

Des Guidi

LETTER

TO THE

Physicians of France,

ON

HOMŒOPATHY;

BY THE

COUNT DES GUIDI, M.D.

DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FRANCE, INSPECTOR OF THE ACADEMY OF LYONS,
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF NAPLES, &c. &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY

WILLIAM CHANNING, M.D.

“ Duo in medicina fulera sunt ; ratio et experientia. — Experientia præcedit, ratio sequitur ;
hinc rationes in rebus medicis non condite, nil valent.”

FR. HOFFM.

“ The means that Heaven yields must be embraced
And not neglected ; else, if Heaven would
And we would not, Heaven’s offer we refuse.”

SHAK.

NEW-YORK :

MONSON BANCROFT, 389 BROADWAY.

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William Pearson,]

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LETTER

WILLIAM WALKER

HOMEROPATHY

BY WILLIAM WALKER

PHYSICIAN OF THE HOMEROPATHIC DISPENSARY, NEW-YORK

NEW-YORK

WALKER ON TALKING

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1831

THE Letter embraced in the following pages, agitates a question of the deepest interest to all who either practise or need the aid of the healing art. It is a question, the merits of which in this country have been perhaps as little examined by the professional as by the non-professional; and of the small number of the former to whom it has been presented, few indeed have bestowed upon it, besides idle or declamatory speculation, the little attention of *personally canvassing the verity of a single fact alleged by the Homœopathic school*; so predominant are the prejudices, so active the influences, which embarrass the very commencement of such an examination.

To obviate the more formidable of these apparent difficulties, and thus to induce a careful, a candid investigation of the claims of this school upon the serious consideration of those who appreciate the sacred responsibilities of health and life, is the object of this Letter; and with the philanthropic spirit of a sound philosophy, it urges upon such the maxim—not less applicable to rational medicine than to rational theology—“*Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.*” for, “*Veritas, a quocunque dicitur, a Deo est.*”

THE TRANSLATOR.

New-York, May 15, 1834.

TO THE
PHYSICIANS OF FRANCE.

“Per similia morbus fit et per similia adhibita ex morbo sanantur.”

HIPPOC : *De locis in homine*, § 51.

GENTLEMEN :

I anxiously desire to awaken your attention to one of the most important questions ever submitted to your consideration. But, unknown as I am to most of you, I feel the necessity of first establishing some claim upon your indulgent attention, by placing what I have to say under the patronage of a physician, who honored me with his esteem, and whose renown constitutes a part of your glory—the late Doctor Sainte Marie. In presenting myself in the name of this physician, whom the faculty of Lyons, while paying him the last honors, lately, through the learned Prunelle, saluted as their prince, do I not virtually place myself under the auspices of that whole faculty, of that enlightened body, whose reputation is every where so well established? I will then quote Doctor Sainte Marie, and perhaps more than once; but as I shall hardly cite any one besides, and shall confine myself to the most unpretending of his works—a simple preface, which, to be sure, is of itself worth a volume—I shall thus avoid fatiguing your patience by a display of erudition as easy as unnecessary to my purpose.

“It is certain,” says St. Marie, “that we sometimes cure by acting in concert with nature; completing with our aids the salutary efforts which she has commenced, and which she has not the power to perfect. It is thus that Rivière, at a period when Cinchona was as yet unknown, cured ataxic intermittent lethargic fevers, by giving opium in the intermissions. J. P. Frank reports a curious observation relative to this principle, and which I cannot here omit. A man of forty years of age was reduced to the last stage of consumption, by a diarrhœa of very long standing. The sufferer listened to the propositions of an empiric, who gave him a drastic powder, the ingredients of which he carefully concealed. Excessive purgation of the most violent kind was the consequence. The patient was at the point of death, but his discharges ceased at this crisis, and in a short time

his health was firmly and entirely restored. On this occasion Frank asks whether drastics might not sometimes cure diarrhœas? A similar fact occurred under my own eyes in 1817. An artist of this city was wasting for ten months under a diarrhœa, with slight colic. Neither the best regulated regimen at first, nor the most severe diet afterwards,—neither emollients nor antiphlogistics of any kind, could effect a cure. He took, one day, unknown to any one, a strong dose of Le Roy's purgative elixir. He vomited several times, and was horribly purged for twenty-four hours. All thought he was about to die, he had become so feeble and emaciated. But this crisis passed, convalescence commenced, and was at once rapid and complete.

“Again, the following fact seems referrible to this order of considerations. A quack, in the vicinity of Lyons, has acquired some celebrity, since 1803, in the treatment of epilepsy. He does not exact his fee till two years after the treatment of the case, and when the cure seems well confirmed to all the world. His secret consists in a powder which he causes to be taken in the morning, and he requires his patient to lie in bed the rest of that day, under the apprehension that if he continue up, he would fall and kill himself in a fit; and, in truth, many and violent attacks of epilepsy take place within the twenty-four hours. The patient is found the next morning in extreme debility, with stupor or delirium: but here terminates the treatment and the operation of the remedy. The patient is free from his disease for many years, sometimes even for ever. It is impossible that these facts should occur by mere chance; they are undoubtedly to be referred to some *Grand Therapeutical Law*, which I have perhaps suggested in the principle above noticed, but which remains to be better determined than I have yet been able to do it.” (*Nouveau Formulaire medical et pharmaceutique, par Etienne Sainte Marie, Paris et Lyon, Fevrier 1820. Preface, page 80.*)

This law, Gentlemen, recognised at different epochs of the medical art, imagined, suspected and in a manner appealed to by Doctor Sainte Marie, this *Grand Therapeutical Law* has been fixed, defined and reduced to a formula by Doctor Samuel Hahnemann—and it is Homeœopathy. He has successfully made innumerable applications of it, not by means of barbarous and dangerous tortures, like those of which we have just spoken, but by the slightest possible aggravation of the disease, and by means of the mildest remedies. Around him is forming, expanding and daily augmenting a new science, a system of medicine wholly new, which thus far steadily justifies the anticipations of its founder, opens to physicians an interminable career of brilliant achievement, and promises to humanity incalculable blessings.

Our chance of attention would indeed be slight, were we to speak of a new system of medicine in ordinary times, when your

own distinguished success, the fruit of your zeal and talents, induces you often to pardon the system of the schools, its deficiencies, its uncertainties and its errors, and indemnifies you, at least in part, for the painful disappointments which you too often owe to the imperfection of the science, the insufficiency of the art. But the invasion of a plague, which has desolated one portion of the continent, and which still menaces the rest of it, must change the disposition of your minds. When the weakness, not to say the nullity, of the reigning medicine, compels you to seek every where for new lights and new remedies for the Cholera, may I not hope for a moment of attention in replying to your general and distracting cry of impotence and distress, in the name of Homœopathy? Can you reject without examination, the promises of another school, where your own effects so little, even in the hands of men who best understand all its secret virtues, and who employ them with a zeal indefatigable, a devotion heroical? For, well may we ask, who can flatter himself—without essaying some new path—with the hope of more success than the Broussais, the Recamiers, the Magendies, the Marjolins?

Hahnemann, that illustrious old man, who, at the age of 77 years, still pursues with an incredible activity his long career of labor, is the same Hahnemann to whom we have been long indebted for a very important pharmaceutical preparation. In close intimacy with Lavoisier and our other great chemists of that period, a splendid station amongst them awaited him; but he preferred to devote to the art of healing his days, his genius, and his untiring industry. Chemistry needed not two Lavoisiers, medicine demanded one. Hahnemann, the favorite pupil of Wagner, and honored at the commencement of his career with the confidence and friendship of Quarin, was frequently entrusted by that celebrated professor with the care of his patients in Vienna. It was in 1790 that he commenced that series of experimental investigations which have laid the foundation of a new science, and which nothing to this day has interrupted.

