

THE THOMSONIAN'S

MANUAL AND VADE MECUM:

BEING

A SYNOPSIS

OF THE THEORY AND PRINCIPLES ON WHICH IS BASED THE

Botanic Practice of Medicine,

AS PROMULGATED TO THE WORLD BY DOCTOR SAMUEL THOMSON;

AND ALSO

A COMPARISON OF ITS SIMPLICITY, EFFICACY AND MERITS, AS CONTRASTED WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF THE

Mineral School of Medicine.

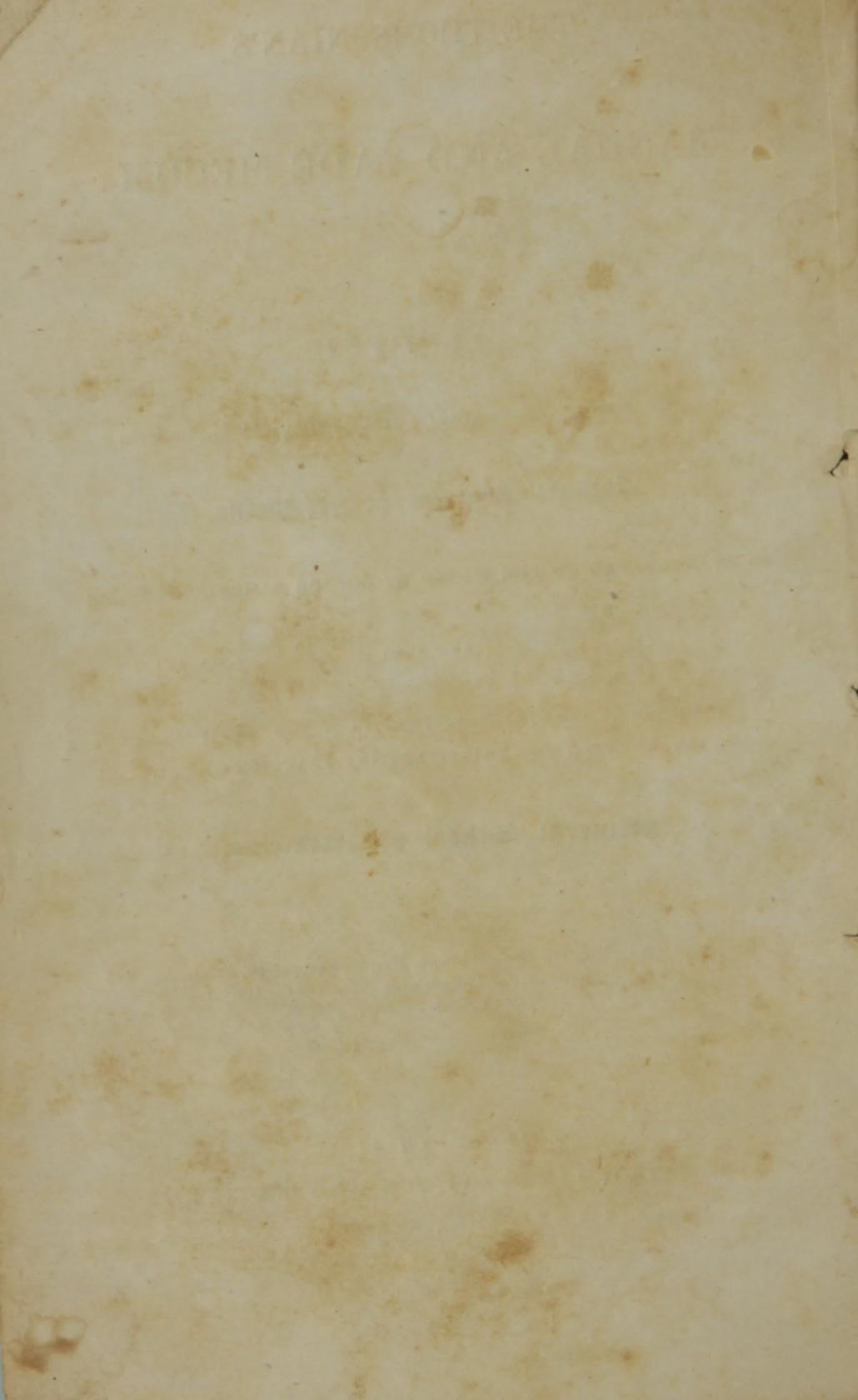
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SYNOPSIS, ETC.

