

ORME (F.H.)

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HOMŒOPATHY:

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BY F. H. ORME, M. D.

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Homœopathy (Gr. *omoios* like, and *pathos*, suffering), is the title given by Hahnemann to a system of medicine founded upon the law expressed by the Latin formula *similia similibus curantur*—like cures like—the practical rule deduced from which, as expressed by its founder, is, “that in order to cure in a mild, prompt, safe and durable manner, it is necessary to choose, in each case, a medicine that will excite in the healthy an affection *similar* to that against which it is employed.” This is the *only principle* of homœopathy, and any one who believes that this is a true guide in the selection of remedies—without regard to his views as to the *modus operandi* of the medicine, or the quantity necessary, or the best mode of its preparation, or any other of the numerous questions which exercise physicians—is a homœopathist.

That this is different from the popular idea, is due to the fact that information has generally been sought or derived from interested and prejudiced opponents—who are either ignorant of, or desire to misrepresent, a rival system—instead of from those who have investigated and practise it.

To apply to the Mussulman, who calls the Christian an “infidel,” for a knowledge of Christianity, would certainly not be more inconsistent than to apply to the allopathist, who calls its practitioner a worse name than infidel, a “humbug,” for a knowledge of homœopathy. Being represented as a system of “infinitesimal doses,” it is décried by those who have not studied it, but who undertake to educate public opinion with regard to it. Despised because not understood, and not examined because denounced, it is thus *condemned without trial*. “If I have spoken falsely, *prove it*; if I have spoken truly, why then dost thou smite me?”

Of the truth and merits of this system, which has been steadily and rapidly spreading for over seventy years, there is of course but one rational way of judging, namely, “by its fruits,” for it is a question of fact, and its truth or falsity admits of a practical demonstration. Let us see

WHAT IT ACCOMPLISHES.

“Trial,” says Sir William Blackstone, “is the examination of the matter of fact in issue, of which there are many different species, according to the difference of the subject or thing to be tried. * * * * This being the one invariable principle pursued, that as well the best method of trial, as the best evidence upon that trial, which the nature of the case affords, and no other shall be admitted.”

From the time that Hahnemann, a regular graduate—and in the language of Hufeland, “one of Germany’s most distinguished physicians,”—published, in 1796, in the leading medical journal of Europe, (Hufeland’s), his remarkable “Essay on a new principle, etc.,” a violent and virulent warfare has been waged by a large portion of the profession against those who, from observation or experience, became convinced of the truth of, and adopted in practice, the principle. In this the history of all innovations, especially in medical science, has but been repeated. But there are two things remarkable in this connexion: first, the fact that notwithstanding all diatribes, and opposition of every character, the principle of homœopathy continues to be tested and adopted; and secondly, the no less significant fact, that while its opponents have labored with “a zeal worthy of a better cause” to overthrow the system, resorting to every conceivable sophism, and expending the whole vocabulary of epithets upon it and its professors, and especially ridiculing any extravagancies of its votaries which may have an adventitious connexion with it—they *rarely* attempt to attack the *principle*, and NEVER bring experimental or statistical evidence to show its inferiority! Would they not bring it forward if obtainable? And would not an argument of this sort out-weigh all others? The reason is plain. It is not that it has not been tested sufficiently in hospital and in private practice, but that the advantage is all upon the other side. Homœopathy has been tested to an extent ample for a fair judgment upon it, and it now appeals to the results as proof of its claim to be regarded as the superior system of medicine. In its inception it called for an experimental trial; this it has had, and it now points triumphantly to the evidence thus obtained. Condemn it upon this issue, and it must cease to be a subject for discussion. Is this not fair? Will the opposition abide the judgment? The honest inquirer certainly will.

THE EVIDENCE.*

“Evidence signifies that which demonstrates, makes clear, or ascertains the truth of the very fact or point in issue, either on the one side or the other, and no evidence ought to be admitted to any other point.”—BLACKSTONE.

In the above reports is given an account of *extensive practice* upon the homœopathic law. Do not the successful results prove beyond all question, the truth of the law? If not, how are we to expect to prove anything?

* Under this head Dr. Orme has collected a mass of statistics, mostly official, many having remarkable testimony given as to their accuracy, showing that in general diseases and cholera there is about three times the mortality under allopathic as under homœopathic treatment; in typhoid fever nearly four times; in yellow fever eight times; in pneumonia nearly five times the mortality is any given number of cases treated. The general average, (including cholera, &c.) being a mortality of eight per cent. under homœopathy to 34 per cent. under allopathy.