His discoveries, despised and persecuted at first, as all great discoveries are, then insensibly comprehended, adopted, and propagated, now reign over a compact and already numerous school of disciples in Germany, in Russia, in Sweden, in Denmark, in Poland, in England, in Italy, and even in America. The Physicians of this school give the greatest publicity to their labors; and at this very day, in countries of *surveillance and censure*, in the midst of cities where they reside, encompassed by antagonists and rivals, where they have combatted the cholera in presence of so many witnesses, they with one voice loudly proclaim their triumph over this Hydra. Their remedial measures have every where been nearly the same, as traced beforehand with admirable felicity in the code of their practice, The *Materia Medica* of Hahnemann.

What is then, this doctrine which dares to speak of its success in the face of the ablest physicians of Europe, admitting their own impotence—this doctrine, still so foreign to our region? Doubtless not one of you, Gentlemen, but would ask this question; and with your permission I will devote a few pages to its answer. Above all, I shall especially aim to be clear.

It is in the books of Hahnemann and of his disciples that we shall discover the whole science, together with its methodical progress, its exact language, and its rigorous demonstrations. To give a very general idea of Homœopathy, and vividly to impress you with the importance of an immediate and thorough investigation of its claims, is the sole object of this letter. That accomplished, my highest wishes will have been attained.

Two great general truths, both heretofore more or less overlooked, constitute the basis of the new school. They are believed to be incontrovertibly established by millions of experiments, fortified by a host of observations in every age, and to lead to practical deductions the most comprehensive and the most auspicious.

Here is the first. The cure of a disease is to be effected by means of a morbid power capable of producing symptoms similar and a little more active. The cause of this fact is to be found in the eternal and unchangeable laws of Nature, which hitherto have been misunderstood. (*Organon*, § XLIII.) Whence it results that the remedy which will cure a disease, is precisely that which, in a healthy man, has the power of producing a similar affection; the cure being effected by exhausting the disease and consummating the salutary effort of Nature, as conjectured by Sainte Marie,—the same grand therapeutical law surmised and appealed to by this writer twelve years ago.

It was first in pursuit of this fundamental law, and afterwards in order to verify and establish it, and to draw from it from day to day new practical results, that Hahnemann and his fearless disciples have for months and years made upon themselves, in perfect health, experiments with more than one hundred and fifty remedies, whose number is slowly but steadily increasing.

It appears to me that all prejudices should cease against a school which alone, amidst the boastings of its rivals, presents itself to us, frankly avowing “My agents are as yet but few, their catalogue will only be completed by the concurrent action of the medical faculty; let them labor then with ardor—the mine is fruitful, and the last comers may soon be the first.” What doctrine has ever presented itself with more modesty, and yet what doctrine has ever supported the most exaggerated pretensions by careful experiments, so multiplied, so persevering.

Would such a series of investigations, were they even united by an illusory principle, were they even yet without application,

would it deserve to be despised in our *Materia Medica*, so destitute as it is, with all its pitiful abundance, of precision and strictness? Would our *Therapeutics* be without hope of deriving from it, sooner or later, some fruit? Or, would it perchance, have the vanity to consider itself perfect? Perfect! "*Therapeutics*," says the writer just quoted, "is not a new science, merely because of the immense space which opens before us, when we examine the discoveries to be made and what the actual state of things renders possible or probable; but this consideration derives additional weight from the uncertainty which reigns in the rules already established, and which we have the presumption to consider the most fixed, the most invariable and the most infallible." (*Ibid.* p. 21.)

Now to the second great fact. In opposing to a given malady the medicine recognized as capable of producing its *fac simile*, Hahnemann soon saw that in our ordinary doses, the object proposed was often defeated; whether by excessive aggravation of the evil, or by provoking reactions so strong as to reject the curative agent without allowing it time to produce its legitimate effect, or from some other cause, was not material; for this matter-of-fact school seeks no support in vain conjectures. Thence he was led to think that, inasmuch as there was specific analogy or affinity between the two elements present—the disease and the remedy—it was possible that this relation, depending in the medicine much more upon its nature than upon its quantity, might render the least portions of it sufficiently active; just as in the experiments of Spallanzani, a drop of the spermatic fluid of the frog is divided *ad infinitum*, and so long as its nature remains unchanged, it still fecundates millions of eggs. In short, from experiment to experiment, and by whatever route he traversed, to Hahnemann the truth was constantly reiterated, that it was by a dose incredibly small that the homœopathic remedy prepared in a special manner, was to be administered. And he soon published definite and easy processes, by which was facilitated the employment of every remedy, by grains, by hundredths, thousandths, millionths, decillionths of a grain.

These, Gentlemen, are the fundamental points in the Homœopathic school; and from these emanate with a rigorous precision, the numberless developments and applications with which this school is hourly enriching itself, and in the midst of which is seen, always predominant, the mighty genius which has founded it.

If Homœopathy, instead of being a science wholly experimental, were nothing but an ingenious tissue of the imagination, it would undoubtedly have exacted from us in more than one instance, some tribute of curiosity, by its name, by the past services and the immense labors of its inventor, by the constantly

accumulating number of its votaries, and by the continued announcements of their therapeutical success. It would have been pleasant to contemplate the spider's web, which was capable of sustaining in air such an edifice, and of animating so many machines. So that, even if Homœopathy were at bottom but a learned speculation foreign to the practice of medicine, the meditative spirit of many among us would assuredly have dedicated to it some idle moments. How is it then, that with its triple character of profound speculation, of positive science, and of science eminently practical, it is still almost unknown to us? What are the obstacles opposed to its propagation?

The same questions have often been raised in reference to all great discoveries. Nor would we frown upon that law, salutary perhaps, which condemns them all to a period of humiliation, of contest and of trial. But time presses—the danger is imminent, and may not the duration of this trial be abridged by circumstances so urgent? How cruel would it be for us all, Gentlemen, and what reproaches should we entail upon ourselves, if we should discover but one day too late, that the means of triumphing over the Cholera was under our pillow, and we had put off the important business of looking there till to-morrow! Shall we prefer the chance of these regrets, to the danger of wasting a few hours in this investigation?

Three difficulties, which we are about to weigh, almost always present themselves to the mind of a physician who first hears of Homœopathy. At a later stage when better known, it doubtless expects to encounter other obstacles; but our object now is, not to repel assaults as yet not made upon it, but simply to ask for an examination of its merits; we shall hence confine ourselves to obviate some of the causes which prevent this examination.

I. Is the principle "*Similia similibus curantur*," which, if once demonstrated, would be unquestionably of primary importance, worth the trouble of investigation? Has it, in the actual state of our knowledge, any probabilities which encourage, or at least which sanction the undertaking? Certainly not, if as has been satirically said, and as is often repeated with so much *gout*, "Hahnemann sees nothing more certain than that the cut of an axe will cure the cut of a sabre, or than that a man who has fallen from a window, may certainly be cured by throwing him from a balcony." But this is by no means the process of Hahnemann; it is *too witty* to be compatible with his good sense.

But if the Homœopathic principle, deduced as it is from experiments at once numerous, severe and easy of repetition, concentrates besides, many interesting facts which engage the attention of all physicians, and of which they have often sought the law; if this principle, however novel it may at first appear,

is less a new creation, than the development—the promulgation of a doctrine, which even as such, has always had an existence in our art, we do not see how the enlightened physician can dispense with the examination which it demands. If he can, we would humbly ask what object would be worthy of his attention?

Two therapeutical methods, universally admitted, and capable according to circumstances, of lending to each other a mutual support, have up to this period, appeared to constitute the principal power of the Healing Art. The one, the revulsive—the derivative method—displaces one malady by another; it substitutes sweating for a diarrhœa, a diarrhœa for an ophthalmia, a cutaneous rubefaction for an affection of the chest, &c. Whatever may be the ultimate results of these proceedings, it is enough for our purpose to admit that by them the malady is combatted by means of a different malady. This is what Hahnemann calls *Allopathy*.*

The other method—the direct method—the method of contraries, attacks the very front of the disease by an action believed to be directly opposite to its own, adopting as its principle the maxim “*Contraria contrariis curantur.*” This method aims to arrest constipation by purgatives, certain diarrhœas by astringents, sleeplessness by narcotics; it employs Cinchona by assigning to it a virtue opposed to periodical irritations; Mercury, by considering it antisiphilitic, &c. This method is called by Hahnemann *Antipathy*.