WHEN we consider that the practice of medicine, for the cure of the various and complicated diseases with which the human family are afflicted, is a subject which has engaged the attention of some of the greatest men which the world has ever produced; when we consider that the sufferings of our fellow beings from disease, have often called into action all the best energies of the philanthropist, all the commiseration of the patriot, and the loud and lasting eloquence of the Christian; when we consider, indeed, that the sagacity and ingenuity of mankind have been racked, and even tortured, to invent new modes by which to ascertain the primary causes of disease, and to devise adequate means or remedies for their effectual cure or removal: we should enter upon this investigation with all the care and caution imaginable.

In commencing the discussion of a subject of so much magnitude and importance, prudence, indeed, would seem to admonish us to confine ourselves simply to facts, or to follow on in some plain beaten track, laid out and pursued by those more cautious and competent hands who have attempted the subject before us. But whatever prudence might seem to dictate, I should feel I was treating you with but little respect, if I were to confine myself to collecting and recounting the opinions and acts of others, however successful they may have been, upon this most interesting subject. I shall, therefore, endeavour to give you my own views and opinions, which are neither hastily formed, nor, I hope, rashly entertained.

In the few remarks which I design making, if there should be any thing said that may be thought to be improper by any one, whether friend or foe to the Thomsonian cause, I shall regret it, as I do not intend to wound the feelings of any one. I shall, however, endeavour to treat the subject in an upright or rather downright manner, but which I am sure can never correspond with its vast importance; and my remarks will be drawn chiefly from what little reading and experience I have

had, and from observations made on the courses pursued by others.

It is a remark said to have been made by some great man, that every thing that breathes carries within its body the elements of its own destruction ; or, in other words, that there are certain principles or elements implanted within our bodies by nature which, however they may be kept in restraint for a while, yet these principles or elements eventually consume that life, of which they themselves are some of the constituent parts. We are informed by revelation that man is naturally prone to sin and suffering ; and when we look around us in the world, and see so many artificial means of hurrying us on in our career of sin and destruction, it may be fairly said, that we augment our own sufferings and hasten our own death. The remark that has been quoted then, supported as it seems to be by revelation, must serve to convince us that the causes of disease and of death itself, like those of most other infirmities to which we are subject in this world, lie, in some measure, concealed among the hidden mysteries of our natures, and every effort to bring them out of their concealment hitherto seems to have been somewhat in vain.

That great and good man, Dr Rush, speaking of the science of medicine as it existed in his day, and which is yet in its infancy according to the confessions of the most celebrated practitioners, compared it to an unroofed temple, uncovered at the top and cracked at the foundation ; and after bewailing the defects and disasters of medical practice, he consoled himself with the animating prospect of the hope that the day would arrive when medical knowledge should attain the height of perfection, that it would be able to remove all the diseases of mankind, and leave not for life a single outlet but old age ; for such was his confidence in the goodness of God, that he believed that he had placed on earth remedies for all the maladies of mankind.

And however gloomy this prospect may be, how irrevocably fixed may be our fates in sin and suffering, however firmly we may have implanted within us the very principles or elements that shall eventually destroy us ; yet the influence of this hope, so feelingly expressed by Dr Rush, and so deeply felt by every noble mind, that all diseases shall yet yield to the power of medicine, and that sin and suffering, that the innate principles or elements of destruction in our compositions, shall be kept in restraint until our bodies, these mortal tenements of clay, shall wear out with old age—these considerations should induce us to examine with care and candour every new experi-

ment that may be presented by the industry and experience of man, whatever may be his state or condition in life.

