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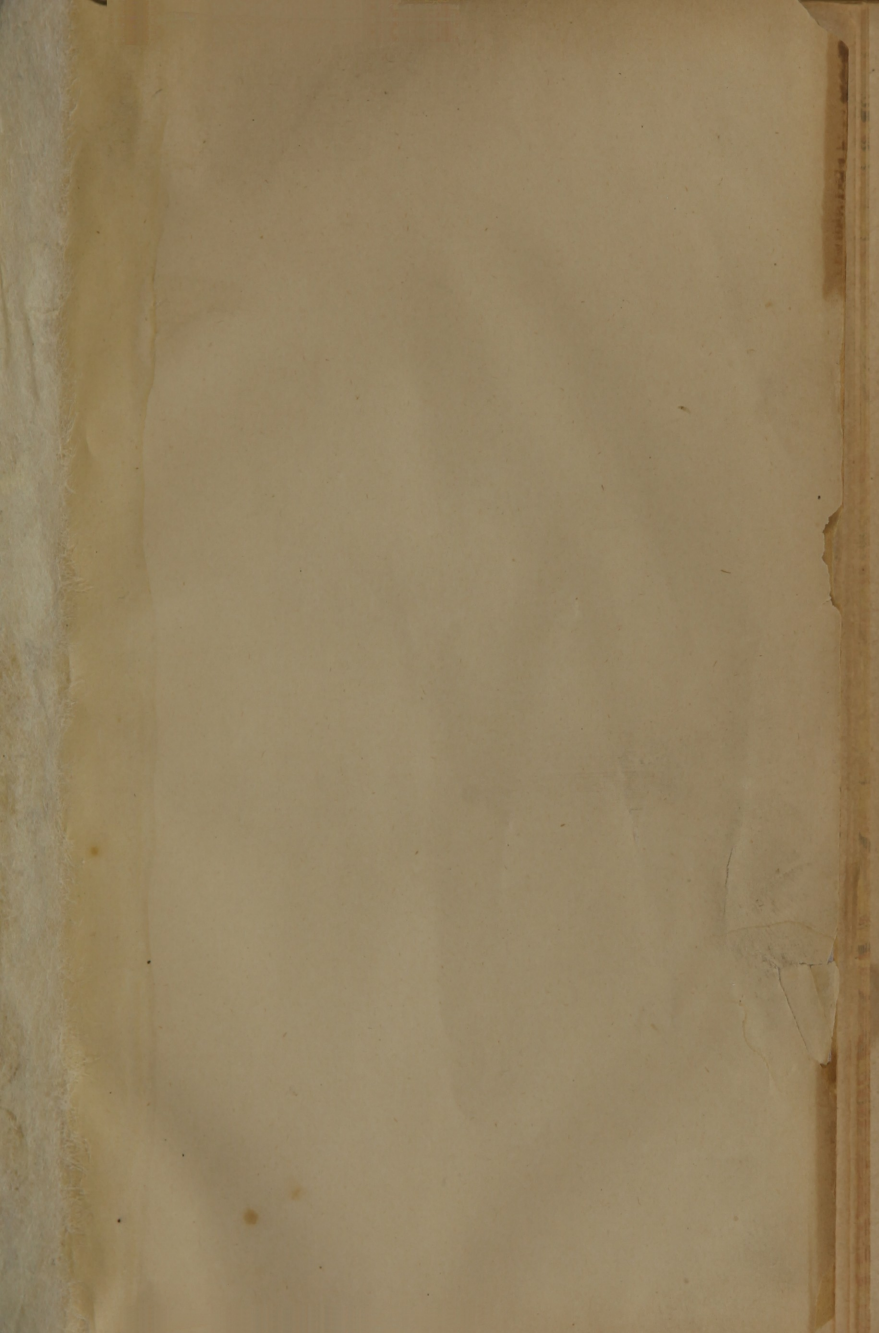
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AN ESSAY

ON THE

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Practice of Medicine.

BY JAMES W. PRICE, M. D.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA:

"DAILY INTELLIGENCER" PRINT.

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AN ESSAY

ON THE

Practice of Medicine.

The legitimate end of medicine is to cure disease. To procure this result, depends not so much upon the amount given, as a correct knowledge of the diseased organization, and the selection of *the remedy* which will act directly upon the organ affected. Inspiration has declared, that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," evidently conveying to our minds the important and all absorbing fact, that this wonderful and ingenious piece of machinery, the workmanship of an all All-wise and Supreme Being, is not to be ruthlessly attacked by every *tyro* and *pretender*, whose vanity and pretensions may have forced him upon the people as a practitioner of the healing art.

Unfortunately for the age in which we live, there is a great fault existing some where in regard to this matter. To bring to light this error, and place the responsibility where it should rest, shall be the only apology rendered for these strictures. I shall not attack *individuals* but *systems*, and endeavor to show beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the only tangible reason given why *quackery* has flourished and "spread itself like a green bay tree," has been the fault of men who have claimed to

have been brought up at the very feet of Gamaliel in the science of medicine, and drank deep from her fountains as they gushed from her classic halls.

Allopathy, the system of curing by opposites, "*contraria, contraries, curantur.*"

Here we have a system of medicine which boasts of the experience of ages—backed up by all the science of centuries, and during that period but little change has been made in its principles or practice. The fundamental doctrines then taught are identically the doctrines taught now; and should any man have independence sufficient to prompt him to depart from these dogmas, he is at once branded as a *quack*, and runs the risk of losing his reputation as an honorable competitor in the profession, and unworthy the patronage of the public.

Aside from all these considerations, my purpose will be to make myself useful in my profession, and adopt that mode of practice, gathered from *all systems*, which may be best suited to my conception of right, and most likely to relieve the sufferings of those who may place themselves under my charge in the hour of affliction. It is a matter of very small consequence to me, whether I am recognized by my professional brethren as in "*regular order*" or not, if I can but succeed in relieving the sufferings of humanity, and restoring to health those who are smitten by disease. The right to think and act for myself is a prerogative which I have always exercised in religion and politics, but more especially in medicine; and, perhaps, to put myself right on the latter subject, I will state that I follow no man's views, no man's practice. For twenty-seven years I have endeavored to inform myself, and upon the experience of that period I have based my hope of success. Of that success, my numerous patrons and a generous public must determine. During this period my great object has been to arrive at *facts*, based upon scientific research, and reconcile discrepancies. "Truth, order, and harmony prevail every where in the physical world; where we do not find them, we may be certain that the fault

lies in a deficiency of knowledge or preception on our part. Our duty, therefore, is still to pursue our investigations until we find the sacred *prize*, and thus have obtained a revelation of new glories." No man should be censured for objecting to a system of medicine, whose founders and expounders are objectors themselves. To more fully illustrate my views and startle into existence an investigation on this subject, I will call the attention of my readers to a few extracts, from prominent authors upon the subject :

J. W. Gullifer, Surgeon in the British Army says: "The time is not very far distant when the members of our profession will disdain the adventitious supports to which their predecessors had recourse. It is impossible for them much longer to maintain their empire from the rapid diffusion of knowledge among all classes of people, and the greater number of thinking men in every community. When I survey the *Album* of great names and recollect what the fathers of *Medical science* have done, I feel mixed sensations of admiration and regret; of admiration at the extent of their labors, of regret at the misapplication of their talents."

