

stimulants of an alcoholic character are admissible in any case.

At one time mercury was the great specific, and was pushed to such an extent that men felt the remedy to be worse than the disease: and from the ignorance which led to its abuse there came a rebound, and by some (wisely or otherwise) it is repudiated and cast on one side as a vicious poison. A great change has come over the profession as regards cholera. It is not many years since its contagious or communicable character was generally denied. Now it is as generally admitted. Thus it is. Theories rise and fall; and medicines, which belonged to observed facts we might suppose to be better grounded, pass through the same phase; to-day used, and commended as efficacious, to-morrow neglected or condemned.

No doubt a few active or powerful minds lead to such results. By their force they set the new system in motion, and the mass follow; and the followers of a sect are always more inclined than the founders to push systematic opinions to the most absurd extreme; "and if we are to believe the recorded results of therapeutic research, conducted under complicated conditions, we shall be obliged to admit that the same diseases have equally well been cured by the interposition of the gods—by witchery and priestcraft—by the most sanguinary and anthropogistic and by the most mild and expectant treatment; by remedies founded on the rational pathology of the disease; by the administration of infinitesimal parts of nothing; by peppermint water and bread pills. Each and all of those diverse plans of treatment have had their advocates, who bring forward in their favor accumulated masses of evidence."

There can be no effect without a cause. But the difficulty is to determine, amid the complicated actions of the human body, what is the cause. And yet there must be some one or other which shall be efficient in the varying systems of treatment. For if similar results are attained, are we not compelled to admit that nature asserts her supremacy, and, in spite of the errors perpetrated, rises superior to the depressing agencies arrayed against her? Men become the subject of disease, and under every system throw off the morbid state and resume a healthy condition. Many a nostrum has been used and proved apparently successful in

the hands of the regular practitioner, and frequently the thorough empiric can parade the cures which have attended his panacea. And both the regular and the empiric have succeeded, not because their remedies were beneficial in themselves (in many cases they may have been injurious) but independently of the means used. We have therefore, to look for a reason why this should be. Why judicious means shall fail in the hands of one man, and why inert, or it may be injudicious medication, shall be attended with favourable results in the hands of another. It is a common experience to witness the eventual failure of the theories, or of the medicines which have been initiated by strong and ardent minds because they are unphilosophically based, yet the success which has attended theories demonstrates the necessity of looking for some principle beyond mere physical agencies, some underlying cause for the success which follows the same or varying treatment. It may be urged that the "vis medicatrix" explains the difficulty; but that power has been present in the same case in which the philosophical attendant has failed, and the inert globule has afterward succeeded. We are there compelled in *certain cases* to look further for the efficient cause; one which aids the ignorant empiric as much as it does the regular practitioner—one which stimulates the force of the system to renewed activity and to a healthy termination, one which is more than a natural tendency to a sound state—one which exercises a curative power when called into play, and residing in the mind and proceeding from it aids the physician, who enlists in his favor a strong anticipation more potent in certain temperaments than well adapted drugs. This is no new idea. It is one we all recognize, yet one we continually overlook. We are so engaged in the contest with disease—so bent upon effecting results by the power of medicine—that we are practical sceptics of the enormous force which the mind exercises not only over the functions of the organs, but over the structure of the organs and tissues themselves.

Brown Sequard, who has devoted much attention to the nervous system, has thus expressed himself, "Power of the mind over the body is much greater than most of you imagine; indeed, I do not think that any one among you, (he was addressing a public audience) however