Dr Robinson says, that amidst all the different branches of knowledge which have engaged the attention of mankind, there can be none of equal importance (religion only excepted) as the treatment or cure of the diseases to which the human family are subject. For, says he, the soul in a diseased body is like a martyr in his dungeon; it may retain its value, but it has lost its usefulness. Such is the nature of man, under the strong power of sense and of sympathy: influenced by all the objects around him, and all the energies of thought within him continually wearing out his mortal covering and sapping the foundations of his house of clay, while the passions pour a continual storm upon the wheels of life. Man, thus circumstanced, and impelled forward by the combined action of so many agents to that bourne from whence no traveller returns, it is not, therefore, astonishing, although the soul is so much superior to the body, that man should bestow upon the care of the body the chief portion of his labour and life. To promote health of body and tranquillity of mind, continues Dr Robinson, the wise men of antiquity laboured with severe and incessant toil. They studied the constitution of man that they might find out the seat of his maladies, and the sources of his misery. To assuage the sorrows of the heart, and lift the load of melancholy from the desponding mind, to restore to the wounded spirit its elasticity, they exhausted all the powers of their reason, and all the arguments and arts of their divine philosophy. Sometimes, indeed, they succeeded, but they often failed; and, penetrated with a deep sense of the inadequacy of their own feeble powers to eradicate the disorders with which they were afflicted, they were led to look for succour to that benevolent Being, who sits upon the circle of the heavens, and showers down his mercies upon the world; in whom there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for ever more.

It is a fact that is worthy of remark, that the science of medicine, or the art of curing disease, has suffered more changes, and been the subject of more various contending and conflicting theories, than almost any thing which has engaged the attention of mankind. One great man would set up a theory of his own, and support it by arguments which all its opponents would find themselves unable to answer, and this theory would become, in time, the established theory. In the course of a century or two, however, another great man would rise up, would overturn this theory, and would set up one of his own, which would, in its turn, finally triumph, and become the estab-

lished theory. And such has been the fate of medical science for three thousand years, according to history.

The question may then be fairly asked, whether the theory which is now attempted to be set up by Dr Thomson will not, in its turn, be overthrown, and another substituted in its place. But before we undertake to answer this question, we must go over the whole of the grounds which have been occupied by the various and conflicting theories, and ascertain whether there are not some small particles of truth in them all, which, when sifted and cleared from the mass of error with which they have been mixed, may, like particles of pure gold, be found closely adhering together, and may possibly, under a more fortunate dispensation of Providence, become so amalgamated, so firmly united, as to form one solid mass; and that however small this mass of truth may be, it shall be found able to withstand all the power and force of its adversaries combined.

Is not the truth, when considered in relation to any and every subject, the same? Is it not simple in all its parts? Is it not always, no matter where found or by whom discovered, the same? Is it not always perfectly consistent with itself? And should not any science or theory, which professes to have truth for its basis, be equally simple, clear, and consistent as the truth itself? To these questions there can be but one answer. Here, then, is the plain reason why all the different theories on the subject of medicine have been pulled down, and others substituted in their places. It is because, in their very foundations, and in the materials with which they have been constructed, more error was to be found than truth.

In bringing of Dr Thomson's theory then to the test, we must first ascertain how far it is supported by those immutable truths which we have said have been in existence from the foundation of the world, but which have been so mixed with error, in all the different theories which have heretofore existed. And when we have satisfied ourselves that they are to be found here, we should then inquire whether, in its construction, the requisite simplicity has been preserved, so that when it is presented to a mind that is clear of prejudice, or in other words, to a mind that has not been unfortunately locked up in other theories—and it is to be feared that some have not only been locked up, but that the key has been lost, so that they never can be unlocked—we say that, if Dr Thomson's system should be found to be, and should remain so simple that an unprejudiced mind can see through it at a glance, and be known to have for its foundation all those immutable particles of truth which have existed from the foundation of the world, but which

have been lost sight of among a mass of error—we are bold to say that, so long as it remains in this simplicity, unmixed with and clear of this error, all the combined efforts of power and prejudice can never pull it down. But on the other hand, if it should ever become the receptacle of error, of speculations, and of suppositions; if it should ever become an engine of power, of superstition or of bigotry, by the use of which man can domineer over his fellow men, it must, like all other systems of medicine that have been invented, sink down of its own weight to rise no more. I repeat that, however successful this or any other system may be, so long as it exists in its purity and simplicity, and is practised upon solely with a view to the good of mankind and according to the doctrines and precepts of our Maker; that whenever it becomes a vehicle by which man may ride over his fellow man, raise and support himself upon the labours of others upon whom he looks down with scorn and contempt, then it is that the fabric will begin to shake, and then it is we may begin to calculate its value and the stability of its existence.

But the truth is mighty and will prevail. There is a redeeming spirit which sometimes infuses itself into the very soul of man; and bursting the fetters which pride and sin have made to bind him down to earth and trample him in the dust, and turning with a resistless fury upon his oppressors, he hurls them headlong from the lofty stations to which they have been raised by pride and ambition. These things have occurred, and if man continues as he is, they will occur again.

