

blast most of the year, though all on the decline. They go by steam, water, caloric, magnetism, "infinitesimal," and divers other species of motive power. Here, too, was the Eden of "spiritual knocking"; and here once flourished an "Eclectic College," which, failing to obtain a charter, disappointed its students of their diplomas, and its professors of their profits; it then removed to Syracuse, N. Y., and from thence, I believe, to oblivion, its permanent location. We have also foreign and native quacks, of all denominations and both sexes. The medical profession, however, is not responsible for this state of things—they have no sympathy with quackery.

A society for the discussion of scientific and medical subjects, has been re-organized, and is attended with interest. A new *fee bill*, with advanced prices, has been adopted; resolutions have been discussed in reference to some decided measures against empiricism—also in relation to the more prompt collection of bills, medical etiquette, sending prescriptions to druggists, &c. A resolution was passed to abide by the rates of our fee bill, uniformly—all violations of the rule being considered unprofessional. The right, however, is reserved, to make deductions in settlement, when necessary—all such deductions being considered as gratuities.

A few of the items of the bill may be mentioned: viz., price of visits in the city, \$1; night visits, \$2 to \$3; consultations in city, \$3 to \$5; obstetric cases, ordinary, \$5 to \$10; venesection, \$1; office prescriptions, \$1 to \$3; surgical operations and other services in proportion. We consider these prices too low; but still, as high as our population will bear at present. Our prices have not advanced at all in proportion to the expenses of living. The main obstacle in the way of fair prices and prompt pay seems to be the legion of quacks, who, in most cases, underbid the profession. Among these are that genteel and respectable class the homœopaths, who practise in some *intensely* respectable families. Here, however, as elsewhere, this system is a mere nullity—as they constantly employ allopathic remedies in large doses. How long will the dear people close their eyes and ears, and run, with their mouths wide open, after quacks and nostrums?

Rochester, N. Y., March 6, 1854.

Yours respectfully,
M. M. RODGERS, M.D.

HOMŒOPATHIC INTERFERENCE WITH REGULAR PRACTITIONERS.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS. EDITORS,—So much has been written upon the claims of homœopathy, as a system adapted to the cure of diseases, the writer will not be surprised if you decline the publication of this communication, unread, when its title attracts your notice. If you will read it, perhaps you may print it, as you will perceive that the repose of either class of combatants in the original battles, as to its superior merits over all other systems, will not be disturbed by its suggestions. The ghost of Hahnemann shall not, at my call, "re-visit the glimpses of the moon," to tes-

tify against his own hypotheses, nor to warn his improving disciples of "the wrath to come," for their practical departures from his specific and immutable laws. I shall not summon the shade of Priessnitz to give reasons for his passing away to the spirit world, before the allotted time of man's earthly pilgrimage, while enjoying and dispensing the life-prolonging powers taught to be infallible by himself and proselytes, in the douche, the plunge, the pack, and sitz. Neither alone, or together, shall these illustrious departed be invoked to question the homœopathy of 1854, as to the propriety of the union of the unequal potencies, in the attacks to conquer a cure among the diseased faithful of the hydro- and homœo-pathic doctrines.

The fusion of principles in the popular mongrel practice would seem to be an admission that, singly, neither hydropathy nor homœopathy are to be relied on, as displacing systems, by the professors of either. A poetical extract from "Mother Goose," or some other collection of childish philosophical conclusions, the title of which is forgotten—an omission some juvenile reader may supply, respecting the wise "man in our town," whose eyes being "scratched out" by jumping into a bramble bush, were "scratched in again" by the same process—gives illustration to the theory and practice of homœopathy, and may have been suggestive of the experiment. The optic case, to my knowledge, has never been disputed by any faculty. This nursery classic has been quoted from before.

I have promised not to argue the general question of homœopathy. The proposed subject of attention at this time, is how its doctrines and the practices of the dispensers, of its "material aid," should be met by those who style themselves "regular physicians," and who in this State are fellows of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

That the tricks of dishonest medical practitioners, styled homœopaths, fellows or not of the Massachusetts Medical Society, regular graduates of regular medical schools or otherwise, should annoy the honest physician, when the pretender, with a flimsy rhetoric which decorates the specious promise of cure, takes away his patients, is natural enough. The stereotyped vocabulary, used as a means to deceive the unenlightened sufferer, is understood, and need not be repeated. The answer to the prognosis of the new light is the autopsy and the undertaker's bill, after a series of visits, and promises of "getting along," "improving," "very comfortable," "out soon," "not quite so well," "if I had been called sooner," "sure to cure," "doctor's medicine can't be got out," "never lose any if we have them first," "weaker," "failing," "dying," "dead." Funeral talk—"died even though we had Dr. Swashen Water and Dr. Simco Similo three times a-day." These are a part of the sayings, when doctors have disagreed. Every day's experience exhibits the success of some assinine cross between speculator and doctor, of the gulling school, in securing patients, because he is a homœopath, and not for any great share of personal acquirement, judgment or skill in the detection and treatment of disease.

