

FATAL ERRORS.

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There is before us the December number of the *New York Medical Times*, and in it we find the first paper, by David A. Gorton, M. D., Brooklyn, N. Y., full of fatal errors, full of erroneous statements, and full of illogical deductions.

The patrons of the *New York Medical Times* have dropped their former title, "homœopathic," with great propriety and honesty, and have been thanked time and again for this action. They became evidently either disbelievers in the efficacy of Hahnemann's methods or were over-anxious for recognition by the dominant school of medicine. The paper before us, by Dr. Gorton, is an attempt to make the medical profession believe that by the aid of such great men as Richard Hughes, Conrad Wesselhoef, and the like of them, Hahnemann's methods and his healing art can be exterminated. It is a very fatal error to build an argument and form deductions from utterly false premises, and it is this very Dr. Gorton who attempts to do it when he says, on page 258:

"The study of aetiology has thrown clear light on things hitherto veiled in shadow and added certainty in medical diagnosis where before was vagueness or wild guessing. Take, for example, cases of pyæmia. He would be an incurable empiricist who should to-day presume to treat it on general constitutional principles, on the one hand, or by a comparison of its symptomaticology, on the other. The same may be said of parasitic affections of the skin, the infectious or contagious diseases, the genus of which has been discovered and the means of their destruction definitely ascertained; the marsh malarias, in the cure of which the alkaloids of Cinchona have proved to be specific," etc., etc.; and he winds up by saying: "At all events, if we remove the cause or causes of them, or assist nature to do so, we may safely close our medicine-cases and walk away, leaving nature to do the rest."

That is exactly what the common school of medicine taught before the days of Hahnemann and teaches now, although there are rare exceptions to be noted. There are found a few progressive men now, and a few of them have always tried to bring certainty into the practice of medicine. What Dr. Gorton says would form a grand text for such a satirist of medical men as Molière was.

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Take, for example, cases of pyæmia! If we accept the methods of Hahnemann, we cure ALL our cases, not by a specific nor by a remedy for a hypothesis as to the nature of the disease, but by a comparison of symptomaticology. There is a true healer, a strict adherent to our blessed healing art, still dispensing well-potentized drugs and curing the sick who was ill with pyæmia in 1852—by far the worst case that ever came under my care and observation. He was cured by Jaenichen's two hundredth potency of Veratrum album because of the similarity of the symptoms. Veratrum may not cure another case of pyæmia—certainly never—if the only indication for its administration is the fact of a cure of one case of this disease. The similarity of symptoms will remain the only guide in future, as it has been in the past.

But when Dr. Gorton says, "*The marsh malarias, in the cure of which the alkaloids of Cinchona have proved to be specific,*" he becomes intolerable. He seems to be anxious to be recognized by a majority of ignorant medical pretenders—ignorant of the teachings of their betters, ignorant of the origin and history of Homœopathy. There once lived in this city an exceptionally intelligent and honest medical teacher, "*Dr. Samuel Jackson,*" who devoted one lecture every season to the abuse of Chininum sulph. as a remedy for marsh malaria. The medical students at the University of Pennsylvania were distinctly told that Chininum sulph. not only did not cure the marsh malaria, but that suppressing it only for a time, a new disease was inflicted on the sick by a combination of the suppressed disease and the poisonous effects of the remedy, and presented itself finally as Chininum caelestia—a ten times worse disorder than marsh malaria. A quarter of a century has passed since this honest instructor passed away, and now we behold a bold man who fables about a specific for marsh malaria, and that specific the alkaloids of Cinchona! The study of aetiology has progressed! Therapeutics have not!