But to return to our subject. We have said that the system of practice established by Dr Thomson, was simple, adapted to the meanest capacity, and that it was based upon those immutable truths which have existed from the foundation of the world, and that from its very simplicity it must be divested of many of the errors which have heretofore incumbered the science of medicine.

Having said this much, it will be required of us that we should state some of the facts on which we rest this bold assertion. 1st. Then, it is a truth that has been conceded from the time that Prometheus stole the torch of fire from heaven, for the purpose of kindling life into an image which he had formed of clay, down to the present time, that life in its perfect state has been acknowledged to depend on a portion of heat in the system. 2dly. That whenever this heat becomes extinct, no matter from what cause it may be, death must ensue. And 3dly. That whatever has a tendency to keep up this due quantum of heat, whether it be taken by way of food or administered by way of medicine, either to restore the heat when lost,

or to keep it up when gained, should be the only remedies resorted to by mankind.

These are the particles of truth alluded to, and which may be compared to pure gold; but, unfortunately, owing to a disposition in mankind to clothe every thing in mystery, these simple truths have been kept concealed from the professors of medical science themselves.

It is a fact that is obvious to the view of every one who has had the slightest opportunity of noticing the course and success of those who have administered to the sick, that this point gained, the heat in the human system restored to its natural stage, and then kept up, whether it be done artificially by medicine, or naturally by food, the wheel of life continues to turn smoothly on its axis, a little food taken into the stomach occasionally for the purpose of keeping the axletree of the wheel well oiled, life runs smoothly on in its journey, nor stops until it has arrived safely at its place of destination, which is old age. There, from the wearing out of the axletree, or the breaking of some of the spokes, or some such accident, the wheel loses its wonted power to turn, and life becomes swallowed up in death.

But, in order to put this matter in a still clearer light, we will undertake to point out the courses pursued by three of the most celebrated practitioners of modern times; and perhaps the most celebrated and successful that have ever existed in the civilized world; viz. Dr Brown, the celebrated author of the Brunonian system of practice; Dr Rush, who professed to have improved on Dr Brown's; and Dr Thomson, the author of the present system, which is marching with such rapid strides, and producing so complete a revolution in the medical world. Dr Brown, after some twenty years study, having made himself master of all the learning that then existed in the world, upon the science of medicine, discovered, or thought he discovered, that all was wrong. He laid the whole of it aside, divided diseases of all sorts simply into two classes, viz: Direct and Indirect Debility; the one caused or produced, as he said, by a deficiency, and the other caused by a redundancy of blood or heat in the system; and with a bottle of alcohol in one hand, and a lancet in the other, he went forth curing diseases which, with all his learning before, he was entirely unable to arrest.

Dr Rush's system, as we have said, was somewhat, in his own notion, an improvement on Dr Brown's; but, owing to his having too many of the errors which have ever incumbered the science mixed up with it, was probably less successful in practice.

Dr Thomson, with a mind entirely unclouded and unob-

scured by the mists of learning, and studying nature in the very simplicity of her operations, discovered that whatever might be the cause, whether remote or proximate, loss of heat in the system was the certain effect of disease; and that, in the progress of disease, as the heat diminished death approached, until the heat becoming entirely extinct, death or cold obtained the victory.

Dr Brown, in his treatment of diseases, directed his remedies, in all cases, to the reverse states of the body; when he found his patient weak, he was for infusing strength into him by his stimulating medicines; and when he found him strong, he was for reducing him by the lancet and his depleting medicines. Dr Rush followed pretty much Dr Brown's practice, but professed to differ with him in theory. He too was for stimulating and reducing his patients according to circumstances. He objected to the distinction drawn by Dr Brown of Direct and Indirect Debility, and gave to diseases of all sorts, one general name of morbid Excitement.

Dr Thomson, as we have said, following nature alone, in the simplicity of her operations, directs his remedies, in all cases, entirely to her assistance in throwing off the impediment or obstruction which disturbs the healthy action of the system. To strengthen the weak and weaken the strong was, in fact, the very gist of Dr Brown's theory. To allay the morbid excitement by reducing the high action, and raising the the low or prostrated action of the system, was, in fact, the gist of Dr Rush's theory.

