than any of them. Not many years ago, in fact about the time of Lord Beaconsfield's death, a well-known London surgeon writing in the *Times* (April 15, 1881), as the recognised medical correspondent, had the audacity and ignorance to assert that Hahnemann was an uneducated man and a charlatan. He says: "Its originator" (*i.e.*, the originator of homœopathy), "one Hahnemann (*sic*), had no pretensions to scientific knowledge, and was probably even too ignorant to perceive the full absurdity of his own teaching." And so recently as 1880 a paper on Hahnemann and Homœopathy was read by Dr. Rigler before the West Berlin Medical Society consisting of a tissue of statements evincing the grossest ignorance or the most barefaced misrepresentations. This paper was actually listened to without a dissentient

voice, approved by the Society, and circulated widely. In 1882 this same Dr. Rigler published a book on homœopathy, in a similar if not grosser style than his paper of 1880.

One expects in these days of accurate criticism, when ignorance of fact and history is inexcusable, that a writer of position should show *some* knowledge of the facts regarding which he ventures to express an opinion; but in everything connected with Hahnemann and homœopathy, we find that men of rank in the profession have no shame in admitting that they know little or nothing of the subject, while they calmly express opinions detrimental to Hahnemann and contemptuous of homœopathy. Such a state of matters is quite phenomenal in this nineteenth century, and is to be found in no other department of science. Were Hahnemann only to be reckoned as a great <sup>6</sup>heresiarch, and homœopathy a great heresy, still one expects that the members of

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a learned and so-called liberal profession should have some knowledge of the heresy and of its author, since the heretics in the profession number by hundreds in this country, and by thousands in America—these hundreds and thousands having the same medical education and the same diplomas as the members of the so-called orthodox school. But such, remarkable to say, is not the case, and the public, who naturally look up to the profession as the fountain of medical knowledge, can hardly believe that such an assertion as I have made is other than a one-sided statement on our part, and they look at one with an unmistakable air of incredulity when these plain facts are told to them. It needs, however, only the reference to the articles I have alluded to in the leading newspaper of the empire, and written by a well-known metropolitan surgeon, and to the Berlin paper by Dr. Rigler, to show that they are facts. Were I to proceed to

refute these misrepresentations by giving a sketch of Hahnemann's career up to the time of his development of homœopathy, I should exceed the limits of a single lecture, and besides, I should be trespassing on the ground already so ably gone over by my friend Dr. Compton Burnett, in his Hahnemann Oration for 1880. Those of my audience who did not hear or have not read this lecture, should do themselves the justice and the pleasure of buying and perusing it.\* They will thus see clearly the remarkable ignorance of the *Times* writer, who can stoop to hold up to contempt the man whom Dr. Burnett shows in his life-sketch to have had the highest education that Germany could give; who distinguished himself in all departments at the University; who had the highest diplomas which were to be got; who was

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\* "Ecce Medicus," by J. C. Burnett, M.D. The Homœopathic Publishing Company. E.C.

known among his fellows to be one of the first men of the day, not only in purely medical science—such as it was—but in the collateral science of chemistry, and in general wide reading. The amount of medical reading shown by Hahnemann's writings could have been surpassed by none, and equalled by few—very few. All this, fully admitted by contemporary writers, is now calmly ignored, and even denied. And why? Because he committed the heinous sin of seeing and exposing the barbarity, to say nothing of the uselessness, of the treatment of the day, and the absurdity of the theories and systems of medicine then in vogue; because, rather than continue practising what he knew to be utterly bad, he elected to go into retirement and suffer the straits of poverty; and because, in his retirement, his genius led him to enunciate a new principle of treatment—a *law* in therapeutics, based upon elaborate and length-

ened experiments on himself and his friends. This liberty of thought and action was then, and is even now, the heinous sin for which Hahnemann suffered detraction enough to provoke the patience of a Job. There are others in the old school who are candid enough to admit that there is a certain measure of truth in the law of similars, but yet endeavour to minimise Hahnemann's genius and labours by asserting that the law was no discovery of his, but that it was known to Hippocrates: As if it was not a remarkable feature in Hahnemann that he gives full credit to Hippocrates by quoting him and every medical writer since his day, where there was to be found any evidence of a conscious or unconscious use of the principle of similars, only taking to himself the credit of seeing clearly, for the first time, and enunciating fully and completely what had been so dimly perceived before his time as to result in

nothing practical. Many other scientific discoveries have been "seen through a glass darkly" by patient workers, whose modicum of genius prevented their going beyond a certain point, or turning to any practical use the facts they had noted, till some genius of a higher order caught the great idea, as by an inspiration, and science is at once revolutionised. Was Newton the first man who saw an apple fall? Yet he was the first to whose genius it occurred that the falling of the apple was an illustration of a great law which was till then unperceived. Such is Hahnemann's position with reference to the law of similars. Hippocrates states that some diseases are cured by likes, and some by contraries. He notices a fact, and there is an end of it. His genius, though high, did not go so far as to suggest to him, as far as we know, that possibly the cures by likes which he noticed were not mere coincidences, but examples of

the *law* which affects the essential relation between disease and drugs, the keystone of the science of therapeutics. It does not seem ever to have occurred to the numerous writers whom Hahnemann, in his wide reading, quotes, and whose examples of homœopathic cures Hahnemann, in his "Organon," extracts, that such cures were anything more than curious coincidences. The number of such cases is quite remarkable, and yet no result followed. The *law* was not perceived. Even Staal and Stoerck had a glimmering of the truth, but the glimmer was too feeble to do more than, like a farthing candle in a large hall, make the darkness more visible. It was reserved for Samuel Hahnemann to be endowed with the genius requisite to see in all these numerous cases the existence of a great *law* in medicine, of which they were the unconscious illustration; to work out the law in a calm, logical manner, and to point

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out the mode of practically availing ourselves of its guidance in the treatment of disease. The manner in which he has done this in his first work, "The Organon of Medicine," is worthy of the greatest genius, and he has literally left almost nothing for his disciples to do but to carry out his principles. Seldom has such a complete work been done by one man, and this while grim poverty was staring him in the face. The "Organon" is truly a marvel of erudition, thought, and logic, and it, with Hahnemann's other writings, stand alone as the only medical works of their date that any one thinks of looking into at the present time, except for antiquarian curiosity. They are as fresh to-day as when first penned, and are the authoritative books to which every one who practises homœopathy looks for guidance. This of itself is a most remarkable fact—a fact seldom thought of, but one which at once relegates homœopathy

and its law to a unique position of their own, far apart from and above the ever-changing theories and systems of treatment which have had their day and died out in obscurity.

