SOME

LOCAL AND GENERAL

EXCRESCENCES OF HOMŒOPATHY.

By JOHN F. GEARY, M. D.

PHILADELPHIA.
1858.

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"WE ARE NOT AS BAD AS WE SEEM."

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SOME

LOCAL AND GENERAL

EXCRESCENCES OF HOMŒOPATHY,

BEING

REVIEWS OF

DR. HERING'S

"HOMŒOPATHIST, OR DOMESTIC PHYSICIAN,"

AND OF

THE HOMŒOPATHIC "MATERIA MEDICA PURA,"

By JOHN F. GEARY, M. D.

These Articles have already appeared in the "Philadelphia" and "North American" Journals "of Homœopathy," as portions of the series called "Our Literature."

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Dedication.

TO THE FRIENDS AND OPPONENTS OF HOMŒOPATHY.

I DEDICATE the following pages to the professional and lay friends and opponents of Homœopathy:—to its friends, because they must regret whatever has a tendency to injure the good name, retard the progress and pervert the character of a system of medical treatment, which investigation and experience have proved to be both salutary and effective,—a blessing by the bed of sickness, a boon to humanity! To its opponents, since to ridicule its misrepresentations and caricature the mere eccentricities of individual practitioners have been their strongest and only arguments;—to the learned and candid who should not be deterred from the pursuit of great principles by the shortcomings and weaknesses of solitary professors;—to the ill-informed and narrow-minded, that they may learn one lesson, at least, neither to denounce nor deride what they have not knowledge enough to pursue or genius to appreciate.

JOHN F. GEARY.

No. 1427 ARCH STREET, PHILADELPHIA,
October, 1858.

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Introduction.

There is no cause so bad that may not be made to appear worse by the unfairness of its opponents, by the imprudence of its advocates, or their unfitness for the task they assume. It would indeed be difficult to say which can inflict the greater injury. Still we are inclined to the conclusion, that it may suffer more in the hands of its reputed friends, than it can from all the efforts of its enemies. The latter have never been able to repress the truth, or effectually to delay its progress; while the very revelations of the Almighty have been crushed, retarded, overlaid, and shut up in the very depths of darkness, for ages after ages, by their self-constituted ministers and reputed guardians! Whatever those who may deem it their duty to sneer at any medical reform, or those who have been turned away disgusted from its consideration by silly caricatures and unfounded statements, may think of that commonly known as homœopathy, it can no longer be denied, that it is at present a great fact; that in this country alone there are nearly one thousand seven hundred medical men who adopt the therapeutic law of cure implied in that designation. Its position and standing in England and continental Europe, may be gathered from the fact, that a large proportion of the best and noblest in these lands, whether distinguished by social position or education, are its advocates.* But, be that as it may, we want only a fair field

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* "*Festival in Aid of the London Homœopathic Hospital.*—A public dinner in aid of the building fund of this charity took place on Wednesday, April 21, 1858, at Willis's Rooms, when the Duke of Wellington presided. His Grace was supported by the Duke of Beaufort, Viscount Lismore, Viscount Maldon, Lord Rokeby, Lord Grey de Wilton, Lord Cosmo Russell, the Hon. R. Grosvenor, Mr. Truman, M. P., Major Blake, Captain Fishbourne, R. N., Mr. Pritchard (High Bailiff of Southwark,) Mr. Sheriff Rutherford, Dr. Chepmell, Dr. Clarke, Dr. W. Bell, Dr. G. N. Epps, Dr. Baikie, Dr. Kidd, Mr. Yeldham, Dr. Wyld, Mr. de Michele, Dr. Tuckey, Dr. Bayes, Dr. McKechnie, Dr. Ryan, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Metcalfe, Dr. de Brereton, Dr. Dunn, Dr. Drury, Mr. Battye, Dr. Ransford, Dr. Guinness, Dr. Morgan (Plymouth,) Dr. Morgan (Dover,) Dr. Joce, Mr. Ayerst, Dr. Quin, Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Leadam, Dr. Phillips, Mr. Mackern, Mr. D. Smith, Dr. R. Russell, Dr. Henriques, Dr. Hartmann, and about 150 other gentlemen, known as supporters of Homœopathy in the metropolis and in the provinces.

"The Chairman's appeal was liberally responded to by the company, and contributions were announced amounting to about £1,000—including twenty guineas from the Chairman, fifteen guineas from the Duke of Beaufort, £100 from the Earl of Wilton, and £100 from Captain Felix V. Smith.

"A grand fancy bazaar was held on Friday and Saturday last, in the Riding School of the Cavalry Barracks, Knightsbridge, in aid of the funds for the necessary alterations, &c., in the freehold premises, Great Ormond street, recently purchased for the London Homœopathic Hospital. The bazaar was originally fixed for Wednesday and Thursday, but the Queen's state-ball on Wednesday, and other fashionable

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and no favor here, to be taken only for what we are worth, and be allowed to bide our time, either to rise or fall as truth and humanity, which we all are trying to serve, may in time decide for or against. We shrink from no field to which honest convic-

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events on Thursday, rendered it desirable, in deference to the wish expressed by many lady-patronesses, to postpone the bazaar until the two following days.

"The bazaar was one of the gayest and most aristocratic re-unions that has been seen in the metropolis for a long time. The Riding School, a large, lofty, and well-ventilated building, was decorated with the flags of all nations. The stalls ran round the sides of the building, leaving a large open area in the centre for the promenaders, except opposite the entrance, where there arose a vast military trophy, having for its base the silver kettle-drums presented to the first regiment of Life Guards by George IV., a superstructure of cuirasses, swords, helmets with nodding plumes, &c., completed the trophy.

"The list of lady-patronesses of the bazaar comprised five duchesses, three marchionesses, eleven countesses, six viscountesses, and thirty-one additional ladies of title. The stall-holders were the Duchess Emily of Beaufort, Maria Marchioness of Aylesbury, the Countess of Craven, the Countess of Wilton, Lady Willoughby de Broke, Lady Ebury, Lady Rokeby, Baroness Alphonse de Rothschild, Duchess of St. Arpino, Viscountess Newport, Lady Augusta and Lady Honora Cadogan, Mrs. Moore, of Liverpool; Mrs. Drysdale of Liverpool; Mrs. Fussell, Mrs. Joseph Hoar, and Miss Wilkinson, Mrs. Rosher and Mrs. Yeldham, Mrs. Hamilton and Miss Crispin, Mrs. Leadam and Miss Meymott, the Ladies of the Committee of the Subscription Society, Mrs. and the Misses Parry, &c.

"The lady stall-keepers were early at the bazaar on Friday morning, in order to receive her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge, the Hereditary Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, and the Princess Mary of Cambridge. The Royal visitors, who, attended by Baron Knesebeck, arrived about twelve o'clock, after passing amongst the flower-stalls, entered the bazaar proper, making purchases at almost every stall, and instituting the most affable inquiries relative to the articles for sale. At Mrs. Drysdale's stall the royal visitors purchased a little card-box, which, the Duchess was informed, was made by a poor girl who had been a Dispensary patient, and who had lost her arm. At the Fine Arts stall, kept by Lady Augusta and Lady Honora Cadogan, the Princess Mary purchased a water-color drawing, by Lady Augusta Cadogan, entitled "Homage to Raglan." The Grand Duchess also made some purchases of paintings and drawings, which reflected great credit on the amateur artists by whom they were executed. At Lady Rokeby's stall the Princess Mary, with her winning smile, called the attention of the Duchess and her sister to some Berlin work of her own; to some bijoux sent by the Princess Alice; to some bead-work by the Duchess of Kent; to packets of gourd-seed from the celebrated collection of Sans-Souci, and to a silver filagree basket, contributed by the Princess of Prussia. The Duchess of Cambridge, who is the patient of a metropolitan practitioner of homœopathy, had herself sent some little offerings in knitting and bead-work to Lady Rokeby's stall. Lady Wilton's stall exhibited some magnificent embroidery and Berlin work, which obtained for the amiable Countess a well-deserved compliment to the taste and industry of the young ladies of Heaton-Hall. After a lengthened inspection of the bazaar, and expressing their gratification at the numerous objects of taste and utility which they had witnessed, the royal party took their departure.

