THE MEDICAL WAR: THE CHOLERA.

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We extract from an article published under this head in the *New York Times*, May 11th, 1866, and preface a few remarks.

"The party most interested in this medical war," says the *Times*, "are the public,"—but such is not the conviction of the Allopaths. Their cry is "our craft is in danger," and consistently with their general demeanor towards the public, they demand the sole and entire control of all the city hospitals. Are they to judge for every person who shall be compelled to seek medical treatment in public institutions when stricken down by the "*Epidemic*," what his treatment must be? Have the public no right to judge for themselves, collectively or individually? And who has conferred that right upon the Allopaths. Have the public tacitly to submit to such arbitrary measures as those now proposed? Or have not the people long ago granted to the Homœopaths the same rights and privileges formerly enjoyed by the Allopaths alone? The very insolence with which these Allopaths have treated Hahnemann and his followers, has induced the people to rebuke them severely. If a man falls sick, is he supposed to have no opinion of his own? Had he no right to investigate as well as he could the comparative merits of the two Schools,—especially when he finds statistics clearly showing the superiority of the new over the old School; when he even finds that the insurance companies will insure the life of a person at a smaller premium, if he declares that he will always be treated homœopathically when sick; and that the premium increases with the increasing risk of Allopathic treatment? Had the searching inquiries of the life insurance

companies shown a reverse result, *then* the Allopaths might be excused if they should endeavor to guard the public welfare and exclude a less successful practice; but as it is, public opinion guided by incontrovertible facts is decidedly opposed to this proud old "*craft*, which declines to expose itself further because it fears *competition*." Were they not themselves fully convinced of the great danger, nay of the certain inevitable ruin to which their craft would become exposed by a fair, honest competition, they would not allow so glorious an opportunity to slip by; they would willingly allow their despised opponents to "hang themselves," by utterly failing to accomplish as much in the treatment of the epidemic as they do themselves.

And to make matters worse for themselves, they with their chosen leaders boldly stand up before the people, uttering the most deplorable historical falsehoods, and demand in return the confidence, the sole control of the people in medical matters.

The celebrated Dr. Parker of New York, and his friends. (vide *Times*) claims, "that to them by right, (what right?) belong not only the chief places, but all the places." What rights have Dr. Parker and his friends but such as they derive from the people? Or has the learned Dr. forgotten that he too is one of the people only; that we do not indulge in preferred classes in this great Republic of ours, and that all the rights he has, he enjoys under his "license to practice medicine?" Under the same license, paying the same tax to the Government, practice all other qualified physicians; the people through their executive officers judging of their qualifications. Both Schools enjoy "equal rights" up to this day at least; whether the Allopaths will comply with progress in the healing art and regulate their respective positions in the community or not, will in a short time be seen. Further "they claim that a much less percentage of death occurs under their practice; where are their figures? There are a great many statistical reports published on the subject of the comparative mortality of Cholera under the two respective treatments, and in no in-

stance have the Allopaths been able to controvert the ugly figures we have shown to the people. And among all the reports made on the subject, there is one published so entirely beyond the power of contradiction, so fully made out, nay endorsed by the Allopathic Medical Hospital Inspectors themselves, that it must take us by surprise how Dr. Parker in the face of such facts can allow such a statement as he makes to go before the public. And we can only seek an excuse in mitigation of his conduct, by supposing that his violent prejudices have not allowed him to pay any attention whatever to the facts as they are on record—and we will therefore reiterate them again for his benefit as well as that of his friends and the public in general.

The facts are these. A committee was appointed by the English Parliament to report on the comparative result of the various modes of treating the Cholera in London during its prevalence in 1854. Lord Grosvenor from his place in the house of Commons, called for the report of the Homœopathic practitioners and hospitals, these reports having been withheld by the committee appointed.

In reply to this call from Captain Grosvenor, the Medical Council returned the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That by introducing the returns of the Homœopathic practitioners they would not only compromise the value and utility of the averages of cure, as deduced from the operation of known remedies, but they would give an unjustifiable sanction to an empirical practice, alike opposed to the progress of Science and the maintenance of truth." The reports so unjustifiably withheld were published in a second Parliamentary paper. By these reports, which the allopathic officials had shown themselves so unwilling to have made known to the people, it was shown that the mortality under allopathic treatment of Cholera was 36 per cent.; and that at the same time the mortality under Homœopathic treatment of Cholera was but 16 per cent. And let it be borne in mind that these reports could not be denied, since they had all been verified by the Allopathic Medical Inspectors. Is it to be supposed

that the allopathic officials would have opposed the publication of these reports had they favored Allopathy instead of Homœopathy? Would they not have paraded them everywhere in triumph?

