

the bowel which nothing seemed to relieve. Since reading Dr. Cooper's little pamphlet all aluminium cooking utensils had been banished from the kitchen, with entire relief of the symptoms. In another instance a favourite dog who had had some of the same soup added to his food every day for some two years gradually developed the same symptoms, and finally died of a condition to which none of the several veterinary surgeons who saw him could put a name. There were no doubt differences in individual idiosyncrasies that accounted for one person suffering while another was not affected. He and his family had had exactly the same diet and yet he had not suffered in any way, though other members had shown their sensitiveness to aluminium poisoning. Dr. Pritchard was most grateful to Dr. Cooper for drawing his attention to a matter which he considered was not only of individual, but also of national importance.

( To be continued )

### \*The Value and Limitations of Homeopathy.

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It does not necessarily follow that because Hahnemann was a thinker—and a very original one—in thinking he was infallible. Few of the great thinkers of history, Hahnemann not excepted, gave us the unadulterated truth. That Hahnemann possessed a great mind and was unusually equipped to enter upon the investigations which finally established the law of similars as at least a working law in therapeutics, there is no question. But the first consideration for the modern physician is whether or not

\* Specially sent to Dr. S. C. Ghose.

that law is based upon facts, in harmony with Nature and, therefore, as useful or more useful in contending against disease and suffering than are other laws or methods of cure. This and this alone should concern the honest, open minded physician who desires above all else to know the truth.

Before it is possible to determine with even a fair degree of accuracy whether or not the law of similars is a law of Nature it is necessary to form some conception of what Nature is. I think it can best be defined by the words "unity" and "harmony." The science of Nature is the science of the relationship by which matter and elements are bound together. Therefore, a new scientific fact is simply the perception of a new relationship. A "Law of Nature," then, means a law which fits or matches other well known laws with harmony and precision. Thus, each new element as it is discovered fits into a kinship of elements where before there had been a gap. "The unrevealed thing is not yet a truth until its relationship is found out. As soon as the scientific eye sees with regard to the new flower or tree, the new chemical element, the new planet, that this matches with all other things known; as soon as the astronomer finds that the hitherto supposed disturbance in his calculation is in fact demanded by the law of gravitation, that it heralds the presence of an unknown asteroid, the area of truth, that is, harmonized knowledge is widened."

It is, with this beautiful conception of Nature in mind, difficult not to stand in wonder at one moment at the marvelous co-relation of the machinery and the forces of the world, and then at the next moment be struck aghast at the disorderly results of the working of this titanic system in the one realm where its working most concerns the physician—in disease, in life and in death,

But while it is probable that a law of healing exists in Nature, it by no means follows that the law of similars is that law. Until comparatively recently it has been impossible to repeat experiments in the biological sciences with unerring certainty. Even in the exact sciences, as we call them, which deal with facts, we touch forces that we cannot always understand. Herbert Spencer has shown that we cannot take up any problem in physics without being quickly led to some metaphysical problem which we cannot quite solve or evade. If this is true of the science of physics, how much more true it is of the science of the human organism. In disease no two cases are alike and it is impossible to make invariable deductions because of the disturbing influences of constitutional bias, race and environment.

It is eminently unfair to judge Hahnemann and his teaching from the scientific data at our command at the present time. We have referred to the status of medicine a century and a quarter ago when Hahnemann began his studies. Few of the great minds in medicine have been free from dogmatism, and Hahnemann dogmatism, especially in his older days, repelled many who otherwise would have investigated his system. It was a dogmatism begot by persecution, by exile, by poverty, by calumny, by unreasonable and intolerant criticism and, finally, by victory and success. This man who drank the very dregs of poverty for truth's sake well deserves all of the encomiums that you and I who have benefited by his sacrifices can bestow upon his memory. His name will be handed down to successive generations as one of the world's benefactors. His writings compared with the writings of his contemporaries in medicine were far in advance of his day and generation—a fact which if anything intensified his dogmatism. But hypothetical explanations have led more

than one great mind into waters too deep for safety. Facts do not always fit hypotheses, even though reason says they should. The law of action will always assert itself. Hahnemann passed from the gross materialism of his day to an extreme infinitesimalism, which is only recently being justified by modern science. I shall later refer, in discussing the small doses of Homeopathy, to some of these findings. In the final analysis there is little choice between the dogmatists belonging to the different schools of medicine; at best the difference is only one of degree.