"About two o'clock the band of the Horse Guards (Blue) takes up its station outside the Riding School, and gratifies the company with operatic selections, waltzes, polkas. The company now begin to arrive, and the scene becomes very animated. Muslin of course carries it over silk, as becomes the heat of the weather, and every year these summer robes become lighter in texture and more graceful and artistic in design. Fair Floras, bareheaded with ravishing *chevelures*, who were presented at the first drawing-room this season, and have already made a dozen conquests, trip lightly about with fanciful flower-baskets and put a posy in your hands with such a simple and winning grace, that your half-a-crown seems a paltry return for the condescension. The sisters of one of the proudest dukes in the peerage, the friends and companions of a royal duchess, sell you a pen-wiper or a traveling cap, knit by their own fair hands; and a young duke, who is anxious to speak to them about

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tion may challenge us to open advocacy, and we refuse no issue that can be justly demanded. But if the public have been imposed on, and the profession mislead by the so-called "homœopathy" of persons whose medical education must appear doubtful and very deficient to every candid and competent judge, it is hardly fair to charge the individual acts of the presuming and the unqualified upon the educated members of the profession, who are not, and can never be a party to acts by which men of this stamp, every where and in every system, endeavor to force themselves into undeserved notice.

The author of these pages has for years labored to defend himself and others from the sneers and insults directed against them in private conversation and social intercourse—upon the gratuitous assumption that they were the advocates of that extraordinary system foisted into this community by certain self-styled homœopathists—and which has passed too long in this city for homœopathy; although these men have never been fair exponents of the system, nor has the miserable mysticism with which they have confounded and confused a clearly demonstrated medical reform any claim to the respect due to our school. To this day, every medical man of the opposite school whom we meet asks, in derision, "if we practice medicine *on the plan laid down* in Hering's book?" and insists on the fact, that "*he* is the head of our heap!" Tired of being twitted and misunderstood, the series of articles from which the following are taken, were commenced in this city, as above stated, and are still continued in our Journal published in New York. Time, however, has proved that the circulation of these periodicals has been too limited, or the prejudice against them too strong to allow these strictures to have their due weight, and to produce the effect intended on those without our ranks; whether lay or professional. It is to this fact alone their appearance in their present form must be attributed. We, individually, claim no consideration; we seek no favor, we desire no indulgence, we shrink not from being considered, and even called, "outsiders;" since outsiders have had their place not unfrequently in the advance guard of all great movements;—even among the pioneers of mental enlightenment, material progress, and divine evangelization! Galileo was an outsider, Columbus an outsider and an enthusiast; and even the per-

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a raffle, waits until your purchase is completed, that he may not interrupt the commercial transaction. The daughters of a countess talk to you about art, and when you praise the *pose* of a figure in crayons, or the perspective of a water-color landscape, you find you have been whispering your eulogies in the ear of the fair artist herself. A fasionable viscountess, who presides over the refreshment-table, and who has a half-dozen obsequious and much be-floured flunkeys behind her to bring her hot-water and cakes, will do that for you which she never does for her guests, and will pour you out a cup of tea with her own fair hands. The viscountess was in the Book of Beauty a few years ago, and still preserves the engaging smile which led enthusiastic admirers to cut out her portrait and hang it up, Madonna-wise, upon their walls."

"NOTE.—The receipts were between £1700 and £1800."—(*See "Illustrated London News," under the above date.*)

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secuted and crucified "Nazarene," was the outsider of his day! Let the craven who would shrink from what he feels convinced is a good and a true principle, because it is neither the fashion, nor in the ascendant, go down to his obscure and soon-forgotten grave! He wants the pluck of the hero, and the courage of a man! Whatever obloquy belongs to the name of homœopathy in the eyes of many, we, therefore, willingly bear, convinced from actual experience, and some reading and thinking, that it is associated with the useful and the good. But we cannot submit to the degradation of being linked with the fanaticism, superstitions, and ignorance revealed in Hering's book and provings! If these were homœopathy, we should scorn to wear the badge. Our reviews will speak for themselves; their imperfections will be forgiven for the sake of the motive that prompted the efforts of their author—to shake himself clear of what no honorable or liberally educated man could suffer to hang to his skirts.

Should the quotations and extracts seem to any reader too absurd and flagrantly ridiculous, easy access may be had to the book itself, at the publishers. We have two copies at our office, and hundreds are in circulation throughout the country and city.

And at the best, who that has any professional pride or standing would lend, or has ever lent himself to the fabrication of books for "domestic" quackery? None, but those who are ready to feed upon the offals of a respectable calling, can stoop to a species of clap-trap, whose only advantage can be to inveigle old women and hypochondriacs into the absurd notion, that "they can doctor themselves." He who lowers the medical profession to this standard is recreant to his brethren, arrays himself with charlatans and empyrics, and therefore loses all right to consideration or notice.

The quack and the caterer for "domestic treatment," belong to the same hungry and pilfering herd, who prefer to prowl in darkness and seize a portion of what belongs to others, rather than undergo the toils and fatigues of honest and hard labor in the clear light of day and under the eyes of honest men.

Europe and America have produced other exponents than these by whom this new system of therapeutics is to be judged, and in whose hands it must stand or fall. We have, therefore, the right to demand at the hands of all honest opponents not to be classed in the same category with men whose only medical education is that derived from a contemptible symptom list, and whose only practice is founded on a combination of old wives' fables and German superstitions. We repudiate all connection with men of this stamp, we desire to be judged by other works than theirs.

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OUR LITERATURE.

A REVIEW.*

"2D CIT. I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when they are in great danger, I *re-cover them.*"—JULIUS CÆSAR. ACT I.

WHEN the spirit of freedom first shines upon the minds of men, who have suffered from time immemorial under the heavy hand and the galling chains of despotism, inspires them to break their bondage, and hurl the tyrant from his seat of power, nothing is more natural, than that the laws and usages under which they had been held in thraldom—whether written in statute-books, or received from father to son, as indisputable tradition—should follow the fate of the despot, and be wiped out from the archives of the nation, or be nullified by new codes; and that their memory should perish as the days of darkness and fear had faded from the minds of the people. Or when, in days of moral gloom and unholy superstition, a light from heaven breaks in upon the soul of some anchorite, in his secluded cell, directs his researches to hidden records in which are stored the disused, overlaid and forgotten truths of everlasting life, and prompts him to lift them up as a standard to the nations; and when these nations kneel in simple reverence and unaffected adoration,

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* See Philadelphia Journal of Homœopathy, for August and September, 1855.

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would it not be reasonable to suppose that the degrading ceremonials and childish follies of the dark ages should disappear with the errors under whose shadow they were fostered? But although these results do finally spring from all reformations, whether political, religious or medical, yet undeniable experience, and a long array of those stubborn things, called facts, furnish proofs that results linger long and depart but slowly, after their causes have disappeared. It would be easy to show, by the history of ancient nations, and even by "modern instances," that the chains and fetters which vanquished tyrants had left to rust on the fields, from which they fled discomfited, have not unfrequently been picked up, furbished and fondly treasured,—by many who looked back with reverence on the "olden and better times,"—not only as mementoes, but in their peevish and fretful moods to shake them in the faces of those whose liberties they would still gladly see restricted. And who needs to be told how often the stake-bound victim has lifted up his eyes to heaven, through the flames that consumed him, according as rival sectaries were able, in their turn, to command the arm of the civil power?—or how vigilantly and successfully the witch-finder magnified his office, and with what sage wisdom and holy indignation the legal functionary pronounced his verdict upon some wretch who was the subject of old age, decrepitude and mental imbecility, rather than the specially authorized "servant of Satan," many years after the New Testament had been recovered from its too careful conservators, and scattered far and wide among the people? But

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time works wonders; and, as light diffuses, the very footprints of the messengers of darkness fade from the face of the earth! All we attempt to show by these illustrations, is, that however sudden and effectual the first and great efforts that introduce reformations, still their final consummation is but a thing of gradual growth under favorable auspices.