To remove the obstruction which produces the debility, both direct and indirect, of Dr Brown; to remove the obstruction which produces the morbid excitement of Dr Rush; to remove the obstruction which disturbs the healthy action of the system, is, in fact, the gist of Dr Thomson's theory.

Here, then, at a single glance, may be seen the precise principles on which these great men acted. Dr Brown ascribed, as the cause of disease, debility or the lessening of the power of the wheel of life. Dr Rush ascribed, as the cause of disease, morbid excitement, or an irregular motion of the wheel of life, which, if not soon regulated, would tear some of the cogs to pieces. And Dr Thomson ascribes, as the cause of disease, obstruction which prevents the wheel from turning.

Brown, in his remedies, was simply either for strengthening or repairing of the axletree of the wheel, or for taking off a part of the load. Dr Rush was for regulating the motion of the wheel, by putting on and taking off, according to circumstances. And Dr Thomson is for strengthening or repairing the wheel thoroughly in all its parts; raising the steam in

the engine that propels the wheel, putting fresh oil on the axle-tree, and clearing away every thing that retards or obstructs the progress of the wheel. Here we at once see the precise difference in the courses pursued by these great men. And, though they seem to differ widely both in their principles and practices, yet if we will trace them a little minutely in their courses, we will find that they come nearer and nearer together, until they will almost meet at the same point. For, whatever might have been the course of treatment pursued by either in the onset of a disease, we find that, finally, if the debility of Dr Brown was removed at all, it was removed by stimulating medicines. That if the morbid excitement of Dr Rush was removed at all, it was removed by stimulating medicines. And that the obstruction of Dr Thomson is, in all cases, removed by stimulating medicines.

The precise difference in their practices then, may be stated in a word, and amounts simply to this: that Drs Brown and Rush thought it necessary in most cases (and here was the great error with them both in theory and practice) to reduce the patient, or, in other words, to circumvent the disease before they could enter the citadel of life, and there combat the enemy with their weak and often inefficient stimulating medicines.

Dr Thomson rushes at once into the citadel, attacks the enemy before he has time to intrench himself behind the vitals, and generally prostrates him at the first blast of his artillery; for such we may fairly call his stimulating medicines.

But, lest the distinction which we have here attempted to draw should not be clear to the view of every one, we will refer you to a monitor who, however egregiously and unfortunately we may and do sometimes deceive ourselves, yet this monitor never deceives us. By this monitor, I mean experience. All of us recollect the contest waged some years since among the physicians in this country, in regard to this very subject of stimulating and depleting in the first stages of disease; and the doctors denominated each other as Brunonians or Anti-Brunonians, accordingly as they ranged themselves for or against the practice. We all recollect with sorrow the dreadful mortality that prevailed over the land, sweeping hundreds and thousands of our fellow beings from the stage of action. I recollect myself to have seen some of our most eminent physicians mourn over the unfortunate victims of disease, and acknowledge that their remedies seemed to have lost their efficacy and virtue.

Had Dr Thomson been among us then, there can be no doubt but he would at once have thrown off the veil of doubt, uncertainty and death that seemed to becloud the paths of our kind hearted and benevolent physicians. He would have told them at once,

Sirs, you are wrong to deplete; your stimulating medicines might possibly answer in some of the milder forms of disease, or they might sometimes arrest disease in its incipient or forming stages? But, sirs, if you will act like philosophers, you will, in all cases, apply a cause fully equal to the effect which you wish to produce! Sirs, he would have said to them, when the disease assumes a gigantic form, you should use gigantic remedies? When the enemy seems to have seized with violence all the powers of life, you should bear down upon him with your heaviest artillery, nor cease your exertions until he is completely repulsed; and when he makes his appearance in the form of chronic but certain disease, administer a remedy that shall be equally sure and certain in its healing effects. But cease your depleting and reducing system. Lay aside your calomel and your lancet, and your train of heroic and poisonous medicines. But pursue that course, in the treatment of all cases of disease, that is best calculated to raise and support the sinking and exhausting powers of nature! Kindle the decaying spark of life, and, when blown into a blaze, establish and confirm it in its strength. Cherish this flaming principle, or lamp of life, by keeping it well trimmed, clear of obstructions and in the even tenor of its way, until it shall grow dim with age! We say, could such a being as this have made his appearance among us at the time alluded to, and in language like this have infused confidence and skill into our friendly and benevolent physicians, there can be no doubt that many of us would have escaped the afflicting scenes of sorrow and death which we have been called upon to witness.