Thus it happened that the Medical Council, with the President of the College of Physicians at their head, could no longer hide their ignorance of Homœopathic treatment; and could no longer pretend ignorance of its greater comparative success. Nor could they any longer withhold from the people the statistics which would enable the people themselves to institute a comparison between the two modes of Medical treatment. Nor could they any longer escape the charge of having, in the interest of Allopathy, betrayed the trust reposed in them by the people. No longer could they deny having attempted to sacrifice the interests of the people at large, to promote the aggrandizement and maintain the dominant and domineering position of their aristocratical Medical Class. They could escape none of these consequences of the unexpected failure of their nefarious attempt to withhold most important public information from the public.

Such is a statement of recorded historical facts; and still the opposition is unmindful of the advantages their perversion of facts gives us—how the confidence of the people, so shamefully abused by these self-constituted and most interested parties, must utterly and forever be withheld from them; they do not seem to see the utter helplessness of their condition if the confidence of the people in them has been lost, never to return.

The Homœopaths on the other side ask but for "equal rights," they are anxious to have the respective merits of the opposing systems made known, and they are all the readier to abide by the result as they know full well what results have been accomplished in former epidemics. But they must decline to leave the appointment in the hands of the supervisor, an allopathist. Would it not be best for the community to trust to the good sense of the numerous homœopathic practitioners themselves, to furnish such physicians as the

themselves thought to be most competent to represent them? Would not their own interest lead them to seek to be well represented, and men who would not seek to appear as applicants for a doubtful favor at the hands of an allopathic physician who happens to be supervisor at the time, might be induced to accept positions and give their time and experience to the community for the sake of a cause they advocate.

And we as Homœopathists may leave the case with the people, they will see to it that we have our rights sooner or later, but we will have them at their hands surely. We may also congratulate ourselves that we have to do with a divided party. Those who enjoy the offices at present, say that "Cholera" is on Staten Island, but those out of office and representing another wing of the self-termed "Regulars," have been down the Bay to see the elephant and say (vide report of the Baltimore Convention of the Regulars) that there is no cholera anywhere at all. The description given by the very learned doctors in office of what they are pleased to term "Cholera" has not the characteristic symptoms of the "Asiatic;" and when we take into consideration the breaking out of the disease on over-crowded vessels some seven days at sea, with a clean bill, and the absurdity of charging some Saxons from Werda with having brought it from home; from a town in which there had at no time lived three human beings who ever thought of emigrating to the land of liberty beyond the great water; who, if they had bethought themselves of it, would not have found the means, and if they had found them, would have been prevented by the authorities who would have kept them "at home;"—there being no emigrants in and from that place, so was there no cholera there at any time since Adam. If then the disease was not carried to the ships, it could not have been the Asiatic cholera, that raged before the mast; what then was it? Was it bad impure air alone, or was it not very likely the food? And when it is further known that thousands of horned cattle were killed in Old England, and the noble owners were ordered by Act of Parliament to kill them, if they rested

under suspicion of liability to the rinderpest, and were by that act to be buried ten feet under ground,—which was an additional expense to the noble or patrician owner of the suspected animals,—is it quite impossible to suppose that a large number of said cattle might not have gone to be packed, pickled and sold abroad? And might not this cheap meat have been purchased for the emigrants? And if we further know the similarity of the so-called cholera as reported by the learned physicians with the symptoms resulting from the use of unwholesome meat, and the further similarity of the remedy indicated for both the pretended cholera and rinderpest (Arsenicum) we might be permitted to draw some logical conclusions from these propositions. And if these learned sons of the Regulars had tried the experiment, as they are in the habit of doing on cats and dogs, and had given such unfortunate canines and felines some of the meat found on board of these vessels, said animals would surely have deposited their testimony in such a manner as to make it appear to the dullest understanding, even of a "regular in office," that the meat was causing serious disturbances in their alimentary canals, stomachs, etc. And it becoming perceptible to their senses that the food was bad, the case might have been handed to a "detective," who in less than a fortnight would have brought the whole matter to the notice of the public, owners of the cattle, merchants, brokers and all. But what would have become of the panic? and the controversy over a mite? and the assertions of superior success by Dr. Parker & Co., and the statement of facts by the friends of the people, the Homœopathists? All that would not have been, and the *Times* would not have had that column and a half about the "war medical" and the "tricks medical," and the "danger of the craft;" the question would not have agitated the public mind, the Allopaths would have had it all their own way as before, losing ground very gradually but surely; and what will be the result of all this agitation, caused by some ill-advised Regulars in office? *Inquiry!* And that is exactly what we covet, what our opponents fear;

