

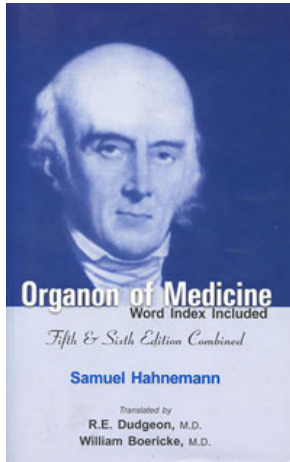
Samuel Hahnemann Organon of Medicine (Hahnemann)

Reading excerpt

[Organon of Medicine \(Hahnemann\)](#)

of [Samuel Hahnemann](#)

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INTRODUCTION^(a)

Review of the therapeutics, allopathy^(a) and palliative treatment that have hitherto been practiced in the old school of medicine.

As long as men have existed they have been liable, individually or collectively, to diseases from physical or moral causes. In a rude state of nature but few remedial agents were required, as the simple mode of living admitted of but few diseases; with the civilization of mankind in the state, on the contrary, the occasions of diseases and the necessity for medical aid increased in equal proportion. But ever since that time (soon after Hippocrates, therefore, for 2500 years) men have occupied themselves with the treatment of the ever increasing multiplicity of diseases, who, led astray by their vanity, sought by reasoning and guessing to excogitate the mode of furnishing this aid. Innumerable and dissimilar ideas respecting the nature of diseases and their remedies sprang from so many dissimilar brains, and the theoretical views these gave rise to the so-called *systems*, each of which was at variance with the rest and self-contradictory. Each of these subtle expositions at first threw the readers into stupefied amazement at the incomprehensible wisdom contained in it, and attracted to the system-monger a number of followers,

who re-echoed his unnatural sophistry, to none of whom, however, was it of the slightest use in enabling them to cure better, until a new system, often diametrically- opposed to the first, thrust that aside, and in its turn gained a short-lived renown. None of them, however, was in consonance with nature and experience; they were mere theoretical webs, woven by cunning intellects out of pretended consequences, which could not be made use of in practice, in the treatment at the sick-bed, on account of their excessive subtilty and repugnance to nature, and only served for empty disputations.

Simultaneously, but quite independent of all these theories, there sprung up a mode of treatment with mixtures of unknown medicinal substances for forms of disease arbitrarily set up, and directed towards some material object completely at variance with nature and experience, hence, as may be supposed, with a bad result— such is old medicine, *allopathy* as it is termed.^(a)

Without disparaging the services which many physicians have rendered to the sciences auxiliary to medicine, to natural philosophy and chemistry, to natural history in its various branches, and to that of man in particular, to anthropology, physiology and anatomy, &c, I shall occupy myself here with the practical part of medicine only, with the healing art itself, in order to show how it is that diseases have hitherto been so imperfectly treated. Far beneath my notice is that mechanical routine of treating precious human life according to the prescription manuals, the continual publication of which shows, alas! how frequently they are still used. I pass it by unnoticed, as a despicable practice of the lowest class of ordinary practitioners. I speak merely of the medical art as hitherto practised, which, pluming itself on its antiquity, imagines itself to possess a scientific character.

already present by one that is unhomoeopathic, even though it be stronger, and just as little is the unhomoeopathic employment of even the strongest medicines ever capable of curing any disease whatsoever.

§36

I. If the two *dissimilar* diseases meeting together in the human being be of equal strength, or still more if the *older one be the stronger*, the new disease will be repelled by the old one from the body and not allowed to affect it. A patient suffering from a severe chronic disease will not be infected by a moderate autumnal dysentery or other epidemic disease. The plague of the Levant, according to Larry, ("Memoires et Observations," in the *Description de l'Egypte*, tom, i), does not break out where scurvy is prevalent, and persons suffering from eczema are not infected by it. Rachitis, Jenner alleges, prevents vaccination from taking effect. Those suffering from pulmonary consumption are not liable to be attacked by epidemic fevers of a not very violent character, according to Von Hildenbrand.

§37

So, also, *under ordinary medical treatment*, an old chronic disease remains uncured and unaltered if it is treated according to the common *allopathic* method, that is to say, with medicines that are incapable of producing in healthy individuals a state of health similar to the disease, even though the treatment should last for years and is not of too violent character. This is daily witnessed in practice, it is therefore unnecessary to give any illustrative examples.

46) ~~were~~ always effected by the supervention upon the old disease ~~one~~ of a *similar* character, ever taught them, during such a ~~big~~ series of centuries, this truth, the knowledge of which can ~~be~~ conduce to the benefit of the sick.

§62

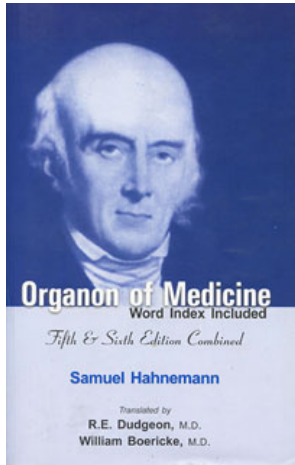
But on what this pernicious result of the palliative, antipathic ~~treatment~~ and the efficacy of the reverse, the homoeo-pathic ~~treatment~~, depend, is explained by the following facts, deduced from manifold observations, which no one before me perceived, ~~though~~ they are so very palpable and so very evident, and are of ~~such~~ infinite importance to the healing art.

§ 6 3

Every agent that acts upon the vitality, every medicine, ~~changes~~ more or less the vital force, and causes a certain alteration in the health of the individual for a longer or a shorter period. This is termed *primary action*. Although a product of the medicinal and vital powers conjointly, it is principally due to the ~~former~~ power. To its action our vital force endeavors to oppose its own energy. This resistant action is a property, is indeed an automatic action of our life-preserving power, which goes by the ~~name~~ of *secondary action* or *counteraction*.

- §64

During the primary action of the artificial morbific agents (medicines) on our healthy body, as seen in the following examples, our vital force seems to conduct itself merely in a passive



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