Did this Dr. Gorton never hear of Cullen's *Materia Medica*, a work which Samuel Hahnemann translated?—and when he came to consider Dr. Cullen's question, "Under what circumstances does Cinchona officinalis cure the intermittent fever, admitting its curative effects to be limited?" denounced it as "*a specific,*" and then and there resolved to answer this question. He proved Cinchona off. on himself and found that it had cured only such cases of intermittent fever as it was capable of producing in similarity on the healthy. Hahnemann then laid the foundation for the certain applicability of the Law of the Simi-

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lars for the cure of the sick. It is thus that Hahnemann created a *materia medica pura* which, Dr. Gorton says, is represented by Dr. Richard Hughes to be an Angcan stable to be cleaned out by him. The Law of the Similars is as old as anything we know about medicine. Hippocrates knew of it; Paracelsus advocated it. But it was left to the great philosopher, Hahnemann, to point out clearly and distinctly how to apply that law for the cure of the sick. He created a *Materia Medica* which will remain a master-work and will be appreciated by future generations, while such men as Richard Hughes, who have never done anything to develop or augment it, will be remembered only as attempting to bring distrust upon it; and as having failed ignominiously to destroy this healing art by destroying its *Materia Medica*. The latter in reality is the stumbling-block which the ordinary physician cannot conquer. As Dr. Gorton has it, this very indispensable record of the sick-making properties of drugs, obtained by the provings on the healthy of various degrees of preparations, is an eyegore to the scientific medical pretender, who still dreams of being able to find out the hypothetical causes of disorders and diseases and the hypothetical means of stamping them out. When Hahnemann first pointed out with certainty under what circumstances Cinchona off. would cure intermittent fever, he certainly did not anticipate that in the future any one would be bold enough to ignore his progressive development of the healing art—would ignore the great intermittent fever works of Banninghausen and Allen, which so clearly point out the characteristic indications for the use of the various known drugs in the treatment of this fever.

There are hardly three per cent. of intermittent fever cases curable by Cinchona or Chininum sulphuricum, because of the unsimilarity with their sick-making properties. Every observing medical practitioner sees every day what terrible harm is done by the perpetual administration of Chininum sulph. for what is termed malaria in massive doses, and it is not to be wondered at if such bold declarations as Dr. Gorton makes are rebuked as absurd—as contradicted by facts open to everybody's observation. The truly homoeopathic remedy will, if administered according to Hahnemann's methods, irrespective of the purile babbling of a Conrad Vesselhoef or the still more offensive braying of Richard Hughes, cure every case of intermittent fever. Why do these numerous pretenders—so eager for recognition—not publish one single case, say, of intermittent fever, and their mind it—their homoeopathic treatment of it?—their failure to cure till they resorted to their boasted specific?—and—mind it—

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the cure thereby accomplished? The sick treated homoeopathically are really and truly cured—are much better in health after the cure than they were before they sickened. The sick who are not cured, but only recover apparently, come out of their sick-room broken down and never regain any of their former health. Dr. Gorton is one of the many whose aim in life seems to be to draw caricatures of Homeopathy, make it ridiculous, and move forward with a host of allopathic discontents, forming an unholy alliance of caricaturists, allopathists, and mongrels detesting the science of medicine in its true meaning to vile eclecticism—a phantom ship without rudder or compass, drifting toward final destruction without any guidance. The talk and the writings of these representative men of a caricature on medical science and art seem to aim at this same end, just as does the talk and writings of the communists aim at the destruction of all law and order. There they march on, declaring themselves a free people, governed by no law, like the French army that, under orders of the third Napoleon and under the influence of "spirit," marched out of their great city singing out, "A Berlin! only to be driven home again howling. So this lawless horde will be driven back in their silly attempt to conquer scientific progress. The various captains of this law-defying band all sing the same ridiculous songs. There is the microscopic band all who define his own individual opinion of Homeopathy before the Boylston Medical Society of Howard University and neglect to calculate that there are readers of his address who might be tempted to put the orator and his address under the most powerful microscope to detect in him or in it an atom of logic, common sense, or historical knowledge, and, finding none, look for contempt of logic and an atom of communism. There is, again, the mighty ex-cedior of the once loyal *British Journal of Homoeopathy*, who abandoned said journal, preferring to let it go down with his motto, "Similia Similibus Curantur," than to hoist "currentur" instead, which he perceived would not be acceptable to logical minds. There is, again, the same consistently persistent adversary to a healing art he cannot acquire or master, who, as a *reformer*, attempts to set aside and destroy our great *materia medica* and offers to a gaping multitude clumsily, carelessly, and inaccurately prepared day-books of proverbs of medicine—utterly useless trash, indeed—under the plea that he, as a reformer, will undertake to clean out the Angcan stable of Hahnemann's unreliable *Materia Medica*. Like the rest of them, this reformer deals in generalities. As homoeopathsians, we have for a long time accustomed ourselves to individualize.