Elisha Bartlett, M. D., Prof. of Theory and Practice in the Transylvania University, says: "I am stating what every one knows to be true, when I say that the general confidence which has heretofore existed in the science and art of medicine, has within a few past years been violently shaken and disturbed, and is now greatly lessened and impaired. The hold which medicine has so long had upon the popular mind is loosened, there is a wide spread skepticism as to all modes of curing diseases."

And why such an admission? If the science of medicine be correct, and based upon principles as firm as the eternal hills, the gates of hell would never have prevailed against it; but ever and anon an honest disciple of the healing art, soaring far above his professional predilections, has given *Allopathy* some awful chides. And strange to say, with but one exception, (that of

Thompson,) every new fangled system which has, in modern times, sprung into existence, has emanated from among themselves. "A house divided against itself can not stand;" and the only reasonable alternative left an honest searcher after truth, is to draw his own conclusions from the lights before him, leaving error to combat itself. "A cripple in the right way may beat a racer in the wrong." "The science of medicine, like the Doric column, should stand, *simple, pure and majestic*; having *fact* for its basis, *Induction* for its pillow, and *truth* alone for its capital." "Time overthrows the illusions of opinions, but confirms the decisions of Nature."

In illustrating more fully the views which I wish to impress upon the minds of my readers, I will allude to the subject of *Fever*, to shew the utter fallacy which prevails among the profession upon this great destroyer of the human race. Dr. Fordyce, from whose works all other writers have drawn their ideas for the last half century, says:

"Every man who has read the various descriptions of fever which have been given by authors, ancient and modern, for one country or of another, becomes immediately sensible that neither its causes, rise, progress, nor termination, are thoroughly known or perfectly described; and of this he will be more fully persuaded if he has frequently had occasion to see the disease. The history of fever, therefore, is by no means thoroughly understood. That its treatment is not, appears clearly, as the practitioners of different countries who attend patients in this disease, nay of the same country, district, and even town, although of great learning in medicine, employ very different modes of cures."

Again he says: "In short, fever is a disease the whole of the appearances of which have been in no ways accounted for."

Again he adds: "These sensible appearances in fever seem so very independent upon one another, that they can only be considered as symptoms of some alteration of the system which has not hitherto been investigated." The ingenious Doctor, then, frankly acknowledges that he is unable to show up the connecting links so as to prevent an unbroken chain of causation, but admits that such a chain does exist, and that some future investigator may succeed in demonstrating it.

A writer in the Transylvania Medical Journal says: "But notwithstanding the immense labor that has been devoted to the investigation of fever, the annual number of its victims is sufficient evidence that the disease is not yet understood, at least so far as treatment is concerned."

Another, in a late number of the Boston Medical Journal, terms this disease, "That embodiment of transcendentalism which we call fever."

Professor Cross, of Transylvania, says: "No topic has been more earnestly discussed than the nature and treatment of fever, and yet few points have been settled less to the satisfaction of the generality of physicians."

Dr. Cooke says: "When we seriously consider the striking difference, not to call it positive

opposition, which marks the different theories of fever, and the modes of treating it, and again consider the mass of testimony, equally voluminous, and apparently alike reputable, in favor of each, we are puzzled not a little to decide how far it is safe to confide in human perception."

Having shown the contradictions in relation to what these scientific teachers of the healing art promulgate in relation to Fever, my next object will be to shew most conclusively their discrepancies and very apparent contradictions in relation to its treatment. As Typhoid Fever is the prevailing form of Fever of this climate, I shall now make their own authors speak for themselves, leaving the intelligent reader to draw his own conclusions in the premises :

"Very little appears to be decided in the profession with respect to this disease, either with regard to its nature or its treatment.

"In order to show the unsettled condition of the medical mind upon this subject, I will give an abstract of the present mode of treating this disease, taken from writers living in various parts of our own extensive country and in different European States, which I think will show that more light was needed upon this subject. I will first condense from the published Transactions of the American Medical Association some abstracts from reports of committees on epidemic diseases, etc. :

"Dr. Barbour pursued the expectant plan; bled if re-actions ran high; gave opium to restrain diarrhoea, quiet delirium, and procure sleep; moved the bowels with castor-oil and turpentine. Mercurials proved injurious; quinine was also injurious in every case of real typhoid fever. Dr. Adair agrees with this.

"Dr. Hart relied upon aperients, diuretics, diaphoretics sedatives, and stimulants.

"Dr. M'Nelly gives blue-mass, ipecac, and citrate of potash, in a state of effervescence; restrains diarrhoea with paregoric and tinc. catechu; has frequently given quinine, but without benefit.

"Dr. B. F. Stephens gives chlorine-water for the purpose of introducing oxygen, so as to favor the production of fibrin. His patients recovered in about three weeks.

"Dr. Sutton, of Georgetown, Ky., supposes there is generally a daily obscure chill in typhoid fever, and gives quinine, he says, with great advantage.

"Dr. Desha relies on quinine and blue-mass as an antidote to the diarrhoea in typhoid fever, or quinine alone.

"Dr. Geno gives quinine in typhoid fever to quiet restlessness, and equalize the circulation.

"The great objection to quinine by Dr. Grant is, that it always increases the restlessness, sleeplessness, tinnitus aurium, (ringing in the ears,) and the deafness symptomatic of the disease.

"Dr. Grant and Dr. Hawkins meet the crisis with diffusible stimulants.

"Dr. S. Kersey, Lewisville, Henry county, treated three cases of typhoid fever with rhubarb, blue pills, camphor, valerian, quinine, and anodynes, with cold sponging. One died. One case treated with anodynes, quinine, turpentine, and cold sponging, recovered."

"I will now give some extracts from those who have written books upon that subject :

"Dr. Jackson commences with an emetic of tartarized antimony, and follows it with an active cathartic. If this does not afford decided relief, he then uses venesection, letting the blood flow until an *impression* is made; then gives tartar emetic in broken doses every two hours until decided nausea is produced, restraining its action on the bowels when necessary with

opium. Formerly gave calomel in frequently-repeated small doses, so as to produce salivation, but finally abandoned the measure as useless if not injurious.

