

## THE RELATIVE VALUE OF SYMPTOMS.

AD. LIPPE, M. D., PHILADELPHIA.

The eternal laws are immutable, and Providence is ever ready to see a violation of these laws exposed. When the world was created there were created also all natural and eternal laws governing the universe collectively, and individuals as such especially. How much or how little we know of these laws is not under consideration in this paper. What we do positively know is the law governing the healing of the sick. This law always existed, and the earliest writers on the healing art knew of it. So did the greatest poet, "Shakespeare"; so did many men of learning; so did the immortal Hahnemann. His merit was to formulate a system of applying this law for the cure of the sick, facts after facts presenting themselves before his searching inquiries led him to develop his methods of cure till he succeeded in the application of the law of the similars, and he demonstrated that all curable diseases were amenable to the methods he finally developed for the cure of the sick. His strictly inductive method led him safely on his onward course; every forward step depended upon new facts ascertained. The last fact was that crude charcoal when taken by healthy persons did not change their sensations, did not produce any symptoms, but if triturated with an inert substance (sugar of milk) to the third trituration and then taken by the healthy individual, it produced such symptoms as were also cured by potentized charcoal if similar symptoms were found on the sick. These facts led to the foundation of the so-called potentization theory, and proved conclusively that potentization developed sick-making as well as curative powers lying latent in the crude drug. The Vienna provers had to admit it, the true healer admitted it, and found later, as Homeopathy was further developed, that there was not yet found a limit to the curative power of drugs, no matter how far and how much they were developed by means of potentization. It was left to the President of the American Institute of Homeopathy to open anew a question so long ago settled by facts to the full satisfaction of all true healers in his address, 1885. A series of papers showing how very indignant the homeopaths felt on that account appeared in the journals. Finally a peck of whitewash came from "Providence" provisionally only making the unfortunate President's position if possible more ridiculous. Providence would have it that the President of the American Institute betook himself to the witness stand and "confessed,"

264

July, 1886.] THE RELATIVE VALUE OF SYMPTOMS. 265

He delivered himself of an address before the Homeopathic Medical Society of the County of New York on March 11th, 1886, before one hundred and eighteen members present, after Dr. P. P. Wells, of Brooklyn, had read a paper on "The Best Mode of Selecting the Remedy." A vote of thanks was extended to Dr. P. P. Wells for his interesting and instructive paper on motion of Dr. Bacon, seconded by Dr. Wilder. That paper was not published in the May number of the *North American Journal of Homeopathy*; the leading paper in that number is on the relative value of symptoms, by T. F. Allen, M. D., New York.

Dr. Allen accepts the more scientific sounding terms proposed by Dr. Drysdale, absolute and contingent symptoms. For many long years the progressive homeopaths who were often uncharitably charged with neglecting "*Pathology*," have charged that a knowledge of the very little knowledge we have of pathology is indispensably necessary. On this point there never was a difference of opinion, but there is a great difference of opinion as to the uses of this knowledge. The symptoms of the sick, belonging absolutely to the form of the disease he is afflicted with, are those called now by Dr. Drysdale absolute symptoms, and there are many pretending homeopaths who seek to find a specific remedy for these absolute symptoms, and failing to cure the sick under the silly application of the law of the similars to a sick physiology or a pathological condition, ascribe these failures to the potentized drug, demand appreciable doses or doubt the general applicability of the law of the similars, denounce Hahnemann, his materia medica, and fall into vile eclecticism.

The true healer discerns closely between these so termed absolute symptoms as absolutely belonging to a form of a disease and then carefully and accurately notes down all the other strange symptoms belonging absolutely only to the sick individual and not absolutely to the disease, and these symptoms Dr. Drysdale terms contingent; these are the guiding, determining symptoms, and have a positively greater value for the selection of the simillar and therefore curative remedy than have the so-called absolute symptoms. A knowledge of pathology and the absolute symptoms does not assist us in selecting a curative remedy, but assists us in determining the general régime of the sick. After clearly showing the value of the determining symptoms, the learned Doctor falls out of his roll when he fables about the two anti-zymotics, Quinine and Mercury, and finally asserts that if it—the poison (marsh malaria)—has attained an overpowering control Quinine will so reduce its virulence that nature will