Now, by the side of these two methods—the reigning Queens of that science, the object of so many efforts, of so much discussion and research—there has existed from all antiquity, a third method, which enters very obviously into a share of the labors, if not of the honors, attributed to the two others. Every day we hear this language, “we must give this ulcer or this catarrh activity in order to dissipate it: we must give to this disease a certain degree of acuteness,” &c. Who of us has not seen, in the works of authority, in the practice of able professors as well as in the hands of ignorance or chance, at one time Rhubarb or Aloes applied to the cure of diarrhœas; at another, sweats yielding to sudorifics, vomitings to emetics, and comatose paroxysms of pernicious fevers to opium? Paré removes an herpetic eruption, and Dupuytren an erysipelas, by applying to them blisters.*

Facts of this kind are numerous and of every day's occurrence. They are known, they are cited at least as examples of a temerity sometimes fortunate; and it is perceived that, in the midst of their uncertainty and danger, they embrace an important truth. We even try to imitate them with caution, but in

* General usage gives the name of Allopaths or Allopathists to all physicians who are not Homœopaths or Homœopathists.

* Others again, ^{apply} erysipelatous inflammation, by the application of Nit. Argenti.

the end we arrive at nothing satisfactory. They stand as anomalies, under a species of provisory exceptional law recognized and admitted, rather than promulgated in the art. The common herd of physicians find in them nothing but anomalies—*singular cases*; but thinkers perceive that so many similar facts cannot be the work of chance, and they feel the necessity of attributing them to some principle more elevated. Our first quotation from Dr. Sainte Marie, gives a sufficiently exact idea of the kind of perplexity with which true physicians contemplate these isolated cases, ask themselves where is their general law, and what place is reserved for it in medicine. Unfortunately, no powerful mind had as yet, made this law a special object of meditation and research; and this question, so long rich in materials for its solution, was still new, when Hahnemann appeared.

Engaged in translating the *Materia Medica* of Cullen, and cloyed even to loathing with the hypotheses and learned reveries there huddled together to explain the action of remedies, he determined to try upon himself, then in full health, the powers of Cinchona. In his place we might have reasoned perhaps, and we might probably have reasoned till this time. Hahnemann experimented.

Was this procedure wise? Was it praiseworthy? Was it of a nature to be avowed by Hippocrates, by Galen, Boerhaave, Sydenham, Baglivi; in short, by every physician the world has known? And if, from this experiment there results a fact however unexpected it may be, is not this fact, with the inductions and other facts to which it may lead, a part of the domain of Medical science, and are they not fully authorised to produce their credentials?

Rational medicine would indeed be but a barbarous and brutal folly if it would deny this right; and it is not thus, Gentlemen, that you understand and honor it. The truly rational medicine, that which you cherish, that which Hahnemann cultivates in common with you, the *Medicine of Experience and Induction*, can proscribe no fact. You applaud then, the experiment of Hahnemann, you admit all its legitimate consequences, however strange they may appear to you—you accept them, though they should reiterate that which you but too well know, that which all your instructors continually say to you of the insufficiency and the inanity of the reigning theories, the imperfection and the poverty of therapeutical science, such as ages have left it with us, even at this day.

Hahnemann discovered, in thus experimenting upon himself, that the Cinchona has the power of creating an intermittent fever, analogous to that form of it which it cures most perfectly. This unforeseen result forced upon him the recollection that the sovereign antisyphilitic has also the property of producing syphi-

loid symptoms ; and that a kind of itch is caused by sulphur, itself a powerful antipruritic.

This approximation under the same law, of three substances, and these the very articles whose salutary action has given to medicine its most uniform and most certain results, ought it to rest here ? Would you yourselves be contented with it ? And could Hahnemann dispense with rallying to these three primary facts the numerous other facts we have mentioned, all of which, in the same manner as the Cinchona, the Sulphur and the Mercury, display the marvellous exhibition of a curative virtue existing in a power analogous to that of the disease itself ? Could he forget how striking was the resemblance of the vaccine disease to the variola which it displaces ? Could he forget that the *vis medicatrix naturæ*—the conservative instinct of organised beings—manifests itself ordinarily by an augmentation of the disorder, and that in the maladies cured by nature alone, it is precisely when the disease has reached its height that the cure commences ?

So many data imposed upon the observer, as an imperative duty, the investigation of the general question, whether substances capable of producing diseases, were not also adequate to the cure of similar diseases ; and accordingly the clinical observations of Hahnemann and of his friends, went to establish, that in fact Copper, for example, which causes bloody stools and convulsions, is all powerful against such diseases ; that Colocynth, Rhubarb, Veratrum, cure many species of dysentery and diarrhœa ; that atoms of Cantharides extinguish inflammations of the bladder, &c. &c. It was in the course of these experiments, so new, so beautiful, so necessary to our shapeless *Materia Medica*, that Hahnemann himself, recognizing a confirmation of past observations, in a property of Belladonna to excite in the healthy man symptoms similar to those of scarlet fever, conceived the hope, and was soon enabled to establish by thousands of cases, that the Belladonna was sovereign against *Scarlatina*, not only as a remedy, but even as a preventive. This discovery, adopted for a long time past in Germany by practitioners in all the schools, and which alone would suffice to immortalize him, appears but a by-play amidst the astonishing labors and multiplied discoveries of this wonderful man.

Reversing the question, another inquiry calling for experimental demonstration, was, whether medicines which have the most constant and best ascertained curative virtues, would give to a healthy man the symptoms which they most readily removed in the sick. And it was soon ascertained that *Hyosciamus* and *Assafœtida*, for example, excited nervous affections similar to those which they most certainly relieve.

Strong in his own experience, and fortified by the experience of medicine in all times and in all places, might he not conclude

that the method which cures by aggravating the malady, which cures by taking upon itself as it were, the whole burden of the disease, in order immediately after to let it fall without support—that this anonymous, this unrecognized method, the parent of so many happy chances for the ignorant, the object of the research and the habitual solicitude of distinguished practitioners—in short, Homœopathy, was the curative method *par excellence*, the real strength of the healing art; that to it belongs the honor of so many cures hitherto claimed by the method of contraries, the hope of rendering useless all the aids of the derivative method, and the true solution of the problem proposed by Celsus, and so long proposed in vain—*Cito, tuto et jucunde!*

Which of us, Gentlemen, placed near Hahnemann, following step by step the progress of his ideas, daily familiarizing ourselves with the numerous facts that each day revealed to the indefatigable experimenter, would not have been irresistibly drawn to the same conclusions with himself? And because we have slept, amused with our antiquated dreams during these gigantic labors, because medicine has marched on without us, do we no longer recognize her? Are we no longer willing that she should be the Healing Art, and have we the courage to ask ourselves if she merits our attention?

Without doubt, the space traversed by Hahnemann is immense; but must a Columbus again be cast into irons for having boldly dashed across the Atlantic? And must pigmy navigators alone be allowed to extend the bounds of discovery? And besides, why forget that, though the voyage is great, it does not conduct us to a strange land? We were all well acquainted with Homœopathy long before Hahnemann had given it its garb and called it by name. Even now, emetics are employed at Paris to counteract the vomiting of the Cholera; sudorifics have long been in use against morbid sweats, soporifics against sleepiness, and convulsives against epilepsy. What hinders us, in this same route in which we have marched for four thousand years, from opposing sedatives to sedation, excitants to irritations, &c.? and thus, behold us completely Homœopathists without leaving our homes? All the difference is, that Hahnemann, one of our brethren, has by an impulse of genius, filled in a single life a space, which at our ordinary gait, we should not probably have traversed in seven or eight centuries; with this simple qualification—truly not so great a misfortune to us or to humanity—that we are his contemporaries, and he is one of us.

It would be shameful to insist longer upon this question. The facts which have thrown Hahnemann upon his discovery, are so numerous, they are so entirely within the precincts of Hippocratic Medicine, they have already aroused the solicitude of so many of our thinkers, and Hahnemann himself has taken so much care

to collect them, that, instead of finding Homœopathy so foreign to our knowledge and our studies, it is rather a matter of surprise that so many ages, rich in facts so well adapted to bring it to light, have passed without its recognition.