"Dr. Nathan Smith has never seen any remedy shorten the duration of the disease; in mild cases gives no medicine, but keeps the patient quiet; gives mild drinks and nourishment. In severer cases uses such means as will mitigate the most prominent symptoms; looks upon emetic tartar as "an inappropriate and unsafe remedy;" has known it convert a mild case into a severe one.

"Chomal, of Paris, follows the expectant plan, giving only mild drinks; sponging with cold water; fomentations, mucilaginous injections, etc.; and in the latter stage tonics and stimulants; bleeds if the symptoms indicate it.

"Loves pursues pretty much the same plan, but resorts to bleeding oftener. He says that "by the judicious use of the three principal means—bleeding, sweating, and tonics—the disease may be shortened a little—a day or two at least," and "hopes that a more successful treatment of this disease will yet be discovered."

"Bouillaud bleeds freely and frequently, and cups and leeches in the intervals; does nothing else.

"De Laroque begins with an emetic, and then gives daily brisk purgatives throughout the entire course of the disease.

"Bartlett recommends the eclectic plan in a mild way, merely combating symptoms and taking care of the strength as much as possible, to enable the patient to bear up under the tedious course usually run by this disease.

"Wood commences with a mild purgative; then bleeds, if arterial action is high; gives refrigerants to moderate pain; and in the second stage gives mercury and turpentine to combat inflammation."

I might extend my views on this subject to an almost illimitable length; there seems to be, however, an agreement among our Allopathic brethren, in relation to the administration of some particular remedies in all diseases—the Sampson of their curative means is Calomel, hence Dr. Anthony Hunn, of Kentucky, says: "This is the era of *calomel*. The present medical practice might well dispense with every other drug besides it. I own that the calomel practice is both cheap and easy to the physician, for the whole extent of both theory and practice is, give *calomel*. If that will not help, give *more calomel*, and if that again proves abortive, double, treble the dose of *calomel*. If the patient recovers, 'calomel has cured him,' if he dies, 'nothing on earth could have saved him.'"

And notwithstanding the glaring facts which are developed in relation to this one article in the materia medica of its deleterious effects upon the constitution of man, a blind adherence is still persisted in by those who administer it, when at the same

time they are as as ignorant of the mode of its operation, as the most consummate dupe which walks our streets. To prove my position, I quote from the United States Dispensatory: "Of the *modus operandi* of mercury, we KNOW NOTHING, except that it PROBABLY acts through the medium of the circulation, and that it possesses a *peculiar* alterative power over the vital functions, which enables it in many cases to subvert diseased action by substituting its own in their stead."

Strange as it may appear, yet nevertheless true, wherever and whenever this substitution is produced, the unfortunate victim had much better have struggled on with the original disease, and taken his chances for life, than to have become the subject of all the horrors which such treatment inflicts upon him the balance of his days.

This, however, is the legitimate and recognized practice of the present century. To sustain the rotten and tottering fabric which is now reeling under accumulated enlightened public opinion, it has to be bolstered and sustained by Legislative enactments, and the continued anathemas of those who are dreading encroachments upon the craft. Yet, amid all their oppositions, there is a mighty revolution in medicine dawning upon the world—and the day is now not far distant when the consummation of our hopes shall be accomplished, and the star which has so long shown dimly, shall burst forth in radiance and beauty, and pour its light upon the world so long enshrouded in darkness.

In private life, we are often permitted to employ our physicians from whatever source we prefer; yet, at the same time, should it become necessary to need the counsel of some others, and the attending physician happens not to belong to the *regular order*, the first must be discharged, as all consultations are refused on such occasions. So far as I am concerned, I have never been greatly benefited by such consultations, and shall from this time, in medicine, raise the "*black flag*." I have nothing to ask or to grant. If my past experience and practice will not

sustain the position I have taken, I will seek other arrangements to obtain my bread in future. I will, however, premise these remarks, by stating, that I will not hold counsel with any physician who entertains such bigoted views, but will at any time take charge of his cases, provided he is discharged.

A more alarming and deleterious effect of this legalized practice is manifested in the army. It is the experience of the best physicians, who have practiced as Army Surgeons, that those diseases which are most prevalent among our troops, are such as require but simple treatment, and wherever heroic remedies have been used the mortality is enormously great. From the best information which can be obtained, the majority of the Surgeons now in the Confederate Army are young men of but little experience or practical knowledge. I would not call in question their talents or *capacity to learn*, but, where the lives of our soldiery are so much exposed to the diseases of our camps, it is but simple justice that Surgeons of long experience and extensive practical qualifications should hold positions so vastly important to the welfare of our soldiers, and the interest of the country at large. But no man is allowed to enter this field of usefulness unless he is a regular *Calomet, Quinine, Blister Doctor*. The door has been closed by an act of Congress. The Army Regulations declares that none but these favored sons of the immortal Hippocrates shall administer to the poor soldier, whatever preference he may have for any other mode of practice. This is not only the fact in reference to Army Surgeons, but also to Hospital Surgeons to a very great extent. While the soldiers may worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and feel free to give an opinion in matters of religion, they are bound to bow submissively to an acknowledged medical creed without a murmur, because it has been sanctioned by the strong arm of law.

In every age of the world, from the earliest dawn of medical science to the present period, physicians have ever been regarded as the guardians of the public health, and perhaps no class of

men, of whom history gives an account, are the subjects of greater sacrifices, *mentally* and *physically*; and great indeed are the responsibilities of a physician. To him is entrusted the lives of his fellow-men. Yea, more than this—he is the depository of the secrets of families among whom he practices; and no man who is known to be immoral in his course of life and a libertine should be recognized in any community as a physician, much less permitted to tread within the sacred walls of the family circle. If a physician is the possessor of those feelings which should characterize the man and the Christian, he must not regard his calling as one of small import. Hence, looking with the deepest interest upon this subject, as it presents itself to my mind, with all of its momentous consequences, I have endeavored to investigate every system of practice which has been presented to the consideration of the people, from that of the immortal Hippocrates, whose “principal object was closely to observe nature, collect facts, make experiments, and to record his own experience, or that of others, wherever he could,” down to the present time.

I now call the attention of my readers to *Homœopathy*. But before alluding especially to this system, I must state my own relationship to it particularly. I have made it my study. I think I understand it in all its minutia; and my honest conviction is, that, as a *whole*, it will not do for a *system*—and not reliable when the strong arm of disease lays hold of man. Many of the remedies are valuable as medical agents, and such as I deem of that character, I use in my practice, but not upon the principle of *similia, similibus, curantur*.

