ness of our calling demands? How often do we hear it said, "Mr. A. says Mr. B. has treated me all wrong, not understood my case at all." How glad, alas, is Mr. A. to write a prescription altogether different from what Mr. B. has done! Medical men must differ in opinion as to treatment, and this very difference is the greatest safeguard the public can have; but the difference of opinion and the treatment to be followed need not be made the subject of comment to the patient. The difference ought to be sacred, as between man and man; and I pray that the freer communication now possible, as I have expressed in a former portion of my address, may be the means of reconciling many men hitherto kept apart by only a partial knowledge of each other.

Again, how sadly do medical men arouse the astonishment of the public when called upon to give evidence in judicial inquiries; how diametrically opposed are the opinions advanced, without regard for their own character or for that of the profession! The opinion must be in favor of the side of those on whose behalf each man is called to give evidence, whether it be for or against. Can we be surprised that the laity often accuse us of violating the principles of honor? In no class of cases is this brought more prominently before the public eye than in railway accidents. Is it impossible for medical men, before giving evidence in such cases, to come to some mutual understanding? I trust some way may be found to escape from the scandal by which, under the above circumstances, we are now surrounded. As long as these controversies last, just so long will it be before we attain to that position which we ought to hold in the estimation of the public.

How the backbitings, the jealousies, have existed for so long is marvelous, even in times gone by, in reference to the power, the prosperity, and dignity of one college of learning over another, and which, even to this day, are so far existing as to greatly impede, I fear, the cause of education, and the proof, by one combined examination, as to the fitness of men to be intrusted with the health and lives of their fellow-men. How different this from what Harvey anticipated, as expressed by the last Harveian orator, Dr. Barclay, "how in the early days of the College of Physicians, jealousies crept in, instead of that large-heartedness which Harvey hoped would guide the steps of the Fellows of the College."

Can we be surprised, then, that the public, being critical, should look doubtfully upon our profession, and refuse us that meed of just sympathy and position which we certainly deserve? Let us hope that a great future is in store for all our colleges and seats of learning, and that they may be pregnant of great results, both as regards the advance of science and the eligibility of those who are destined to go about doing good, following in the steps of their Great Master. . . .

Permit me now to draw my conclusions from what I have ventured (I hope without offense to any individual, present or absent) to place before you. I trust, moreover, that the sum and substance of my observations may have the effect, which I greatly desire, of clearing away some of the clouds which surround the lay public, and that my observations may bring those who have hitherto looked upon our profession as a necessary evil, rather than a good, to believe at any rate that, although we may differ individually as to treatment of disease, we are not antagonistic collectively; that our feelings towards each other are brotherly;

and that in the performance of our duty toward our patients and to the public we are actuated by true and honest motives, and the most honorable intentions. Gentlemen, a review of what I have already said cannot fail, I am bold enough to hope, to prove that our profession merits the highest consideration from the world at large, and that it stands upon the topmost pinnacle of fame.

Gentlemen, only a few words more, and I have done. Many thanks for your patient attention to my sayings, which I fear have been dull and uninteresting. I trust that no word has fallen from my lips offensive to any one here. I have spoken from the fullness of my heart, with but one desire, namely, that the high position in which our profession already stands may be maintained and increased, and secure for you, individually and collectively, that respect which, if honestly, honorably, and perseveringly carried on, your calling merits.

In conclusion, I would venture to say, pray each morning before you commence your day's labor, which labor cannot be attended but by much anxiety, and at times by disappointment and sorrow, mingled happily, however, by some bright spots; pray, I say, that you may be blessed by that Divine help which can alone sustain you and carry you successfully through labors and anxieties of no mean order, and when evening comes pour forth thanksgivings that strength and knowledge have been given you, to do your duty, in mitigating to some extent the sufferings of your fellow-men. These are the only sure and safe steps to a happy life and a prosperous career. . . .

ADDRESS IN MEDICINE,

BEFORE THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AT ITS LATE MEETING AT RYDE.¹

BY JOHN SYER BRISTOWE, M. D.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN, — There are few more interesting and curious studies than the history of medicine. Taking its origin in the very dawn of human existence, not in the instincts which lead men to obey the dictates of nature, but in the sense of rebellion which the pains and penalties she inflicts engenders, it was cradled in the credulity and superstition which are the first fruits of thought struggling for independence. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the earlier ages, when their origin and nature seemed alike mysterious, diseases should be attributed to the influence of stars and comets, to the malignity of demons, to the wrath of deities; and that their alleviation or cure should be sought in amulets and charms, in sacrifices and prayers. Nor is it surprising that in later times, when the knowledge of disease had advanced, and the influence of drugs had become recognized, a belief came to prevail that for every morbid evil which nature permitted to afflict mankind she had provided an antidote. Nor, perhaps, is it to be wondered at that, even at the present time, in this enlightened age, not merely among the lowly and the ignorant, but amongst the noble, the learned, and even the scientific, credulity and superstition in relation to the common enemy of mankind — disease — should still widely prevail; that diseases should still be attributed to supernatural causes, and to the spleen of

¹ Reprinted from advance sheets.

an offended deity; that still amulets and charms, sacrifices and prayers, should be included in the popular *materia medica*; or that the belief should still be entertained (for which no scientific basis whatever exists) that diseases, which are the necessary correlatives of mortality, are mere puzzles, designed by nature for the exercise of ingenuity in the discovery of remedies, which she has industriously hidden in the eternal rocks, and in the living things which people the face of the earth or clothe it with verdure.