Let us then, conclude that every enlightened physician, very far from finding in what is well known, a motive which forbids his examination of homœopathy, will, on the contrary, surrender himself to it so much the more earnestly as he is better acquainted with medicine, its history, its controversies, its deficiencies and its demands.

II. Let us approach another difficulty. It is asked, if the curative power attributed by Hahnemann to infinitesimal doses, is so far probable, or rather possible, that the physician who has any respect for himself, can venture to see in this pretension, any thing but an extravagance unworthy of examination?

In the first place, it would be unjust to put in comparison the doses adopted by the two schools, without taking into account the degree of action expected from them by each. The old practice administers its doses, either simply to create new disturbance, for example, artificial diarrhœa, vomiting, diaphoresis, &c., or, to combat directly an existing evil by means of agents deemed to be opposed, such as constipation by purgatives, dryness of the skin by sudorifics, &c. It has then an entirely new condition to originate, with no favoring predispositions in the first case, and in opposition to adverse predispositions in the second. Hence then, it has always a great task to accomplish, and it is perhaps, right that its doses should be proportioned to its wants. Homœopathy, on the contrary, has only the modest pretension of aggravating, in an infinitely small degree, the disease which exists, and which of itself, affords to it the most suitable of all possible predispositions. With so little to effect, and with organic conditions so conducive to its purpose, it is but justice to allow that its doses may be proportioned to what it wishes them to accomplish; and it would be unreasonable to make a general exception to its minute doses, as if it expected from them greater effects than it does.

Let us now add, that the particular mode of preparing homœopathic medicines ought to be taken into the account. The astonishing energy which this mode develops in the subject matter, may be seen in Hahnemann's works, and can be readily established by experience, whenever it is desired; but, while waiting for that desire, let us recall some known facts which may dispose us to regard as possible what Homœopathsists say in this respect. Practitioners at all periods, have attached great importance to the reduction of certain medicines, antimomial preparations for example, into powder of extreme fineness. It is well known that a particular preparation of Cinchona has been highly

extolled, especially in England; yet it differed from others only in this, that it was so pulverized that the moistened point of a knife would take up enough to destroy an intermittent fever. Facts of this kind, at once numerous and long well known, are in general, too much overlooked, too little examined; but has the physician who has thus neglected them, the right to deny in advance every inference which those may draw from them who have made them their special study? We confine ourselves to the exhibition of this injustice, and instead of our own, offer the testimony of a practitioner who will certainly not be denied a hearing, upon a question which here can be only glanced at.

He writes thus: "I will first mention a singular and scarcely noted effect, though it occur every day;—it is the increased activity which certain substances acquire when they are mixed with water in certain proportions. This liquid, far from abating their virtue, as one would at first be led to suppose, only serves to develop it. Is it because the active principle is diluted—is rendered more penetrating, and by means of a subtile vehicle, is made to act upon a greater number of parts and tissues, which it would not reach but for this dilution? Cullen had already remarked, that calves were better nourished and more easily fatted, when the milk with which they were fed, was diluted with an equal quantity of water, than when given to them without dilution. I have often proved upon myself that a given quantity of wine, capable of producing a slight degree of intoxication, has more readily brought me to that state when mixed with an equal quantity of water. Many persons, very capable of self-observation, have assured me that they were more stimulated by a cup of coffee, taken with as much or even twice as much milk, than by a cup of coffee pure." (*Ibid.* p. 56.)

Let us now cursorily examine how far what we know, presents any obstacles to our faith in the power of doses much smaller than ordinary, and authorizes us to reject without inquiry, every thing which may be said of that power.

Is it in the facts that we see every day—or is it in fundamental facts, in the principles, in the spirit of medical science, that we shall find *a priori* evidence of the impotence of these doses?

Far from being thus influenced by the facts which fill our annals, we recognize among them, on the contrary, numberless precedents furnishing presumptive evidence of the power attributed by Hahnemann to these minute doses. There is no course of Elementary Physics, which has not commenced by proving to us the extreme divisibility of matter by the example of that everlasting grain of Musk, which has the power, without impoverishing itself, of filling with its odour unmeasured space and time. In this common-place of the schools, it is not the fault of the fact, that we have scarcely thought of it only as a demonstra-

tion of a property of matter, whilst it exhibited to us in a striking manner a physiological law of the greatest fertility. No! The odour of Musk, of Amber, or of Assafœtida is not merely matter extended—it is also a power which acts forcibly and profoundly upon the animal organism. In one case, its effects are bounded indeed,—and this is not a trifle,—to a perception more or less vivid and durable. In another it causes syncope, in a third vomiting, sleeplessness, vertigo, abortion, and it may even extinguish life. Will not all this put us on the way to infinitesimal doses?

I know that such ethereal, pervading odours, appearing to act specially upon the brain and nervous system, and to address themselves as it were directly to the soul, we have insensibly accustomed ourselves to consider only as a kind of metaphysical power, in which the odour was every thing and the matter nothing; a power, which we have not dared to believe that atoms in any other form could possess—"so little," it may be said, "is required to overturn the economy, if we act upon the brain! A tickling, a word, a look, a surprise have this power. And why should not odours so penetrating have it, even though the matter which conveys them, were a thousand times more attenuated? But to stop a hæmorrhage, to resolve a phlegmon, to break a quartan fever, oh! this is very different; matter plays so great a part in these corporeal and subordinate evils, that to exercise any influence over them it is absolutely necessary to employ a great deal of matter."

In despite of the severe logic, the rigorous and precise language which physics, chemistry, and almost all the sciences have created to themselves, there yet remains so much ambiguity in the ratiocinations, such want of precision and so much metaphor in the versatile and vague language of physicians, that we are fully justified in ascribing to them such remarks, as the only mode of understanding why, for so many ages, they have dwelt only upon the diffused atoms of this classic odour of Musk, instead of contemplating it specially in relation to the striking power with which these atoms are invested, and pursuing this fact into all the developments and applications of which it is susceptible. Odours not cephalic, and with effects more substantial, if we may use this language, gave them the same lesson, and they have profited no better by it.

Here is the odour of Manna or of Senna becoming purgative, and there that of Camphor counteracting the pernicious influence of a vesicatory upon the urinary passages; it matters not; it is still said—"These are anomalies, desultory facts from which nothing can be inferred; besides it is, no doubt, by the intervention of the brain, by the uneasiness or the well-being induced in the sensitive centre, that such results take place." Thus it is always the odour, and never the odourous matter which engages

their attention; it is always that favored pituitary membrane which is invested with the most astonishing and exclusive privileges, at the expense of the numberless nervous ramifications intimately interwoven with all the tissues, which infuse into them a sensibility so exquisite, and which fulfil there, functions so delicate, so subtle and so varied.

Well then, let us quit the odours, since, notwithstanding the frequency, the energy and the diversity of their phenomena, they cannot at any price put us on our course. Let us quit them, and without inhaling the odour of this terebinthinate spirit, confine yourself to touching it with the little finger, and immediately one of the most inferior, the most material of your functions will attest the power of the atoms which have acted in this feeble contact. Here you are altogether free from odours and confronted by the energy of infinitesimal doses. Let us proceed; innumerable facts are still at hand to support and direct us. These facts are as old as the world, it is not Hahnemann who has created them. What quantity of matter is imparted by a branch of Delphinium to him, who, from merely plucking it, becomes the subject of torturing convulsions? How much is received from the touch so formidable, of the *Rhus-Toxicodendron*? What is the minimum of the vaccine dose,—of that dose which will triumph through a whole life? What is the minimum of the rabid virus? Of the venom preserved in the desiccated fang long severed from a reptile? Of the poison of the savage arrow for ever mortal? Where are the balances to weigh the air of marshes which overthrows armies and desolates provinces?

Look to other sources—they will not fail you. The common people often so truly wise, witnesses of the contests which have been constantly maintained among the proudly learned of our academies, the people I say, time immemorial, have put a lump of sulphur into the watering-tubs of sick domestic animals, and science has not dared to pronounce the medication useless. The people have preserved the practice of rendering spring water vermifuge, by boiling it with a few globules of mercury consecrated by inheritance in their families to this use; and a crowd of distinguished practitioners, writers on the *Materia Medica*, have recommended this remedy. What shall we say of those mineral waters, which with atoms of neutral salt, detected by Chemistry with great difficulty, have more diuretic and laxative effects than the same salts administered otherwise by the handful?