“The system of Homœopathy was founded by Samuel Hahnemann, a native of Saxony. He was born in the year 1755, and died in 1843. While a student at the University of Erlangen, where he graduated in 1779, his attention was attracted to the controversies which divided the medical schools of Europe. While reflecting upon the various theories existing in the medical world at that time, he formed the basis of his system, *similia similibus curantur*, or, “lik e cures like.”

He asserted that disease was a complex group of symptoms, which must be overcome, subdued or driven out of the system by creating another similar group of symptoms. To quote his own words, “The curative power of medicines is founded on the property they possess to give rise to symptoms similar to those of the disease, but of a more intense power. Hence, no

disease can be cured but through the means of a medicine which produces a group of symptoms similar to those of the disease, and at the same time possessed of a superior energetic power."

The human mind cannot conceive of the decillionth part of a grain of any substance. Astronomers say that it is 95,000,000 of miles from the earth to the sun; and before you have reached the decillionth of a grain of any substance, you would have more pills than would reach from the earth to the sun, when laid side by side in a straight line. Yet Hahnemann tells us that the decillionth of a grain of oyster shell is capable of producing over a thousand different symptoms. The doctrine of infinitesimal doses, together with the *similia similibus curantur*, constitutes about the whole of Hahnemann's system. He tells us that when the decillionth of a grain of any substance is taken into the stomach, the effects frequently last for forty days.

It has been calculated by an intelligent mathematician, that a billion of seconds have not yet elapsed since God created the world, according to the Mosaic chronology. In order to produce a decillion, and express it in figures, you have to multiply a billion by a million seven times. Now, assuming that a single drop, or ten drops of water, will hold in solution a single grain of any medicine, and that you desire to so dilute the mixture that a single drop, or ten drops, will contain but a decillionth of a grain of the medicine; to do this you would require the fluid in all the fresh water lakes in America and Europe, and then have to draw for the balance of the marine contents of the Caspian Sea and the Mediterranean.

The absurdity of infinitesimal doses must be apparent so soon as you begin to reflect upon these facts, and we do not feel surprised to see a growing desire on the part of some of Hahnemann's disciples to abandon this part of the Homœopathic system.

Now, what is Homœopathic treatment, by infinitesimal doses, but a system of treatment which prescribes no medicine? If the diet and nursing are good, the patient's chance of recovery is good.

We can only account for the belief of Hahnemann in the singular doctrines he promulgated, from the fact that he was a cotemporary of Mesmer, and a believer in animal magnetism.

To give some idea of Hahnemann's method of developing the medical virtues of substances, we quote his own language:—

"By shaking a drop of medicinal liquid with one hundred drops of alcohol *once*, that is to say, by taking the phial in the hand which contains the whole, and imparting to it a rapid motion by a single stroke of the arm descending, I shall then obtain an exact mixture of them; but two or three, or ten such movements, would develop the medical virtues still further, making them more potent, and their action on the nerves much more penetrating. In the attenuation of powders, when it is requisite to mix one grain of a medicinal substance in one hundred grains of sugar of milk, it ought to be rubbed down with force during one hour *only*, in order that the power of the medicine may not be carried to too great an extent; medicinal substances acquiring at each division or dilution a new degree of power, as the rubbing or shaking they undergo develops that inherent virtue in medicines, which was unknown until my time, and which is so energetic that latterly I have been forced to reduce the number of shakes to two."

I have thus endeavored to give a fair description of the views of Hahnemann. Doubtless he was a man of great research and extraordinary ability; and as to his medical knowledge and literary attainments, he had but few superiors; but a monomaniac upon the subject of *infinitesimal doses*; but few, however, are to be found now who are fools enough to hazard their reputation upon such a foundation. If such should be in existence fol-

lowing in his footsteps, they are trying either to make dupes of the public or destitute of brain enough to discover their errors. Whenever a physician approaches the bed-side of a patient with his 200 or 500 attenuations, for the purpose of curing disease, I can come to no other conclusion that either he is a knave or a fool. A celebrated author remarks upon this subject :

"The minuteness of the subdivision prescribed by Hahnemann is extreme. He does not talk of doses so large as the decillionth part of a grain—this would be horribly disastrous. A hundred decillionth of a grain is quite a formidable dose. A decillionth is the common dose, and this numerical is expressed, after the old method of enumeration, by a unit with a string of 60 cyphers. If we suppose the population of the earth amount to a thousand millions, a grain, if taken in the dose of a decillionth of a grain, would supply every inhabitant of the earth with a septillion of doses. And if each one should take three decillionths of a grain a day, the present inhabitants of the earth would require very nearly a sentillion of years to use up the whole grain. Hahnemann, and his followers, do not talk of these exceedingly small doses in regard to powerful medicines only, but in regard to medicines considered almost inert. Nothing is more common with Homœopaths than to give a decillionth or two of a grain of charcoal, of oyster shell, or common salt."

That the fallacy of such a practice may be fully understood by those who are often imposed upon by men who are following such extreme measures ; however, in some instances professedly. There are but few who are now engaged in the practice, who are honestly so. Within my own knowledge, I know a Homœopathic physician who was called to a case of *delerium tremens*—after his *sugar pills* had failed, and every other remedy which his skill and judgment could bring to bear upon his patient, he administered *three grains* of Gum Opio, with the happiest effect. Others, again, are resorting to external applications of various kinds, which is an express violation of Homœopathic practice. I use Homœopathic remedies, but not in *infinitesimal doses*—neither upon the principle inculcated by Hahnemann. To place myself in a proper light before the community in which I live and practice medicine, was the object I had in publishing this Essay. I am the advocate of a rational practice. I do not conceive that any system of medicine is free from errors, and it should be the business of the generous, scientific physician to investigate every system, and select from the mass the pure and good. Eclecticism in medicine is the great law which will

govern the world in future, and whether physicians will engage in carrying on this work or not, public opinion, enlightened public opinion will force the profession into that channel. It requires but little discernment to discover that Allopathy, Homœopathy, Hydropathy or Thomsonianism can not live separate and distinct within themselves. The followers of each of these different systems are gradually crawling on to each others premises, while each in turn are using remedies belonging to their practice. I can not follow Allopathy strictly, because I object to the use of so much mercury. I can not follow Homœopathy as a whole, because they differ among themselves—one class is following Hahnemann in *infinitesimal doses*, while another class is using large doses of Quinine, and from five to ten grains of Calomel at a dose. I can not practice Hydropathy, because water will not cure everything—and yet I do not object to the use of water. I can not adopt Tomsonianism, because Steam, Lobelia and Red Pepper does not meet my views of what I conceive to be correct practice.