It has been largely held, and is doubtless still believed, that the position of medicine as a science is a discredit to the age in which we live; and it may be freely admitted that, while the arts and sciences generally have been making rapid strides, medicine, in its primary and chief object—namely, the cure of diseases,—has made but scanty and doubtful progress. But those who hold this view have given little real thought to the subject. In no small measure they are persons who have no acquaintance whatever with medicines who judge of it by its failure to accomplish ends which are probably impossible of accomplishment, and who are themselves to a great extent credulous as to the efficacy of measures and of remedies whose use is an outrage on common sense. But largely they are persons who base their judgment on a false comparison of the progress of medicine with that of the exact sciences, and of the natural sciences on which alone scientific medicine is built. They forget that mathematics and geometry are (difficult, no doubt, but) comparatively simple sciences, which men may cultivate in the closet, apart from life and nature, and which the ancients, therefore, were as well able to investigate with success as ourselves. They forget that the physical sciences and chemistry, which deal only with the simple forces of nature and unliving matter, have only within the last hundred years made those gigantic strides which have raised them from the depths of empiricism and quackery to the marvelous position which they now hold among our intellectual and effective possessions. They forget that the natural sciences, the sciences which deal with living nature,—namely, botany, zoölogy, anatomy, physiology, and pathology,—though long cultivated fitly and to little purpose, have only of late years made systematic progress; and that it is mainly within the present century that anatomy, physiology, and pathology have risen into the dignity of sciences, and have worked a very revolution in our knowledge and estimate of life, in both its normal and its abnormal conditions—of health and disease. And, lastly, they forget that the scientific treatment of disease can only be based on a scientific knowledge of the structure and functions of the healthy body, on a scientific knowledge of the causes and processes of diseases in it, and on a scientific study of the methods and means by which those morbid causes and processes can be prevented, counteracted, or destroyed, and that such a study is only now becoming possible.

I confess that to me it seems altogether Utopian and unreasonable to expect either that diseases shall ever be banished from the earth, or that even diseases generally shall become curable by therapeutical or any other treatment. All living things are foredoomed to die; and the more complicated their structure, and the higher and more multifarious their functions, the more liable are they to suffer from those changes of structure and derangements of functions which constitute essential elements of disease. Moreover, the causes of

disease abound, and form, as much as we ourselves do, an integral part of the economy of nature. Why should they cease to exist and act and we survive? Again, assuming the persistence of diseases, what grounds of reason or experience have we to justify the belief that for every disease an antidote or cure will sooner or later be discovered? The history of medicine raises no such hope. There is nothing in the nature of diseases themselves to render such a consummation probable. The immortality of mortal life is neither conceivable nor to be desired. Still less is there any reasonable or sufficient basis for the assumption that diseases, differing absolutely from one another in their nature, and depending on causes which have no mutual connection and act upon the system in various and independent ways, should all be amenable to treatment in accordance with one simple theory of therapeutics.

I am not presuming to question the benefits that medicine has conferred upon mankind; still less to deny the promise of greater things to come. I know that, in the past, many glimpses of therapeutical truth have from time to time been caught; and that veins of bright ore have here and there been discovered in the dreary waste of empiricism and charlatanism. I see that, at the present time, pathology and the investigation of the causes of disease are throwing fresh and unexpected light on the nature of diseases, and are leading us into new lines of successful practice, especially in relation to their prevention. And I cannot doubt that as our knowledge of the processes and causes of disease extends, so will our power to prevent disease acquire a wider range, and attain more certainty of operation; and that here, more than in the direct treatment of disease, our future successes will be found. But neither can I doubt that the progress of this and cognate sciences, aided by well-devised experiments and careful observation of diseases, will lead both to the discovery of new remedies and to the more successful use of those we already employ.

I shall not pursue the subject of the potentialities of medicine, fascinating though it be. It is in the vagaries, and not in the science, of medicine, that for this hour my interest centres. I am not going to investigate or explain how it is that systems of medical treatment of disease have originated, have played their part in the drama of human life, have given place to others, and yet (though henceforth discredited in the eyes of man) have left behind them relics which are still embodied in the therapeutical practice and theories of the present day. It is easy, however, to understand how, on the one hand, the vague beliefs, speculations, and errors—the growth of ages—should have gradually acquired form, and blended into creeds; and how, on the other hand, ingenious and self-reliant minds, speculating on the mysteries of nature, should have gradually evolved out of their inner consciousness elaborate systems in explanation, with nothing but their ingenuity to commend them. Thus it was that, in accordance with the first alternative, the Doctrine of Signatures gradually arose; thus it was that, in accordance with the second, Galen elaborated his celebrated hypothesis respecting the virtues and operations of medicines. It seems marvelous that such fantastic fictions as these were should ever have developed in the minds of men, and for ages have been accepted as true, and adopted in practice, not only by the ignorant and thoughtless, but by physicians of conspicuous ability and eminence.

But, gentlemen, the age of credulity is not yet passed; and doubtless, as long as humanity strives to unravel the secrets of nature, and to explain her actions, there will be men, and men, too, of cultivated intellects, who, in the search after truth, will be led astray by will-o'-the-wisps, and who will end by making idols of the vain pigments of their minds, by pulling down and worshipping the golden images they have themselves set up. Such a man, it seems to me, was Hahnemann, the notorious founder of homœopathy. It is of him, and of the sect he founded, that I propose to speak to-day.

Hahnemann became a medical man from choice, and pursued his studies in respectable schools and under fairly eminent teachers. He acquired some credit as a practitioner while yet young, though probably not more credit than many of his contemporaries, and many who have preceded and many who have followed him, have also obtained, whose names, nevertheless, have never emerged from obscurity. But he appears to have given his mind mainly to the study of chemistry, botany, and therapeutics; and certainly there is no evidence from his writings, or any other source, that the study of disease itself had any interest for him. Though he had friends, he seems, like most physicians, to have failed in early life to make his profession lucrative; and either for this reason, or, as some assert, because he became dissatisfied with the methods and systems of treating disease then in vogue, he retired for a time from practice, and gave himself up to his favorite studies, and to the translation of French and English works relating to them into his mother tongue. However this may be, many will sympathize with him now, as many doubtless would have sympathized with him then, in the dissatisfaction which, about this period, he undoubtedly felt with the chaotic state of therapeutical theory and practice at that time prevalent, and with the aspirations that sprung up within him to make order out of confusion, to discover some intelligible relation between therapeutic agents and morbid processes, to systematize the curative treatment of disease. And many even of those who dissent most widely from his conclusions will still, I think, admire the tenacity, the energy, and the sublime bigotry he displayed in the development of that system of which he was at once the creator and the apostle.