If physicians as a body have not sufficiently reflected upon these facts, if they have not seen all the deductions which by studying and generalizing they might draw from them, it is but justice to say that physicians have not all permitted themselves to be governed by the prescribed doses of our dispensaries—

one or two ounces, one or two drachms, one or two grains—that strange bed of Procrustes, to which it seems that all the vital susceptibilities must adapt themselves. Many practitioners in fact, have employed for example, much smaller doses than those usually advocated by the schools; many, after having long opposed ounces of Cinchona to intermittent fevers, have finished by opposing them as effectually with one or two drachms. They administer the sulphate of Quinine in doses of six or eight grains, and very often one or two suffice. The Sublimate is sometimes administered by fortieths or fiftieths of a grain, against inveterate syphilis. Do you not sometimes cause vomiting with the fourth part of a lozenge, which contains only one twentieth of a grain of Ipecacuanha? Have not Opium, Belladonna, Aconite been divided into twentieths and thirtieths of a grain? Such examples are real and numerous, and they attest that if nothing is fixed as to the limits of doses, many physicians seek to reduce them, some to one point and some to another; that it is a want felt, a way open, and that if in the midst of all these isolated, imperfect attempts, a man of talents presents himself, after having elaborated the question during forty years, we are sufficiently advanced in this matter to listen to him with respect, and to understand how far his labors may be useful to us.

But though all these precedents should fail us at once, would not alone the experiments of Spallanzani upon the diffusibility of the spermatic fluid of the Frog, compel us to see nothing incredible in the power of homoœpathic doses? Under the inspection of that incomparable observer, the impregnating fluid, diluted with water, has shown itself susceptible of division without losing its virtue, to such a degree that there was scarcely a trillionth of a grain in the drop, with which an egg was impregnated. Why should not the soporific virtue of one substance and the febrifuge virtue of another, as mysterious and incomprehensible in their essence as the impregnating virtue of an animal fluid, and directed like it to the vital forces no less mysterious, obey the same law? Is not such the thought of Spallanzani, when carrying his eagle eye to the question, he invites observers to pursue the route which he has just opened, and exclaims, as if by an admirable foresight of the discoveries of Hahnemann, “Oltre alla luce che spanderebbero sull’ oscuro divisato problema, non v’ha dubbio ch’è fossero per rischiarare altrè punti diversi del mondo animale!”*

Let us pause here: incontestable facts in nature, in art, in vulgar usages, throng around the enlightened physician enforcing upon him the power of the minutest doses of medicinal agents,

* “Besides the light which they would shed upon the obscure problem proposed, there is not a doubt that they would reflect much upon various other points of the animal world!”

and directing his attention in the most urgent manner to the doctrine which proposes them.

But it may be urged that it is above all these facts—in facts more elevated and more controlling, in those which constitute the principles, the very genius of the science—that the observing physician finds traced, *a priori*, the condemnation of these doses. Far from it! Medicine is the science of life—and, great God! do we then so thoroughly understand what life is, as to dare to pronounce that the powers capable of acting upon it must necessarily be equivalent to so many pounds, so many ounces, or so many grains of matter? Life! Is it not on the contrary, more subject to powers imponderable?—even a gesture—a look—a tone of voice—a ray of light or of caloric—a current of electricity—are they not more absolute in their dominion over it? Life! How little matter it sometimes demands for its resuscitation even in that function which is most strictly and servilely bound to matter, Nutrition? See that man sinking with weariness and hunger; repose and abundant aliment are indispensable fully to restore his exhausted forces, and to repair his withered and impoverished organs; and yet a single mouthful of bread, a piece of sugar, a spoonful of wine, a mere alimentary atom when compared with the wants of his case, will forthwith revive, and for some hours sustain those failing masses, inspiring with a breath of vigor that vast machine shattered and falling into ruins.

Life! We no longer indeed confide it to levers, cables, wheels and pulleys; but how many reminiscences of these Boerhaavian theories still habitually and without our knowledge, influence our ideas? Because we see organs extended, deformed, palsied, it seems to us impossible to relieve suffering life from the masses of matter which overwhelm it, without copious evacuations, or without giving it, in its struggles, ponderous and massive auxiliaries against an enemy so materially commensurable.

But let us look a little closer, let us search for life, such as we really conceive it to be—let us seek the vital source of all these disorders in the elements of the organism in which it resides; there lies the evil. It is not an axe, nor a club—it is the finest of your needles that can strike it there, located as it is between elementary atoms. The matter of some grains of Quinine insinuated within the vast array, the formidable apparel with which life is invested in a paroxysm of pernicious fever, is it any thing other than this needle? And shall any one be so culpable in your eyes, because he shall have prepared for you needles finer and sharper still?

All physicians agree that medicines can act only by reason of the vital susceptibilities with which they are engaged, whatever may be the masses of matter which it is proposed to disturb,

to remove, to dissolve; and all agree that the scale of the vital susceptibilities is still very uncertain, hardly even sketched. Men of observation, especially in Italy, have lately extended this scale at one extremity, in curing mortal diseases with frightful doses of poison. The schools, indignant at first at so much audacity, have not however, been slow to perceive that there was nothing at all inconsistent with their notions of life and the general laws of therapeutics, but that, on the contrary, it was simply a new and unexpected application of principles universally admitted. In their turn, other physicians of Germany have just elongated the scale at the other extremity; they inform us that the feeblest agent may not always be feeble; thanks to that versatility in the vital aptitudes which ordains that poison shall not always be poison. Virtually, is not all this in accordance with the oldest and best established practice? And if because we have not yet thought of it, an application of our most certain and undisputed maxims astonishes and confounds us, will not such an inconsistency on our part astonish our successors still more? Will they understand how we have been able to confine ourselves so long to the vulgar limits which blind routine, in the name of rational medicine, prescribes to our doses;—a routine which continues unhappily to encumber with material chains, those sublime ideas of life which we have so often admired in Hippocrates, Vanhelmont, Stahl, Barthez, Bordeu and Bichat?

Let us conclude, by admitting that the minuteness of homœopathic doses, in reference to the mode of preparation which elaborates them, and to what they have to do, is strictly in accordance with a very great number of facts recorded by physicians of all times, as well as with the soundest principles of the science. It is not with astrology, it is not even with chemistry, with mechanics, nor algebra, that Hahnemann, one of our coadjutors, has enriched the science by which he has been educated in common with us all. It is simply with good and genuine medicine. It is with instruments which we all use as well as he, that from the dark mine in which he labors with us, he has drawn treasures. He has done what we are all doing, only he has said to himself, and he has cried out to us—“*Let us look nearer, let us go farther.*”

Physicians, ye who have any regard for science and humanity! Ye whom the people esteem as they esteem their priests and their kings! Will you disdain the heritage of a new world which under your banner, one of your brethren has just conquered?

III. Another difficulty presents itself—“Is it possible,” it is said, “that a doctrine disclosed in 1790, and scarcely heard of amongst us in 1832, should be worthy of the least attention?”

If we have remained in ignorance, of a discovery long since

promulgated by our neighbors, surely there is in this circumstance little for us to boast of, and still less upon which to base an impeachment of its merits; *nemini patrocinetur iniquitas sua*.—During more than fifty years we have scarcely known Goëthe, except as the author of Werter; what does that prove against Goëthe? When De Villers came to name Kant to our astounded philosophers, and Madame de Stael to reveal an entire world in this same Germany so new to us, though filled with our armies and visited in every direction by our officers, did we say to De Villers and to Madame de Stael, “Would not all these things have been long since known to us, had they been worth the trouble?” Did we make the same response to Dr. Gall, when he came in person to protest against his virtual outlawry at Paris itself, where but for that visit, he would probably still have been the butt of our dramatic sarcasms?