But how far Dr Thomson's system is superior to those opposed to it, must, with the great body of the people, be left to practice, time and experience, to determine.

There is one thing which should induce us all to weigh the merits of it with candour. We have seen cases which have for years baffled the skill of the most successful doctors in the whole country, completely cured in a few weeks by the Thomsonian remedies. We have seen cases of a highly inflammatory kind, and which, if they were cured at all by the best physicians, would first be reduced to the verge of the grave!

We have seen such cases as these cured in a few hours by the operation of the Thomsonian remedies! These facts are stubborn things, and will, when they come to be generally received as such, outweigh all the surmises and theories, all the speculation and hypothesis, that can be arrayed against them.

Our design is to lay before the people a fair and candid statement of the principles on which the Thomsonian System of Practice is founded, and its results, so far as we have been able

to observe them, that they may judge of its fair and honest claims to public confidence and support.

But being aware of the prejudices which exist against it, among a powerful and influential class of our fellow citizens, and of the extreme caution with which it must be received by the great mass of people in this intelligent community, we must not expect that what we have to say in favour of it, will be received in a spirit of kindness and confidence by many.

And, if we attempt to introduce it into practice, we must not expect to march on uninterruptedly in our course; for, says Dr Robinson, such is the perverseness of our natures, that we are ready to assail with obloquy and proscription every experiment of man. Whoever, then, engages first in advocating this new system of practice, must, according to the ingenuous Dr Harvey, hazard the martyrdom of his life, reputation, and estate. For such is the nature of man, (he continues) that from the day that Noah built the ark, and had to encounter the scorn and mockery of the antedeluvian race; that from the day that our Saviour descended from on high to dwell among us, and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, and was nailed to the cross on Calvary's Mount, down to the present time, obloquy, scorn, persecution, and proscription have assailed every new experiment of man. That because we ourselves are not the first in the discovery, or because it might possibly militate against our interests, we would wish it buried, no matter how useful or benevolent it might be; we would wish it for ever buried in the cave of the Cyclops. This spirit, continues the same writer, forms one of the most unseemly traits in the human character. It shows a state of mind neither resting for success upon the resources of its own powers, nor relying upon the superintending care of a just, a wise, and holy Providence. If the wise and learned only were to make discoveries, it could be borne; but that the illiterate, the mere plough-boy, a man like Samuel Thomson, who had spent his life among the clods of the valley, and himself but little superior to the dust on which he walked; that he should pretend to make discoveries in the science of medicine, and invent forms and medicines and rules, to instruct and enlighten its exclusive and profound professors, is not to be endured.

But let us for a moment change the state of the case. Let the brightest son of medical science suppose that he himself had been consigned to the plough tail, and Dr Thomson to the wisdom of the schools, and, thus situated, would he have thought it a crime in himself to have forced his way through all the asperities of nature, the obstructions of poverty, the absence of education, the iron and heavy hand, the combined pha-

lanx of science, wealth, power, and popularity, arrayed against him, to spurn him down, and crush him to the earth, and plunge him in oblivion for ever?

Would he have thought it a crime in himself to have resisted this terrible array; to have risen superior to the blow that would have cloven his fortunes down, and, by the unaided, innate vigour of his own intellect, to have forced his way, in despite of all these powerful and combined enemies, to wealth, and rank, and fame, and have taken his station among the benefactors of the human race? No, I am persuaded he would not. For, according to the saying of that modern sage, Dr Johnson, the man that can submit to trudge behind, was never made to walk before.

Every one knows, too, who is at all conversant with history, that many solemn facts are there recorded which serve to show us that the learned are as much indebted to the illiterate for their observation, as the illiterate are to the learned for their science. Those of us, therefore, who consider ourselves wise and learned, and profound, when we contemplate this fact, should be willing to glean from every source that promises an accession to the stock of our knowledge. When we consider this disposition in mankind, and we trust we are prepared to do so, with all due allowances for the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature; but when these things are considered, what was Dr Thomson to expect? And what, in fact, are we to expect, who have been the first merely to step forward to examine into the matter, and see whether there was any thing valuable in his discoveries or not? A few scenes, here recited, will satisfy us, in a few words, of what we may, with some degree of certainty, calculate upon.