His system took its origin in those scholastic views of the nature of disease, of the nature of remedies, and of the influence of remedies on disease, which more or less have influenced the theory and practice of medicine from the earliest ages down to the present day. Looking upon diseases, not as what they are, but as mere assemblages of symptoms; and upon remedies, not as what they are, but as agents specially given by Providence with the one hand to cure the evils which he had scattered broadcast with the other; and, guided by certain superficial relationships, easily observed, between the effects of certain morbid conditions and the effects of certain drugs, it was not unnatural for observant and thoughtful men to speculate on the hidden laws which might be supposed to underlie such relationships, and to generalize. Thus, some perceiving that constipation of the bowels was overcome by purgatives, diarrhœa by astringents, and that hæmorrhages were arrested by styptics, thought that in such facts they recognized the general therapeutical law that all diseases should be treated by their opposites (*contraria contrariis curantur*); some noticing that coma was

relieved by purgatives (that is, that affections of the head were favorably influenced by remedies acting on the bowels); that affections of internal organs were benefited by counter-irritants and such like phenomena, originated the theory that disease was curable by remedies which were unlike in operation to themselves, the theory to which the term *allopathy* was given by Hahnemann; and, again, some observing that diarrhœa was often relieved by purgatives, that constipation was often best treated by remedies having a tendency to restrain the action of the bowels, that inflammation of the skin was frequently cured by the application of remedies which themselves tended to irritate the skin, were pioneers in the alleged discovery which Hahnemann proclaimed to the world in the legend *Similia similibus curantur*, and under the name of *homœopathy*.

It is clear, if one looks only at some of the coarser phenomena of disease and effects of remedies, there is some warrant in fact for each of these three theories of treatment, but none for regarding one or other of them as of universal applicability. It is clear, too, that any one arguing back from such facts as these to the hidden workings of diseases and remedies within the corporeal frame, and at the same time shutting his eyes to the phenomena of life as they exist actually, might bring himself to the belief that there were three modes corresponding to those enumerated above, and three only, in which remedial agents could act upon the processes of disease: namely, one by acting in opposition to them (*antipathy*), one by acting in accordance with them (*homœopathy*), and one by acting heterogeneously to them (*allopathy*). But it is difficult to understand how any one who has followed in any degree the advances, during the present century, of the natural sciences, and especially of those which relate to the structure and functions of the human body in health and disease, and to the ætiology of disease, can see any plausibility in such speculations, any provisional hypothesis even, such as sometimes aids the advance of science — any meaning whatever in them.

How Hahnemann's special views of disease and its treatment originated, and how they underwent gradual development, until they found exact expression in his *Organon*, the bible of homœopathy, I shall not attempt to discuss. The *Organon* itself, however, is a remarkable work, very interesting also, and very entertaining; for it comprises not only the quintessence of his labors, but reveals the character of the man, as in a mirror, with all his strength and all his weakness, all his wisdom and all his folly.

He was a physician who had a supreme contempt for pathology, and on the whole for ætiology. He inveighs over and over again against the absurdity of those who endeavor to discover, in morbid phenomena within the body, an explanation of the symptoms which persons who are ill present. He says: "We may well conceive that every malady implies a change in the interior of the organism, but this change can only be surmised obscurely and fallaciously from the symptoms; it can never be recognized infallibly in its complete reality. The invisible changes wrought by the malady within the organism, and the changes perceptible to our senses (that is to say, in some of the symptoms), together form a complete image of the malady; but that image is only visible in its entirety to the eye of the Creator. It is the totality of the symptoms which alone constitute the part of it accessible to the doctors; but it is likewise in the totality of

the symptoms that we find everything that it is needful to know in order to cure." To Hahnemann it is a matter of no moment whether ascites depends on cirrhosis of the liver, or tubercle of the peritonæum; whether an attack of constipation and colic arises from lead-poisoning or from a cancerous stricture; whether a paralytic seizure is the outcome of hysteria, or is due to some material lesion of the brain. In each case, to him, what is the condition of things within is an idle speculation: the symptoms for which the patient complains comprise all that the medical man need know; and to treat those according to the true laws of homœopathy is to cure the disease. But he goes further; for, not satisfied with stigmatizing all pathological investigations as mere pedantry and foolishness, he actually objects to all attempts on the part of systematic writers and practical physicians to distinguish and classify diseases. Speaking of pathology in the past, he says: "It created arbitrarily the object of cure — namely, the malady. Men decided authoritatively what are the number of diseases, what their form, and what their genera. Good God," says he, "the infinity of diseases which nature excites in man, exposed as he is to so many different influences, under conditions never to be determined beforehand, and infinitely varied, is reduced to such an extent by pathology that there remains only a handful of them furnished according to its whim." Elsewhere he observes: "We may also pass over in silence the fact that persons have tried to reduce the number of maladies — those infinitely varied deviations from the state of health — to a limited list of denominations, and to give the definite descriptions (which vary, nevertheless, according to different pathological views), in order to afford a ready indication of medical treatment for each form of illness that is artificially defined in therapeutics." And again he says, in reference to the causes of disease (which he regards as innumerable): "Thence come an infinite number of heterogeneous diseases, which are so different from one another that (to speak strictly) any case of illness appears only once, and (if we except the few diseases which originate in a miasm) always of the same kind, or which arise from the same cause, every man who becomes affected suffers from a special malady, to which no specific name can be given, and which has never existed in the same manner as in the present case, in the particular individual and under existing circumstances, and will never be reproduced in exactly the same form."