But, let us seriously examine this question, since we have reason to believe that it has been seriously raised. “Would not,” it is asked, “a discovery so extraordinary and so important have certainly made the circuit of the globe within forty years if it had been true?” Ah! from what region are you, good souls! who think that the salutary and the beautiful, have but to show themselves upon earth, and every where command altars? Open your eyes, and you will see with what difficulty and tardiness, discoveries the most useful, the most positively and immediately useful, are introduced and accepted. Before Parmentier could naturalize the potato in France, was there not put in requisition all the ascendancy of a superior mind, all the address of a courtier, and all the patience of a devotee? Consider the force of interest, of habit and of opinion, which oppose innovation, even with those who have the strongest motives to adopt it; calculate the thousand hostilities of those who have, or think they have aught to fear from it; and you will understand why so many excellent things move so slowly, or rather do not move at all; why, for example, popular education, asylums and a hundred other institutions of undisputed necessity, are still amongst us, so far from what they ought to be.

Vaccination is still scandalously neglected by many mothers, in despite of the constant efforts of philanthropists and physicians, in despite of the placards and presses of government, in despite of the terrible devastations which the small-pox makes at intervals among so many deluded families. There are many mines in which, at the hazard of the most destructive explosions, they still disregard that lamp of Davy which costs nothing, and which England has so nobly, so magnificently paid for. The fumigations of Guiton Morveau, long since announced and recommended with eclat by the ministry, have remained from that time—more than thirty years—unknown, until Smith by em-

ploying them in the English navy, recalled to our memory our right to this discovery, and brought it into general use. It is neither the body of physicians nor of divines who have banished the murderous use of whale-bone stays ; but J. J. Rousseau and Bernadin de St. Pierre, or, perhaps rather, the paramount influence of a new fashion. In all these things, the interests of life itself are concerned, and yet has the world had the leisure to think of them ?

If the interests of life are always thus but too readily immolated to the slightest convenience, to the most frivolous habits, there are times and places when these interests speak with a power which makes them listened to in earnest. We hasten with the more readiness to acknowledge this power, since it has hitherto been almost the only one which has yet spoken to us in favor of Homœopathy. It is hardly by its immense labors, its genius, its long and painful studies, that the new doctrine commands attention ; it is not even by the incalculable savings which it promises ; such titles address themselves only to the learned, and the learned are otherwise occupied ;—it is purely by the plebeian services which it renders to the distressed of all ranks, it is by the cures with which it is surrounded, that Homœopathy has attained the light of day ; it is the applauses of the multitude and the cry of public gratitude which has opened a passage for it, and protected its march upon the encumbered way upon which it slowly advances ; it is by the force of blessings, that it each day wins a little resting-place from which to diffuse new blessings.

But, you well know Gentlemen, whole nations that have not spread one step beyond their own frontiers that vaccine, of which they have, during so many ages, enjoyed the benefits ; that vaccine which the hand of Jenner alone spread so promptly over two worlds. However glorious, however powerful then Homœopathy may be in the benedictions of the people, it is the medical suffrage that it most needs. Physicians alone can give it its entire development ; they alone can make it subserve the general weal in the most solid and extensive manner ; they alone can countersign its letters of naturalization ; but, benefits rendered to the sick, popular services are not always the shortest route to their suffrages.

We shall take good care, Gentlemen, to establish a difference between what is useful to the patient and what is useful to the physician. We estimate too highly the noble corps to which we have the honor to belong, not to be persuaded that in general, whatever is advantageous to the patient is regarded by the physician as advantageous to himself. Still, the nature, or rather the infirmity of man has also its laws which it is impossible for us to forget ; they seem eternal, they re-appear in every epoch of

the art, of all the arts, of all things here below. It is by virtue of these laws that a medical innovation, far from advancing in proportion to its utility and its popular success, rather finds these very circumstances capable within certain limits, of retarding its progress.

So long as an innovation of this kind has not originated in some Academy of Science, is not sustained by some acknowledged Corporate Authority, he who presents it to the public, whether inventor or propagator, almost uniformly draws down upon it that first degree of dislike which often, without our knowledge, prejudices us against whatever comes from our rivals or our inferiors.

Professor Pinel never mentioned pectoral percussion in his clinical lectures; his pupils never employed it, at least in his presence. And why? Because Corvisart, as is well known, had especially devoted himself to this means of diagnosis. If the venerable and good Pinel was not beyond the reach of such a weakness, which of us will dare to consider himself entirely exempt from it? Pinel, in his turn, has scarcely ever been quoted by Corvisart or Portal; Corvisart, Pinel, and many others have not appreciated the work of Broussais, on chronic phlegmasiæ; Chaussier hardly mentioned Bichat, while he lived, but with a smile; and what did Richerand and Alibert then say of him? This is History. Now, quit the heights of science and descend to the humblest hamlet, you will every where trace the same law, and you will unavoidably arrive at the conclusion that the Homœopathist who presents himself with a doctrine and practice so new, cannot, whatever may be his advantages, escape this first degree of disfavor. How must it be then, if while isolated among physicians, he is found suddenly prosperous—surrounded with patients! I appeal to the consciences of all and to universal history, if so much good fortune will not touch numerous sensibilities, will not too often rouse ungenerous passions, upon which it would be sad for us to dwell.

But if the thing went farther, if Homœopathy finished by inspiring the public with a deep interest, by carrying with it the opinion of that public, formed as it is of all the social capacities, is it not almost inevitable that more than one physician, driven with violence by the popular wave to this Homœopathy—despised at first and henceforth odious—abandons himself, perhaps for a long time, to the brutal opposition, the blind hatred of a pride most deeply ulcerated?

Do not think, Gentlemen, of recognizing in this language, any personal, pitiful recriminations with which I might have the indiscretion to entertain you. No! I speak in the most general, I might say in the most absolute manner: I state what has always happened, what necessarily happens, and what to all appearance will happen for a long time to come. There are very

few of our best books in which you will not find bitter complaints in this respect, in the body of the work, in the preface, or at least in the notes. If then, at the period when they appeared upon the stage—Harvey, Bordeu, Bichat, Desault, Baumé, Barthez, Dumas and so many others, have drawn upon themselves, demonstrations of spleen, of unrelenting opposition, of open hostility, or of cruel persecution, notwithstanding their relative superiority, or rather because of it; if their names were uttered so lately, or never were uttered by their classmates, who thought themselves their equals, nor by their elders who deemed themselves their superiors, what reason have you to imagine that the Homœopathist will be better treated in the circle great or small, which he shall have chosen?

Physiological physicians—for so they style themselves—may sound all their trumpets in the midst of Paris; the hospitals, the presses and the amphitheatres at their disposal, give them ample means of demonstrating to the world, whatever they consider salutary; and yet have they not just proclaimed through their chief, that their doctrine is far from being dominant around them? And who is this chief? A man of a superior order, a consummate practitioner, an able writer, a commanding and conscientious orator, the favorite of large audiences which have surrounded him for sixteen years. Physiological physicians! Whether your pretensions be well or ill founded—you, at least—you are convinced that the best system of medicine, that which is the most efficient in the cure of disease, is not very promptly established among physicians, even when sustained by every thing which can assure its triumph. It is not you then who will say to Homœopathy—“*Thou hast not made the circuit of the Globe, therefore thou art nothing!*”

Nor will you use this language, physicians of other schools and other opinions, whether in town or country; for have not each of you unavailingly exhibited to your competitors, your neighbors, or your friends, a theory, a process, an idea, or at least a formula, which, whether good or bad, you have conceived to be of great importance, and yet have had the mortification to see it wholly disregarded. Who then will remain to cast this stone at Homœopathy? He alone, who having never proposed any thing useful, has the honesty thus to avow it. It is not to him that we owe a reply.

But why undertake to justify the tardy arrival of Homœopathy among us, when it bears on its front the proudest explanation of the delays of its voyage? The more grand, extraordinary, unexpected is a discovery, the more it must expect to find the minds of men disposed to revolt at it. Copernicus was obliged to conceal his magnificent labors for more than forty years. He dared not, even to the last, hazard the publication of them with-

out placing them under the protection of the Holy Father—"that they may not accuse me," said he, "of shunning the judgments of enlightened minds, and that the authority of your Holiness, if it approve this work, may secure me from the shafts of calumny."