We have seen men high in public confidence and esteem, descending from their lofty stations, and mingling with the low, and mean, and vulgar, in abusing Dr Thomson and his adherents. We have seen witnesses bribed to enter a court of justice, and there testify to facts which never had existence, and we have seen the exalted and dignified judges of the law and of the land, whose decisions should be impartial, and as pure as the manna that once descended from heaven; we have seen them mingling in their decisions dark surmises, vague and unfounded conjectures of guilt and crime, for the purpose of bowing us down, and heaping upon us a load of confusion and disgrace.

We have seen the public press of the country, that formidable and tremendous engine in its operations upon public opinion, forgetting the high prerogatives in which it is supported

by the constitution of the country, and descending into the arena of low and vulgar abuse, for the purpose of disparaging Dr Thomson and his adherents. And we have seen political partizans, nay we have seen whole legislatures, in this free and enlightened country, travelling out of the paths of their duty, and enacting laws unequal and oppressive in their operations, and in direct violation of the constitution, which they are sworn to support, for the purpose of putting down Dr Thomson and his adherents. These things we have seen, and we must stand prepared to see them again. But would it become us as men; would it become us as the admirers and emulators of the honest and conscientious Dr Thomson, to quail and tremble before this dreadful and unavoidable array? No, it would not. We should be unworthy the name of Thomsonians—low and mean as it is in the estimation of some; we should be unworthy of the name of Christians—humble and meek as the followers of Christ should be.

Let it not, however, be inferred from what we have said, that we would inculcate a disregard of public opinion. We beg that no person will so understand us. We trust that we have too much respect for the opinions of others, when fairly and honestly expressed, to disregard them altogether.

There is another thing to be considered in relation to this subject, upon which we would wish our own opinions, weak and unimportant as they are, to be correctly and properly understood. It is this: We think that every thing that proposes a radical, or even a partial change, in the established order of things, in any country or community, no matter how specious or plausible the thing may be, should be looked into with the closest scrutiny. "All that glistens is not gold," is a saying that should be stamped upon the head and front of every new fangled and far-fetched notion, however bright and shining it may be.

There are many who will agree with me, that this simple truth is too often lost sight of in this free and enlightened country. In advocating this new practice then, which proposes a radical change in the established medical practice of the country, we shall, no doubt, in the estimation of some, subject ourselves to the charge of inconsistency. But if what has been said be not entirely satisfactory to all, we beg leave now to say, in addition, that although many things in connection with the established practice appeared to be bright and shining, ye we discovered that all was not pure gold. There appeared to be an uncertainty about it, which the best informed among the faculty themselves honourably and candidly confessed. And upon a full and impartial review of all that we had witnessed

in connection with it, there was but little indeed that could excite our admiration or confidence. We speak exclusively of the practice, and not of the practitioners. We should be the last men on earth who would designedly inflict a wound upon a worthy and respectable class of our fellow citizens: a class, too, who, from the peculiar nature of their daily avocation, must suffer at least their full share in the general lot of mortals.

To many of us, who had been suffering for years from disease, and under the conviction of these truths in regard to the established practice forced upon our minds by the confessions of the most ingenuous and successful practitioners themselves, a dark and portentous cloud seemed to be hanging over our future prospects for health; and in despair of relief from every other quarter, we determined to try the Thomsonian remedies. And here, without going into a full detail of all that we have witnessed in connection with the practice, we will simply say, that we believe that if there is no more truth in the Thomsonian practice than in the practice opposed to it, there is much less error. Or, to use a figure which we have before adopted; if there is no more gold to be found here, there is, at any rate, much less of the inferior metals. This being our decided opinion, formed upon mature reflection, and according to the best of our weak and imperfect judgments, we should be wrong not to say so. What we would wish to be understood as meaning, when we say that we should not tremble before the opposition which we must expect to meet with, is, that with our opinions carefully and deliberately formed, but firmly and respectfully maintained, we should go on in our course careless of the clamor and opposition that may be raised at our heels; nor turn aside to seek this man's smile, or to shun that man's frown. But governed and guided solely by the desire to promote the happiness and comfort of our suffering fellow beings, we should endeavour to act up to the principles which we profess. We should, as Thomsonians, follow Dr Thomson strictly in all his directions, and administer medicines solely with the view of relieving the sick. Whatever persecutions and privations we may be called upon to suffer on account of these principles, we should never complain; for it would be unmanly to complain.