From these quotations we may fairly gather what his views of the nature of disease were. In the first place, he admitted that diseases originated in causes; but these causes were innumerable, and operated in innumerable combinations, and hence (excepting in the cases of miasmatic affection, and some few specific fevers which he could not deny the existence of, and enumerated) were barren subjects of investigation, and as indications for treatment worthless, if not misleading. Indeed, in one place, speaking of intestinal worms (which we regard as causes of disease), he denies that that they are causes of disease at all; and says that when they irritate, they irritate simply from the fact that they are themselves suffering, together with their host, of some malady under which their host labors; professing (in accordance with his preconceived views) to imagine some hidden cause, rather than to acknowledge that as the cause which offered itself in a visible and tangible form to his senses. For him, I should

think, preventive medicine, which deals specially with the cause of disease, and has been successful only in proportion to its knowledge of them, would have been a delusion and a snare. In the second place, pathology, and more especially morbid anatomy, had no meaning for him. All the laborious investigations conducted in our dead-houses, which we fondly imagine add to our knowledge of disease, and to which (in association with clinical study) we attribute most of the advances that have been made in medicine of late years — such as the differentiation of kidney diseases, the recognition of suprarenal medicine, the discovery of the condition known as embolism, the exact recognition of the nature of tumors, the discoveries which have been made in regard to the diseases of the nervous system — would be looked upon by him with contempt. For what, in the third place, have such investigations and such knowledge to do with diseases as he understood them. His diseases, as I have shown, were, with a few exceptions, simply groups of symptoms — mosaics of what the component pieces admitted of endless rearrangement. Intermittent fever constituted one of the cases in which he recognized the operation of a definite cause; but, notwithstanding this, intermittent fevers were themselves innumerable, and each case that came before him was an independent disease.

I do not wish to misinterpret his views. He recognizes, I admit, the existence of morbid causes; but he seems to liken them to the impulse which propels a ball, and to think that with their initial impulse all this specific influence ceases. Nor does he deny the existence of pathological changes in the interior of the body; but he says that we cannot detect them, that, as a matter of fact, they are correlated with the symptoms which patients present, and together with these are common manifestations of the same disease, and that in the symptoms alone we have a sufficient indication of the nature of the disease and of the treatment to be adopted for its cure.

Of course, in all this there is much that is true, and much that is specious. Were it not so his theories would long ago have been abandoned; for it is the mixture of truth and verisimilitude with error that gives error currency. But how much of wild speculation, how much of absolute ignorance of the matters which he proposes to teach, how much obstinate shutting of his senses to the truths of nature.

Hahnemann's views of the nature of disease were doubtless subservient to his views of the curative operation of drugs. And it is on his therapeutical views, if on anything, that his reputation must depend. He says, in his introduction, "All human maladies have up to the present time been cured, not in accordance with reasonings founded on nature and experience, but in accordance with hypotheses arbitrarily devised, such as (amongst others) the law of palliatives, *contraria contrariis*. Yet it was from this opposite side that the true method of cure was arrived at. It is based on the following principle: to cure gently, promptly, certainly, and durably, we must select, in every case of sickness, a medicine which produces of itself a similar affection to that which it is intended to cure. No one up to the present time has taught this homœopathic method; no one has yet practiced it." And he goes on to add that all the maladies that had heretofore been cured had been cured by homœopathic remedies. Let us see exactly what the nature of his teaching is. He seems to start from the fascinating belief that all symptoms of disease,

and therefore from his point of view all disease, are curable. He seems also to have adopted the belief (already adverted to) that for all diseases nature has provided a cure. And he holds that the only proper and efficient cure for any assemblage of symptoms is a remedy which is capable itself of causing in a healthy person an identical assemblage of symptoms.

Stated generally, his views are as follows: the innumerable diseases which afflict mankind, and which arise out of natural causes, consist, for the purposes of the physician, of groups of symptoms; the innumerable remedial agents which exist in nature, locked up in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and in the inorganic world, are themselves the causes of a parallel basis of artificial diseases, which again, for the purpose of the therapist, consist of groups of symptoms; in order to cure any natural disease that may come before us it is necessary to administer that particular remedial agent which is capable of producing identical symptoms with it, and of course this must be given in a suitable dose, for if in too minute a dose it leaves a residuum of the original disease uncured; if in too large a dose it cures the disease, but induces after-effects of its own; and, further, inasmuch as we are not yet acquainted with the specific virtues of all remedies, and inasmuch, therefore, as for a large number of diseases the most suitable homœopathic remedy has not yet been discovered, we must in such a case select a remedy the effect of which approximates to the symptoms of the disease, by which means we shall cure a certain area, so to speak, of the primary disease, but we shall leave a new disease behind, compounded of the as yet uncured symptoms of the old disease, and the supernumerary symptoms due to the drug itself, which new disease must be treated *de novo* on homœopathic principles. How curious, how ingenious, how interesting the whole thing is! How excellent, if true! And has it not the simplicity of truth in it? The entire range of diseases, the entire range of therapeutics converted into Chinese puzzles; the phenomena of diseases and the effect of drugs upon them treated as algebraical equations! It is impossible to conceive of any physician working daily by the bedside of patients, and in the dead-house, and seeing diseases as they are, forming such a system, except as a joke. It could only have been, as in fact it was, the serious work of a visionary who had thrown off the trammels of fact, and, allowing his imagination to run riot, mistook its fantastic figments for a revelation from heaven.

That Hahnemann believed in himself and in the absolute truth of all that he taught is beyond dispute. He was a prophet, not only to his followers, but in his own eyes. All other systems of therapeutics but his were folly, and all who pursued them were fools. That he had training, and ability, and the power of reasoning, is abundantly clear. He saw through the prevalent therapeutical absurdities and impositions of the day: he laughed to scorn the complicated and loathsome nostrums which, even at that time, disgraced the pharmacopœias; and he exposed with no little skill and success the emptiness and worthlessness of most of the therapeutical systems which then and theretofore had prevailed in the medical schools; and then he invents and proclaims a system of his own at least as empty and as worthless as any that had gone before. In this, I suppose, there is nothing very strange; for it is only the broadest intellects (and his was an essentially narrow one) which are capable of treating the offspring of

their own brains with the same impartiality they manifest in other cases. But, under the circumstances, it will be interesting to consider, however briefly, the character of the therapeutical facts and arguments which he himself alleges in support of his doctrines, and the methods of investigation which he taught and practiced.