Modern writers in dealing with the evolution of thought are disposed to stress the fact that the great achievements of science in all of its departments are due entirely to the complete elimination from the scientific mind of all bigotry and prejudice; and that in matters philosophical and religious so little progress has been made because of the common sensitiveness in all discussions in which the "amour propre" of the particular individual concerned is involved. While this may be true of the more exact sciences, it is not true of the science and art of medicine, for the treatment of disease is still an art rather than an exact science. Robinson (2) has shown, in a book yet fresh from the press, that "mankind is lethargic, easily pledged to routine. This is his nature. He is only artificially, partially and very recently, 'progressive.' He has spent almost his whole existence as a savage hunter and in that state of ignorance he illustrated on a magnificent scale all of the inherent weaknesses of the human mind." Changes of belief often cause real mental pain and we are constantly resorting to a psychic smoke screen as a defense against our mental sloth.

Because of this peculiar attitude of mind on the part of physicians every great innovation in medicine has been

antagonized by human passions and human prejudices. Hydrotherapy, which is to-day chiefly relied upon by the older school in the treatment of fevers, was ridiculed for years by that school. Electro-therapy was first exploited by irregulars and quacks but is now a part of the armamentarium of all physical therapists. Twenty years after antiseptics had become recognized by the medical profession as the greatest life saving agent that the world had up to that time witnessed, there were men of no less fame than the late Lawson Tait who ridiculed it. Nearly 50 years after Harvey had announced his great discovery to the world the Paris Royal Society of Medicine gravely listened to an essay which classed it among the impossibilities. Jenner's great discovery, notwithstanding that it affords security from that horrible and once universal plague, smallpox, is still bitterly opposed by a small minority of educated physicians.

It is true that the revolt of Descartes against the scholastic philosophy of the seventeenth century, and the contributions made to science by Newton, Black, Bacon, Lavoisier and Copernicus freed the human mind in matters scientific of much of its bigotry and intolerance. But it is hard for men of any generation not to be influenced by the prejudices and errors of their contemporaries. I am afraid that we of to-day are in no small degree equally prejudiced when confronted with innovations which on first thought seem unreasonable and which, therefore, do not receive the serious consideration absolutely essential if we are to arrive anywhere. This applies to the homeopathic as well as to the regular physician in dealing with those sporadic innovations in medicine based upon one single method of cure, which may possess a modicum of good. It emphatically does

not apply to the homeopathic school in its attitude toward regular medicine.

In order to clarify the atmosphere regarding the comprehensiveness of the homeopathic school let me give for the lay reader the definition of a "homeopathic physician" adopted by the American Institute of Homeopathy, our national organization: "A homeopathic physician," as defined by that body, "is one who adds to his knowledge of medicine a special knowledge of homœopathic therapeutics. All that pertains to the great field of medicine is his by tradition, by inheritance, by right." In other words, we of the homeopathic school are physicians first and homeopathists secondly. We are anxious and willing to utilize any and everything that the regular school has to give us, (and they have given us much) which will prove of service in the prevention and the cure of disease. We insist upon developing and perfecting the law of similars only because we believe it to be a most useful adjunct in the treatment of disease and in the relief of suffering; and we are ready and willing, as soon as something better is given us, to discard that law, if its utilization is longer for the best interests of humanity.

All of which perhaps will sound in no small degree bombastic to the lay reader and as though the homœopathic school after all is the all comprehensive school and that the regular school is in every sense narrow, intolerant, and bigoted. Let us be entirely frank in this matter and admit that all homœopathic physicians do not live up to the ideals of the definition given and, fortunately, many members of the regular school are equally liberal and broad minded. I want to be absolutely just and fair in discussing this phase of the subject. But there is such a thing in law as "circumstantial evidence." Now what are

the facts? I am not a betting man but if I were I would not be afraid to bet, in the language of the street, one hundred to one that if one were to go into the offices of 50 regular physicians of the city of Cleveland, one would not find upon their shelves a total of 10 volumes dealing with homœopathy, except such as were written as a criticism of homeopathy. On the other hand, if one were to go into the offices of fifty progressive homœopathic physicians, one would find their shelves loaded with the latest works on medicine and surgery written by the members of the regular school. This disparity is not because the homœopathic school does not possess a literature of its own for we have a literature of many hundred volumes.

The foregoing will prove of interest to the lay reader only in so far as it leads up to the genesis of homœopathy and the law of similars. It will enable us, as we proceed, better to understand the attitude of the homœopathic profession toward the science and art of medicine as exploited by the regular school as well as our reasons for perpetuating the homœopathic school as a distinct organization.

#### References.

1. The writer's Presidential Address, American Institute of Homœopathy, "Transactions," 1902.
2. "The Mind in the Making," by James Henry Robinson.

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Susceptibility and reaction are basic principles, and very closely allied to the problems of immunization. The similar remedy, the similar disease, satisfies susceptibility and establishes immunity.—H. A. ROBERTS, M. D.