While such a genius is ignored, and even libelled as an ignorant, uneducated charlatan, is there not ample reason for the delivery of the annual "Hahnemann Oration"? "Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo," and we believe that our labours in frequently bringing forward before the profession and the public Hahnemann's greatness will in the end bear fruit, and we shall find him raised to a pinnacle of fame exceeding in height any other physician or medical scientist, as the man who first inaugurated the *Reign of Law in Medicine*. This is the character in which he stands forth so prominently above his fellows.

Here we are met by the query, "Is the existence of one great law for the treatment of disease possible, or to be looked for, con-

sidering the immense variety of diseases, and the almost infinite combinations of symptoms presented by individual cases of a given genuine disease, making no one case precisely like another?" This query can only, of course, come from the old school; but, nevertheless, it is widely asked and answered according to the turn of mind of the questioner. We find, in reply to it, three answers. By one class of minds the answer is, that since for two thousand years every system has had its day and been given up, while no law has been discovered (the homœopathic law being, of course, ignored), pure empiricism, coupled with a general scepticism as to the value of medicines at all, is perhaps all that is to be looked for. The discovery of law is looked on as Utopian, and such minds "settle on their heels," resolving to make the best of it.\* A

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\* A recent example of this view is given by Dr. Sawyer, senior physician to the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham. In

second class of minds take up the pseudo-philosophic tone, and answer that, because disease is so infinitely multifarious, a law to bind them down to rule is not even to be desired. They glory in anarchy, and pride themselves in thinking that they cannot and ought not to be trammelled by any *system*, but treat each disease on such empirical plans as seem best at the time. General scepticism as to the value of medicine at all is

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an address on "Therapeutic Progress," at the annual meeting of the Midland Counties Branch of the British Medical Association (*Medical Times*, August 1885), Dr. Sawyer asks, "Are we making real progress in the treatment of disease? . . . How can the art of 'treatment' be placed upon a broader and sounder basis, upon a basis less shifting, less empiric, more demonstrable, more effectual, and more scientific?" He replies: "Whether we like it or not, we must yet be mainly empirics in our practice. . . . Here is a specific question which we have to answer every day. Why do I give this medicine to this patient? Not because it has such and such physiological effects, and I expect, therefore, that it will do good, but because I have *before* found its administration attended with advantage under similar circumstances; and this experience *satisfies* me, and gives me confidence in using it again until I know of a better remedy."

largely predominant in such minds. Is not such glorying in the absence of law ignorant, shallow, and the reverse of philosophical? A third class of minds deplore the absence of law in medicine, and believe that some day a law will be discovered. For this they wait and work on in the way that seems to them most likely to yield fruit.

That there should be in medicine no law possible, or no law actually existing, is, to my mind, unthinkable in the presence of a belief in a beneficent Creator and Ruler of the universe. Wherever we turn our eyes in this universe, we are brought face to face with law. The heavenly bodies, so infinitely numerous, are so regulated by law that any deviation from it would be, astronomers tell us, fraught with inconceivable disaster; a transit of one planet across the visible disc of another can be calculated in time to a minute, and even such erratic and ill-understood bodies as comets show

laws of motion peculiar to themselves, so that astronomers can calculate to a nicety when they will reappear to view after years of absence from our sight. Our own earth, wherever we turn, shows nothing unregulated by law, in its structure and in the relations of each particle to another. Chemical salts, natural or prepared artificially, show reactions which are constant, and they crystallise uniformly in one form peculiar to each. The vegetable kingdom, in its growth, structure, habits, and infinite species, is a marvel of law; while the animal kingdom, and specially our own bodies, are the most perfect examples of beneficent law—law which, if interfered with by accident or neglect, at once displays its presence in the physical troubles that ensue. Isolated facts which for long were only known as such, became, under the genius of a Darwin, collected and arranged so as to form illustrations of hitherto unsuspected laws.

While our bodies in health thus obey laws which keep the marvellously constructed apparatus in working order, harmonising each part with the others, we find ample evidence of laws regulating *disease* also. Although there are such numerous forms of disease, and almost infinite individual variations of every species of disease, owing to the complexity of structure and mutual relations of the various organs and tissues of the body, and owing also to individual peculiarities, hereditary or acquired, yet through all this law is plainly visible. We thus are able, from the uniformity of disease in its broader outlines, to sketch a generic picture of a given malady, so that a skilled physician can at once tell from what the patient is suffering; what are the organs affected; what, on the one hand, is the probable course or law-governing progress of such disease, if the conditions are favourable for recovery, and what,

on the other hand, will be its progress and result if the surrounding conditions are unfavourable. The individual variations can be shown to be such according to definite law, while the almost endless number of those variations, all showing the generic type in their broader features, only show how laws can be *modified*, not altered, in particular cases, by the greater or less correspondence of each with its environments. This variation in individuals, owing to their greater or less correspondence with their respective environments, is visible in every other department of nature, and is so far from being a state of unravelled chaos that it only furnished further illustrations of the beautiful laws of nature in living organisms, permitting of individual growth, individual effort, individual elevation among fellows, and, on the other hand, individual falling off from neglect or running counter to law, individual degenera

tion, and individual death. And it is the glory of the physician to take note of individual distinctions even in the minutest symptoms, and to appreciate the meaning and import of each, rather than as is often done, especially in the old school, to pooh-pooh these minutæ as being unimportant or valueless as a help in treatment. The former is the work of the philosopher, the latter of the journeyman.