Now, there is no reason why medical reformation should differ in its development and progress from those noted above. Medicine being purely founded upon facts and experience, must needs be more slow in advancing, and longer in coming to maturity: if indeed such a thing as *maturity* can be predicated of a science, which must always change with every new disease, or with the new phases of old ones that must inevitably spring up among different races of men, as they change their climates, their habits of life and their occupations.

The reformation which, about sixty years ago, took place in our science, has been steadily progressing ever since; and seems to obey the laws, or yield to the necessities, which govern and modify all similar movements, whilst plodding its onward way through evil and good report; and in spite of determined and often ungenerous foes without, and many imprudent and incompetent, though well-meaning friends and advocates within. As we look to the literature of a nation for its progress and history, so it is to the books of our school in this country we must look for the facts that lead to this conclusion. And as "the written letter remains," and our writings may any day be brought up in evidence for or against our system, we believe we can do no better ser-

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vice to the cause, than by taking a retrospective glance at the records of our science since it was introduced into this country, and openly and candidly avowing how much can fairly be endorsed by us, and how much we feel bound, in self-justification, to disown and put aside, as forming no part of our literature.

There are so many examples of childish folly and silly superstition—demonstrating a total want of, and disregard to, sound medical science—in some of our earlier records, that we are almost daily made to blush for them by those opponents who are too much in the habit of overlooking great virtues and dwelling upon small vices. And to cut even this narrow ground of argument from under their feet, we have determined to take up our goose-quill and, with a few brushes of its feathers, wipe out, or nullify these exceptionable acts of old and partially enlightened legislators. And if they, their followers or their descendants, should feel aggrieved when we are compelled to raise a smile at their expense—for that is all the mischief we mean them—they must forgive us for the sake of that good cause for which they, like ourselves, should be ready to sacrifice even a little feeling. But should they not meet us in this spirit, we shall try how we may outlive their frown, and survive even their malice;—whilst we answer them and all objectors with this argument and apology: "*Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more.*"—"*I have done no more to Cæsar, than you should do to Brutus.*" And, as before remarked, if we may not at all times be able to suppress a smile, we shall be fair, candid and charitable, make full and

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ample excuse for human frailty and short-comings, and consistently with the just claims of our cause,—"*which is above all,*"—pass over every thing but palpable error and downright folly.

We must, according to our plan, first direct the attention of the reader to a small *duodecimo edition*, published at *Allentown, Pa.*, in 1835, called "THE HOMŒOPATHIST, OR DOMESTIC PHYSICIAN,"—as we know of nothing produced in this country at a prior date—a circumstance not at all to be regretted, if, as may be naturally supposed, an earlier effort must needs have been more feeble. Taking the book as a whole, and and making full admission for all it contains worth the perusal even of those for whom it was intended, it can only be a cause of sincere regret to our school that such a production should ever have gone into the world in our name. We doubt not but even the author himself will now agree with us in this opinion.

Whatever may be the character or the real value of the work before us, we have no wish to detract from the motives which prompted its author in sending it into the world. These, we are bound to admit, must have been of the highest order,—a sincere desire to serve the common cause of humanity and of science. And, if we except the common but small weakness of men in general,—the desire to see oneself in print, the "cacoëthes scribendi," or the scribbling itch,—which, alas, even "psorinum" fails to remove,—we cannot conceive that any thing short of a desire to place the means of an easy and pleasant cure for all human ailments within the reach of every individual and family could have

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tempted him to risk his professional reputation upon this manual.

But purity of intention, loftiness of motive, and even self-denying toil do not always imply soundness of judgment, scientific acquirements, extensive and solid information, or even elementary knowledge in any given case. And all must admit that authors, whose mission it should be to enlighten the people upon the subject on which they write, can hardly be excused if totally wanting in these departments. It is not, however, by any means a rare occurrence for men of defective or narrow education, with some claims to natural, though ill-cultivated talents, to mistake their resources, if not their powers, and to engage in undertakings for which they are altogether unqualified. And it is this which renders their intended good and well-meant efforts positive evils: —makes them unwittingly injure the cause they would more effectually have served by quiet and unassuming labors in the domain for which education, if not nature, had fitted them. Of such men we commonly say, "that their hearts are better than their heads;" that they meant well, but acted unwisely. And of them every good cause has reason—if it may find a tongue—to exclaim, "save me from my friends!" We sincerely regret to be compelled by the task we have assumed to allow no higher place to the author of the work under consideration,—Dr. Constantine Hering—than that of one of the above class—that of a man whose zeal outran his knowledge and judgment: and who has by this one act —to mention no others of a later date at present—given our opponents a decided advantage by laying our

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system open to serious and most injurious charges, from which we suffer to this day. And these must remain as a stigma upon us as long as by our cowardly silence and guilty connivance, we permit them to stand as items in our professional bill of fare. From this charge we must, individually, make an effort, though it be but feeble, to clear ourselves. And now to our task. It will not be needful to make any strictures upon the language and style of this book, simply because there is not a line of tolerably correct English from its beginning to its end, and it has still less claim to style. It is deformed by every imperfection of speech and diction which is commonly heard in the mouths of the vulgar every where —without connection, order, propriety of expression or accidence. In style we can only pronounce it an amalgam of the colloquial, the grave, the solemn, the didactic, the mystic and the slang—thrown together in chaotic confusion, with an apparent obliviousness of there being any such things as laws and rules in language by which writers are governed on all subjects and in all tongues. Lest we may be accused of making assertions without proof, by such as have not read this extraordinary book for themselves, we will cite the following examples taken at random. The page on which they may be respectively found is indicated by the numbers set down.

22. "*When any one has sweaty feet.*" The model for this elegant form of expression may be found in one English classical author. One of the "two fine ladies from town," introduced to the family of the Vicar of Wakefield, says in the midst of the dance, "*by the liv-*

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ing jingo I'm all of a muck of sweat." 35. "*When a person is so tired as to feel fainty!*" very feeble indeed. 58. "*A feeling of emptiness in the pit of the breast!*" This is a very queer pit for a medical philosopher to tumble into—why not say stomach? it would not be half so bad; but in avoiding this Scylla of the stomach, he falls into the Charybdis of "the breast." 59. "*Tedious consequences from immoderate smoking are difficult to cure!*"—we should think they would, indeed, and much more difficult to diagnose, since they form a new addition to the practice of physic, upon which we should like to see a thesis. 60. "*When suddenly dangerous symptoms appear,*"—an attempt at, when dangerous symptoms appear suddenly. 63. "*Rising of the blood into the head,*"—fine, very fine! 81. "*We are apt to inhale poison through the* AIR!"—indeed we are "*apt*" to do no such thing, and for two very good reasons; first, because we are *very reluctantly compelled* sometimes to admit poisons through the mouth and nostrils; and second, because there never was any poison *in the air*, its component parts being oxygen, nitrogen and carbon.—But let the learned author explain his own meaning; he says, "*old wells, caves, cellars, vaults, and particularly old privies, contain frequentlg air that is deadly poisonous.*" In all deference we submit that this is not philosophy or fact, as, in the conditions attempted to be described, they contain *no air at all*, but deleterious gases, called by the uneducated "foul air," which is capable of destroying animal life. 84. "*Whatever has gone into putrefaction!*" can't easily go out, of course. 137. "*The bite of a mad dog, or of a raving*

