

Homœopathic Record

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF HOMŒOPATHY AND OF THE MONTREAL
HOMŒOPATHIC HOSPITAL.

VOL. I. No. 10.

MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1896.

25cts. A YEAR.

Homœopathic Record

— PUBLISHED MONTHLY —

By the Woman's Auxiliary of the Montreal
Homœopathic Hospital.

Telephone 3837.

Ambulance 3020.

All matters of business and subscriptions to be sent to C. S. De Witt, care of Montreal Homœopathic Hospital, 44 McGill College Avenue.

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THE POSITION OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.

Two thousand years ago the old Greeks said, "The physician is fortunate, for the sun exploits his success and the earth conceals his errors." Hippocrates observed that, "Art is long and life is short;" and Petrarch added, "The doctors say that life is short; but they appear able to abridge it." The surest sign, according to Plato, of a bad police and a badly regulated social system was to find among them many lawyers and many doctors, and in later years this same sentiment appears in our classics. Later Mr. Addison comes in with this little verse :

"The single doctor like a sculler plies,
The patient lingers and by inches dies;
But two physicians, like a pair of oars,
Waft him with swiftness to the Stygian shores."

We have even had enemies in our own number. "The best medicine," said Celsus, "is not to use any medicine." Dr. Hoffmann, a most learned physician of the eighteenth century, told us, "Avoid doctors and drugs if you wish to be well;" only half a century ago a well known English physician prophesied very badly, saying, "I think it

more than possible that in fifty or a hundred years the business of a physician will not be regarded as either a learned or a liberal profession." The best way to treat those who laugh at us in this fashion is to laugh with them. You may feel sure that they are wrong and that they themselves know that the art which they deery is the one to which they all promptly resort with the utmost precipitation on the approach of a single twinge of pain. The man who holds in most derision the doctors, is he who dies surrounded by the largest number of them and impatient that he cannot have more.

The medical sciences we know are now for the most part exact sciences, and are becoming more exact and worthy of a high place in the rank of human knowledge every year. The art of medicine is the practical application of this scientific knowledge. Like every other art, it is imperfect. Artists are not all good painters, poets do not all write good poetry, even engineers do not always build safe bridges or construct railroads on which no accidents occur. The application practically of any kind of human knowledge is attended with some uncertainties. The science of medicine is exact in most of its departments; the art of medicine is an art, and is safe or certain much in accordance with the skill and natural aptitude of each physician.—*The Post Graduate.*

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