Dr. S. B. Williams, (Lexington, Mo.,) a Homœopathic physician, writing to Dr. Peters, says :

"Within the last few months, I have been called to some dozen or more cases of congestive chills—some in the first stages of the chill, and others at a more advanced period, when *cramps, cold extremities, cadaverous features* and the most intense suffocation were fast crushing the poor victim into eternity. In a case *entirely pulseless*, and oppressed in the abdomen, what is to be done? Can we put *one pellet* of the *thirtieth attenuation* in a tumbler of water, and give the patient a dose of it, every five, ten, or twenty minutes, with any hope of relieving his condition? Or even from the third, second, or first? I gave Quinine and brandy, with hot, external fomentation—and God bless the treatment! It saves all my patients, while they are dying all around me."

Dr. Wm. H. Holcombe, M. D., a Homœopathic physician, in the "American Journal of Homœopathy," reports his experience as follows :

CASE 1.—A negro boy, aged twelve years, fell insensible in the field about sunrise. I saw him two or three hours afterwards. He was perfectly insensible, and had occasional convulsions—mainly of the extremities. Hot skin, full, hard pulse, pupil contracted, deglutition difficult. The convulsions were excited by handling him. Tried the *douche* on him, but to no purpose. I treated this boy for about thirty-five hours with *Aconite, Belladonna, Ignatia, Hyosciamus*, and *Zinc*, besides bathing and mustard plasters, without effecting the least change. The owner then took the case into his own hands, applied blisters, and administered large doses of Calomel and Quinine. The boy roused up in a few hours, and Quinine secured the convalescence.

Was this a coincidence or a cure? I may here state that I treated three small children, for ten or twelve days, for symptoms of acute hydrocephalus, with irregular and imperfect remissions. Vomiting; constipation, irregular pulse, screamings, gritting the teeth, coma, rolling the head, chewing motions, and even convulsions had occurred in all of them. No amelioration whatever was obtained, and the cases seemed steadily marching to a fatal issue, when I adopted the bold and experimental use of Quinine. The three cases promptly improved, and thoroughly recovered. It is not to be supposed that Quinine is a specific for idiopathic hydrocephalus. In these cases, the hydrocephalic symptoms were merely subordinate appendages to the intermittent type, which was the epidemic constitution of the year.

CASE 2.—Negro woman, aged about twenty-five years, stout and healthy; had a chill on Saturday. Fever very slight. She was perfectly well on Sunday. Monday morning, she went to work as usual. About noon, she dropped suddenly in the field, without previous complaint, in a comatose state. I saw her in about an hour. She lay on her back, perfectly motionless and senseless. Pulse about 100, full and strong. Respiration slow, and loudly stertorous at times. Occasionally there were two or three jerking, spasmodic inspirations to one long sighing expiration—a very bad symptom, although not uniformly fatal, as Dr. Parry, of Indianapolis, pronounced it to be. Pupil closely contracted, teeth clenched, deglutition impossible. Skin natural. She was cupped in the temples, almost covered with mustard plasters, her head was shaved, and the cold *douche* persistently applied to it—all without eliciting the least expression of sensibility. An injection of twenty grains of Quinine, and forty drops of Laudanum were given, to be repeated in four hours, unless she improved. About the time for the second injection she winked (one of the first indications, oftentimes, of returning sensibility) and moaned, and soon executed some voluntary movements, so that it was not administered. She seemed perfectly well the next day, only feeble. No more Quinine was given, and she convalesced.

CASE 3.—A fine stout negro man, aged twenty-five, had a paroxysm of chill and fever, in which he complained dreadfully of pain in the abdomen. After it left him, the overseer gave him Quinine, until it produced a decided impression on the senses. He was seen at ten o'clock in the morning, sitting in the door, apparently well. He was found upon the floor, at twelve o'clock, profoundly insensible.

* * * * * He was intensely hot, eyes injected, pupils contracted, full bounding pulse. He rolled the head very frequently from side to side, made chewing motions with his mouth, and kept up an incessant picking or clawing motion with his fingers on his breast and throat. I tried homoeopathic remedies faithfully on this man for thirty-six hours: Aconite and Belladonna for twelve hours, Belladonna and Bryonia for twelve hours, and Bryonia and Hellebore for twelve hours, with a laxative injection and cold water to the head. He had grown worse: the pulse was more rapid, his fore-arms were unflexed with difficulty, the automatic motions unchanged, and the respiration becoming stertorous, which it had not been before. I expected another paroxysm certainly in twelve hours—probably it would anticipate six hours. The experienced would ask, how would another paroxysm manifest itself in that peculiar state of the patient? Answer,—by collapse and death! What was I to do? I applied blisters to both legs, and to the entire scalp, and gave an injection of thirty grains of Quinine and forty drops of Laudanum—ordering a repetition of the same in five or six hours. When I saw my patient again, in about twelve hours, he answered questions feebly but rationally; the congestion had mostly disappeared, and he was convalescent. I kept him on small doses of Quinine for a long time afterwards. He had a troublesome headache afterwards for two or three weeks—probably the effect of the Quinine, but he is now in perfect health.

CASE 4.—A stout negro boy, aged twenty, had experienced one paroxysm of intermittent, of medium severity, and had taken Quinine until he felt its specific effects. At the next return, he became suddenly speechless, but every function appeared natural—skin, pulse, stomach, respiration, and all. His eyes rolled about the room, as if he saw and appreciated the relation of

things, but could not catch it. The teeth were tightly clenched, the arms rigidly flexed. He was partially cataleptic; if you rolled him on his face he would lie just as motionless as if he were on his back. After some hours, the eye closed, and the breathing became slightly stertorous. Quinine and Laudanum were given by injection, and he seemed perfectly natural the next day. Still, however, a similar but deeper paroxysm came on the day after, at the same hour. When I saw him, blisters had drawn on his scalp, arms, and legs, but he had not winked or stirred. Quinine and Laudanum injections were again given. In a few hours, he was all right. I then gave him Quinine, in stout doses of brandy, for some days. He got well, but had a precisely similar paroxysm on the twenty-first day from his last attack, which was treated in the same manner. He is now in excellent health.

I might relate twenty or thirty more cases, similar to those above, which have occurred in my practice this summer, almost every one of which recovered; but sufficient has been adduced for the illustration of the disease and for the purpose I have in view. That purpose is mainly this: To impress upon the homœopathic practitioner the fact that intermittent congestions of the cerebro-spinal axis, occurring in a paludal region, whilst periodical fevers are epidemic, are not cured, or in any way modified by Aconite, Belladonna, Bryonia, Hellebore, Zinc, Laurocerasus, Glonoine, Hyosclamus, &c., &c., or any other of the numerous remedies which we have been found of such signal efficacy in the idiopathic diseases of the cerebro-spinal system. The remedies are not then the homœopathic *similies*; nothing but a superficial symptomatology can mistake them for such. The cerebro-spinal symptoms, although the most obvious, are not the most important in the *totality* which is required for the selection of a remedy. The fact that these symptoms come and go with periodic definiteness, in connection with certain specific causes,—this fact, I say, is the supreme, all-embracing, all-important *symptom* in the cases. Where is the homœopathic simile? In the present state of our art (as I understand it, though humbly confessing I have many superiors, who may know more, and do better than I can) we are compelled to resort to experiential treatment.