In the first place, in order to prove the truth of his assertion, that all cures which had heretofore been effected by drugs were effected in virtue of their homœopathic action, he ransacks the writings of his predecessors; and, while omitting to quote (probably, in his opinion, as absolutely worthless) any of the multitude of recorded cases in which cures had been attributed to remedies which could in no sense be regarded as homœopathic, he quotes a number of at least equally worthless cases, in which he thinks he recognizes the curative influence of unconsciously applied homœopathic treatment. The following are two of his quotations: "The English sweating disease, at its beginning more deadly than the plague itself, and which, according to Willis, destroyed ninety-nine patients out of every hundred, could not be overcome until doctors had learnt to treat the sick with sudorific remedies; from that moment, as Sennest remarks, few persons died of it." Again: "Albus informs us that the high temperature of an acute fever, with 130 beats of the pulse in a minute, was much reduced by a hot bath of 100 degrees of Fahrenheit, and that the beats of the pulse consequently sank to 110." I have no doubt the quotations he gives here are essentially accurate. But surely it is well known that all the older physicians claimed to have discovered, towards the close of any epidemic fever, no matter what its virulence, the true method of curing it, which discovery coincided in time with the rational disappearance of the disease. Many men have thought and declared that they had cured plague and cholera and typhus with similar circumstances by remedies, some of which may even have been homœopathic. Does any one believe that such asserted cures of these incurable diseases ever took place? Is there any sufficient reason to admit that the sweating disease was ever more amenable to treatment than this, or that it was, in fact, ever cured by sudorifics, or any other remedies? And as regards the case of the reduction of temperature by the bath, Hahnemann fails entirely to see that the patient's temperature was much higher than that of the bath; that the bath was relatively cold to him; that it relieved him by reducing his temperature; and that the treatment was, not only not homœopathic, but essentially anti-pathic; that the case, if it proves anything, proves the efficiency of one of those very methods against which he pours out the vials of his wrath. These are simply samples. I could run through the whole series of them, and show that, while a large number of them were merely loose and untrustworthy statements of supposed facts, nearly all of them prove nothing whatever, to my unbiased mind, in response to those homœopathic principles which they are assumed to support. Naturally, the recently introduced non-relation of cow-pox, as a preventive of variola, is adduced by him as a homœopathic remedy against the latter disease. He fails to observe that it is preventive alone; and that, so far from acting as a cure of small-pox, it aborts when applied to a variolous patient, while his disease runs its course wholly uninfluenced by it.

In the second place, as regards his own homœopathic observations. These, as given in his *Organon*, are not

very numerous. For the most part, he there lays down the law oracularly, and quotes the more or less questionable and loose statements of other authors in support of his opinions. There are some two or three observations, however, apparently his own, or at any rate confirmed by his own experience, which are really interesting. He speaks, as I have before pointed out, of intermittent pains as being innumerable, and derides the blind pathology which makes of these one disease, and proceeds: "Pathology feigns this in order to give pleasure to her dear sister Therapeutics, who, excepting antimony and sal ammoniac, has, as a rule, no other remedy against intermittent pains than quinine, with which it treats them according to a fixed method, as if they were all identical! It is true," he continues, "that these pains can be suppressed by enormous doses of quinine, that is to say, that their periodical recurrence is overcome by it; but those who are affected with intermittents for which this remedy is unsuitable are not cured by it, but remain continually ill, and worse than they were before. And this is what the vulgar art of medicine calls a cure!" He regards quinine, and mentions it elsewhere, as a homœopathic remedy for ague attended with certain groups of systems. Homœopathic, forsooth! when the most striking therapeutical fact concerning quinine is that it lowers temperatures; while the most striking clinical feature of ague is the extraordinary rise of temperature which attends its paroxysmal attacks. But fancy ague, which (Hahnemann notwithstanding) is in all its forms identically the same disease, being homœopathic to quinine in one case, and allopathic or antipathic in another; being in one case curable by quinine administered in infinitesimal quantities, and in another aggravated by the same remedy in large doses. I do not know what the present views of homœopathic practitioners may be as to the relations of quinine and ague; but I appeal to every one of experience besides as to whether ague ever succumbs to the use of infinitesimal doses of quinine; and whether, in the large majority of cases, it does not yield, with no ill consequence (due to the drug), to quinine in large quantities? What is the experience of our Indian colleagues in this matter? Again, he speaks over and over again of itch, a disease with which he seems to have been familiar, and which he assumes to be an affection pervading the whole organism, but attended, as small-pox is, with a rash; and in reference to it, he insists upon the folly of endeavoring to cure this skin-disease by local applications, a procedure which he says has the effect of aggravating the constitutional disorder; and teaches that the disease is only to be cured by the internal administration of sulphur in homœopathic doses. Now, it is pretty certain that Hahnemann did not very clearly distinguish itch from many other forms of cutaneous eruption; still, many of his cases of itch were true itch, no doubt. But what can practical men think of the insight into diseases, of the power of observation, of that man who discovers that to destroy the local phenomena of itch is to aggravate the patient's illness; that itch itself is even curable by any internal remedy whatever. No doubt he was not aware that itch is due to the burrowing of parasites in the skin; but if he had been it would have made no difference to him; for he would have argued of them, and of their relation to itch, as I have already shown that he argues of intestinal parasites, and the symptoms of disease which are usually attributed to their presence.