Mesmerizers, Thomsonians, seventh sons, spirit rappers, natural bone-setters, humor killers, hair doctors, corn doctors, water doctors, worm kill-

ers, root and herb doctors, Indian doctors, fit stoppers, fortune tellers, old women sâlve makers and homœopaths, are sought for by a portion of the public, because they are these things, and vanquish disease in their own peculiar style; and therefore one practitioner of either class is considered about as good as another—a conclusion for the most part not far from correct.

Among what are termed regular practitioners, the public seek those who are men of tried skill, or who have a reputation for that quality, so desirable in any important practice.

It is usual to style regular practitioners allopaths. Without admitting the propriety of the appellation, as applied to all who are not of the list of those inventors detailed above, it may be used as designating the regular opponents of all systems of whimsies, absurdities and crotchets, although individuals among the regulars may have whimsies, absurdities and crotchets of their own, as they apply the principles of what is termed regularly-taught medicine in their own practice.

The public think—that part of it who think at all on the subject—and say, sagely, one party or the other is grievously wrong in this medicine business; and those other parts of the many-headed public who think, as they hear others say they think, repeat the opinion, and thus, snowball fashion, as the ball rolls it aggregates, and a large amount of evidence is accumulated, which if placed in range of common sense attack, would vanish as would the snow fabric exposed to a south wind or drenching rain. Here are two parties; how shall the public judge, if they desire to use judgment in the matter.

Now on what is called the philosophy, theory and practice of Hahnemann's fasciculi of notions and observations, doctors have disagreed in magazines, reviews, lectures, dissertations and talks among themselves, and the parties to these various modes of discussion have wasted much ink, paper, time, words and temper, and are each pretty much where they started from.

The public, mystified with learned phrases, and professional technicalities, have been bewildered. Sick men, women and children have been "made comfortable," "helped," "cured," and have died in many localities and under divers influences. Obscure and semi-obtuse disciples of Galen have changed front, deserted the ranks of the old Gallipot, Phial and Pill-box Company, as practitioners, while they retain and value their social association and membership in State Medical Societies, and with the aid of Hahnemann's thunder, as represented by the pellet, the powder and the drops, allied to the Priessnitz formulæ of water cure, have made themselves rich and famous in common with others originally doctinated with the Hahnemannisms. While we of the old estate, loyal to our belief, grumble, look on, and cry out quackery, charlatanism, humbug, down with the heresy and the cheat, which thrives the while, and will in spite of all means hitherto attempted to restrain it.

At the next annual meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Society a committee will report in relation to the subject of homœopathic practitioners retaining membership in that Society. In time, the report will

be public ; till then, no assumption is to be made of its recommendations. In the meantime, if Fellows of the Society would define their position and let the public be informed of the questions at issue, a separation, if it is to be accomplished, will have a telling force.

To fight homœopathy successfully, if any battle is to be fought, a proposition at this time not to be considered, in the usual form of conflict either with pens or batteries, it must be decided to fight, to conquer something—and not to use the weapons which effect no purpose or wound.

There are differences of opinion among regular practitioners as to the tactics and manœuvering which are best calculated to “carry the war into the enemy’s country,” their patron’s houses, as the enemy has done into the castles of the regulars. This may appear to be no easy task to some ; to others, daily duties afford daily demonstrations of the ways by which all irregular practitioners may be in some degree checked and exposed.

It is proposed, if I am correctly informed, to class homœopaths with irregular practitioners ; to deny to them the privileges of the Massachusetts Medical Society and to refuse consultation with them, and never to give them aid in the cases confessedly beyond the power of either their theory or practice. Scrupulously carried out by all the members of the medical profession, the public being made to understand the matter, this action would do something with a class who think, and are suffering from real disease. But humanity forbids. To leave a sufferer, who may be benefited by real treatment, to his agony, because, unconsciously perhaps, he has been deceived by ignorant, designing or chimerical adventurers in the healing art, is not characteristic of the true physician or surgeon : and even if too late to relieve, the trial must be made. There are other lesser though not less effective ways of reaching the vital points of the new doctrine, which are reserved for discussion at some future time.

The paying part of all “outside practice” is the treatment of the chronic, the incurable, and the imaginary diseases. When the regular has given up the case, all promissors of cures, in succession, are employed ; and against the prophecy of the regulars, sometimes a cure occurs. Intelligent physicians know, and their knowledge is sustained by homœopathic experiment, what class of cases suits exactly this expectancy of cure, which time and certain conditions warrant without the use of drugs. But this knowledge is the consequence of scientific observation, which few of the laity possess. Physicians may argue against cures by homœopathic or any other medical treatment, as much as they will ; the public judge of facts, or what they suppose to be facts.

Sick people will lose confidence in a medical attendant—it may be from caprice—and a change of practitioners, after trial, involves only the question of personal confidence, not the reputation of doctrines presumed to be sound. But when a system is abandoned, it suggests the belief of failure in its principles, rather than the vaunts of imaginary powers in the novelty offered in its stead. It is notorious that the services of the best physicians are dispensed with in many families, and in their stead, hydro- homœo- and other paths are employed. It is the system, not the practitioner, that is “tabooed,” to use a common though perhaps not appropriate term.