While law thus, as we have seen, exists in disease, let us now look at the *relation* of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdom to the human body in health. We have seen that in these departments of nature, external to this relation, law is uniformly observable. But when we explore the mutual relation of the healthy human body to plants, minerals, and animal poisons or secretions, one is at once confronted by evident law. Every substance in these three kingdoms has an effect

of one kind or another, but always of a fixed legal nature, on the healthy human body. Many are foods, and are necessary for our existence, while other substances are what we term drugs—that is to say, they are of no use as foods, but, on the contrary, when ingested, upset the normal physical functions in one way or another. It is this class that I am at present concerned with. These substances, when taken in a certain quantity, varying with each individual drug, are poisons to the human body. They each, according to their dynamic properties and activity or potency, produce such an alteration of the normal functions or tissues as to make life impossible, or, short of this, they produce more or less serious illness. This is the broad or crude relation of drugs to the healthy body. But the interest of this broad fact is enhanced when we come to study each individual drug or poison in its separate relation to the healthy

body. And here we are at once confronted by law. We find that each individual drug or poison produces, not a vague disturbance of health, but certain well-marked and uniform effects on special organs or tissues, evincing this by uniformly constant symptoms. This is known to every tyro in medicine, and it is the basis of the science of toxicology. So uniform is this action of each individual poison that a skilled medical jurist can tell at once from the effects of what poison a man is suffering, merely by noting his symptoms, and we all know how, not long ago, a criminal was hung on the evidence of an expert who trusted to the law which regulated the effects of aconite on the body. Broad lines distinguish one class of poisons from another, and finer lines separate individual poisons of each class from their fellows. Here is unmistakable law. Still more marvellous and interesting is it when drugs are given in doses less than will

cause death, to watch the operation of law. We expect, and with certainty, effects which are remarkable in their legal uniformity. We know that a certain quantity of colocynth will purge and cause griping pain; that an overdose of belladonna will produce headache, dimness of vision, cerebral excitement, dry and inflamed throat, and a red rash on the skin; that an overdose of arsenic will cause vomiting and diarrhoea, with griping, cramping pain, and exhaustion; and so on with every drug. Each one is true to itself, and is not another. This much can be learned from the rough materia medica of the old school. But it is still more beautiful to watch the yet more minute details of health-disturbance which is elicited in such a materia medica as Hahnemann's "*Materia Medica Pura*," a work based solely on experiments on the healthy body—his own and that of his disciples. Here, also, law asserts itself, keeping the main lines broad and clear, but

developing details of action varying in individual provers within definite limits, but all harmonious and legal. These minute observations of Hahnemann and his disciples have again and again been amply corroborated by subsequent observers, thus showing the great basis of law existing in the smallest detail of health-disturbance produced by drugs, instead of these being, as is asserted by our opponents, the offspring of Hahnemann's imagination.

Having thus seen that law, marked in uniformity, but with almost endless variety in detail and relation, governs the action of drugs on the healthy human body, the next thing that strikes one as remarkable is that in each is presented to us a wonderfully clear counterpart or picture of some form of disease or departure from health, such as comes under the eye of the physician when produced by other than drug-disturbing causes. The correspondence is not in broad, crude lines merely,

but in minute detail, each individual drug disease showing a picture of some more or less frequently met with disorder. Thus we find distinct forms of dyspepsia produced by arsenic, nux vomica, bryonia, pulsatilla, hyo- drastis, &c.; distinct forms of diarrhoea by arsenic, veratrum, colocynth, rhubarb, mercury, &c.; distinct forms of bronchial inflammation by antimony, ipecacuanha, bryonia, bichromate of potash, and so on; each of these drugs again showing disease-symptoms referable to other organs than those broadly affected, and exactly corresponding with what we find existing in actual disease produced by other causes. The more one studies drug pathogenesis, the more is one astonished at the reproduction, as it were, of the various combinations of symptoms present in actual disease arising from other sources.

Let us stop for a moment to see where we are. We have found the noteworthy fact that

two parallel columns, as it were, of diseased symptoms stand before us; the one set caused by drugs on the healthy body, and the other by diseases arising from other causes—the one corresponding minutely in detail to the other. Can this be a mere coincidence? Can such a counterpart exist without any meaning? Can we bring ourselves to believe that this parallelism should stare us in the face, and yet that there should be no law to explain or utilise it? Is this to be the one department of nature, and that one affecting God's highest creatures in the most intimate manner, where there is an absence of law? Can we suppose that our beneficent Creator should permit our bodies to suffer from disease, and yet provide no law of cure; that drugs by the hundred should lie to our hands, beautifully showing law in their action on the healthy body—law uniform in its diversity of detail, but every detail true to its type; that the same

detail, and yet uniformity of type, should be daily visible to the physician in the case of actual diseases, and yet no connecting link between the two? Such a supposition seems, on the face of it, untenable, or almost inconceivable. There *must* be a connecting link, a law to explain this harmonious relation of counterpart.

