

ART. —*Infinitesimal Doses ; a notice of Homœopathy, and its Doctrines, by D. MACCALLUM, M.D., M.R.C.S. Eng.*

(Continued.)

2nd, *Because the theory advanced, in support of their mode of action is clearly false and untenable.*

Who, that has ever bestowed a serious thought on the subject, has not been deeply impressed with the fearful responsibilities which rest on him who adopts medicine as a profession, and makes its practice his daily pursuit and calling.

His fellow men, confidently trusting in his professional knowledge, his discretion, judgment and skill, unhesitatingly place that which they value beyond all price—their own health, and the health of those whom they love, under his care and surveillance. Such a one, if he duly appreciates the important position he occupies, as an allowed dispenser of health and happiness to those around him, will never allow himself to adopt novelties of practice, which usually experience an ephemeral existence, without rigidly examining all the claims which their advocates put forth as entitling them to the consideration of the medical profession. The mere *ipse dixit* of an interested party, as to the success of the new practice,—the hackneyed and sickening cry of “the uncertainty of medicine” will produce no effect on him. He cannot conscientiously adopt any new plan of treatment, unless it commends itself, alike in theory and practice, to his mind. Were he to do otherwise, and embrace every wild and extravagant system, which puts forth claims to consideration and adoption on the score of the certainty of cure to be effected in every diseased condition of the body, through its application ; there is no medical heresy extant, from that of Hahnemann and Priestnitz, down to Morrison and Holloway, but which he would feel bound to adopt.

Hahnemannism, in common with other

systems of quackery, while dealing largely in theory, declaims against any objection being made to it on account of the incomprehensibility or fallacy of its theories. We contend, however, that where medicines are employed in quantities so widely differing from those employed in ordinary practice, some satisfactory, or, to say the least, plausible explanation of their action should be given, to at all authorise a physician to depart from a safe and long-tried practice, and submit his patients to a series of experiments with novel, and, what must appear to him, supremely ridiculous quantities of remedial substances.

The “Sage of Coethen,” in the twenty-second aphorism of his “Organon” distinctly lays down his theory of the action of Homœopathic remedies. The italics are ours. “The curative powers of medicines are therefore grounded upon the faculty which they possess of creating symptoms similar to those of the disease itself, *but which are of a more intense nature.* It necessarily follows that disease cannot be destroyed or cured in a certain, radical, prompt, and permanent manner, but by the aid of a medicine, which is capable of exciting the entire group of symptoms which bear the closest resemblance to those of the disease, *but which possess a still greater degree of energy.*”

He regards disease as an immaterial essence, a “dynamic power”—or force, which, interfering with, and disturbing the vital powers, gives rise to various symptoms. This force, be it remembered, then, is capable of interrupting the healthy processes, and inducing all those aberrations from a normal state in the various organs and parts of the body, which, under the name of signs and symptoms authorise us in pronouncing that disease exists. “Medicines possess a *spiritual virtue*”—a force, “by which they can modify the state of the human body and even cure disease.”—(aph. xv.) Here, then, we