After the death of that great man, the event proved how well his fears were founded. Many more years were yet necessary for the most independent and intrepid thinkers to convince themselves that they were flying—form and substance—in the immensity of space with an appalling rapidity, and upon this vast globe itself the ancient prototype of weight and immobility.—The very idea of this impetuous whirl sufficed to turn the strongest heads, and certainly such were not rare. It seemed to them that every instant threatened utter dispersion.

Could the discovery of Hahnemann meet with less resistance, when we reflect that—as extraordinary as that of Copernicus, perhaps more unexpected, and not confining itself like his to overturn the classification of certain received ideas, to displace some ciphers, to destroy some imaginary epicycles—it comes to cut to the quick opinions universally adopted and profoundly revered; to arrest in their labors active and powerful corporations; when, in a word, by its promises to create a social order almost entirely new, it comes to alarm the interests—always dark and suspicious—of indolence, of pride and of fortune?—Honor to the age, in which chains and faggots no longer subserve such interests in recompensing the benefactors of mankind! Honor and Gratitude to the Prince of Anhalt-Coëthen, who has afforded to Hahnemann that magnanimous support which the great Copernicus besought in vain from the Holy Father!

Frenchemen! You know too well the brilliant domain you have acquired in the intellectual empire of the human race. To the glory of your own creations, you unite the power of naturalizing every where those which are foreign. The Prince of physicians—Volta, is coming to elevate his immortal column under the eyes of your institute. Humboldt would be less the universal man, if he had not like Cuvier, employed your language. Leibnitz dedicates to you his Theodicea; Frederic II. his prose and his verse. It was upon your Seine that the first fruit of steam navigation appeared, and it was not without regret, that grieved by your neglect, it went first to enrich with its numerous progeny the rivers of America instead of France. Spoiled child of Nations! so many flattering attentions, so many caresses, have rendered you exacting, but they should not render you foolishly unjust. No—although Homœopathy has not come to you by express, you will not say to it, "German! what do you ask of us? We know you not; you should have come sooner." And by what right can you say so, when Bigel, the physician of the

Grand Duke Constantine, six years ago, dedicated to you an examination of Homœopathy now become a classic work, and which you alone have not read.

Let us pass by a thousand developments so obvious to any one who is slightly acquainted with the history of discoveries, the nature of things, the heart of man and the character of nations; and let us not hesitate to admit that the tardiness of Homœopathy, far from justifying a prejudice against it, is rather an argument in its favor. Is not its late promulgation an evidence of the tedious labors that consumed its early years? The slowness of its march a proof of the positive, practical and immediate results which it promises every where, and which must every where awaken opposition? In this respect are there many discoveries to which the rapidity of their diffusion does so much honor as is due to Homœopathy for its delay?

Let us go still farther and show, by the recital of what has happened to ourselves, that if there is evidence of the truth of Homœopathy in the slow development, in the very struggles of its incipient existence, this evidence is still better recognized in the rapidity of its expansion so soon as it has attained the open air.

In narrating the accidental circumstances, without which I should perhaps never have studied Homœopathy, and the results which have since, abundantly recompensed the little that it has fallen to my lot to do to extend its usefulness, I trust I am so much within the scope of my subject, as to be pardoned the liberty I am about to take of speaking a moment of myself.

My wife, afflicted for many years with a cruel disease, had exhausted all the aids of medicine. Eminent practitioners of Lyons, Paris, Grenoble and Montpellier, had with affectionate interest, lavished upon her case their ablest advice; but to transient meliorations speedily succeeded new relapses, sometimes alarming, and always evincing a constitution profoundly affected. Expectant treatment and treatment very active, regimen, voyages, mineral waters, nothing had been neglected, nothing had had any durable success, when I determined as a last hope, to conduct her to the baths of Pouzzoles; that ancient Serapis, so celebrated for the almost miraculous virtue of its waters. My patient here only encountered more acute sufferings, and a cerebral fever menaced her life with immediate danger. In my distress, I earnestly solicited the hospital physician to unite with the physician of the baths, and aid me with their advice. The physician of the hospital proved to be one of my old friends, Dr. Cimone, of whose destiny I had been ignorant. We all hastened to the bed-side of the poor sufferer, and after some consultation, vague and unsatisfactory, Cimone, left alone with me, addressed me nearly in these words. "To you my dear Friend, from whom I never had any thing to conceal, I will not disguise that I practice here an

"entirely new system, both at the hospital and in the city,
 "whenever I can without being discovered. My success asto-
 "nished myself, and the public give me the credit of such hap-
 "py results; but it is certain that this credit belongs wholly to
 "the new school, in which, to tell the truth, I am as yet but a
 "mere tyro. This extraordinary practice may save your wife."
 "What," said I, "do you speak of that secret medicine of a fo-
 "reigner, who, they say, cures at Naples with small doses, and
 "with poisons? How can you, my dear Friend, refer me in my
 "situation, to secrets, quackeries or dreams; and how can you
 "be the dupe of them yourself?" "My friend," replied he, "you
 "have always given me credit for probity, some share of science,
 "and of good sense; and yet, because I speak to you of a thing
 "strange to your studies and your reflections, of a thing with
 "which you are unacquainted, behold me at once an impostor,
 "or at least an idiot! Listen to me. This foreigner is not a
 "vender of amulets, but a physician high-minded and well-
 "educated—Dr. Necker,—attached to the army of occupation. His
 "doctrines are no secret; they constitute an entire, compact and
 "well-digested science, composed and published in German and
 "Latin, by a genius of the highest order,—Samuel Hahnemann,—
 "who has devoted to it a long life of immense labors. This sys-
 "tem cures by slightly aggravating the disease, and it cures by
 "millionths of a grain; it is one of those discoveries kept in re-
 "serve, to appear some time or other; unless you are certain that
 "every thing is accomplished for the human race, that our sci-
 "ences are to crystallize at the precise point at which they now
 "stand, and though mostly but the creations of yesterday, that
 "they will continue to be five thousand years hence, precisely
 "what they are to-day. It is one of those discoveries, in short,
 "to which it is no more forbidden to our age to bear witness,
 "than to the discoveries of Columbus and Galileo. In an age
 "like ours, of universal doubt and investigation, an age in which
 "so many materials are accumulated, so many imperfections
 "pointed out and acknowledged, and in which the human mind
 "toils in every way with more energy, method and perseverance
 "than ever; in an age which would produce Luther and New-
 "ton, if it could have been produced without them, is it so as-
 "tounding that the science the most difficult, the most import-
 "ant, the most in arrear of all the sciences, Medicine, should
 "have its turn also, its great revolution? This idea shocks you;
 "it has shocked me as well as you; it is to shock many others.
 "Do you imagine that Maquer, Sage, Baumé, Serao—upright
 "men and able chemists—who knew Lavoisier from infancy,
 "would have readily consented to live without phlogiston and
 "to breathe oxygen? Must the prejudices and blindness of our
 "predecessors be lessons eternally lost upon us? Must the con-

“ temporaries of all great discoveries always begin by repelling them? Listen, time presses; Go to Dr. Romani; you know his splendid reputation as a practitioner, as a man of letters, as a philosopher, and above all as a man of probity and worth. He is profoundly versed in the new doctrine, he has even published a translation of some works of Hahnemann. Dr. de Horatiis, physician of the court is also a disciple. To him the new school is indebted for having treated homœopathically the Duke of Calabria; for in consequence, it is less ridiculed than formerly. We even hope that in a short time, we shall be permitted to open a clinical course in one of the hospitals of the capital. But here comes Dr. Romani.”