There are supposable only three relations leading to a practical issue, and we actually find that the several modes of drug-action employed as a means of cure by the profession since its commencement may be divided into three. These three modes are fully gone into in a masterly criticism by Hahnemann in his "Organon," to which I refer my hearers and again by Drs. Hughes and Pope in their respective Hahnemann orations of 1881 and 1884. I therefore forbear to enter on this point, except in the most cursory manner necessary for my argument. The first, which

is hardly to be dignified by the name of a relation at all, is employed when healthy organs are punished in order to effect in a reflex, or roundabout manner, the cure of disease. An example of what I mean is the use of purgatives in acute disease of organs other than the bowels. It does not require any analysis to show how rough and barbarous this mode of medication is. Drugs are here used which have only the most indirect relation to the organs diseased. It may therefore be dismissed at once. The second, the anti-pathic, or opposite action of drugs, has more to be said for it. Here there is a relation of a real character between the drug and the disease—a drug being given which produces the state opposite to that of the disease, as, for example, when opium and allied substances are administered for the relief of pain and sleeplessness, chloral for sleeplessness, purgatives for constipation, and ergot for contrac-

tion of the uterus. As Hahnemann says ("Organon," § 69), "The antipathically chosen medicine certainly touches the diseased point in the organism as certainly as the homœopathic medicine, chosen on account of the similar affection it produces." But the defect of this relation is, that it is a very partial one. It can be practically employed only in a very few varieties of illness, since for the majority of cases of disease there is no opposite. The defective or partial nature of this relation is admitted by all in the old school, who nowadays object to be called allopaths, or adherents of the law of contraries. It cannot be used as a law of cure applicable to disease in general, and hence it is supplemented by empiricism, that is, the use of drugs which have been accidentally discovered to be curative in certain diseases, as when Withering, in the last century, found out from a woman herbalist the action

of digitalis on the heart, and introduced it to the profession. Besides this only partial applicability, the relation of contraries, as I shall afterwards more fully point out, shows its great defect as a claimant to be a therapeutic law explaining the counterpart of disease and drug action, by its inability to make any use of three-fourths of the symptom-material which the materia medica places at our service. This fact of itself is sufficient to show its radical deficiency.

There remains only one other explanation of the relation between drugs and diseases, namely, the homœopathic. That is, that, as each drug presents a counterpart of some variety of disease, the former should act curatively towards the latter by virtue of its relation of similarity. As a simple example of what I mean, to relieve sickness a drug like ipecacuanha, which, as every one knows, produces sickness in full doses, is to be given. Of

- course, it stands to reason, that if such a medicine is to be given at all, it must be administered in a smaller dose than will produce the sickness.

Hahnemann knew that this relation existed between at least one drug and one disease, cinchona and ague, and a flash of genius suggested to his mind the query, Is this similar relation a curious coincidence, or may it not possibly be an example of a great law, that disease and remedy have this similar relation? He hunted up every available book on medicine, from Hippocrates downwards, and was himself surprised at the pile of unconscious evidence there found in favour of the truth of this relation, in cases cured by drugs which had no other perceptible relation than that of similarity. Armed with this evidence, he set to work to make experiments on himself and his friends to find out, as a necessary foundation, the *pure* action of drugs on the healthy

body as distinguished from their action in disease, and then, like a philosophical, yet eminently practical worker, put his theory to the test in actual cases of disease. The result of his investigations, carried on for several years in the most careful manner, was, that he became satisfied that he had at last solved the problem, had discovered the law of the uniform and definite relation of remedy and disease.

In 1796 he first promulgated this law, one which was destined to revolutionise the practice of medicine, as *the* great law of therapeutics, "*similia similibus curantur.*" The discovery of this law was the great glory of Hahnemann's genius. He it was who—though others, as Hippocrates, had a faint glimpse of it—saw, as in a bird's-eye view, the parallel pictures of drug-action and disease, and the natural law connecting and harmonising the two. He thus was the honoured in-

strument, in God's hands, of pointing out the existence of law, beautiful in its simplicity, in a department of nature where, till then, law was unknown, and where, even at the present day, men are found who are profane enough to assert that law cannot exist. Truly if a man does not wish to see the light, no process is so easy as shutting the eyes.

But how, I am asked, do you prove that this law is true? I reply, that we abide by the only test of real scientific value, that of the practical results from the application of the law. However beautiful and simple a supposed law may be, if it will not stand the test of practical utility it is worthless, and no law at all. Every homœopathic practitioner from the time of Hahnemann to the present day, testifies, by his open adherence to the law of similars, to the success of it in practice. Is it conceivable that, besides those who are dead and gone, the hundreds in this country and

on the Continent, and the thousands in America, of practitioners who have been educated as their brethren in the old school, and have the same diplomas, can be deceived? And if this were possible, their delusion would soon be checked by the public who are their patients, and who are fully able to judge of the comparative results of one system of treatment over another. Not only do the working-classes, to whom time is money, and the loss of a day a very serious matter, come by thousands to our homœopathic hospitals and dispensaries, but many of the highest class, socially and mentally, men who are looked up to as leaders in literature and statesmanship, are sufficiently satisfied of the practical working of the law of similars to trust their lives to those who employ it as a means of cure, in preference to those who reject this system. Here we have overwhelming evidence of the truth of the law by the only real

test of its truth. True it is that the majority of medical practitioners hold aloof and cry it down, but nowadays the argument from majority does not go for much. Twenty years ago the doctrine of evolution was supported by the few and scouted by the majority, while now matters are just the reverse. As Charles Kingsley says, "It is not the many who reform the world, but the few who rise superior to that public opinion which crucified our Lord many years ago." Or as the poet (L. E. L.) beautifully says:—

"Not to the many doth the earth  
Owe what she hath of good :  
The many could not stir life's depths,  
And would not, if they could.

It is some individual mind  
That moves the common cause ;  
To single effort England owes  
Her knowledge, faith, and laws."

But the opinion of the majority in the profession counts for very little, judged by the test I have accepted for homœopathy. I do not

think I am wrong in saying that if all the old-school practitioners in this country were polled, barely one per cent. could even correctly state the homœopathic doctrine; and I am certain I am not wrong in stating that less than one in a thousand could say that, after becoming acquainted with the doctrine and practice of homœopathy, as a first necessary step, he had put it to the trial. Of what value then is an opinion expressed as to the error of homœopathy and the falsity of its law by men who have never even tried it? Surely it is *nil*. Any medical man who expresses such an opinion occupies a position of contemptible arrogance, such as would be tolerated in no other branch of learning.