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animal." We know of no animal addicted to "raving" but the human animal, and he furnishes numerous well-marked instances of the disease; one of its characteristic symptoms is "to talk irrationally," and "when men *thus rave* we may conclude their brains are turned." 140. "*The endless variety of remedies increase with every year, deserve,*" &c.; how can an *endless* variety increase? A school-boy would write, "*increases,*" "*deserves.*" 140. "*With such any remedy will answer*"—a housemaid would say "*for such.*" 142. "*When pregnant women from a fall, misstep, or violent motion and concussion of whatever kind, receive pain!*" &c. There are upon record numerous strange and miraculous *conceptions*, and this one, produced at Allentown, Pa., in 1835, is the latest, as far as we have been able to learn, and certainly the most wonderful. The pregnancy of Rhea Sylvia was decently and indulgently attributed to Mars,—and

"Of Brian's birth strange tales are told,"—

as we are informed in the "Lady of the Lake," canto 3d; but so remarkable a cause of gravidity as "a fall," "misstep," or "violent motion and concussion" is without parallel in sacred or profane history. And even at the risk of being charged with want of due reverence for the mysteries of nature, we feel inclined to deny the main proposition implied in the learned Dr.'s words, whilst we freely admit that cases of pregnancy may occur on which each, or all, of these counts may be attendant circumstances, or incidents; though in strict medical jurisprudence they would not be allowed indi-

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vidually or collectively to stand "*in loco parentis.*" Still, we have *classic* authority for the above form of words;

"Her apron grew short, and her heart it did ache,
And she thought upon the *fall* coming home from the wake,
She thought upon the *fall* coming home!"—OLD SONG.

But, to be serious, if the above were written in English, it would run thus,—"When pregnant women are hurt by a fall," &c.—and be no laughing matter. 144. "*Dislocation is when a joint has been put out of its proper place!*" This definition of dislocation is as great a curiosity in surgery as the last case is in obstetrics. Ordinary books and surgeons tell us that a joint is the union of two bones, and that dislocation occurs when the head of a bone is forced from its place. 146. "*The most important means of healing wounds is by combination.*" We should think that a "combination" of wounds would be an odd mode of healing them,—one in one place being deemed quite enough. The ordinary mode in cases of simple incised wounds we rather suppose to be by *coaptation*, or by bringing the edges together. So at least say Liston and Miller:—but what of them? 150. "*Let him lay high with the wounded part, and see that no part of his body be pressed.*" This seems to us a very strange piece of medical advice, as it would not at all seem unreasonable that the act of incubation or hatching should succeed that of "*laying.*" It would, to say the least of it, be no *fowl play.*

158. "*Heterogeneous particles in the body,*" is the heading of a chapter treating of the extraction of for-

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eign bodies—a truly singular, though high-sounding, caption. It would, indeed, seem from this and many others, that, by a studied system, erroneous and unmeaning expressions and collocations had been sought out in order to supersede plain, correct and popular language.

170. "*When molestation remains after the danger is passed*"!! Here we confess ourselves at a dead stand; to this description of a diseased condition we have nothing to say, so we leave it *un*-molested.

173. "*Potashes, it is well known, are a substance very fretting and burning!*" it are, are it? the schoolmaster was certainly abroad at Allentown, Pa., in 1835.

"*If it have been occasioned by too great joy,*"—certainly whether "*it have*" or not, one thing is certain, that if we pursue this detail longer we shall either split our sides with laughter, or go mad with indignation. But may we not ask, in all seriousness, why this compilation of unmitigated trash has been allowed to remain for so many years to compromise and disgrace our cause? And how it has happened that, with so many able men in our ranks in this country, no one has had the courage to disclaim this thing and so disarm those opponents who are always ready to judge us "by our works."

But verbal deformities and inaccuracy of diction are the lightest charges we have to make against this work. We would be willing, indeed, to pronounce an exemption in favor of an author who, through the medium of "broken English," conveyed great ideas, or even correct and useful information; we might, it is true, designate them "diamonds in mud," but who would quarrel

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with the mire that soiled his fingers, when it expiates the offence with a gem?

We must arraign this book before the supreme court of our Profession, and charge it with *capital crime;* as being guilty of violating our cause by false therapeutics, gross empiricism and vulgar superstition; by all which incalculable damage has been sustained by pure homœopathy! In a word, it stands at the bar indicted for "*High Treason*" against the Majesty of Science! The evidence we shall bring forward shall admit of no doubt, even cross-examination can be dispensed with. It shall be acquitted or found guilty upon the confessions and admissions of its own pages. These witnesses must needs be few, though fitly chosen, as the limits of our time and space restrict us from calling the array we have ready to attend. The plan of the work is highly objectionable and ill-judged. It savors of mysticism and quackery; you are always prescribing a *number*,—19 or 21, as the case may be—instead of a medicine. Thus one is eternally groping in the dark, and the mind, in vain, looks out for some ray of light as to what these ever-recurring figures signify—a state of mind that would at once be relieved by simply giving the names of the medicines, as Hahnemann and all other writers since his time have done. But some men are so fond of being in the clouds themselves that they will scarcely allow the light of the sun to break in upon others. To say the least of this feature, it was a great error in judgment, and implies want of sufficient caution and care in the author. On page 8 we find directions given for the administration of the remedies in these

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words: "*How to apply the medicine*"—"1st, by smelling; 2d, by taking one or two globules; 3d, dissolved in water." Upon the *first* of these modes the greatest stress is laid, from which we are to infer that Dr. Hering deems it to be the most efficacious, as well as from the minute directions given as to the mode of closing one of the nostrils and then "smelling at the lower part of cork"—doing which once or twice is thought sufficient,—and in dealing with children it is thought best "to hold it to the nostril when asleep!" Now a careful perusal of Hahnemann's works will show that he was by no means so confident on this point, and that his faith was wavering, weak and unsettled in the efficacy of "smelling." Nor have the credible records of the qualified practitioners of our school in this country or abroad, been more fortunate in confirming the advantages claimed for it by Dr. Hering. Indeed, it seems very clear to us that the reputable members of the profession have studiously "turned up their noses" at this dogma. One of the best informed, most accurate and reliable members of our school—Dr. Dudgeon, of London, says with regard to it: "I confess I have never had the courage to employ it in acute diseases, nor the impudence to use it in chronic ones. I cannot conceive a case in which it would ever present advantages over the other methods of administering the remedy."—Lecture 18, page 511. So that, on the whole, we feel justified in pronouncing it one of those wild vagaries, which men, like Dr. Hering, who are more singular than sound, adopt for the sake of doing something out of the common way, and for which vagaries we should not, as

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a body, be judged. So much for the general characteristics of the work, for we must now turn to its particular marks of deformity.

On page 43 we are gravely told, "*when the stomach suffers from eating short fish or spoiled meat, give some finely pulverized charcoal mixed with brandy.*" "Brandy and water" is so well known and so fully established, that we need not add a word. Some time ago "brandy and salt" was the universal remedy for all ailments. We believe it answered very well *for liquor merchants* as long as the rage lasted; but it remained for Dr. Hering to sound the praise of brandy and charcoal, and to him belongs the doubtful honor of blacking the face of homœopathy with a filthy compound that hardly deserves the credit of being a cross between an allopathic dose and the bolus of an itinerant herb doctor. In holding forth upon drunkenness at pages 51 and 52, we see the amiable blending of the clerical office with that of the medical philosopher; and a little homily is given in the usual style of prayer-meeting doctors upon the religious aspect of the "*disease;*" after which, on page 53, the drunkard is desired to "put a drop of sulphuric acid in a tumbler with water, stir it well, and drink it in the morning, and to repeat it every two or three days till it occasions uneasiness, against this smell of camphor." And in case sulphuric acid, cant, and camphor should fail, the doctor goes on and says,—"we would advise his unfortunate wife, his children, or brothers or friends to administer to him the following remedy in a secret manner"—