Therefore, in the treatment of malignant or pernicious intermittent fever, with anticipating paroxysms and serious local congestions, I cordially endorse the following paragraph from Prof. Wood's "Practice of Medicine," vol. I., page 303: "As soon as a remission or intermission has been obtained, there is but one course of treatment, and that is all important. There should be no delay for previous treatment: no waiting for a more perfect relief from this, that, or the other symptom, such dallying has been but too often fatal. No matter whether the patient has been under treatment during the paroxysm or not; no matter how partial the remission, provided it be a remission. (In desperate cases do not wait for any remission at all.—H.); no matter at what period of the interval the practitioner may have been called;—his first: his last, almost his only thought, should be Sulphate of Quinine. This is the remedy for the disease, and only this—at least none other approaches it in efficacy."

Dr. J. C. Peters, the principal editor of the "North American Journal of Homœopathy," a man of good mind, extensive research, and large experience, says:

"The intentions of Hahnemann were philanthropic and honest, and his aim was a truly noble one; but as he experimented upon the healthy human subject only, his 'Materia Medica Pura' necessarily contains mainly the details of *functional* derangements and symptoms; in point of fact, it does contain an unexampled host of isolated and often very trivial drug symptoms. * * * But from what internal morbid, functional, structural, or chemical changes they flowed, or to which they pointed, remained either nearly unknown to, or could only be darkly and uncertainly guessed at by him. * * * * *"

"We forbear to enter more minutely here into the difficulties of treating diseases with no.

other guide than the *Materia Medica Pura*; and, although we honestly think that the homœopathic method offers, even in its present condition, an excellent method of curing many diseases, yet experience teaches us that its application is always laborious, frequently uncertain, and often *utterly impracticable*."

From such facts as these the candid reader will at once come to the conclusion, that the practice of medicine is but one chaotic mass, and that he who has boldness sufficient to meet opposition on the one hand, and discrimination enough to judge well on the other, will most likely build up a medical reputation eventually. And I intend to be my own guardian in the future management of my profession, regardless of the opinions of those around me, except those who may favor me with their patronage; conceding to others the same generous privilege, submitting the whole matter to the discrimination of men who are competent judges.

"The student of medicine," says one writer, "should scorn to swear by the words of his master. If this blind allegiance should be required of him by his master, this gentleman makes himself liable to the suspicion of charlatanism and unenlightened intolerance; and, on the other hand, the student who submits to this species of despotism, is entirely unfit to practice the sacred art of healing. A skillful artist may indeed construct a harmony with the various vibrations of the same chord; but what a much more beautiful and perfect harmony he might construct by a proper combination of all the sounds that can be elicited from *all* the chords of his instrument." This is likewise true in regard to the various systems of practice now in the world.

There is no subject which has ever been brought before the people, with which they are so little acquainted as that of medicine; consequently the more easily imposed upon by the *passing Quack*, who not unfrequently infests every community. The world is filled with schools, flooded with medical literature, with innumerable young men crowding the arena of life with "*sheep-skin*" authority and pills, ready to contend with disease, and disarm the "*King of Terrors*" of his power and put him to flight, and as matter of course, each contending strenuously for

the correctness of his practice and the system which he may assume to be SCIENTIFICALLY right. The ALLOPATH, HOMŒOPATH, HYDROPATH, THOMSONIAN, and EXPECTANT, equipped according to law, are attacking us with their various systems, all clamoring for the ascendancy in the medical world. How shall their differences be reconciled and contending parties be brought down to a proper level, and the people see their true interests? It can only be accomplished through the agency of conservative medical men, who shall consecrate their time and talents to an honest investigation of the whole subject, culling out from the great mass of theories now extant, those facts which are reliable and based upon scientific principles. But here "most of them unfortunately remain careless and careworn, according to their several *natures*; expecting yet to find a firm foothold among their chaotic confusion of doctrines, they plod along on the old beaten track without joy or energy.

"The more learned portion of them, however, threatens to leave them: a second division of the great chaotic mass has to take place. Seeing the errors of the old, or heroic practice, they start the idea that the *nihilistic*, or *do-nothing* method, is the only one which a learned medical gentleman ought to adopt. Accordingly they advocate it to be the physician's highest duty never to give any medicine whatever, but to watch the efforts of nature, in order to guard against interference. They style themselves the *physiological* or *pathological* school.

"A third portion of the old chaotic mass, more inclined to energetic action and empirical routine, has been attracted in another direction by the wonderful power which the cold-water system has exhibited in curing diseases. Thus the medical world, which, sixty years ago, still formed chaotic mass, void of form, but full of useful elements and seeds of promise, is divided now into three concrete parts, each of which tries to enlarge itself from without by elaborating within the powers of attraction.

"The physiological, or do-nothing school, does not really pre-

tend to cure a disease, but merely to watch its natural progress without interfering; they affect to be the high priests of nature, clothed with the robes of her pontifical dignity, in which capacity they pronounce nature's will. It seems not to be a part of their duty to alleviate the poor patient's sufferings,—that would be an invasion of nature's rights. Nature will do that herself, if she can, and if not, no power on earth can relieve the sufferer or divert the fatal shaft; no medicine exists to assist nature or to cure disease. Such reasoning is at once the death of the science, and if it does not immediately cause the death of the patient, it certainly is not calculated to avert it."

Under all these circumstances, it is the imperative duty of the scientific physician, regarding the interest of the community in which he may reside, to investigate the claims of each of these, and adopt, in part or as a whole, the one which, after mature deliberation, he may conceive to be based upon correct pathological principles. Influenced by motives of this nature, I have endeavored to gather from these various systems of medicine, a practice which I conceive to be in accordance with sound judgment and practical experience, whether it emanated from the mineral, animal, vegetable, or any other kingdom. The want of a similar course in others has led to a want of confidence in the public mind in reference to the practice of medicine, while the adaptation of remedies to disease has been only palliative in its effects and injurious in its results.

QUININE cures everything with some. Not an ache or pain exists in the human frame which may not be reached by this *immortal* drug. It is a *tonic, sedative, nervine, &c.* To the latter property I attribute for it all that is claimed by its strongest advocates; for, doubtless, more *nerves* have been shattered and constitutions debilitated by its use, than any other article within the range of the *materia medica*. Acting directly upon the brain, the nervous centre, and from thence conveyed off through all the ramifications of the nervous system, producing its dire effects to the remotest tissue of the body. The effects

of one dose having passed away, it is necessary soon to repeat it, until the subject finds him or herself the unfortunate victim of a sort of *quinine delirium tremens*, from which there is no relief, until there is a repetition of the medicine, thereby establishing the correctness of the old adage, that "the hair of the dog is good for the bite." In all reason, how is it possible that one article of the materia medica can meet the demands and combat all the diseases which flesh is heir to? It is contrary to common sense and sound philosophy, and cannot stand the test of scientific research or investigation.