We again throw down the gauntlet. Who will take it up? Only two years ago the chairman of the Board of Management of the London Homœopathic Hospital, Major Vaughan Morgan, out of his private purse, offered to

St. George's Hospital, which was begging for funds, £1000 a year for five years, on condition that a ward should be placed at the disposal of selected homœopathic physicians, where the cases and their results could be publicly observed. The letter remained unacknowledged for weeks, and the offer was finally declined.

But while homœopaths are quite content to rest the verdict of the truth of the law of similars on practical results, it is of importance to adduce collateral arguments which have each a value of their own, and collectively raise the evidence in favour of the truth of the homœopathic law of cure to an amount sufficient for the requirements of scientific necessity.

First, Hahnemann saw, as I have already said, that it was a prime necessity for the practice of homœopathy to know accurately the pure effects of drugs, and that the only sure way of obtaining this indispensable know-

ledge was to test each drug on the healthy *human* body, and in this mode he compiled his "Materia Medica." In recent years, since Sir Thomas Watson's address at the formation of the Clinical Society, about eighteen years ago, when he advocated this same mode of Hahnemann's, the testing of drugs on the healthy human body, as the only method of obtaining a reliable materia medica, the same cue is taken up by writers and lecturers till it is a proposition that is now generally agreed upon. But here is the difficulty. When all the mass of disease-symptoms produced by drugs, such as we find in the homœopathic materia medica, and even in a cruder way in any modern work on pharmacology produced by the old school, has been collected, it is next to useless practically, without the homœopathic key to its employment. Of what use is it to an allopath to know that Arsenic will inflame the eyes, irritate the stomach to

inflammation, cause vomiting, cramp, and diarrhoea? Of what use is it for him to know that corrosive sublimate will cause dysenteric diarrhoea, and that all forms of mercury will produce inflammation of the mouth and throat, or that cantharides will cause inflammation of the bladder and kidneys, or that belladonna will produce sore throat, headache, cerebral excitement, and a red rash on the skin; or that colocynth will produce severe colic? Of no use whatever, except as curious facts, and as indicating the size of dose beyond which it is not safe to go. While to the homœopath, with the law of similars as his guide, all these symptoms are so many accurate indications for the use of these medicines, as curative agents in the diseases to which they are similar. No other than the homœopathic law gives the least clue to the use to be made of such knowledge, and hence the languid manner in which the testing of drugs on the

healthy body proceeds in the old school. The game is not worth the candle. Dr. Bristowe hits the nail on the head when he says (*Brit. Med. Journal*, Aug. 13, 1881): "We must admit the truth of the homœopathic view of the relations between medicines and diseases before we can admit the special value of investigations conducted only on the healthy body." Precisely so. And this argument seems to me of the first collateral importance, and one that it is impossible to set aside. Both schools agree as to the information to be obtained as to drug-action, and also as to the only mode of obtaining it; but the one school find their labour lost, while the other uses every pathogenetic symptom with success. The one system must be on the wrong path, and the other on the right.

Secondly, outside altogether of homœopathic works on *Materia Medica*—in those, namely, reckoned as standard by the old

school up till the last twenty years, we find a remarkable mass of unconscious evidence in favour of homœopathy. We have but to put two and two together, with the law of similars before us, and the result of reading these books will surprise any one who has not had his eyes open to the fact before. Some years ago I collected these coincidences, and arranged them in parallel columns in a pamphlet, in one column the pathogenetic effects of the drugs, and in the opposite one the use of these same drugs in diseases to which they were similar or homœopathic—all, be it observed, extracted from standard old-school works, and with a reference to each work. The result surprised myself. Time forbids me to go into detail, but I shall be happy to show my pamphlet to any of my audience who would care to see it.\* Unconscious teaching of this kind from men who

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\* Now out of print.

pooh-pooh homœopathy is of very considerable collateral value.

Thirdly, *within the last eighteen years* several remarkable works on Therapeutics have been published, and have become popular in the profession—I might say standard. These are Ringer's "Handbook of Therapeutics," Phillip's "Materia Medica," and in America Bartholow's work on the same subject. In the case of all these works, what chiefly caused their popularity was the amount of recommendations in treatment which were quite new to the old school. This new treatment, it was palpable to every one who was acquainted with homœopathy, was transferred directly from homœopathic works, but without acknowledgment. It was to be found in no previous allopathic work, but, by a remarkable coincidence, was known to every homœopath, and to be found in homœopathic works only. It would be too great a stretch of charity to

believe that treatment which was explainable in no other way than by the law of similars, and was in *direct opposition* to the views supported by the old school, should have been suddenly hit upon in an accidental manner. The principle on which such recommendations were made is carefully ignored in these works, and all allusion to homœopathy omitted. The result of the popularity of these works is that, in the old school, bits of treatment, not one but many, which fifteen years ago would have been laughed at, are now commonly employed, not on any avowed principle, be it observed, but on the authority, forsooth, of these writers.

The latest work on *Materia Medica*, by Dr. Lauder Brunton, presents a unique feature. In the "Index of Diseases and Remedies" we find quite a number of homœopathic medicines and recommendations unknown to the "orthodox" physician, but on turning to the page to which the reader is referred in the body of the work,

we find no allusion whatever to the therapeutic recommendations in the index. Why is this? We leave Dr. Brunton to reply. I say nothing of the *morale* of such actions, but bring it forward as a remarkable collateral piece of evidence in support of the law of similars.

Time forbids me going into detail, or giving quotations of what I allude to. One has but to read these books with one's eyes open to see the correctness of what I have stated. The *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, in reviewing Ringer's book, too late to stop its popularity, went so far as to say, "This is nothing more or less than pure homœopathy." So much for the unconscious and *conscious* testimony of our opponents.