But, in the third place, before medicines can be employed homœopathically, their collective effect must of course be ascertained and tabulated; and, before cases of disease can be treated homœopathically, their symptoms must all be accurately determined and tabulated; in order that the appropriate, or at any rate the most appropriate, remedy may be selected for each. We cannot, therefore, quarrel with Hahnemann for requiring that drugs shall be carefully tested or proved, and that cases shall be carefully and accurately recorded. But what does he mean by proving of medicine, and what by testing of cases? Most men accustomed to scientific investigations would say that, in order to determine the precise potential characteristics of any unknown agency, it should be interrogated and cross-examined and tested from all points of view; that, if a drug, its chemical properties should be determined, and its action on the living and on the dead, in health and disease, should be exhaustively ascertained. That is not Hahnemann's notion at all. Drugs being, in his view, agencies which impart disease, must be tested only on the healthy body, in order to determine, in accordance with homœopathic requirements, what natural diseases their effects simulate. And the method of procedure is, that the experimenter, and those who act under his directions, shall take regulated doses of the drugs they wish to examine, and thus note in each case accurately every phenomenon which develops itself during some period, determined more or less arbitrarily, after the reception of the drug. The results to the uneducated eye look, perhaps, fair and reasonable. But we must admit the truth of the homœopathic view of the relations between medicines and diseases before we can admit the special value of investigations conducted only on the healthy body; and, as regards the method of investigation which he teaches, can anything be better calculated to promote self-deception. Think of the innumerable phenomena which a hypochondriacal old man, a youthful enthusiast in experimental research, or a credulous lecturer would find under such circumstances arising from inconceivable doses of the most inert substances — the itching at this joint, the aching at that, the variation in the pulse, the watering of the eyes, the noise in the ears, the muscular startings, the eructations, the swellings in the bowels, and many other matters of the same kind. What pictures of the mimicry of disease may be thus produced and varied *ad infinitum*; of what innumerable pictures of the kind (comprising here and there doubtless accurate and valuable observations) is the homœopathic literature on the processes of drugs made up. The recording of cases, according to Hahnemann's directions, is of a piece with the proving of medicines. He tells us to listen carefully to the account the patient gives of himself, to hear all that the friends and others about the patient say concerning him, and to note down everything accurately, and in tabular form. You are not to interrupt. And then, when the recitals have been completed, you are permitted to ask certain questions, the character of which he carefully specifies. But you are never to suggest anything to the patient; and you are never, so far as I can make out, to cross-examine him. Imagine the picture of her condition that a garrulous old lady would give under such conditions. Imagine the innumerable histories of diseases you would get in which everything accessory and unimportant would be recorded, and everything really distinctive and important for diagnosis and treatment,

as we understand them, omitted. I am not prepared to say the method is a wrong one from the homœopathic point of view, in which diseases as objects of medical treatment are regarded only as an assemblage of symptoms, and in which the interconnection of symptoms is comparatively unimportant. But what a caricature of scientific case-taking it reveals to us. What an unpractical condition of mind it manifests in him who elaborated it. What light it throws on his curious incapacity for exact scientific observation. How like his method is to that of an industrious newly-appointed clinical clerk. How utterly opposed to the procedure of the experienced scientific physician.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature of homœopathy, as Hahnemann bequeathed it to us, is his hypothesis of infinitesimal doses. He discovered, from the results of his experiments and practice, that, when once the true homœopathic remedy for any disease, or rather collection of symptoms, had been ascertained, it was needful, in order at the same time to secure the full effect of the drug and to obviate any ill effects it might leave of its use, to reduce the doses of it to an inconceivable minuteness. The millionth, the billionth, the trillionth of a grain were gigantic quantities compared with some of those which finally he found it best to administer. It has been calculated that a drop from the lake of Geneva, through the waters of which a single grain of medicine had been diffused, would contain one of his ordinary doses; and that a drop from a mass of water similarly treated long enough to filtrate the whole solar system, would contain as large a dose as is furnished by some of these extreme attenuations! When we laugh at these infinitesimal doses, the retort is often made that we ourselves use small doses; and calculations are flung at us, showing how excessively minute must be the amount of any potent drug administered by the stomach which reaches the organ wherein it induces specific effects, and how absolutely inappreciable must be the bulk of odorous particles which not only affect the sense of smell, but even provoke coryza, sickness, and faintness. Wherein, then, is the absurdity of the Hahnemannic dosage? But this is not a retort that Hahnemann would have made; and, indeed, it is one that could only rise to the lips of degenerate followers of his. It is not the amount of any drug which reaches any one part of the organism which is in question, but the amount of it which has to be administered for a dose. And it cannot be denied that the smallest doses employed by us, even such as Dr. Ringer recommends, are gross indeed compared with those of Hahnemann. Where we give a drop or the hundredth part of a grain he would have given the millionth or the billionth part of that quantity, at the very most, and probably millions of billions less than that. Moreover, the principles underlying the two cases are wholly dissimilar.

The limit in the efficacy of infinitesimal doses involved the violation of his theory. It was, indeed, I think, the natural outcome of it. The mystical powers, which for him resided in drugs, bore no quantitative relation to the ponderable element with which they were associated. They are contained in them much as the genius in the fisherman's story in the Arabian Nights was contained in the leaden bottle which was fished up from the bottom of the sea. It is easy, then, if not inevitable, for him to imagine that the power of drugs became more and more developed, in proportion

as the grosser matters which environed the drug were removed. It is easy, too, from another point of view, for a vaguely mathematical mind like his (which had already dealt with diseases as if they were algebraical equations) to conceive that, just as mathematics becomes a more and more potent instrument, according as the encumbrances of arithmetical and ordinary algebraical præcipe are thrown aside, and one comes to deal, as in the differential calculus, with the mere ratios which survive in quantities which have been reduced to zero, so medicine would become a more and more potent art, according as the coarser portions of drugs and of diseases are eliminated from consideration, and we have only to do with the relations or ratios (if I may so express it) between drugs attenuated to nothing, and diseases reduced to mere groups of intangible subjective phenomena! One may, I think, follow Hahnemann's lines of thought; one may trace, I think, without much difficulty, the steps by which his system acquired its full development, and culminated at length in the doctrine of infinitesimal doses. The author of homœopathy himself carried homœopathy to its logical consequences! and was there ever a more amazing *reductio ad absurdum*!