Now if the "sick" public and their "well" friends will decide which form of treatment they will undergo or recommend, why should not the regular physician, in whom personally "they have great confidence," prescribe according to their wishes, from the *Organon* of Hahnemann, the *Manuel* of Jahr, or "Guenther's Doses for Domestic Animals" if they prefer that to any of the others?

That some physicians act upon this principle, is well known amongst us; and it is no rare event of medical practice in some "rides" to have one member of a family under treatment by what is termed an allopathic physician, while one or more are "put through" on the homœopathic system by the same party. The patient submitting to each may say, with the great Cato—

"My bane and antidote are both before me."

Two questions are proposed to persons who may be disposed to answer them. What rule of medical ethics is violated if the physician, Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society, dispenses homœopathic medicines to his patient when he desires it, and when from any cause in his own judgment that kind of medication will be just as beneficial as any other? Second, what would be the proper action of the Massachusetts Medical Society, should they deny fellowship to homœopaths, when a Fellow, practising as a regular physician according to his judgment, departs from established formulæ, and gives "nux," "ipecac." or "calomel" after Hahnemann's directions, in all their potency, danger and curative peculiarities?

I do not know if these questions will be answered. Homœopathic practitioners will not probably notice them. Anecdote and personal reminiscence are of no weight in deciding a question of principle, and the "tricks of trade" resorted to by some practitioners of homœopathy should not be pressed upon its theories or the practice of its honest disciples.

Some of the laity are yet of the opinion of the majority of educated physicians throughout the world. To these reasoners the Hahnemania is so monstrous a mouse in its absurdity, that they are prepared to believe it will require monstrous effects and supernatural evidences of superiority, with a soil of mental recipiency in which credulity is a principal element, ere it will displace legitimate medicine and thrive long in any land where a square is known from a circle, or incandescent iron from a block of ice.

Yet this *ism* has, in consequence of its foreign prestige and associations, made greater inroads upon some branches of medical practice, than any other of the exploded theories buried in the grave of the past; and to which sepulchre of things forgotten, this pathy will in good time be committed. This is the first attempt on a grand scale of educated charlatanism. Real doctors sustain its doctrines and practise upon their teachings; and wealthy addle brains and their humble followers patronize the experiment and pay the bills. Physicians of eminence, with some exceptions, while opposing the doctrines of Hahnemann have by their actions aided in the obtusion and acceptance of homœopathy among what is termed the better classes of society. Medical science has not

suffered, but individuals have, by the advent of the German legion among us.

In the keeping of the coming men of the profession are the truths of medicine. To them is confided the duty of preserving the honor of the followers of an honorable art. These men are forming their plans for a future; to them this communication is directed. Elder soldiers, or, perhaps, better, may read; their plans are formed, their reputations made, their practice is remunerative, their action conservative. They will not change their opinions in tactics in accordance with the changes constantly at work in a progressive age. Some of these Nestors will write ponderous articles in American or foreign reviews, which will be read with great pleasure by kindred spirits, and talked of by obsequious satellites. These will be alluded to in journals devoted to medical science, of lesser calibre and dimensions, and pointed at as specimens of scientific artillery, which is to demolish and destroy the arch enemy (in the regular camp), who will never feel the weight of the battery pointed at his walls, but will gain confidence by the apparent size of the guns it is thought necessary to open upon him.

It will be perceived that the writer is not of the school of Hahnemann or Priessnitz; yet he holds to the doctrine that any person has the right to practise medicine after any method he pleases, and that any person has the right to employ whomsoever he pleases to drug him to the death or to cure him with no drug at all.

If homœopathy seeks to supplant rational medicine, its opponents should give it a fair field before the public, opposing it in act as well as name—and endeavor so to draw the line of actual practice that the public who are to offer the victims to the experiment shall understand the chances on either side, and so act that fair dealing, as the world weighs such matters, may be distinguished from false pretences.

March, 1854.

Yours respectfully,

H. COCLES.

DR. DEANE ON FRACTURES OF THE FEMUR.

[Concluded from page 115.]

THE indications of treatment in simple fractures of the femur consist merely in preventing motion at the seat of injury, in restraining muscular action, and in preserving the axis of the bone. To fulfil these indications successfully and without pain, is to attain high perfection in mechanical surgery. Still it is possible; not, however, by the inclined plane, for it does not maintain the axis of the bone, nor prevent motion at the seat of fracture; nor yet by antagonistic forces, for contractions, excoriations, displacements, local suffering and constitutional re-action are the certain concomitants. But it is to be accomplished by surrounding the leg with a firm, elastic covering, and then fixing it immovably to the body; to make the leg and body, so to speak, one immovable member.

The first consideration in this treatment, and not the least important, is the bed whereon the subject is to complete the period of cure. It should, if possible, consist of a good mattress, or some substitute that