Again: Morphine and Elixir of Opium are the "Alpha and Omega" while thousands of unfortunate victims, who are daily slumbering on in unconscious insecurity, who have been made the subjects of this *mania* through the injudicious and unguarded application of these articles in the prescriptions of physicians. And hence the practice of medicine in the present day is narrowed down to a few experimental palliatives, resulting in an almost entire loss of confidence in the science, and an abandonment of all curative agents. And when we turn and look around us at the violence of disease, and the fatality attending a large proportion of the cases, the heart sickens at the thought, and anxiously inquires, is there no "balm in Gilead, and is there no physician there?" I allude to no particular location or class of physicians, but upon general principles, as I have witnessed the march of death through the earth, spreading ruin and dismay, and clothing once happy faces in the habiliments of mourning.

After mature deliberation and years of research upon this subject, I have determined to gather from the great mass of authors upon the different systems of practice now extant in the world, that mode of treating diseases suited to my own views and conceptions in reference to a matter of such vast importance to my fellow-beings and my own responsibilities, morally or otherwise. In some sections I have been charged with being a Thomsonian, in others a real *bona fide* Calomel and Blister doctor—again a Homœopathist—next a Hydropathist. I trust that I may be per-

mitted to set this matter at rest, by stating that I am an *Eclectic* in my views of medicine, and shall use such remedies as I humbly conceive may be best adapted in their nature to alleviate the sufferings of my patients, whether gathered from Allopathy, Hydropathy, Homœopathy, or any other *pathy*. And "in this light I have presented the relation of these new forces, which seem to be destined to bless the suffering world in a degree hitherto unknown, when linked together and understandingly practiced. Each one separate will of course be able to produce upon its own legitimate field a great deal of good, but it will still be partial and limited, when compared with the good which, united, they are able to produce. Party feeling, as we have seen, has created strict party lines to keep them asunder, but their common interest in the service of humanity demands their union.

"If thus a union of these three most effective methods is realized, a complete revolution in medical matters must be the result; medical success will be increased until disease will be almost annihilated and death retarded to its natural limits." And he who comes out from a medical school with his diploma, content to plod on in the same old beaten track, as taught him in the beautiful theories and systems promulgated by medical lecturers in schools of science, and never looks beyond these for other lights, nor ventures an opinion of his own, will find after a few years practice that all was not "gold that glitters," and that his misfortunes in the practice of medicine was but the result of not thinking for himself. With the most profound respect for the experience and scientific research of our fathers in medicine, as laid down in the text books, I would say, that he who follows to the letter the dictation of such, without exercising discretion and judgment, and watching the operations of nature, as exhibited by a totality of symptoms in diagnosis, and then fails to select his remedies to meet the emergencies of his case, outside of what he has been taught by his medical dictators, will find himself and his patient in a labyrinth from which there is no extrication. I am not opposing a thorough medical

education, but I do most strenuously oppose that system of education which prohibits the exercise of free thought and carrying it out into practice. If there is a decided improvement in medical science as taught in regular schools, I would ask the most strenuous advocates of such views to point them out. The *lancet*, once the sheet-anchor in acute diseases, is now abandoned almost entirely by the profession. Calomel, the "Sampson" of the materia medica, is gone out of repute, when we take into consideration its application to the treatment of diseases in former years. If there is an improvement in the science, it has grown out of the fact that first principles have been abandoned and new theories erected on the ruins thereof. These are facts which can not be evaded. Agents are now recommended to the students of medicine in institutions of the present day, which would have been considered sacrilege twenty years ago. This, however, is but the force of public opinion, growing out of the increased intelligence of the people, who are no longer to be duped and drugged to death; and I believe that there are very few diseases which may not be reached by rational medical treatment, if timely and properly administered. I am candid in saying, that education alone can not constitute a successful practitioner. There are innumerable instances where individuals have received the most enlightened education who have been perfect dupes in medicine, and were compelled to retire from the profession. While others, with less advantages, have arrived at eminence and accomplished wonders in the profession of medicine. There is a peculiar tact and talent required, which all do not possess—it is almost of a divine origin—a sort of *intuition*, which gives its possessor advantages not to be comprehended or explained by the powers of reasoning or philosophy. And while I would not have my readers believe me contending for SPIRITUALISM, yet, the position assumed is at least tenable and not easily confounded.

"A physician's practice," remarks Hempel, "is scarcely ever proportionate to the real merits of the treatment he pursues; on

the contrary, it depends chiefly upon accessory causes, so much so, that many a deserving physician, distinguished by his skill and *success*, is scarcely able to get along in the world, whereas an ignorant pretender, who happens to be a bold, an intriguing tactitian, is looked upon as the leading man of the profession. If a physician succeed by dint of manœuvring in spreading among the people the belief that he is the cleverest physician in the place, they will run to him in preference to any other, though a much more inferior man. It is simply intended to show that a *large practice* is no proof of a physician's superior skill and success, and that, therefore, the large practice which a physician may have can not be adduced as an argument in favor of the exclusive preference which may be given to him."

Doubtless many, very many, of the errors in practice, have grown out of the fact, that physicians eagerly seek for *names*, and prescribe for diseases, whereas, if *symptoms* were more closely analyzed as the means of arriving at a correct diagnosis, many errors would be avoided. The closest and most scrutinizing observation ought to be called in to aid the physician in making a proper prescription, at the same time watching the operations of nature, in removing from the system diseased morbid matter, and restoring to healthy action those organs which are endeavoring to throw off that which may be derogatory to the animal economy. Nature "has a meaning in every thing that she does, and there is no occurrence, however common, which is not the exemplification of some laws of nature. As the operation of one law is usually found to accomplish an infinity of ends, so the discovery of any one exemplification of it usually leads to the explanation of many other things of which we were previously ignorant."

Dr. DIXON, editor of the "New York Scalpel," the enlightened surgeon, who has been contending with error and striving to establish a more rational system of medicine for years, says, "Nature is ever busy, by the silent operation of her own forces, endeavoring to cure disease. Her medicines are air, warmth,

light, food, water, exercise, and sleep. Their use is directed by *instinct*, and that man is most worthy the name of physician who most reveres its unerring laws."