179

[July,

eliminate it. This a fatal error, to say the least of it. Why abandon the law of the similars at a state of sickness which, as Dr. Allen says, has attained an overpowering control? This overpowering control is expressive of a failure of the unskillful homœopathic to cure, and then he is told that Quinine will so reduce its virulence that nature will eliminate it. Of course, *nature*, aided by the similar remedy properly administered, will eliminate it, the marsh malaria. Quinine will suppress the symptoms and leave the marsh malaria to seek other organs, frequently the liver or spleen, and there develop fatal diseases. Again a lucid remark is made by the Doctor when he says, on page 411, our best results are obtained by treating the patient and ignoring the zymosis. The question, "How far is palliation consistent with or antagonistic to Homœopathy?" is answered by showing, as Hahnemann did in his *Organon of the Healing Art*, paragraphs 53 to 56: Either one or the other of the means of applying medicines for the cure of the sick can be the right one, and if we profess to be homœopaths it follows that we are in honesty bound to reject all other modes of applying medicines for the cure of the sick, we are bound to declare palliative treatment inconsistent with and antagonistic to Homœopathy. The keynote to the heresy of the applicability of various modes of cure by the physician is sounded in the New York *Medical Times*, which journal is honest enough to reject Homœopathy and accept eclecticism. On page 85 of the May number it expresses its hopes that the American Institute will cease to bind its members by a single dogma. The declaration of a belief that homœopaths are bound to adhere to a single dogma shows the deplorable ignorance of men who can utter such an absurdity.

*Bound by a single dogma.* All assertion for which no proof is offered is dogmatical *Chalybeus spirit.* (*Philosophy*), p. 4. *Doctrines of Pyrrhus come to maturity.* The law of the similars is a natural law on which rests the whole structure of the homœopathic healing art. The history of the development of that law, and how it can and must be applied for the cure of the sick, was fully described in Hahnemann's *Organon of the Healing Art*. A deviation from his methods will necessarily be followed by failures, and weak as well as lazy men will never—hardly ever—blame themselves, but find some plausible excuse. Not all men do so; and I may now relate a singular case worthy of imitation: The late Professor Robert Hare, who for many long years had so successfully filled the chair of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania, after resigning his chair, and after giving all his chemical apparatus to the Smithsonian Institution, had made up his mind to make some

267

Aluminium. Calling at his house one morning, I met the old Professor with his leather apron on, and naturally asked him what he was doing. He answered that he had twice failed in his attempt to make Aluminium; that it was his fault surely; other people had made it, and he would not give it up till he succeeded. He did succeed. "What other people have done I will do also," and he did it. How different it is in our days. Thousands of evidences are recorded confirming in all particulars the truthfulness of Hahnemann's method if properly applied. Hahnemann and others had secured an unparalleled success in curing the sick; others failed, and these men now boldly seek to create a doubt as to the applicability of the universal law of cure; they seek excuses for palliative treatment; they deny the efficacy of potentized drugs, if no appreciable drug quantities can be discovered by the microscope. Professor Hare made Aluminium. These unfortunates who failed deny that others succeeded and resort to eclecticism. They bewail that the homœopaths are bound by a dogma. They have time and again had the temerity to declare the followers of Hahnemann, the very ones who have established our practice, and by their painstaking, hard work made Homœopathy respected, that those men were now regarding the progress of what? Eclecticism! Well, they do, and will continue to do, all they can to expose the folly of men who favor a deviation from the law of the similars when it suits them. The relative value of symptoms must be determined by the observing healer himself; he knows that pathological conditions and sick physiology are not guiding symptoms, nor does he for a moment fable about zymotic diseases or palliative remedies; he will accept and apply Hahnemann's methods and cure the sick. He will not be compelled to implore Providence for a peck of whitewash because he was breaking his pledges to the public, when he professes to practice Homœopathy, and denies first of all the infallibility of the law of the similars as the only law of cure, and progressively undermines Hahnemann's arguments, till finally he packs a jury of incompetents to report adversely on the potentization question. It is a fat! error to claim that Homœopathy, stripped of the infinitesimal, would be more acceptable to the common school of medicine. Hail! Homœopathy, without the infinitesimals, becomes a caricature. If these unfortunate adherents to fatal errors would diligently hide their infinitesimal knowledge of the principles governing the healing art to which they not only profess to belong and of which principles they profess to be exponents also, the common school of medicine might at least respect them, while now they refuse that much-coveted recognition.

642