what we demand, what they prohibit. Let the people inquire, let them be guided by results, by facts, let them follow the example set by the life insurance companies and by persons who have had homœopathic traeatment for long years, and seen the comparative results of both varieties; and above all let them try it themselves. And let the Allopathic School consistently follow the beaten path of stubbornly closing their eyes to facts, and resist all innovations on their pretended rights to dictate to nature and to the people;—that is all we ask from them. The people will decide the question before long, and we are willing to abide by their decision.

The Allopaths vs. *The Homœopaths—Claims of each—Decision of the New York Board of Health.*

A great deal of natural but unnecessary ill-feeling is apparent between the medical practitioners of the day, in this and the adjacent cities. The treatment of cholera is the field on which the rival schools have marshaled their factions, and propose to fight a bitter fight, let the consequences be what they may.

In the first place it may as well be clearly understood that at present we have no cholera among us; and that there is no apparent cause for all the excitement on the subject, beyond the very stringent rules made by the authorities and the incessant clamor raised by certain newspapers, which act upon the mind of the community as a lighted match does upon prepared tinder. The general health of the City, as shown by statistics and official figures, is admirable—the condition of the streets was never so excellent—their cleanliness is marked and their freedom as a general thing from filth and garbage and offensive matter is greater than has been known for many years, and all parties who are uninterested agree that so far as an epidemic is concerned there need be no fear of it, if the contractors continue to do their work as it is now done, and if the people give heed to the hygienic rules suggested by experience and common sense.

The Actual Condition.—Despite all this, certain parties have succeeded in creating a very decided alarm in the public mind, and the weaker vessels of the community are filled with anxiety and care, dreading the approach of the terrible monster, buying all manner of bottled preparations, arming themselves with a thousand and one "directions," scaring their children and unfitting themselves for life and its duties. The hotels already feel it; the out-of-town public believe that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire. They read in the daily press glowing accounts of the fearful death of a patient and below them a long series of directions from people who may know all about it and may not. Instantly they apprehend the danger of a trip to New-York; their visit is given up, the Spring purchases are made elsewhere, and the Metropolis is shunned like Golgotha. The absurdity of all this is apparent to us who live here and know the falsity of the reports, but the fact of its effect is none the less true.

The Allopaths.—The school of practice known as Allopathic, has, by many years of practice attained a recognized hold upon this and all com-

munities, which entitles its disciples and learned men to distinguished consideration. Indeed, down to a comparatively recent period of the history of the civilized world, the word "doctor" meant and was understood to mean one who practiced according to its rules and theories. Long habit has also done much toward granting its practitioners certain priorities and privileges, which they now haughtily and defiantly claim as rights, declining to recognize any man or set of men as brethren or doctors who do not agree with them. In the Board of Health, for instance, we find a distinguished member of the school refusing to admit or have aught to do with the believers in HAHNEMANN, stigmatizing them as believers in a system that amounts to nothing, and doubting whether any of the profession were men of reliability in practice. Dr. PARKER is a man of ability and culture, and his word or opinion goes far with many people, except in a case where prejudice leads him beyond the bounds of ordinary discussion. The allopaths, led by Dr. PARKER, claim that to them, by right, belong not only the chief places, but all the places. They claim that a much less percentage of death occurs under their practice: that long experience in the treatment of the disease at the East and elsewhere entitles them to the public confidence; that the medicines of the homœopaths are powerless and utterly invalid, and, *per contra*, that the medicines of the homœopaths are poisons and agents unfit for use; that, inasmuch as they know, they are abundantly able to manage the cholera, if it comes, and there can be no good reason for granting hospitals to other practitioners who think they can manage it. That these claims should arouse indignation among the followers of HAHNEMANN was to be expected. All through the City the matter is and has been discussed, the wordy warfare, like all such battles over religion, politics or medicine, being as near settlement now as when it began.