I intended, gentlemen, when I first thought of preparing the address, to devote no inconsiderable portion of it to the consideration of some of the modern developments of homœopathy. But the time at my disposal is insufficient for that purpose; and I shall content myself with only one or two remarks upon the subject. It is only natural that amongst the many followers of Hahnemann, some, though believing in the essential truth and value of his teachings, have ventured, within certain limits, to think for themselves; and that hence sub-sects, or a tending to the formation of sub-sects, should have arisen. It is hardly possible, for example, that all homœopaths, who have received a medical education, should accept Hahnemann's views of the nature of diseases; and many at the present day do, I believe, acquiesce in the teachings of modern pathology. It is hardly possible, again, that every homœopath should believe fully in the efficacy of the infinitely little doses which Hahnemann contended were the most efficacious, or should believe in the potential effect of the shakings of his preparations, to which, in fact, he largely attributed the development of curative energy in them; hence the change with some is much larger than Hahnemann could have sanctioned. Then, again, was it to be expected that any thinking man could admit that remedies cured because they produced identical effects with them (and, indeed, unless one assumes that remedies act like Pharaoh's lean kine, and then die of a surfeit, it is difficult, to say the least, to imagine Hahnemann's process of cure in progress); and hence has arisen a hypothesis with respect to the influence of minute doses in the cure of diseases, which is fully as ingenious as Hahnemann's own, and is probably just as true, but which has the theoretical disadvantage for homœopaths of converting homœopathy into antipathy! It is to the effect that all medicines have opposite effects, according as they are given in large or small doses, and that when, as the consequence of proving on the healthy person, a drug is found to excite the symptoms of a disease it cures that disease by its opposition to it when given in small doses. I shall not stop to consider the propriety or plausibility of these and other like innovations in orthodox homœopathy; and I leave those who advocate them to reconcile them as best they may with

the teachings of their founder; neither shall I quarrel with the homœopaths who choose to maintain that these only represent successive stages in the progressive development of homœopathy. To me, I confess, they seem in direct contravention of homœopathic principles, and fraught with ultimate disaster to the homœopathic cause.

It is perhaps the most difficult thing in the whole practice of medicine to determine in disease whether the drugs which we are giving are directly influencing it for good. This difficulty is specially great when, as sometimes happens even to ourselves, we are, from ignorance of the essential nature of the disease we are treating, or from failure to form an accurate diagnosis, compelled to treat, as Hahnemann only treated, groups of symptoms. It is true that even the most accurate observers constantly deceive themselves. It was mainly by treating diseases simply in groups of symptoms that Hahnemann deceived himself from first to last. And it is mainly thus that homœopathic practitioners continue to deceive themselves down to the present time. When they can show that, by remedies acting homœopathically, they can cure habitually definite diseases, which by other means we cure uncertainly, or fail to cure altogether; that they can cut short, or render less fatal than they are, the fevers that tend to run a definite course, it will be time for us to make homœopathy a serious study. For tetanus, for epilepsy, for hydrophobia, typical homœopathic remedies exist. Was ever tetanus, epilepsy, or hydrophobia cured by homœopathy? They profess to ward off and to cure scarlet fever, by what they hold to be its homœopathic antagonist, belladonna. Is scarlet fever less frequent or less fatal in the families of homœopathy than amongst the general population? What evidence is there which we can accept, that any internal inflammation, any internal growth, any specific fever, has ever been cured, or even ameliorated, by homœopathic remedies? Of course affirmative assertions will be made, of course statistical evidence will be forthcoming. But mere assertions — and mere statistics are simply tabulated assertions — are not evidence which a man professing scientific caution would accept in such a case? Nevertheless, did homœopathy possess one tittle of the curative power that Hahnemann claimed for it it must long before now have commanded the homage of even its most inveterate enemies. For it must be recollected that the claims of homœopathy are not in equality of results with those of orthodox medicine, but that they are to alleviate and cure diseases over which we have little or no control, to relieve where we hurt, to save life where we kill.

So far, gentlemen, I have discoursed only on homœopathy as a science and an art; I wish to add a few words on homœopaths as men, and as members of our common profession.

That a very strong feeling of hostility should have arisen early between orthodox practitioners and homœopaths, is not to be wondered at, when we consider, on the one hand, the annoyance and intolerance which Hahnemann displayed, at any rate in his writings, and on the other hand the contempt which experienced physicians felt and freely expressed for him and his whimsical doctrines. Nor is it to be wondered at that the variance should still be maintained; for homœopathy is still a protest against the best traditions of orthodox clinical medicine; and there is a natural tendency among us still to look upon homœopathic

practitioners as knaves or fools, but surely this view is a wholly untenable one.

That all homœopaths are honest men, is more than I would venture to repeat, but that in large proportion they are honest is entirely beyond dispute. It is quite impossible that a large sect should have arisen, homœopathic schools and hospitals have been established, periodicals devoted to homœopathic medicine be maintained, and a whole literature in relation to it have been created, if it were all merely to support a conscious imposture. No, gentlemen; the whole history of the movement and its present position are amply sufficient to prove that those, at any rate, who take the intellectual lead in it are men who believe in the doctrines they profess, and in their mission; and who practice their profession with as much honesty of purpose, and with as much confidence in their power to benefit their patients, as we do. That all homœopathic practitioners are men of ability and education, it would be absurd to maintain: but it is absolutely certain that many men of ability and learning are contained within their ranks. If you care to dive into homœopathic literature, you will find in it (however much you may differ from the views therein inculcated) plenty of literary ability; and I have perused many papers by homœopaths on philosophical and other subjects enumerated with homœopathy, which have proved the authors to be men of thought and culture, and from which I have derived pleasure and profit. Again, I will not pretend that even a considerable proportion of homœopaths are deeply versed in the medical sciences; yet they have all been educated in orthodox schools of medicine, and have passed the examinations of recognized licensing boards; so that it must be allowed that they have acquired sufficient knowledge to qualify themselves for practice, and some among them possess high medical attainments.

But it may be replied, If these men are honest and educated, and at the same time duly qualified practitioners in medicine, how can they believe and how can they practice such a palpable imposition as homœopathy? Well, gentlemen, it is very difficult to account for the beliefs and vagaries of the human intellect. It is only occasionally that our convictions are the result of conscious reasoning. For the most part they arise in the mind, and take possession of it, we know not how or why; and our reasonings in regard to them (if we reason at all) are merely special pleadings prompted by the very convictions they seem to us to determine — in other words, they are not the foundations of our beliefs at all, but exhalations from them. It is not surprising, therefore, that, even on matters of supreme importance, irreconcilable differences of opinion prevail, aye, even amongst men of high integrity and cultivated intellect. And if we desire to live broad and unselfish lives, we must be slow to condemn all those who entertain convictions which to us seem foolish or mischievous, and logically untenable, or to refuse to coöperate with them.

