

"NOTES ON HOMOEOPATHY."

We have received the second number of this little monthly serial, which, if its present character is sustained, promises to become a really useful work on the subject. The second number opens with an article giving an able reply to the question "What is Homoeopathy?" The writer says:—"The essence of Homoeopathy consists solely in the principle that *'like cures like.'*" So long as a man is guided by that principle in the administration of medicines, he is a homoeopath, whatever doses he may use. Our opponents have contrived to misunderstand this simple axiom, showing the most extraordinary ignorance of language, by confounding *'like'* and *'same.'* Thus the *Laurel* affects to suppose that we should attempt to cure strangulation by drawing the cord a little tighter, or to revive a drowning man by giving him a little more water, his *'wise intellect not being able to perceive that this would be, not Homoeopathy, but Toxicopathy.* We do not give the *same* thing as that which has caused the mischief, but something else which, in the healthy organism, produces *similar* effects. Two things may be as *like* to one another as two pens; but they are, nevertheless, not the *same* thing. If a man is suffering from the effects of a contusion, we do not give him another blow to cure it (which would be pretty nearly the same as the allopathic doctrine of "revulsion"), but apply *arsenic*, or some other drug which most closely simulates the effects of the blow. If, again, he is laboring under the results of intemperance, we do not pour into him infinitesimal doses of brandy and water, but we administer *nas vomica*, or *opium*, because they bring about in the stomach and nervous system a condition closely resembling that produced by excessive indulgence in intoxicating liquors."

"The maxim of the homoeopaths that diseases are cured by similars, and that of the allopaths, that they are cured by contraries, seem to be irreconcilable; but in truth, the second is only a modification of the first—both being in reality different phases (so to speak) of one law. It is a well ascertained fact that all medicinal or morbid substances produce a twofold action, the one state being the opposite of the other. Thus one primary effect of opium is to excite the brain and nervous system; but this is soon followed by drowsiness and insensibility. The first effect of aconite is shown by depression of the circulatory system—weak pulse, cold skin, creeping, shivering, &c., which are soon succeeded by a full, quick pulse, hot skin, flushed face, and all the symptoms of inflammatory fever. Purgatives, by their reaction, induce constipation; and astringents, diarrhoea, as was observed by Hippocrates."

And again,—"The distinctive feature of homoeopathy consists entirely, as we have seen, in the law of cure by similars; it is altogether independent of the dose. Hahnemann, when he began to treat his patients on the new principle, used at first the ordinary doses, but on finding that they often produced aggravations of the disease, he successively reduced the quantity, until he arrived at the so-called infinitesimal doses, or, as he termed them, *potencies.* With these minute doses he found he could cure his patients quite as effectually as with the larger, and much more safely and pleasantly. It is now generally allowed that he carried his reduc-

tion of doses to an unnecessary extent; but we have it on the authority of men whose statements cannot be questioned, that cures have been obtained with attenuations as high as the 250th and still higher. In the ordinary practice, however, the division of medicines is seldom carried beyond the 30th centesimal dilution."

The next article treats of "The Results of Homoeopathy," showing by statistical returns the proportion of deaths and cures in various diseases in British and Continental hospitals to be greatly in favor of homoeopathic treatment. "The average mortality from pneumonia, calculated on the number of cases (which include the numbers remaining from the preceding, and those remaining to the succeeding year) in the hospitals of Victoria, in 1867 and 1868, was 18.7 per cent; and in those of Tasmania in the same years, 35.8 per cent. The mortality in the hospital at Launceston in 1868 was 88.9 per cent. of cases, and in the hospital at Hobart Town in 1866, 100 per cent., *not a single patient having recovered!* A more than average mortality in the hospitals in Tasmania is only to be expected, considering the age and antecedents of most of the patients, but the result under homoeopathic treatment would certainly have been very different." There are two other short articles—"Homoeopathy in Cholera," and "Appropriation to Homoeopathic Institutions," which conclude the October number.