The noble Cimone, in the abundance of his zeal for Homœopathy and for me, would not have stopped here, but I was already decided. Passionately devoted to medical studies almost from infancy, practising medicine for many years and not wholly without success, I had had too often, in common with you all, Gentlemen, to mourn its uncertainty and its indigence, not to have made it a subject of frequent and serious reflections; but these reflections, which I found reiterated with so much bitterness and truth in all our standard works, instead of casting me like many other practitioners into discouragement and incredulity, had always left me full of faith and hope. Yes, I firmly believed in medicine; not in that which so often failed in its promises, and which, in despite of the noblest efforts of genius in all ages, was still living on in an interminable infancy—but in that medicine which nature concealed from us yet, and which the perseverance of man was sooner or later to wrest from her arms. I had investigated with avidity the doctrines of Brown, those of the contra-stimulant school, and of all other schools: I owed to each of them some truths more, some errors less; but none of them was medicine, and I sought for it still. Now, a man of honor, an enlightened physician, a friend, had just announced to me the termination of my inquiries; he spoke to me of discovery, of experience, of clinical lessons, he promised me a cure which no other had dared to do. Could I hesitate? I hastened to see Dr. Romani.

This physician, full of sympathy for my situation, at once visited the patient and administered a homœopathic remedy. It was an atom of Belladonna, given with assurance, almost with the promise of success. Judge of my anxiety! The patient, worried at first, soon experienced a sensible alleviation which gave me some courage. The treatment was long and difficult, but in the issue wonderfully successful. It was not however till afterwards, when I saw sleep, bloom, strength return and manifest a general state of health unknown for twenty years, that I really comprehended the whole truth, the whole power of Homœopa-

thy; for, to what else could a cure so long unlooked for, be attributed? The power of imagination, to which so many persons ascribe every thing which they have no other mode of accounting for, was easily satisfied. Climate? but climate had for a long time done no good, and the patient was even tormented, in a slight degree, with Nostalgia during the treatment. Regimen? its resources had long since been exhausted. Nature? I prayed for nothing better; but nothing had indicated to me the period of her awakening, nothing taught me why nature had delayed for twenty years to come to my aid until the precise day and hour when the homœopathic treatment was commenced. From exclusion to exclusion, I always fell back into homœopathy. But atoms! Nothing!—The elixir of Le Roy, Spider's Web, any of the Arcana, the celebrated nostrums of the day, would have put me greatly at my ease; all are something; almost all have great energy, producing some striking results which explain their transient credit; but millionths of a grain—what can they do? Yet how get rid of the facts? I unavoidably concluded with the admission that a new fact, though incredible to me, was nevertheless a fact, and that the measure of my ideas was a little short of the powers of nature and the discoveries of genius. I made experiments upon myself and upon others, and my conviction soon became immoveable. I attached myself for two successive years, to the clinical course, opened in the mean time at Naples, by Doctors Romani and Horatii; that interesting course, the results of which have been recorded in so many journals. In fine, I studied unremittingly and with some profit, thanks to the writings, the luminous lectures and unlimited kindness of Dr. Romani, towards whom my gratitude should have no bounds.

A year afterwards, circumstances led me to Crest, where my homœopathic cases were replete with interest, and sanctioned the treatment by its incontestable success. The same thing has occurred at Lyons, where a proper sense of gratitude made it a duty on my part to kindle the first fire of Homœopathy in France, and where during the last twenty months, numerous cures, and many among persons the most distinguished by their intelligence and rank, have daily attested in a striking manner the value of this doctrine.

Such facts could not escape the attention of a faculty so judicious and so well informed as that of Lyons. Many physicians of the city and its environs, after a rigid examination of some of the cures effected, have devoted themselves with increasing interest to the study of the new doctrine, and many among them exercise it with honorable success. I have always made it an especial duty to put at the disposal of these gentlemen, books, manuscripts, medicines and all that my feeble counsels could offer

that might prove useful. In return they have often done me the honor to assist at my stated public consultations;* and I congratulate myself upon having thus been able, through their aid, to afford to Homœopathy a support so richly merited. Called upon also to treat cases of grave or obstinate disease at Paris and other remote cities, I soon found myself in correspondence with physicians in all parts of the country and in those adjacent, and have diligently transmitted to them all the explanations which they have demanded of me. Thus Homœopathy may already count upon its zealous friends, propagators and practitioners, at Paris, at Nîmes, at Bourdeaux, at Bourg, at Maçon, at St. Etienne, at Besançon, at Vevey, at Lausanne, but especially at Geneva. Among many other cases which I have treated with success in this last city, two severe affections were cured under the eyes of Dr. Dufresne, and in a manner which excited in the highest degree his surprise and interest. He did me the honor to write to me immediately; and I was happy in the opportunity of putting him in direct correspondence with Hahnemann himself. An able physician of the old school, and endowed with a mind profoundly investigating, a spirit truly independent, Dr. Dufresne, after having proved by a series of methodical and rigorous experiments the truth of Homœopathy, embraced the study of it with ardor. His new practice is already among the most fortunate and extensive, and in conjunction with some friends, he has just established a Homœopathic Journal of great interest. Thus Geneva, that noble city, which among its many titles to distinction, loves to dwell upon that of having taken a leading part in the establishment of vaccination upon the continent, will have the additional honor of aiding powerfully the propagation of Homœopathy in French Europe.

I pause, embarrassed at having been so long obliged to speak of myself; but it was perhaps necessary, to recall to you events which demonstrate how many obstacles embarrass the first steps of Homœopathy, how many fortuitous circumstances she may need in order to attract the first attention, but how small a spark afterwards is sufficient to light many torches. What then, if in my place, and instead of the various incidents which conducted me to the lessons of Drs. Romani and Horatiis, fate had led to them one of those master spirits which are ordained to impart great impulses, a rival of Bichat, or of Broussais? And why not Broussais himself? A man of such power is formed to shrink before no truth: and there is more than one sceptre to seize in the vast empire which Hahnemann has just founded.

* My illustrious and long valued friend, Professor Foderé, has not disdained to assist at this kind of weekly clinique.

Gentlemen ; I have endeavored to weaken the prejudices most opposed to the examination of Homœopathy in France. Would that I may have the good fortune to interest you in this examination ! Homœopathy demands nothing more. She will need neither my feeble suffrage, nor that of any other, so soon as you shall have once canvassed her merits.

Leipsic, Coethen, Berlin are at your doors ; if Dr. Chervin has made voyages, which seem almost fabulous, from devotion to a secondary question, in reference to a disease unknown to our climates, collecting documents of which we have yet been able to make no use, shall not this admirable devotion have imitators in the matter of Homœopathy ? The most important of medical questions, that which embraces them all, shall it not find its Chervin for a voyage so short, for documents so easily collected, and so certain of yielding a triumph ?

At least, the way of direct experiment is open to all, free from danger, easy and certain. Which of you, Gentlemen, will refuse to enter it, especially in an age in which the martyrdom of so many animals, the ligation of so many nerves, the mensuration of so many globules, the trial of so many drugs and new processes subject you daily to unheard of labors for results, at best very limited and subordinate ? Does not the Cholera itself, in places which it desolates, offer circumstances in which the physician the least acquainted with Homœopathy, ought without hesitation, to have recourse to it ? Water and wine, cold and heat, wet and dry, all the varieties of treatment of Europe and Asia, of the learned of all opinions as well as of the ignorant and the barbarous, all have you put in contribution, and yet you seek for others. And would you reject that alone which Hahnemann and numerous physicians of the North propose to you with undeniable, with striking testimonials of its success. Could it do worse than all the rest ?

Frenchmen ! called upon to distinguish yourselves nobly on all occasions, to aggrandize and give vigor to every discovery, and to triumph over every scourge, will you become insensible, for the first time to the appeals of science, of your country and your race ?

Physicians of France ! your varied and profound acquisitions in all the branches of the art, your experimental ardor, your spirit of analysis and investigation, and moreover the philosophic clearness of your language—of all these gifts with which Heaven has so bounteously endowed you, Homœopathy seeks to avail herself only for the benefit of humanity. Will you longer close your eyes upon a course which promises you at once, so many blessings and so much enviable distinction ?

Do not, Gentlemen, while you pardon the numerous imperfections of this letter, despise the words of a physician, whom fortunate experience and the most thorough conviction have drawn before you—of an old man, whose fondest hope is to see his labors effaced to-morrow by yours, in a career abounding in unfading laurels, which he is happy to have it in his power to point out to you.

C. S. DES GUIDI, M. D.

Lyons, 1st June, 1832.