"Put a live eel into a bucket or narrow tub; pour

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wine over it, and let it die. Draw this wine in bottles, and give it to the drunkard, and let him drink as much as he will. You may proceed in the same manner with brandy; which, however, ought to stand for a short time before being put into decanters." There is in this piece of sage wisdom another "tale of a tub," and a wonderful "*fish story*"—but in thinking of swallowing this disgusting compound,—though we get new ideas of "wine negus" and "brandy toddy,"—we confess ourselves compelled to hold our nostrils strongly compressed between our fore-finger and thumb, and cry "stinking fish!" And with strange inconsistency, and more strange want of faith in so *purely* scientific a draught as a rotten eel in a bucket of wine or brandy, it is said once more on the 54th page, "should this prove abortive, try sulphuric acid!" and then the drunkard's friend must mix it, diluted with water, in the food and drink of the patient, morning, noon and night,—his coffee, tea, soup, &c., &c., must be in part, at least, made of sulphuric acid, till it affects his stomach, when he must have tea of bitter herbs, oranges or roots, and still his sulphurated "meat and drink" in tact—"until the mouth gets sore, then cease;"—and then, "in case weakness of stomach, diarrhœa, vomiting, or giddiness be the consequence, give No. 8; if the mouth becomes ulcerated, give No. 7." These would certainly be very likely results from the large quantities of sulphuric acid the poor drunkard is to have smuggled into his stomach with every morsel of food and every drop of drink he swallows, according to the advice and directions of the author of "The Homœopathist," of Allentown, Pa., in

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1835! An advice which the veriest tyro in science and homœopathy must laugh to scorn, and which the most superstitious and gullable old woman would think beneath her notice.

Among the curative methods for *mania a potu*, on page 56, "*blood-letting, from five to six ounces*, is frequently of service, at first daily, then every other day, and let the patient drink plenty of cold water," &c., &c. It is a relief to us once more to find something we can refer to learned authority. If any reader of this article has not read GIL BLAS, we pity him, and beg that he will oblige us by reading, as he can, the second and third chapters of Book the Second; he will find there honorable mention made of Doctor Sangrado, "who had acquired a great reputation with the public by a pomp of words, a solemn air, and some lucky cures, which had done him more honor than he deserved."—Of the greatness of the man he may judge from these words addressed by him to his pupil: "Thou art learned, Gil Blas," said he, "before thou turnest physician; whereas others prescribe a long time, generally all their lives, without ever becoming learned." His mode of treating each and all of his patients was short, easy and simple. "*He must be bled every day, and drink hot water in abundance.*" The reader can here see the striking analogy between the formula of "The Homœopathist" and that of Sangrado,—the difference being simply that the former recommends *hot*, whereas Dr. Hering prefers *cold*, water *after the bleeding*. Of the many other points of resemblance between the two cases, the reader must judge for himself.

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On page 166, we find, "*Whoever is troubled with dyspepsia, should eat much butter, and have daily an injection administered of warm water or milk*"!—A notable prescription, truly, for curing or preventing dyspepsia! Most medical men of both schools agree that butter and fatty substances in general are the greatest promoters of this disease; but we live in an age of discoveries, and who, in the grand march, would not say with Horace—

"Occupet extremum scabies; mehi turpe, relinqui est."—
(May the itch seize the hindmost; I am ashamed to be left last.)

On the 7th page, Part the 2d, as a cure for rheumatic headache,—"*the steam of hot mush drawn into the nose, and the hair combed every evening*," is the truly homœopathic and scientific prescription!

The mode, or one of the modes, of dealing "with shortness of breath" is, by "anise-seed tea at night, and smoking tobacco every morning"!!—page 89.

On page 92, Part 2d, in pleurisy the patient is directed that he will "do well to have a vein opened, and when it is once done, make a large incision and allow a good quantity of blood to escape." Now, with the utmost consideration for this author's word, we distinctly assert that we think *he would do much better to do no such thing!* And we would like to know to what other respectable homœopathic authority Dr. Hering can refer us for recommending this practice in a case where the patient is presumed to have the remedies usually given in the disease, at his elbow?—It has not often fallen to the lot of men who have studied medicine from good books and at colleges only, to meet with such a remedy

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as that to be found on the 102d page, part 2d, of this truly extraordinary work; it runs in these words: "*we may in many cases, relieve by tying, over night, around the throat, the woollen stocking of a healthy person, and who is not of the same sex as the patient.*" Now, this prescription, as before intimated, being entirely out of our sphere of knowledge and experience, we will not presume to pronounce on its efficacy in the face of so high a sanction. But with respectful humility we submit that its administration is surrounded with a network of difficulties. We will suppose, for instance, that the patient is a young gentleman, still unmarried; he must in that case, lay his mother or sisters under contribution for the "loan of a stocking!" And should he not be blessed with these tender relatives, he must present his petition at the feet of "that idol whom every young man has enshrined in his heart."—Now if the season should happen to be that in which ladies prefer silk or cotton, or if it should be the evening of the day on which either of the ladies in question had taken a long walk, we are sure they might justly feel some hesitancy in lending the doctor's prescription. We will neither present the other side,—that is, the female aspect of this question—nor pursue it further, but leave it to the gentle reader to follow out the train of thought for himself: and we feel fully assured that he will agree with us that this remedy is one of some delicacy and great difficulty, on whatever footing he may place it.

The next advance upon the foregoing "specific" is no nearer than the moon! Treating of tape-worm—page 165, those who may suspect this parasite to hold

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his revels in their intestines, must look out for him "*about the new and full moon*," at which time he may be expected to come forth to pay his respects to "the glimpses of the moon!" But the remedy which is to compel the monster to reveal himself to the full light of day, must be administered "*at the waning of the moon, and the next full moon!*" Well,

> "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Who does not like, when the hour for rest has arrived, and Nature has drawn her night-cap over her wrinkled forehead, to enjoy the refreshing luxury of her "sweet restorer, balmy sleep"? Who does not, as he lays down his weary limbs, address the brother of Death, and, with Ovid, say,

> "Somne, quies rerum, placidissime Somne Deorum,
> Pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corpora duris
> Fessa ministeriis mulces reparasque labori."

But the god, however smooth and soft the accents of prayer and fervent the spirit, will not always shed his oblivious influences upon mortal eyes, but frequently deserts his post, perhaps, to spend the night with Cupid and the other troublesome deities, whose special office it is to disturb the children of men both night and day. For such sleepless eyes and restless heads "The Homœopathist" has a ready cure at page 252, —Sleeplessness may be relieved or cured "by rubbing the forehead with the palm of the hand, particularly if it be done accurately 101 times and counted; if you count wrong, still go on; if it do not help, begin anew from the beginning, without losing patience. It also

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contributes much to sleep to fancy you had to write with a very long pole, on a high, exceeding high wall, the year and date in very large letters, first in figures, then with letters"! There is only one thing that could at all improve this piece of medical wisdom, which is, that the long imaginary pole were a real pole, and that the sleepless man would actually use it upon the "very high, exceeding high wall;" in that case we assure him he would, after the necessary muscular effort, sooner sleep, and be less a dreamer. Perhaps it would make this result doubly sure if he were to go out and collect 101 "decent-looking" paving-stones and bring them in a bag into his bed-room.

In no less than three different places,—pages 223, and 274–5, is MESMERISM called into requisition, with full directions how to make the passes in straight lines and high curves! so that it is not thought sufficient that homœopathy should be an improvement and an advance upon the old system, but this contemptible humbug, execrated and despised by all sound thinkers and well educated men, must be foisted in to patch up what Dr. Hering thinks the failures of the former. We trust it will be henceforth distinctly understood that these abominations are anything but Homœopathy.

One more novelty from this mass of confusion and folly, and we have done with it.