Fourthly, the continued existence and spread of homœopathy is a strong collateral argument in favour of the truth of its law. Every other system and theory has had its short day, and is forgotten. This so-called heresy has sur-

vived for nearly a century, and instead of dying out, as our old-school friends would like to believe, it is spreading its roots and branches more and more widely, and as we have just seen, is steadily leavening the old school, till we find that even medicines hitherto peculiar to the new school are adopted and used in cases to which they are homœopathic.

Fifthly, it is worthy of note that many medicines which are most trusted in an empirical way in old-school treatment, are, on a moment's thought, clearly homœopathic in their action, and hence we find in certain complaints both schools using the same medicine. In my lectures on Practice of Medicine I have frequently to point out this fact, to which I have only time now to allude.

Sixthly, scepticism as to the value of medicines at all is the order of the day in the old school, while in the ranks of homœopathy it is unknown. We as a body are a standing

protest against this prevalent scepticism. A sceptical homœopath is almost a contradiction in terms.

Seventhly, the minuteness with which we can adapt a medicine to every individual variety of disease is a remarkable proof of the truth of the law. Had we only broad lines to go on, and a few medicines for a few *genera* of diseases, we could say little in proof of the law, but the infinite variety of combinations in disease only serves to bring out more forcibly how the law can be applied, and how wonderfully uniform it is in its operation. In this, as in all science, "What is wanted," as a philosophical writer of the present day says of another department of science, "what is wanted is simply a unity of conception, but not such a unity of conception as should be founded on an absolute identity of phenomena. This latter might indeed be a unity, but it would be a very tame one. The perfection of

unity is attained when there is infinite variety of phenomena, infinite complexity of relation, but great simplicity of law" (Drummond, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," p. 22). As this same writer observes, "It is probably the very simplicity of the law regarding it which has made men stumble. For nothing is so invisible to most men as transparency" (p. 307).

I have endeavoured, gentlemen, to elicit your admiration for our hero Hahnemann by adducing various arguments in favour of the truth of his law such as appeal to any one, professional or otherwise. I have shown that the relation of similars *does* harmonise in a beautiful manner the two parallel effects of drug-action and disease; that it is the *only* relation which has as yet been conceived which does so; that in putting the truth of this relation to the test, every available piece of knowledge in regard to drugs can be, and is, utilised,

while on no other supposed relation is this possible; that the practical success of treatment based on this relation is testified to by thousands of practitioners and millions of patients; that the true means for ascertaining the pure effects of drugs, though now admitted by the old school to be the same as Hahnemann from the first advocated, is yet confessed by them to be so much labour lost, unless the homœopathic relation is admitted; that up till twenty years ago the old-school books contained a remarkable mass of *unconscious* testimony to the truth of the doctrine of similars, while since then an ever-increasing mass of what I cannot consent to call unconscious testimony is to be found in works emanating from the old school; that many of the medicines most trusted by our opponents act homœopathically, and consequently are used by both schools; that while scepticism is rife in the one school, it is unknown in the

other; and lastly, that homœopathy is steadily spreading all over the world, not only as a separate system, but one which is largely and increasingly leavening the old school, being thus the only *system* of therapeutics which has not died after a short existence. I therefore claim that this constitutes a mass of evidence sufficient to raise the relation of similars to the place of a *law*, and that the discovery of a law which has revolutionised the practice of medicine entitles Hahnemann to a place in the very first rank of medical heroes.

I must, gentlemen, however, at the risk of being tedious, conclude by giving a few illustrations of the manner in which, in working out his law in detail, Hahnemann showed himself a century before his compeers in original thought and prophetic instinct. I take my examples from his great work, "The Organon of Medicine." Having already alluded to his mode of ascertaining the pure

effects of drugs by experiments on the healthy human body as an idea far in advance of his time, but one which is now allowed to be the true one, I pass this by without further expatiating on it.

Hahnemann taught that in studying a case of disease, *with a view to select the right remedy*—not, it will be observed, as a substitute for pathological study, but with a view of *treating the case*—the physician should pay regard solely to the symptoms present in the given case. In paragraph 6, he says the physician “notices only the deviations from the former healthy state of the now diseased individual, which are felt by the patient himself, remarked by those around him, and observed by the physician. All these perceptible signs *represent* the disease in its whole extent, that is, they form the true and only conceivable portrait of the disease.”\*

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\* This is very different from Dr. Richard Quain's statement

This, it will be seen, includes, besides the subjective symptoms, all modes of physical diagnosis within the reach of the doctor—in fact, all the information as to *facts* obtainable. He thus prevents the adoption of treatment according to *theories* of disease, which may be right or wrong, and though the diagnosis of the nature of the disease in a difficult case may give rise to difference of opinion, the treatment ought to be regulated independently of any theoretical points admitting of doubt.

That this method is now becoming more and more adopted by the rising men of the old school is evident from the indications given in recent works for the selection of remedies. It is the only mode of prescribing which prevents fallacies, and is also the

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in his Harveian oration for 1885, that “homœopathy teaches that disease *consists* of symptoms which are to be treated,” &c. (*Brit. Med. Jour.*, Oct. 24, 1885). This is the most recent illustration of the ignorance displayed by leading men in touching on the subject of homœopathy.

only method for utilising a minutely detailed *Materia Medica*. Thus to a careful and thoughtful physician, who selects his medicines in accordance with the symptoms present, minute details, which to many might seem unimportant, become to him invested with special value as indications for a drug.

