

THE RELATION OF HOMOEOPATHY TO NATURAL SCIENCE

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The Relation of Homoeopathy to Natural Science by Edward Babcock Atkins

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EDWARD BABCOCK ATKINS

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HOMŒOPATHY
TO
NATURAL SCIENCE

BY
EDWARD BABCOCK ATKINS, M.D.
AND
(Ad eundem gradum.)

"That which once existed in intellect as pure law, has now taken
body as Nature."—EMERSON.

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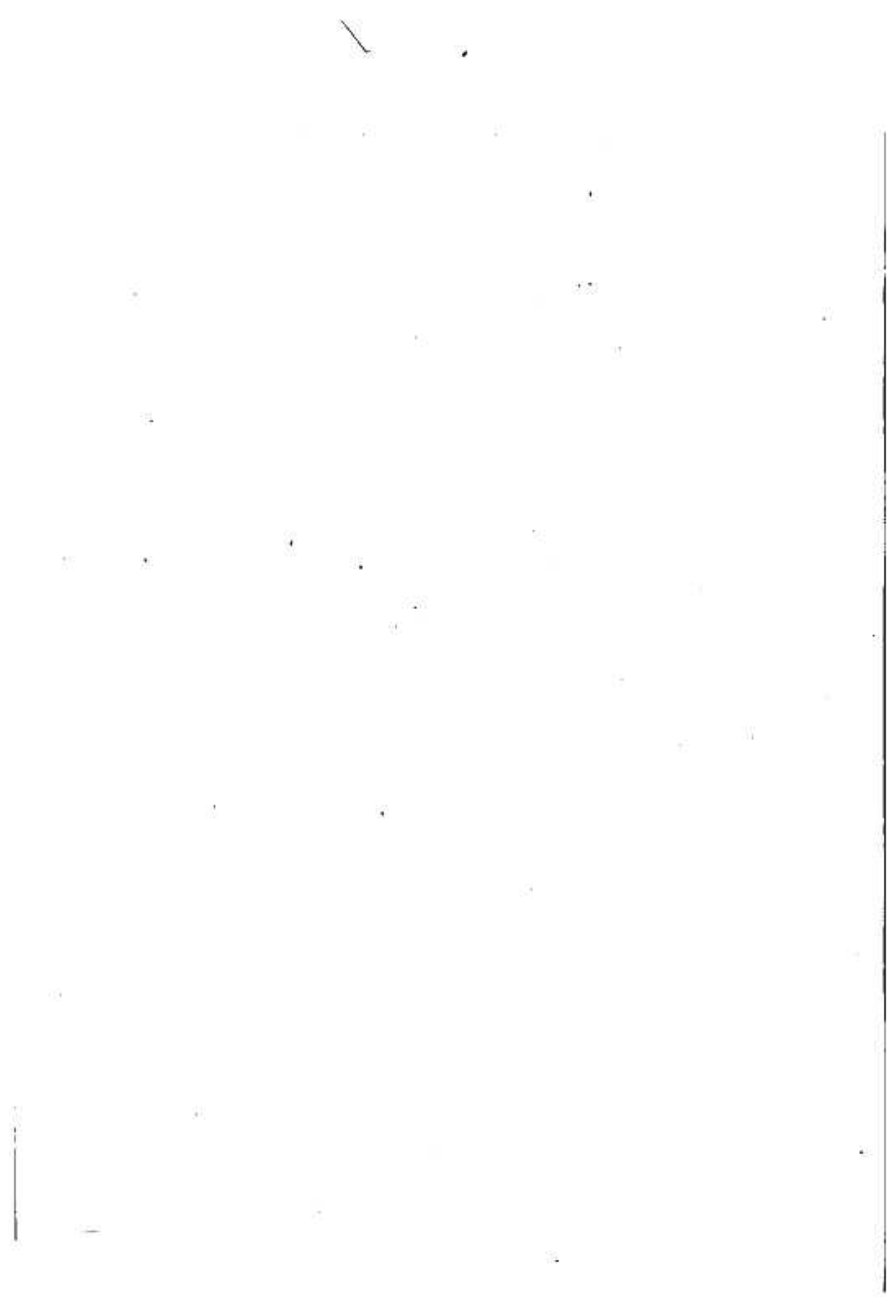
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PREFACE.

THE following pages are the result of a most careful study of the claims of Homœopathy for scientific recognition;—and their appearance in printed form is in answer to the question often asked me, viz: the reasons for my belief in the *law of similars*, and the value of drug provings.

E. B. A.

Saratoga Springs, May, 1889.



INTRODUCTION.

SINCE the truths of nature need no defense for their existence, a demonstration of their laws should need no apology for its appearance before those conversant with *Natural Science*, and conscious of its relation to medical practice. Both the science and the art of medicine are dependent for their very existence upon the operations of natural phenomena, so every demonstration of a law newly discovered, or a scientific explanation of some truth, long followed, should meet with fair attention from all students desirous of true scientific advancement. The writer of the following pages believes he has not departed from the legitimate bounds of a liberal scientific faith, in preparing this demonstration of his belief and the natural basis upon which it is grounded, and asks from his peers, whose opinions may be broadly different from his own, only that courtesy due all persons whose chief object is the advancement of the science for which we all labor,

and who recognize the bounds of nature as superior to the theories of men. The tendency of modern medicine is into divisions or specialties of study or practice, and the inclination of the professional mind is to follow such divisions as give opportunity for more rapid advancement or glowing achievement. The result is, the unconscious neglect of other branches, and the bringing into undue prominence of certain divisions, whose relative importance will not justify the claims urged by their respective advocates. In this disposition of forces the primal truth is often lost sight of; and the specialist thinks more of his brilliant operation, or the pathologist of his accurate diagnosis, than of the *remedial measures*, which if early and accurately used would have often made their labors useless. The mission of medicine is to cure, and the materials for such fulfillment are found in the provident storehouse of nature, where, if not a panacea for every ill, are found the remedies for many a disease; but, as empiricism or accident has never devised a brilliant operation in surgery, so it can never lead to a scientific and successful use of such remedies. As surgical skill is dependent upon an accurate knowledge of anatomy, so is therapeutic skill dependent upon a scientific knowledge of drug

action; and as an accurate knowledge of human anatomy,—the basis of all surgical skill—was obtained from a study of the tissues when unchanged by disease, so must a knowledge of drug action be obtained when the organs or functions are uninfluenced by morbid conditions. As surgical skill rests upon a knowledge of anatomy, rather than pathology, so must therapeutic skill rest upon a knowledge of the natural action of remedies, rather than upon morbid anatomy as found *post mortem*. As the dissector's skill is acquired by constant and personal practice, so the therapist's skill must also result from constant study and observation of the symptoms of disease, and the action of drugs; and since the anatomist would lose his skill, should he confine himself to the descriptions given by the early masters in anatomy, so would the therapist lose his ability to cure, should he rest upon the classical authorities of his branch; as theoretical knowledge, alone, would circumscribe the surgeon's skill, so it has retarded therapeutic advance, for, as the anatomist must conform his operations to the bounds of nature, so must the other remain within the province of natural phenomena, if he would find uniformity of results; and as theory can find no place in the science of anatomy, so it could