THE HOMŒOPATHS.—The Homœopaths labor well under many and manifest disadvantages. In the first place they contend against prejudice and long standing institutions and customs, and in the second place they have been hitherto without official indorsement to aid them. In behalf of some 300 regular practitioners in the district, a committee, headed by the venerable and erudite Dr. BOWERS, presented a memorial to the Board of Health, asking for one hospital and one district, in each County of the Metropolitan District, wherein they could be judged by their fruits. In support of their position they claim that in all hospitals where they had a fair chance they have come out with advantage; that the experience of the citizens of New-Orleans in 1853 led them to rely most upon the Homœopathic treatment; that the mortality in hospitals on Manhattan Island, where their treatment is adopted, is but one-sixth as great as that under the Allopaths; that the official City records of the cholera of 1849 show a loss under allopathic treatment of 53 per cent., under homœopathic less than 8 per cent.; that in Smyrna last year the allopaths lost 66 per cent., the homœopaths 8 per cent.; that the ordinary mortality of patients under homœopathic treatment is one-sixth as great as that under allopathic treatment; that in 1836 the Austrian *protomedicus* reported to the government that, in the Vienna Homœopathic Hospital *two-thirds* of the cholera patients *recovered*, while in the Allopathic Hospitals *two-thirds* of them *died;* and that on this report was based the decree of the Emperor, still in force, legalizing the practice of homœopathy in Austria; that in view of all these provable facts they are entitled to an opportunity by which they can show of what stuff they are made, and an opportunity which the officials of the Board will not be able to mar by unfair opposition. In connection with this the principal homœopathists of Kings County, Dr. A. COOKE HULL, Dr. WRIGHT, Dr. RICHARDSON, Dr. WELLS, Dr. TALMAGE, and others, recently held a meeting indorsing the

action of their New-York brethren, and appointing a Committee of Conference for joint action in the matter.

The Board of Health.—Long ere this the Board of Health has discovered that the medical part of their labor is a very huge, unwieldy and awkward elephant. As he is on their hands, however, he must be taken care of, and to the best of their ability, they have attempted thus far to do so. Having listened patiently to the claims of the allopaths and the homœopaths, they decided that they thought favorably of the request made to the Board by the homœopathic physicans, and recommended that "Dr. Smith (allopathic) make selections of such persons as shall offer their services, and that one-half of the hospital at the Five Points and at the Barracks be assigned them," under the supervision of the Superintendent, who is an allopath.

The ill-feeling that this decision created was tremendous. Governor Fenton, President Schultz and President Acton are homœopaths, and the allopaths, in their rage, growled and grumbled at the outrageous violation of precedent and custom. The homœopaths were just as much excited, and waxed indignant at the idea of placing them under the superintendence of an allopath, who by sending them all the moribund cases and otherwise treating them unfairly, could not only damage them, but seriously compromise them.

In self-defence the Board of Health then issued a bulletin for the instruction of the people in the prevention and cure of cholera, which was printed in the Times, and contains some very good advice.

"Cholera—Homœopathic Physicians to be Employed.—Reports were received from Drs. Harris and Herzog, containing many useful suggestions as to the peculiarities of the cholera, having a bearing on the quarantine of vessels and passengers, which your committee reserve for future consideration; or if the Quarantine Commissioners and Commissioners of Emigration should appoint a Committee of Conference to meet with the committee appointed at the last regular meeting of this Board, that these letters be referred to this joint committee for consideration.

Your committee think favorably of the request made to the Board by the homœopathic physicians to be assigned to hospitals, and would recommend that Dr. Smith make selections of such practitioners as shall offer their services, and that one-half of the hospitals at the Five Points and of the hospital at the Battery be put under the medical care of those physicians.

The report was adopted.

The mortuary report from the Bureau of Vital Statistics was then read, from which it appears that the number of deaths for the week was four hundred and fifty-two."—*Board of Health, N. Y., May 2.*