"Medical science," says Macilwain, "is in part the study of the laws and relations of animal bodies, in order to ascertain the modes in which *nature* relieves diseases or repairs accidents; and to determine the conditions of the whole body, which favor or impede these processes in its various parts; with an especial view, in the one case, to the MAINTAINANCE of such conditions, in the other, to their removal." This great principle must be admitted to the fullest extent, and any remedial agent thrown into the constitution of man which does not act in strict conformity with the principle inculcated in this doctrine, is contradicted by the laws of nature, and will be productive of immense injury, if not loss of life. Then how closely should we study the various and diversified symptoms which may be presented to the eye of the practitioner, in any given case which may come within his jurisdiction; for he who would carelessly or inadvertently make a thrust at disease, irrespective of the laws which govern and control our animal machine, being "wonderfully and fearfully made," is but tampering with the lives of his fellow-beings, and deserves, to say the least of it, the epithet of a *scientific murderer*. Mistakes have been made in the hands of physicians that time nor memory can ever efface from the minds of the living. How important, then, that we should watch attentively all the minutiae of disease, with every attending symptom in the case, before we bring to bear upon the case those remedies which may be necessary to control the malady on the one hand, and in strict conformity to scientific principles upon the other.

"After all," says an elegant writer, "pathological symptoms do not amount to much, provided we prescribe in accordance with the totality of the symptoms; for, by pursuing this course, we can not fail to prescribe for *the thing*, even if *the name* be left out of consideration." Names are but empty sounds at best.

If I say the patient has *Pneumonia*, I simply state a fact, which may or may not exist. How do I ascertain that the individual has the disease alluded to? I arrive at the correctness of my opinion by certain developments, which are characterized as *symptoms* or *signs*. Then I prescribe for *the thing* according to those symptoms, and if the same group were existing in any other given case, and I could not designate the disease sufficiently to tell whether it was *pneumonia* or anything else, I should direct my remedies so as to cover the greatest amount of symptoms in the case, whether I ever succeeded in applying a name or not. I could illustrate cases where physicians have been for days puzzled to ascertain a *name* before the *disease* was determined upon, or a prescription made, while the unfortunate victim has been suffered to struggle on, awaiting the decision of his physician, until the malady had fastened upon his constitution, and rendered his case utterly hopeless. And it is to be regretted that an opinion is rife in many sections of the country, that *some diseases* are within the reach of remedial agents, only so far as to palliate the symptoms, leaving nature to work out its own cure. Truly if this be correct we are not much in advance of the old Mosaic doctors, who were both hydropathists and vegetable—for the prophet commanded them to wash in the river of Jordan, and they were healed—and a fig was applied to another's *boil* with the desired effect. And if I could imbibe the principle, and reconcile it with the immutable laws of God, that he had provided a ransom for the *soul* and not the *bodies* of his intelligent creatures, then I should necessarily conceive the work of redemption was only partial, and comes far short of accomplishing that which was the intention and design of the God who made us of "one flesh and to dwell upon the face of the earth." But, I entertain no such thoughts; with unshaken confidence in that Providence who has "numbered the very hairs of our head," and notices even the "sparrow's fall," I believe he has placed upon this wide earth remedial agents, if "every where known," sufficient to remove every pain or affliction which the

violation of the Divine law has entailed upon the human family.

And with due respect for the opinions of others who may differ with me upon this subject, I must be permitted to state as my honest conviction, that the prevalent opinion now existing in many neighborhoods and families in reference to *Typhoid Fever*, has done immense mischief. The generally received opinion is, that if you give medicine you kill your patient. Let us analyze a little. This scourge of the human family has swept over our country, mowing down its thousands, almost unmolested in its work of death. I have seen it where medicine was given, and many died; and I have witnessed its inroads upon many families, where nothing was done except a few palliatives to soothe and quiet the sufferer, and they have all almost universally died. And from an experience of some ten years in my own practice and that of others, I am decidedly under the impression, that typhoid fever may be as successfully treated, and brought as much under the control of remedial agents, as any other fever of as malignant a type. If I am wrong, it is but the honest conviction of my mind, backed and sustained by my past experience in the management of the disease—not presuming, however, to avow that I am better posted than others of my professional brethren.

And with bright anticipations of the future, the bow of promise now looms up before us with all its variegated beauties, giving encouragement to the afflicted and wayworn, that the time will yet come when on the mountain-top and in the valley, remedies will be found commensurate with the afflictions of man, and he shall live out his “three score and ten,” and return to the earth full of years and covered with honor, to rest in peace.

JAS. W. PRICE, M. D.,
PERMANENT PHYSICIAN,
ATLANTA, Ga.

HAVING been absent, as Surgeon in the Army, during the last six months, would respectfully inform the afflicted at a distance, as well as the citizens of Atlanta and adjacent country, that he has again engaged in the practice of medicine, in all of its various branches. Although circumstances seem to make it necessary to increase his rate of charges, yet this will not be done, but his fees will be as heretofore.

It will be unnecessary to reiterate the fact of his unlimited success in curing the various and diversified chronic diseases which human nature is liable. Especially has his attention been directed to the treatment of FEMALE DISEASES, such as *Prolapsus Uteri*, Leucorrhœa, Painful Menstruation, and such others as females are liable to, which, in most instances, may be permanently cured.

I also treat successfully, Rheumatism, Acute or Chronic, Syphilis, in all of its forms, especially when of the Mercurial type, Skin diseases, Liver complaints, Dyspepsia, together with bowel affections, either acute or chronic. And, indeed, there are but few diseases which may not be reached by proper medication.

The great secret of my success, however, depends not only upon an experience of some twenty-seven years, but, to a very large extent upon the agency of my "*ELECTRO GALVANIC BATHS*," which are the admiration and wonder of the scientific world.

Persons desiring my services can obtain them by calling upon me in Atlanta, where every thing shall be done, not only to cure them, but to render their stay in our city agreeable and pleasant.

If preferred, (before coming here,) I will visit them at their homes, by paying my expenses, and five dollars per day, while absent from the city.

OFFICE in the Markham Building, second flight of stairs. Residence near the Washington Hall.

REFERENCES:

Gen. F. W. Capers, Marietta; Jos. E. Brown, Col. E. P. Watkins, Col. J. I. Whitaker, Thomas Dozier, M. D.; E. R. Sasseen, Perino Brown, Gen. Ira Foster, Rev. H. C. Hornaday, Gen. J. H. Rice, Atlanta, Ga.; Rev. S. Anthony, Cuthbert, Ga.; Dr. J. Dillworth, Stone Mountain, Ga.

It affords me pleasure in adding my testimony to the above, as well as recommending to my friends and patrons, James W. Price, M. D., as a physician of skill in the treatment of all acute diseases.

W. W. DURHAM, M. D.

Atlanta, August 25, 1862.