This leads me to notice another illustration of Hahnemann's profound thought and philosophical perception, viz., his view of what are known as *idiosyncrasies* in regard to drugs. These are certain peculiar symptoms which are developed by drugs in an extremely limited number of persons. In the rough-and-ready *Materia Medicas* of the old school, these idiosyncrasies are noted as of no value—as evincing peculiarities in the individual, curious but practically useless. How different is Hahnemann's philosophical view of this subject. Listen to what he says (pars. 116 and 117, “*Organon*”): “Some symptoms are

produced more frequently, that is to say, in many individuals, others more rarely or in few persons, some only in very few healthy organisms. To the latter class belong the so-called *idiosyncrasies*, by which are meant peculiar corporeal constitutions, which, although otherwise healthy, possess a disposition to be brought into a more or less morbid state, by certain things which *seem* to produce no impression and no change in many other individuals. But this inability to make an impression on every one is only *apparent*. For as two things are required for the production of these as well as all other morbid alterations on the health of man, to wit, the inherent power of the influencing substance, and the capability of the vital force that animates the organism to be affected by it, the obvious derangements of health in the so-called *idiosyncrasies* cannot be laid to the account of these peculiar constitutions alone, but they

must be also ascribed to the things that produce them, in which must lie the power of making the same impressions on all human bodies, yet in such a manner that but a small number of healthy constitutions have a tendency to allow themselves to be brought into such an obviously morbid condition by them. That these potencies do actually make this impression on every healthy body is shown by this, that they rendered effectual homœopathic service as remedial agents to *all* sick persons, for morbid symptoms similar to those they are capable of producing (though apparently) only in so-called idiosyncratic individuals."

To show at once the truth and philosophical insight of these observations, one has only to take as illustrations familiar to the profession, the power of cinchona and of ipecacuanha to produce respectively, in susceptible individuals, a febrile attack resembling a paroxysm of ague and asthmatic bronchitis. Probably not

one in five thousand individuals will develop in health these morbid states, and yet these two medicines are used most successfully by both old and new schools in the treatment of the large majority of cases of these very disorders—ague and asthmatic bronchitis. These observations of Hahnemann's are so far ahead of even the present day, that I do not remember to have met in a single book emanating from the old school with such a common-sense and yet profound view of the meaning of idiosyncrasies.

Allied to this interesting point is the importance Hahnemann claims for alterations of mind and disposition in cases of not strictly mental but corporeal disease. He says: "In all so-called corporeal diseases the condition of the disposition and mind is *always* altered, and in all cases of disease we are called on to cure the state of the patient's disposition is to be specially noted, along with the collective symptoms, if we would trace an accurate pic-

ture of the disease, in order to be able therefrom to treat it homœopathically with success. This holds good to such an extent that the state of the disposition of the patient often gives the chief bias to the selection of the homœopathic remedy, as it often consists in symptoms of marked peculiarity, which, amidst all those present, can least remain concealed from the accurately observing physician. The creator of therapeutic agents has also bestowed particular attention on this main feature of all diseases, the altered state of the disposition and mind, for there is no powerful medicinal substance in the world which does not very perceptibly alter the state of the disposition and mind in the healthy individual who tests it, and every medicine does so in a different manner" ("Organon," par. 110-112).\* Such thoughtful and accurate observations are much

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\* "Thus," says Hahnemann in a note, "thus aconite will seldom or never effect either a rapid or permanent cure in a patient of a calm, equable disposition; and just as little will

in advance of old-school views of the present day, and until the homœopathic key to the use of the remedy is employed the value of these seemingly trivial indications in disease and their reflex in drugs must be passed by as useless for practical purposes.

This leads me again to notice Hahnemann's views on the nature of mental diseases proper, and their treatment, which are marvellous, when we consider the age in which he lived, the ignorance displayed at that time as to the relations of mental diseases to the body as a whole, and the brutal treatment then accorded to the unfortunate sufferers, when asylums were more like jails than places for treatment.

He says (par. 215, &c., "Organon"): "The so-called mental and moral diseases are all almost nothing more than corporeal diseases,

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*nux vomica* be serviceable when the disposition is mild and phlegmatic; *pulsatilla* when it is happy, gay, and obstinate; or *ignatia* when it is imperturbable, and disposed neither to be frightened nor vexed."

in which the peculiar symptom of the derangement of the mind and disposition of each of them is increased, the corporeal symptoms declining (more or less rapidly) the while, till it at length attains the most striking one-sidedness, almost as if it were a local disease in the invisible subtile organ of the mind or disposition. The cases are not rare in which a so-called corporeal disease that threatens to be fatal—a suppuration of the lungs, or the destruction of some other important viscera, or some other acute disease, *e.g.*, in childbed, &c.—becomes transformed into insanity, a kind of melancholia or mania, by a rapid increase of the mental symptoms that were previously present, whereby the corporeal symptoms lose all their danger; these latter improve almost to perfect health, or rather they decrease to such a degree that their obscure presence can only be detected by the constant and minute observation of the physician. In this manner it becomes transformed into a

one-sided, and, as it were, a local disease; and while the symptom of the mental disturbance, which was at first but slight, increases so as to be its chief symptom, and in a great measure occupies the place of the other (corporeal) symptoms, whose violence it subdues in a palliative manner, so that, in a word, the affections of the grosser corporeal organs become, as it were, transferred and led away to the almost spiritual, mental, and moral organs which have never yet been, and never will be, reached by the dissecting scalpel." The truth of such advanced views is now recognised, and the scientific and humane treatment recommended by Hahnemann is nowadays taken as a matter of course.