If, now, these new reformers and scientific men would only condescend to individualize and let the world know in what particular case and under what particular circumstances they or any of them have carefully and skilfully treated said case according to the methods of Hahnemann and have failed, they will confer a great favor on the medical profession. So far they have all and every one of them failed to make such disclosures exempt from the general rules governing the testimony of a witness, viz.: that he must not testify if his testimony should by any possibility implicate him? and we much fear that this privilege to keep silent extends to the witnesses we have so often called for. We must take it for granted that their very deplorably limited knowledge of the healing art—Homœopathy—is a bar to their ability to testify. So be it, so long as we do not hear from these generalizers.

Furthermore, we must be allowed to express our full belief that this host of truly eclectic physicians have dropped Hahnemann's *Organon of the Healing Art* when they contemplated the first paragraph of this philosophical work, which reads: "*The first and sole duty of the physician is to restore health to the sick. This is the true art of healing.*" What was to become of them? What would become of the contemplated scientific research for the causes of diseases by the microscopic process of investigation?—what of the search for curative powers of medicines by the same process? What would become of the hypothetical speculations so innumerable and forever changing, like the fashion-plates of the day? And what would become of our beloved "regulars," who are so progressively reducing the duties of the physician?—who really are quite satisfied to classify the diseases, "There is malaria and there blood-poison, etc., etc.," each class of disorders to be treated under one rule, easy to learn? The caricaturists must be allowed to indulge in their frivolities; their days are numbered—while

TRUTH IS MIGHTY AND MUST PREVAIL!

THE I. H. A.—The next meeting of this Association will be held in June, at Saratoga. The meeting promises to be an exceptionally good one. Come, all who are interested in pure Homœopathy. A resolution passed at the last meeting requires applications for membership in the Association to be in the hands of the Chairman of the Board of Censors six months before the meeting at which they are to be considered. In accordance with this all applications must be filed by the 20th of January. This resolution was passed in order that none but genuine homœopaths should gain admittance, so that an unbroken front may be presented in the fight for pure Homœopathy, and the greatest good gained from intercourse with the members.

THE BASIS OF TREATMENT.

By THE LATE CARROLL DUNHAM, M. D., OF NEW YORK.

Hahnemann throughout his works takes every opportunity to urge the insufficiency of a pathological theory of the nature of a disease as the basis of the treatment. He everywhere urges that the only sure indication for every case is to be found in the totality of the symptoms which the case presents. One would think that nothing could be more clear and convincing than his arguments on this subject.

His opponents declared that his method ignored medical science, left no scope for pathology and diagnosis, and reduced therapeutics to a degrading mechanical comparison of symptoms. Very many homœopaths have so far deviated from Hahnemann's method as to endeavor to blend with the use of his doses and remedies an application of pathology as a basis of treatment. *This endeavor can never be successful, inasmuch as the function of pathology is to furnish, not an indication for medical treatment, but simply a means of elucidating and collating the symptoms. The result has been a sad falling off from the standard of success in practice which was established by Hahnemann and his pupils.* The points at issue are illustrated by the following case:

Willie M., four years old, was brought to me December 3d, 1863. He had been healthy since February, 1863, when he is reported to have had a long attack of gastric fever, from which he finally recovered with the affection about to be described. This was a dyspnea and wheezing, distinctly perceptible at all times when the child was awake, and which, on making any exertion, were very much aggravated and resulted in an attack of convulsive cough with difficult inhalation, the whole paroxysm resembling precisely what is described as Millar's asthma or *Laryngismus stridulus*. It was remarked that the child seemed to be free from dyspnea when sleeping soundly, but at no other time. On waking in the morning he had always a hard fit of coughing, during which he sometimes raised a little tenacious mucus. His appetite was good, though somewhat capricious. He was considerably emaciated; his spirits were good, and he often attempted to join in the sports of other children, but was obliged soon to desist, because of the dyspnea and cough which was every physical exertion caused and which greatly fatigued him. On percussion and auscultation the lungs were found resonant. The respiratory murmur was, of course, masked by the loud wheezing.