There are few, even of the best among us, who have not weak points in intellect or character. And it would be deplorable, indeed, if, for example, those of us who look at spiritualism as one of the grossest follies of the times in which we live, were to scout the distinguished chemists and the great writers who devoutly believe in it; or were to refuse to do homage to the conspicuous abilities and high character of a great judge, because, throwing off the judicial impar-

tiality which befits a judge, and acting under the influence of prejudice, emotion, and ignorance, he has made himself the leader of all the hysterical sentimentalism of the day in a crusade against experimental physiology in the land of Harvey and of Hunter! The remarks just made apply especially to beliefs in relation to those matters which are incapable of exact scientific proof, and in which the feelings are largely involved — pre-eminently, therefore, to religion, to politics, and to medicine.

I ask you, gentlemen, to forbear with me, if I push my argument to the logical conclusion, and venture now to express an opinion which is opposed to the opinion which many, perhaps most, of you entertain. I do not ask you to agree with it; still less do I ask you to accept it. But I ask you to consider it; and I am content to believe that, if it be just, it will ultimately prevail. It is that, when homœopathists are honest, and well-informed, and legally qualified practitioners of medicine, they should be dealt with as if they were honest and well-informed and qualified. I shall not discuss the question whether we can, with propriety or with benefit to our patients, meet homœopaths in consultation. I could, however, I think, adduce strong reasons in favor of the morality of acting thus, and for the belief that good to the patient would generally ensue under such circumstances. I shall not consider at length whether the dignity of the profession would be compromised by habitual dealing with homœopathists. But I may observe that it is more conducive to the maintenance of true dignity to treat with respect and consideration, and as if they were honest, those whose opinions differ from ours, than to make broad our phylacteries and enlarge the borders of our garments, and wrap ourselves up, in regard to them, in Pharisaic pride. I appeal, gentlemen, in support of my contention, to other considerations. It has been held that to break down the barriers that at present separate us from homœopathists would be to allow the poison of quackery to leaven the mass of orthodox medicine. But who that has any trust in his profession, any scientific instinct, any faith in the ultimate triumph of truth, can entertain any such fear? All the best physicians of old times, all the greatest names in medicine of the present day, are with us; and we know that as a body we are honest seekers after truth. What have we to fear from homœopathy? Bigots are made martyrs by persecution; false sects acquire form and momentum and importance mainly through the opposition they provoke. When persecution ceases would-be martyrs sink into insignificance; in the absence of the stimulus of active opposition sects tend to undergo disintegration and to disappear. The rise and spread of homœopathy have been largely due to the strong antagonism it has evoked from the schools of orthodox medicine, and to the isolation which has thus been imposed on its disciples. If false, as we believe it to be, its doom will be sealed when active antagonism and enforced isolation no longer raise it into fictitious importance. At any rate, breadth of view, and liberality of conduct, are the fitting characteristics of men of science.

COMMON DANGERS IN DWELLING-HOUSES.

MESSRS. MAGUIRE AND SON, of Dublin, who have had large experience in the examination of houses, say in a recent circular: —

"In endeavoring to awaken public attention to the importance of sanitary reform, we here enumerate thirty of the dangers to health which we most frequently detect in our sanitary examination of houses. Any one of these defects, by admitting foul air, constitutes a real danger to health; but, in the large majority of houses, many of these defects may be found existing together, and in some houses they may nearly all be found rendering those dwellings pestilential. (1.) Common built drains under houses; large built drains under or near mansions. (2.) Pipe-drains with leaking joints, or broken, laid under houses, saturating the basement with sewage. (3.) Pipe-drains laid under houses without sufficient fall, or with fall the wrong way. (4.) Drains of every kind, without proper intercepting traps, admitting foul air from sewers or cess-pools. (5.) Drains of every description, without a constant free current of fresh air through them. (6.) Rat burrows from built drains or sewers undermining flags and floors, and admitting foul air to house. (7.) Rat burrows worked alongside perfect pipe-drain from street sewers, and into houses. (8.) Defective connections between soil or waste-pipes and sewers, admitting foul air to houses. (9.) Soil-pipes passing through interior of house, under almost any circumstances. (10.) Soil-pipes inside or outside houses without any or sufficient ventilation. (11.) Defective water-closet apparatus. (12.) Water-closet cisterns with overflows joined to soil-pipe or drain. (13.) Safe-trays under closets, connected to soil-pipes or drain. (14.) Two or more water-closets or sinks on same soil-pipe, untrapping each other when used. (15.) Sink overflow-pipes joined to soil-pipes untrapped, or with trap liable to untrap. (16.) Water-supplies to sinks taken from water-closet or other contaminated cisterns, and used by careless servants to fill bedroom caraffes for drinking. (17.) House cisterns and tanks with overflows direct into soil-pipes or drains. (18.) Traps of every description without ample ventilation to guard them. (19.) Scullery sinks connected direct to drains, admitting foul air to houses, not only through traps, but through joints of brickwork all round, as shown by our smoke test. (20.) Bell-traps, with loose covers, on scullery sinks connected to drains. (21.) Gullies or traps in sculleries, laundries, larders, etc., connected to drains, usually dry and untrapped. (22.) Rain-pipes used as ventilators to drains delivering foul air near bedroom windows, or under eaves or roof. (23.) Ashpits near larders and pantries; ashpits liable to soak foul moisture through house-walls. (24.) Defects of drainage and rat burrows from neighbors' houses. (25.) Water-tanks in areas, near ashpits or sculleries, and with overflows direct to drains. (26.) Washhand basins in dressing-rooms, connected directly in any way to drains or soil-pipes. (27.) Water-closet cisterns in return rooms, frequently under bedroom or parlor floors, perhaps with overflow direct to drain. (Sixteen years ago the writer thoughtlessly used a room of this kind, and was attacked with typhoid.) (28.) Cess-pools near houses, and cess-pools or defective drains near wells. (29.) Neighbors' drains crossing under houses or joining drains. (30.) Drinking-water defects, and all impurities likely to contaminate milk, meat, or food of any kind."

The list is a long one, but it is only too true that such dangers are common in dwelling-houses, and are often unrecognized until repeated illness has called attention to them. — *British Medical Journal*.