Page 245. "*Lying oneself sore.* This may be avoided when a vessel of water is placed under the patient's bed, and renewed every day. If water alone does not serve, then dissolve some globules of No. 15 in it"! And in case this never-to-be-forgotten remedy should fail to cure "lying oneself sore,"—bed-sores, we should

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think—there is another more far-fetched remedy still. "*A soft buck-skin may be laid under the patient, the hair turned down and the tail end toward the feet of the patient!* by these means it may be avoided or cured!" Now, then, surely, "thereby hangs a tail!" Upon the surface of "the water under the patient's bed" we shall not raise a ripple, nor shall we disturb the globules that sleep in its silent depths and send up their healing powers through bed and bedding, by virtue of some profound mystery of nature revealed only to Dr. Hering, doubtless, by divine ordination! But on taking our leave, permit us to take also one turn out of the "buck-skin:"—and while thus pleasantly shaking it up, let us part with friendly smiles and merry faces, with the satisfaction, that, if in this book we have found no philosophy, we *have* found plenty of "fun:"—

"Semel Bryanus O'Linn bracca indigebat,
Frater dedit rubræ bovis pellem quam habebat,
Hocque corpus cruraque noster induebat,
'Frigido jucundum est,' Bryanus dicebat."

"Brian O'Linn had no breeches to wear,
So they bought him a *buck*-skin to make him a pair;
The wooly side out and the fleshy side in,
'It is pleasant and cool,' says Brian O'Linn!"—BRALLAGHAN.

Reader, the case for the Crown and Majesty of Homœopathy and Science is before you; would that the counsellor had been more capable and the pleading of a higher order, for your sake,—but a noble and a just cause can well dispense with the outward display and the extraneous circumstances of pompous show.—It is yours to pronounce the verdict; it shall be, it must be, "guilty upon all the counts!"

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OUR LITERATURE—A REVIEW.*

"Samuelis Hahnemanni Materia Medica Pura. E Germanico sermone in Latinum conversa. Conjunctis studiis ediderunt Dr. E. Stapf, Dr. Gross, et E. G. a Brunnow. Dresdæ et Lipsiæ, anno, 1826."

"Jahr's New Manual," translated by Chas. J. Hempel, M.D. New York, 1853.

"Hull's Jahr." New York, 1851.

"Therapeutic Pocket Book," by Dr. C. Von Bonninghausen. Edited by Chas. J. Hempel. New York, 1847.

"Jahr's and Possart's New Manual," By the Same. New York, 1853.

"* * * * * rudis indigestaque moles,
Nec quicquam nisi pondus iners, congestaque eodem,
Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum."—Ovid.

There is a far distant period dimly seen through the mist of years, when the few and scattered inhabitants of the globe dwelt in those regions of Eastern land where humanity is said to have found its first cradle; where, as we are told, our forefathers first propagated their species, first put forth their new and wondrous powers, first developed their full and perfect proportions—glowing in the joy and beauty of health—first felt the sting of disease, drooped under the hand of decay, and tasted death. It was then that necessity and experience first taught them to provide weapons of offence and defence against the fierce denizens of the field and forest, and to seek appliances against the occult and stealthy attacks of pain and disease in their myriad aspects,—"the pestilence that walked in darkness, and the des-

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* See North American Journal of Homœopathy for August, 1858.

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truction that wasted at noonday." Urged by unceasing pressure, and guided by that singular faculty, shared in common with the lower order of animals, they sought with eager solicitude whatever curative or palliative means nature had fostered in her bosom in pity to the wants of her children, and liberally yielded to the researches of rudimentary science as well as to those instinctive yearnings that, without reason or art, detected in a moment the medicinal products of hill and dale, of mountain, sea and forest.

Through the uncertain vision which the glimmerings of historical light afford us of a later period in the career of our race, we behold the wayside sufferer in painful and prolonged expectancy, even of years' duration, sitting in pitiable solitude awaiting the advent of some wanderer from a distant land, whose wisdom might supply, and whose charity might administer the required medicament. But, alas, how often did the burning tears of disappointment stain his cheeks while even in sight of the water troubled by the flutter of the angel's wings, it became the restorer of some more nimble sufferer who was able to step in before him! In those days of scientific twilight and helpless affliction, whether in Assyria, Egypt, Greece, or Judea, the necessities of the diseased first called into being the office of the physician. The urgent and ceaseless demands of the sick taxed to their utmost the genius and inventive faculties of the doctor, who must be always ready with means to cure, to relieve, or to amuse the fancy of his patient till nature restored him, or till death with a single pang dispensed with his services for

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ever. It was at this time and under such pressure, that the appliances of cure in the shape of drugs began to expand in bulk and number; and with the addition of charms, incantations, exorcisms and assumed supernatural agency, under their dark and varied hues, progressed so rapidly and multiplied so vastly, that in a brief period the world itself had hardly room to contain them. The first-born of these twofold elements, science and superstition, appeared afterwards to the world under the classic title of "MATERIA MEDICA!" And however difficult and prolonged the struggles by which it was forced into existence, it does not seem to have fared any better in after years under its new dignity.

To those who have watched its progress, it appears advancing and retrograding, succeeding and failing, curing and killing! Lauded to-day, execrated to-morrow; now moving with stately and dignified step, and anon stumbling with tottering gait and tipsy uncertainty! Here basking with serene and scientific aspect in the face of day, there with shaded and downcast brow sneaking and skulking, like a knight of the post. By and by lifting on high the mace of accredited authority, and exclusive privilege to kill and to slay "according to law," and then, in mountebank garb and grinning gyrations, like the merry-andrew at a country fair, proclaiming with unblushing impudence the virtues of its "patent prescriptions" and quack nostrums; as duly protected by *Royal Decree*, or the *edict* of a *Republic!* It would indeed seem as if in these latter days Mercury had stolen his medical sceptre from Apollo, and in one of his merry moods lent it as a wand to Momus, that he may amuse

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the gods at the expense of mortals, by turning some of the gravest efforts of their medical faculty into feats of legerdemain!

"A drowning man will grasp at a straw;" but the disease-stricken sufferer will often trust the empty jargon of the most insolent knave that ever vended a "specific," whether he pretend to diagnose his condition "*by applying a glass tube to the eye*,"* or attempt to cure by holding a globule of "the *eight-thousandth dilution*" at the distance of a yard from the nose. Indeed it is, and has always been, one of the weak points of humanity to commit its highest and most serious interests into the most unsafe hands, provided that they are recommended by improbable or supernatural assumptions in science or religion! This should, perhaps, reconcile us to the strange and anomalous condition of medicine, while Science herself has taken up her abode with men on the earth, and hourly guides their fingers with unerring certainty to every triumph that can be achieved within the wide range of the material universe. And yet, how singularly indifferent does she appear in the one department that mostly affects human happiness and health; or, is it because we stupidly and stubbornly refuse to follow her leadings and at her bidding apply the resources which Nature at her command has so abundantly provided?

Materia Medica, to be all that is claimed for it by

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* In this enlightened city, a fellow whose only mode of diagnosis is that stated in the text, enjoys a most extensive practice, and is accumulating the largest fortune of any man in Philadelphia.