Any one desiring to read the reports in full are referred to “Homœopathy:—What it is,” by F. H. Orme, M. D., published by Dr. E. A. Lodge, at his Homœopathic Pharmacy, 51 Wayne-st., Detroit, Michigan. Price, 20 cents.

If further and more particular and immediate evidence is desired, it can be had by applying to the homœopathic practitioner, who will tell you how he became converted—for the majority of the thousands of homœopathists now practising have been practising allopaths—many of them having had conviction *forced* upon them while studying with a view to opposing the system. Or, you can inquire of your homœopathic neighbor, who will tell you that he was not induced to try it from reasoning upon it, or from testing it by the “single rule of three,” (as was actually attempted, as regards the dose, before an audience composed partly of ladies, by a distinguished professor of this city, some time ago,) but from a knowledge of what it had performed in some given case or cases.

Where the system is established in a community, it is generally upon the strength of reputation gained by its achievements when appealed to as a *last resort* in cases found to be intractable in the hands of practitioners of the ordinary method; and it will be further observed that when it has once been adopted by families, after fair opportunity for testing it, they rarely, if ever, return to the ancient mode. The conviction of the homœopathist will generally be found to be firm.

We do not claim that our young system is omnipotent or *perfect*—but we *demonstrate*, by such incontrovertible *facts* as have been given, that it is vastly *superior* to any other known method.

IS IT A “HUMBUG?”

It may seem superfluous to discuss such a question, after presenting the best possible evidence of its superiority. But ‘humbug’ is the charge most frequently made against it, and it will be at least interesting to examine some of the grounds upon which it is based. To be sure the charges have all been met repeatedly—but the answers are generally ignored. The writer has frequently been asked by homœopaths and allopaths when the system has been explained to them, divested of the complications attached to it by those who are ignorant, or who are induced by self-interest to misrepresent it—and when statistics have been shown them—“Why do you not *publish* these things?” The question is a reasonable one, for the subject is of a serious character. The answer is, they *have been* and *are* published—and the reason that they are not generally circulated is that there is an interested opposition to their circulation through those channels which should convey them to the public. They are published in homœopathic journals, and reach the eyes of homœopathists—the opposition being of the class who, “having eyes see not.” The journals of general intelligence do not seem to recognize the propriety of giving their readers information upon this important subject, although

it would seem to be a fair question to ask if public journalists are justified in ignoring and refusing to give to their readers facts as important to them as the statistics given, when these facts are brought to their knowledge. Beside, our allopathic opponents evince something of the tenacity of Goldsmith's village school-master—"for e'en though vanquished, he could argue still," or of Bill Arp's rebellious neighbor, who was easily enough subjugated, but who required a repetition of the process every week. Old sophisms and false charges which have been repeatedly exploded, are constantly reproduced.

The question is one of vastly more importance than might be inferred from the sportive remarks frequently made concerning it. There may be such a thing as a comparatively innocent humbug—but *it is not in medicine!* If homœopathy is a humbug it is a monstrous humbug, both in its nature and the extent of its adoption. It pervades all Christendom, is found in courts and universities, in camps and in hospitals, public and private, and in all ranks of society. Its practitioners are numbered by thousands, and include many in high position, while its patrons are numbered by *millions*. The progress of the system is in an increasing ratio. It has out-lived every conceivable trial, (even ridicule), and is still more rapidly advancing than ever, and more confidently asserting its superiority. It appears, then, if it is a humbug, it is an atrociously and damnably *wicked* humbug, and it follows, as an inevitable corollary, that its practitioners are corresponding humbugs. The man who engages in the high calling of ministering to the sick, who takes into his hands the lives of his fellow-men, who ventures to tamper deceitfully with the tabernacles of human souls—with a prospect of being instrumental in sending those souls unprepared to a perhaps fearful account—is a villain of such a character, that our language possesses no adjective with which fitly to characterize him. Away, then, with that affected courtesy, which, while it proclaims the system a humbug, a cheat, a deception, speaks of its practitioner as a "gentleman," to be treated (amazing condescension!) with respect! *Prove* the system to be a delusion, and injurious in practice, and no man *can* be honestly deluded by it, or have the hardihood to practice what the public know to be a deception. But what avail your ridicule and empty cries of "humbug," "unprofessional," "quackery," etc., with a man of conscientiousness and moral courage, when he can stand with his statistics in his hand, and, pointing to them as the ground of his faith, calling God and man to witness, confidently challenge you to the proof?

