

our method of practice, the fact admits of no doubt, that infinitely minute quantities of a body produce important effects, while at the same time large masses of the same are quite inoperative, and therefore it is not necessary on the theoretical ground to insist upon abstinence from all stimulants and condiments as the indispensable initiative to a successful course of homeopathic treatment. I am aware that these views will be considered by many as somewhat heretical, and perhaps as too speculative, but although I would now rest them upon the reason of the thing, they were forced upon me slowly by my own observations in practice. It is now some twelve years ago since I had a curious illustration of the possibility of a minute dose succeeding, even although the system was at the time being stormed at by massive ones. A patient of mine who had long been subject to megrim, was always cured by a few globules of Pulsatilla. She was also subject to ague, imported from India, which I could not cure. So she was put under the old system, and ordered full doses of the Sulphate of Quinine. While taking this, she had an attack of her old headache, and took a few globules of Pulsatilla, but expecting nothing from it; for I had told her, so long as she was taking her Quinine it was impossible homeopathy could do her any good. Homeopathy, however, showed itself more liberal than its practitioner, and after a single dose of Pulsatilla she got better. This case made a deep impression on my mind, and I often thought from that period that perhaps our diet code was too rigorous. Then during a long course of observation, extending over some eighteen thousand cases treated at the Edinburgh dispensary, I found that it was, on the whole, impossible to interdict successfully the use of tea and spirits, and that notwithstanding these infractions, and a thousand other disadvantages, the proper medicine produced its expected result with so much exactitude as to reduce to an insignificant point the deranging influence of these condemned enjoyments. And quite lately I had un-

der my care a gentleman who took a wineglassful of Laudanum daily, and yet was as speedily relieved by the proper medicine when attacked by pain and spasms of the heart, from which he suffered in consequence of organic cardiac disease, as if he had been an absolute teetotaler.

These facts, and many more such could be adduced, ought at least to make us pause before we lay down any imperative rule against the use of coffee, tea, tobacco, and other exciteable articles, as being necessarily destructive to the efficacy of homeopathic medicines. For my own part I seldom now make any change in a patient's diet out of respect to homeopathy. And with these observations we may pass on to the more general part of our subject, and consider the principles by which we are likely to be assisted in advising our patients in reference to the most difficult affair of regulating their food and drink so as best to lead a long, healthy, and happy life.

The difficulty that meets us at the very threshold of our investigation, and which we cannot get rid of throughout its whole course, and which seems to be strangely overlooked by most professed writers on the subject of the food of man, is, that man occupies an exceptional position in the animal kingdom, although in it, he is not of it. The fundamental instinct of animals is the preservation of their life, and the escape from death. The idea of manliness is contempt of death. The preservation of life is frequently a secondary feeling in man. The reason is, that upon the animal life of man is erected a life of sentiment, emotion, and imagination, which always modifies his animal instincts, and sometimes entirely supercedes them. Hence come the long fasts and vigils of the saints of old, and of the modern Fakirs in the east. Fasts implying a continuance of abstinence from all food, which modern physiologists, deriving their knowledge from the effects of starving dogs and birds, and from the enforced abstinence of shipwrecked mariners and buried miners, in-