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our opponents of the old school, (when contrasting it with new discoveries and innovations, at other times they ever lament its uncertainty and defects,) should stand out as a distinct and well-defined branch of medical knowledge; it should be founded on known and undeniable elemental principles, and be able with reasonable certainty to answer its intended object. In other words, it should be the clear development of practical therapeutics, and furnish ready to the hand of the medical man, reliable means of relief or cure. Pathology clearly and unhesitatingly points out the true characteristics of a given disease, denotes its class, states its name, demonstrates its local boundaries and the point at which it concentrates its greatest intensity, as well as its reflex action on tissues or organs at a distance from its immediate neighbourhood. Why should not Materia Medica be equally clear in responding to our reasonable claims? Or must we conclude that the assumptions of its advocates, when tilting against Homœopathy, are, for the most part, "sound and fury," an empty profession, unreliable and fictitious? It is not intended here to swell the echo of that silly and thoughtless cry—equally foolish and unfounded—that would deny to the medical appliances of the old school any salutary or curative effects, nor to rank them in the category of "unmitigated evils." It is more rational to admit that most of them are excellent tools, often unskilfully handled, and very frequently effective in a high degree, in spite of the rust with which they are coated, and some clumsiness in their use. We desire to confine ourselves to such statements as can be sustained by undeniable facts, whether

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we deal with the defects of the old or the new system of Materia Medica. But whatever be the redeeming qualities of the old method it cannot be considered as resting upon a scientific basis. Its sturdiest advocates cannot show that it is a series of inductive conclusions from unassailable facts which may again be reproduced if necessary; nor can they show us the definitions, axioms and postulates on which it rests. And, still more important, let them show us a scientific classification, clear, sound and practical, in which each division shall rest on its individual utility and prove its inalienable relation to the grand superstructure. But is the sense of security produced by such a combination that which is experienced by the student at every step of his progress? Does he not rather feel himself left in a state of painful bewilderment as to the selection of his remedy in the hour of need? Has he not the widest latitude of choice among a countless variety of dubious agents? Must he not submit to the wildest hap-hazard empiricism in their administration? Science confines herself within known boundaries, and owns no possessions in the dominions of chance. It is true that the student of the old school system, in his perplexity can fall back on a certain time-honored classification of drugs, but of so singular and fictitious a character that it only serves as the *ignis fatuus* of the wanderer, to lead him off from the safe and solid road to sink in darkness and dismay into the depth of the quagmire. It is conceded by the very highest authority that this classification is neither scientific nor useful, and only allowed by sufferance to occupy a place from which the boasted advancement of our

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brethren has never been able to remove it; because there was nothing rational to take its place! But let us glance at it for a moment, and then turn to our more immediate object.

In any attempted classification of Materia Medica, it would naturally suggest itself to a reflecting mind that some arrangement of medical substances in accordance with their effects upon the different organs and tissues of the human body, should be deemed a *sine qua non* in their successful administration. But instead of any such approximation towards a scientific standard, we find them so grouped as merely to indicate their effects on the active functions of the system; as if these abnormal deviations, however produced, were the *cause* rather than the *effects* of a diseased condition! This conclusion must necessarily divert the attention from the wise precept, "*ferre causas*," to a mere trifling with results; the suppression of which (their removal by such means is impossible) can neither aid the patient toward recovery, nor the physician in arriving at a philosophical appreciation of his condition. What does it avail us to know that there are "*Emetics*," "*Cathartics*," and "*Expectorants*," with all those other nauseous compounds which make up the useless and arbitrary catalogue which has come down to us from the dark days of empiricism, through all "that blaze of light and knowledge" so vauntingly set forth, but which, in this department, has only served to deepen and extend the shadows cast by these mystic tumuli across the highways of science and art? It is not necessary that we should indulge in strong expressions in condemnation of this

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arrangement, when the very highest authorities among themselves have spoken in deeper and more emphatic terms of depreciation than we should like to employ; the only exceptions being those creatures of mere terms and technicalities — too numerous in both schools— whose opinions always go for nothing, save where partizan clamor requires the aid of empty noise to shout down formidable and fatal opposition.

So that while we feel called upon to make some severe but just strictures on the manifest defects of our own, it must not be supposed that they imply any commendation of a system whose disposition has shown it to be too proud to acknowledge its errors, too slothful for advancement, and too conservative even to replace positive and self-evident evils by manifestly practical benefits.

But *our own* "MATERIA MEDICA PURA" is "very considerable" in bulk of volume, extent of phraseology, and multiplicity of meaningless words. But how are we to deal with it? since we must candidly acknowledge at once, whether the admission prove our native obtuseness or not, that in dragging our weary and almost hopeless way through its winding and tangled mazes, we feel compelled to inscribe each of the rather singular "*pocket-books*" at the head of our article with the title, *Materia Medica Obscura!*

Let it, however, be distinctly understood that it is not our intention, nor do we consider it our province, to sit in judgment on the *translation* of these works. Favorable opinions have already gone forth of the arduous labors of Dr. Hempel and others in the same field; and

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doubtless from many who are competent judges, as well as from some who evidently know nothing of German, and very little indeed of English; whether "to the manor born," or sprung from continental Europe. Our present review must, therefore, take another direction.

We premise that these compilations in their present form cannot be considered as having any claim whatever to the style or title of "Materia Medica Pura" in the strict and scientific sense attached now by learned men of the medical profession to these words. They form neither the Materia Medica of our school, nor indeed of any other. What elementary principles, or great fundamental truths lie buried in their depths is another question. A block of marble is not a Venus de Medici or a "Greek Slave," till the cunning chisel of the artist has reduced it to either "thing of beauty." When we consider the singularly arduous and important labors of Hahnemann, his revival and establishment of the great law of cure, in spite of the most powerful opposition, his careful and elaborate pathogenetic investigations, we are surprised that even before his death, they had not terminated in some well-knit and concise system, convenient and satisfactory for the practical purposes of the medical profession;—a body of tangible facts enforcing their irresistible conclusions on every cultivated man whose mind was open to conviction. But words are not always things, and if, with ourselves, some of our readers have despaired of gleaning any satisfactory information after much labor and toil among these "provings" and "repertories," "manuals" and "keys," let them remember that it is a common

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peculiarity of the most gifted minds to reject a mass of mere words, while they eagerly embrace new ideas, grapple with new propositions, and store up new facts for future use. These form the elements of the man of genius. The great work which stands at the head of our list, taken as a whole, must be allowed to be unquestionable in its integrity as a history of such provings as were made by the founder and those who aided him in his personal labors, and must necessarily form the solid ground-work of a true system of Materia Medica. It was by these provings that the clear light of medical reformation first broke through the clouds of time-honored fallacies and superstitions.

But if Hahnemann intended to claim any higher place for this work than that of a mere symptom list, it is certain that, like many other great men, his judgment was led captive by his zeal, and caused him to overlook all scientific method, while he threw together in one confused heap grand masses of purely elemental principles, which require some less gifted hand to disentangle, arrange and mould them into a shape that shall subserve the great object he had so much at heart.

Great discoverers have seldom been mechanical enough to turn to practical advantage the truths which their genius had drawn from heights and depths beyond the reach of ordinary workers. And it is but fair to admit that in recording his drug-symptoms, Hahnemann did not display such acuteness and clearness in arrangement and system, as one would expect from so sound and original a thinker. Or, perhaps, in his earnestness

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to be clearly and fully understood, his anxiety carried him too far, leading him to multiply his indications and symptoms to such a degree, as to render it often difficult to discover the wheat among the chaff, or to detect that which is often of the highest consequence among the useless, the puerile and the contradictory. But if this great man has erred a little, many of his self-constituted followers have done nothing else but copy his mistakes and enlarge on his blunders. Indifferent to the grand fundamental principle which lies at the root of all medical science, and which has made its reviver immortal, they seized on his trifling eccentricities as well as on the weakness of his advanced age, when second childhood had succeeded the mental vigor of manhood, and exhibited the small points of his character and the excrescences of his system in so strong a light as to expose us to the ridicule and scorn of such as would look no deeper than this outer surface into Homœopathy!

Entirely unscientific themselves, they had no strong appreciation of, or warm sympathy with his great law of cure; being mere mechanics in theory and practice, they have only rung the changes on the "*original provings*,"—

"Still heaping mountains piled on mountains to the skies,"

until every other branch of the noblest of all sciences seemed lost in one universal fog of symptoms, extending to the very verge of the rational horizon, and darkening the whole heavens; till even by the closest scrutiny no other object revealed itself to the eye of the student

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but an unsightly, lame and forbidding dwarf—an Asmodeus in everything but intellect!