Ridicule sways the rabble, and takes the place of the argument

and of facts—with the superficial (albeit it is not to these that homœopathy especially appeals,) it is indeed potent in a certain sphere, and is deadly to the object of its attack if unhappily not grounded upon the sure basis of truth—but in the view of the *noble mind*, when it is used against that which has been shown to be good, this coward's-mighty-tool wanes to despicable insignificance. It has not availed those who should blush to have used it in such a cause, but who have been forced to its use as their best and only weapon against homœopathy. Our system has withstood its many and most powerful shafts, for lo! these many years, and still pursues, more rapidly than heretofore, its onward course.

IS ITS PRACTICE “UNPROFESSIONAL?”

It will scarcely be believed by many readers that one of the means which the allopathic branch of the medical profession have adopted in their jealous anxiety to keep down this new and rising rival, is that of pronouncing it, privately, and by the action of societies, etc., “unprofessional,” to adopt homœopathy and openly profess to believe in and practice according to the law of *similia similibus curantur*. As if their *ipse dixit* made it so! Few of those who have taken part in this action have paused to consider how peurile such an effort must appear. The most of them have said and acted as directed by a few leaders, for, knowing nothing of the system they can know nothing against it, “but like to village curs, bark when their fellows do.”

It is professional to examine any thing which may be advanced by any respectable medical man through a proper channel—and it is professional, because manly and honest, to adopt and *profess* whatever may be *thought* worthy of adoption, without waiting for the judgment of those who do not examine. And this is precisely what every conscientious and independent physician, who considers his duty to his patients and to himself, is bound to and will do. It is “unprofessional,” because dishonorable to condemn a system without investigation.

It may be said that a *belief* in the law of homœopathy is not objectionable, since it has been held by the self-styled regular physicians occasionally from Hippocrates down, but that the blamable part is in professing to belong to a particular *class* of physicians. Here a common rule of ethics applies. *We must not deceive*. That it is necessary and proper for a practitioner thus to distinguish himself, is a fact for which the allopaths are entirely responsible.

With the first announcement of the truth of homœopathic law, in a regular journal of medicine, by a highly educated physician; an opposition, characterized by “more wrath and untempered hostility than wit or good breeding,” was raised

against it—as in the case of the announcement of other important discoveries—and its professors were traduced and vilified in no mild terms. Hahnemann, its expounder or demonstrator, was persecuted and finally banished from his native Saxony. (But, again to avoid a foot-note, it may be added in passing, that, as a slight atonement for his abuse, there now adorns a piece of ground appropriated by the same City of Leipsic, from which he was driven, a monumental statue in bronze, of that immortal physician!) The same treatment, with little modification, has been continued to this day. Now, *would it be honorable* for any physician to practice the system which the public have been educated to regard as a humbug, without *professing it*? The distinction between the allopathic and homœopathic schools is generally known, however, incorrectly, and it is only *proper* and *professional* for physicians of the minority class to allow their patrons to know what kind of service may be expected from them; while it is due those who may desire to be treated by the improved mode that they may be able to find its practitioners.

As one after another of the old school physicians adopted the new system, medical societies, from prejudice and alarm, adopted unprofessional and proscriptive measures regarding it, and the homœopathist, in many cases, was excluded from their societies, from their journals, and from professional intercourse. By this system of persecution were homœopathists *forced* to become a separate class, and Hahnemann and many of his disciples goaded to an unfortunate state of partizan feeling. What was left for them but to “accept the situation” and establish their own journals, societies, colleges, etc. ! The number, and flourishing condition of these in Europe and America, illustrate both the innate energy and truth of the system, and the futility of all pitiful attempts, even with the influence of *authority*, which was so eagerly sought to assist in putting down, or “crushing out” the truth.

It is lamented as deeply by homœopaths as by allopaths, that this distinction was ever thus necessitated, and it is the hope of many, the writer included, that as the system becomes better known, and the opposition becomes less violent, and more disposed to allow a man to practise according to the faith that is in him, without ostracism—all practitioners may consider it proper to be known simply as physicians. But yet the homœopathist is “unprofessional,” a “quack,” etc. ! May the utterers of these slanders be forgiven on the plea that “they know not what”—“professional” means, and that their manners have been corrupted by “evil communications,”—for the charges can never be made respectable by the *number* of those who flippantly make them.

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