Lastly, I draw attention to Hahnemann's views as to so-called *local* diseases, which he terms *one-sided* diseases. He says (par. 185, &c. of "Organon"): "Among the one-sided diseases, an important place is occupied by the so-called *local maladies*, by which term

is signified those changes and affections that appear on the external parts of the body, which, as has hitherto been taught, were alone morbidly affected, without any participation on the part of the rest of the body, a theoretical absurd assertion, which has led to the most disastrous medical treatment. . . . But those affections, alterations, and symptoms appearing on the external parts, that do not arise from any external injury, or that have only some slight external wound for their immediate existing cause, are produced in quite another manner—their source lies in some internal malady. To consider these as mere local affections, and, at the same time, to treat them only, or almost only, with local applications, as it were, surgically, as the old physicians have done from the remotest ages, were as absurd as it were dangerous in its results. These affections were considered to be merely local, and were therefore called local diseases, as if they were maladies exclusively limited

to those parts, wherein the organism took little or no part, or affections of these particular visible parts, of which the rest of the living organism, so to speak, knew nothing. And yet very little reflection will suffice to convince us that no external malady (not occasioned by some particular external injury) can, without some internal cause, without the co-operation of the whole organism (which must consequently be in a diseased state), arise, remain in its place, or even grow worse. It could not make its appearance at all without the accord of the whole health, and without the participation of the rest of the living whole (of the vital force that pervades all the other sensitive and irritable parts of the organism); indeed, it is impossible to conceive its production without the instrumentality of the whole (deranged) life; so intimately are all parts of the organism connected together to form an inseparable whole in sensations and functions. No eruption

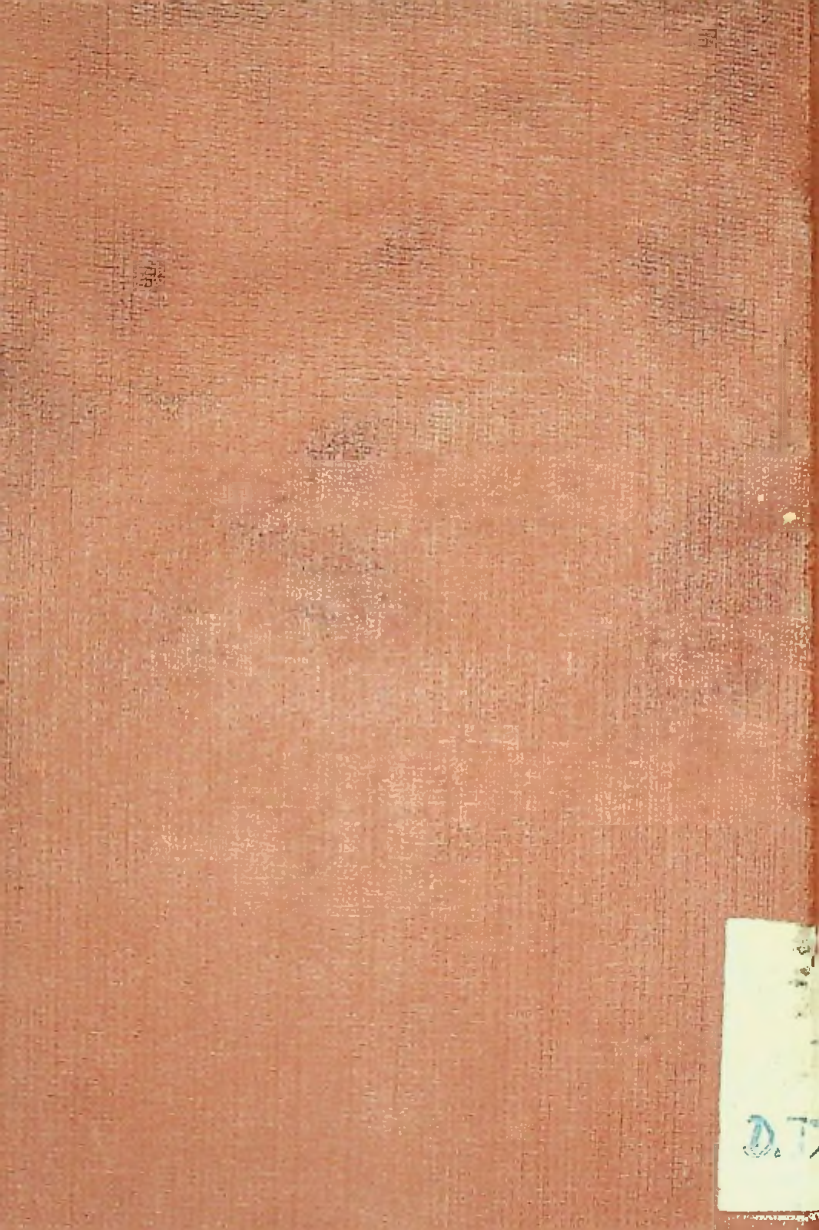
on the lips, no whitlow can occur without previous and simultaneous internal ill-health."

The philosophical acumen shown in these observations of Hahnemann's, far in advance of his day, have of recent years been perceived and acted on to a considerable extent; yet at the present day, owing to therapeutical scepticism, there is evident a marked retrogression in this point to antiquated views and treatment, as witness the management of chronic uterine affections, which are being more and more relegated to surgical or purely local measures; these diseases being regarded, as far as treatment is concerned, as local diseases only.

Had I had time, I should like to have dwelt on his views as to the origin of *chronic* diseases, especially his belief that what he termed "Psora" is at the bottom of so many of those maladies. This "Psora" is not, as some ignorant critics of the old school love to say, the "itch" disease, as we know it, but, as is evident to any one who reads Hahnemann

intelligently, it is only a name for what is now universally recognised and is termed the "herpetic diathesis." But time forbids me to enter further into this most interesting subject, which shows once more Hahnemann's marvellous analytical insight into disease.

Gentlemen, I have done. I think I have said enough to show, in however feeble manner, what a lofty genius Hahnemann was, and how far above his fellows his mind ranged, the rude and rough medicine of his day only bringing forward more vividly by contrast his great mind. The day will come, as surely as I stand here, when the law of similars will be the dominant rule of practice in the profession, and it will then be reckoned a privilege to do anything which will help compensate for the tardy recognition of the genius of *Samuel Hahnemann*, who was first to inaugurate *the reign of law medicine*.



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