"The *Symptomatology*," the "*New Manual*," (a *pocket-book* (!) of two octavo volumes, embracing twelve hundred pages each, full of nothing, but symptoms!) "*Hull's Jahr*," "*Jahr and Possart's New Manual*"—another of the polyphemous *pocket-books*—and Hering's inflated "gas-bags," form the protean monstrosity which has sprung from the laboratory of these enchanters! These have now assumed so formidable an appearance and so forbidding an aspect, that scarcely a man of large views or scientific acquirements thinks it worth while to lose a thought on what seems only fit capital for broken-down mechanics, charlatans, and quack doctors. And which has become, indeed, the means of flooding the profession with a race of symptom-doctors, dubbed by one another, whose only qualifications for their assumed calling is a total ignorance of every branch of medical and general knowledge. It would be both useless and indeed impossible to attempt a detailed criticism of the contents of these productions, in which all that was originally sound, simple and reliable, has been so overlaid as to render it as rational to seek useful information in them as it would be to turn single-handed into the stable of Augeas. Here we have layer upon layer of isolated indications, useless repetitions, and long-labored lines of little words and phrases, which no human intellect can grasp, and no amount of human industry turn to any useful purpose. The brain on which they could be stamped must needs be of the fossil class.

It is a very singular feature, and one which very rea-

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dily impresses itself on the mind of the student of our provings, in their present state of crude and conglomerate amalgamation, that every medicine on the list is made to produce similar, and indeed almost identical conditions. So closely do these approximate, that one name might well indicate every abnormal change which they are said to produce in the human system! Nor is this all, for the converse is made to appear also true. For the same substance that brings about a series of given symptoms now, is forced, by and by, to produce the very opposite phenomena; till every single medicine, without one word of qualification or explanation, seems to embrace within its expansive range every ailment incident to the human family, rendering it a work of supererogation to call in at any time the aid of the other, equally potent, and no less effective, agents!

To fortify us with greater strength, so that at all times we may go forth armed to the teeth, we are gravely presented with a long array of drugs "that act on the right side," and another battalion "to act on the left;"* about one hundred "to act on *the angles of the eye*," fifty-nine or sixty "for the external angle," and sixty-four "for the inner angle!" some to act "*before* the ears," some "behind the ears," some "below the ears," and some "on the lobes of the ears!" Surely seeing and hearing, even in the case of the blind and deaf,

* A few days ago, a grave medical philosopher of this city, asked a lady patient, if "the pain in the side was better?" she replied in the negative; and he, looking at his notes, said, "he did not wonder, since she had been taking a *left side*, instead of a *right side* medicine!"

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should be matters of course after this. The male genitals have *one hundred and ten* remedies to fall back upon in time of need; the penis one hundred and eight, the glans, the prepuce, the testicles, the scrotum, &c., have separate resources proportionately large! The "heel," the "back of the foot," the "sole," the "toes," the "big toe," the "tips of the toes," the "ball under the toes," the "toe-nails," and "corns," may in all cases of trouble come to a fair understanding with no less a force than *six thousand and three well chosen* and carefully adapted medical aids! (Vide Bönninghausen, pp. 130, 131, *et passim*.) But how hopeless and vain the task to seek for information among this hocus-pocus of vulgar jargon, huddled together by a half-crazy enthusiast, to say no worse of him; who had the impudence to assert "that he killed two mad dogs on the spot" with one globule of Jenichen, the horse-trainer's high potency! It is not then in this, so-called, "Materia Medica Pura," that we can hope to find a classification or analysis of medicines which should naturally and necessarily lead us to a knowledge of those lesions they are most likely to relieve or cure. We find ourselves sent at every step, on a "wild-goose chase," hunting up fractional atoms of "pains," "aches," "feelings," and "sensations," till it becomes a matter of doubt with the mere symptom-hunter whether his patient is in the wholesome and natural throes of child-birth, or writhing in the agonies of the worst form of colic. And it is very certain that he who exclusively devotes himself to this miserable and bewildering system of symptoms, must be ignorant that there is such a thing as a disease having a

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specific character, a period of invasion, growth, crisis, decrease and termination. Having his head full only of these *disjecta membra*, how can he refer each symptom for a correct idea of its meaning, as well as the cause of its appearance to some known form of disease to which it points as an index?

But if for a moment we admit that every one of these almost countless symptoms or indications, is a positive and reliable fact—which every one knows is not the case—of how much value could they be to the medical profession in general, as they have been huddled together in these books by editors who have strained their ingenuity to its utmost tension in order to weave puzzles and enigmas out of Hahnemann's provings? Collections of facts intended to bear on any given subject, must cease to be useful when neither synthesis can give force to their combined testimony, nor analysis add weight to their individual declaration. But that the deduction of general scientific conclusions should be the great end of such collected information, does not seem to have passed before the minds of our great compilers. They remind one of a miser, who, having spent a barren and useless life in collecting in one sack, pieces of all denominations—gold, silver, copper—should in the end, as he sits in misery and rags, estimate his wealth by the bulk of the bag!

The great architects of our mighty "manuals" had forgotten, doubtless, that a student of medicine would naturally desire to learn something of the history of each medical substance, of the source whence it is derived, of the manner in which it came to be used for

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curative purposes—by instinct, accident, or experiment —and why it is possessed of medical virtues at all. It would not, we conceive, have been beneath the notice of even the most distinguished thinkers to dwell a little on these points, and tell us of the mine whence the mineral is drawn, of the climate which the animal inhabits, of the region which affords sap to the herb and the plant;— why and how our great predecessors had happened to choose any one or more of the same order or class in preference to others? Nor would it be amiss to know that Nature—"the kindest mother still"—has wisely and providently provided in every clime and country effective means for the relief or cure of such forms of disease as are peculiar within its limits. As natives, or inhabitants of the American continent, we should not lose sight of the circumstance that the constitutional and hereditary tendencies of the human family accompany them in their constant migrations, and assume new aspects under distant and different climates. Here where the children of all lands seek and find a home, and bring with them their vices and their virtues, their strength and their weakness, it would seem peculiarly desirable that our medical studies should embrace a wider and more generous range than that prescribed to them by the feeble and barren capacities of the symptomatologists.

The collectors of our provings have overlooked their true design, and thus far most effectually contracted their utility, since they ought to have known that the value of every new truth in this field is only seen as it forms a link in a chain of evidence that unites the rela-

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tion between the effects of any given drug on the healthy human organism, and the pathological developments of some known form of disease. We conclude, therefore, that in spite of our boasted progress and new light, a Materia Medica, that shall command the respect of enlightened and learned men everywhere, challenge the esteem and defy the cavils of our opponents and be valuable in the hands of the practitioner, has yet to be evolved from this mass of crude and chaotic materials, which have been thrown together, mainly by our German brethren, with more industry than skill, and with an evident design "*to make a new book*," rather than compose one which should contain anything new or useful.

It would not be generous to close these remarks without an expression of commendation due to the scientific, extensive and accurate labors of Dr. Teste, the first who has made some approximation towards supplying this great want of our school, and who has tried to reduce to something like order the fragments left us by our great discoverer,—whose mission, never perhaps understood by himself, went no further than to indicate the great leading truths of a medical reformation, leaving it to minds of more limited inspiration and less comprehensive grasp to mould into an art the scientific deductions he had initiated. Still Dr. Teste's very important and valuable work falls far short of the present requirements of our practice, whilst its plan seems to us open to objections which it would be out of place to canvass here.

An effort is being made in another quarter which we can only notice now as affording a hope that at some fu-

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ture period, apparently distant, a work may be produced which should make us independent of the symptom rolls. Although it would be premature to judge of an unfinished work, its character so far compels us to express our regret that it only appears from quarter to quarter as addenda to a quarterly Journal, which necessarily defers to a very far off time a book that promises fair to fill the vacuum so prejudicial to our cause and the cause of suffering humanity, as well as to the individual interests of every member of the profession. And though we would not urge too much the "willing steed," we must venture the hope that the gentlemen who have undertaken this arduous and useful labor, may find it in their power to hasten it to a more speedy termination, and add to the value of their gift by contracting the length of our season of expectancy.

THE END.

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SOME

LOCAL AND GENERAL

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PHILADELPHIA.
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