A consciousness of the honesty and purity of our intentions, will be sufficient to support us in every trial; for what indeed was it but this consciousness, added to the greatest degree of firmness, that could have enabled Dr Thomson, humble and destitute of fortune or friends as he was, to have endured what he did, without, we might almost say, one word of complaint. But blessed and protected by the genius and spirit that preside

providentially, and we trust ever will preside over our country and her institutions, in the enjoyment of equal rights and privileges with all other classes of our fellow citizens, and while we duly appreciate these blessings, forgetting all minor considerations, we should never permit ourselves to lose sight of that high behest of heaven, wherein we are commanded to love our neighbour and our country, and to serve our God.

The preposterous tales of individuals that know not how to evade imposture, and rather court than shun deception, are not competent testimony.

Those medical nostrums ; those patented secrets ; those deadly poisons, that in one hundred forms are palmed on the world as secret remedies for disease, sustain their reputation on the basis of common credulity without rational inquiry. The attempts made, and still continued, to conceal the art of medicine in unknown technicalities, is demonstrative evidence of gross, contemptible imposition. Is there any charm in the multitude of absurd, and to the common reader, unintelligible jargon of the medical schools ?

The attention of the student is diverted from the plain investigation of philosophical truth, to an endless vocabulary of Greek and Latin names. Names, and the etymology of names, are a barren substitute for solid learning and philosophical research. Were there as great a disposition among all who possess really useful information, to communicate it to others, as there is to conceal what little they do know, and to conceal the deficiencies of knowledge under a specious parade of scientific appearances and allusions of bombastic technicalities, the wide range of scientific flights would be restricted to very narrow bounds, and many a soaring genius, wandering in the regions of fancy, like a kite cut loose from its string, come wabbling to their native level.

We, who are doomed to wear the appellation of Thomsonsians, are not at variance with useful knowledge. We wish to know the latitude and longitude of our cities, towns, and villages, and their relative position, in plain English. We wish to know the situation and functional uses of the bones, sinews, muscles, joints, ligaments, cartilages, arteries, veins, glands, nerves, and all the constituent parts, appendages, and uses, and organic relation, and a long et cetera, in plain English. Not that such knowledge is indispensable, or so materially necessary to enable a man to administer medicine to the sick ; but because such knowledge is agreeable, and sometimes useful when certain surgical operations become necessary ; and because, like all other branches of useful knowledge, correct information, in the whole extent of this subject, serves to enlarge

the boundaries of human thought, enlarge the sphere of observation, strip the veil of false pretensions from before men's eyes; and divest men's minds of that false confidence too often reposed in a merely scientific man who has but little personal experience or observation to direct him at the bedside of the sick. Such men often know very little of disease, its nature, or its remedy. What little they do know, is what others have thought, and said, and done, and they rarely think and act for themselves. Like a student of geography, with a good memory and fluent tongue, he can talk learnedly of countries that he never saw, and write a Latin description of their customs, productions, commerce and government; but if the natives of two distant countries should appear before him, it might puzzle him to tell a wandering Arab from a Russian Cossack.

For one, I am the friend and advocate of useful knowledge; but that learning which consists only in a memory loaded down with what others have taught, and said, and done; that is rich only in the legendary lore and rubbish of antiquity; that manifests itself only in volubility of tongue, servile imitation, and superstitious adherence to stated traditions, is, on general principles, but useless lumber, that serves to inflate the mind with pedantry and empty show.

The knowledge of that which is really useful and essential to human welfare, in a country like ours, is within the reach of common minds. We speak confidently of the power of truth, but it is so seldom exhibited alone, pure and unmixed, that we scarcely know how to appreciate its excellence.

We are so prone to venerate long received opinions, especially when defended by men accounted learned and wise, that we too often neglect to exercise that mental independence which the dignity of our nature demands.

Go into our populous towns and cities, where literary coalitions are more readily formed than in country places; the learned more readily obtain the servile adulation of the multitude. They calculate to acquire a subsistence by their respective professions; and as "birds of a feather flock together," they find a mutual advantage in sustaining their respective claims on popular credulity. Much of the clamour against the Thomsonian system of medicine, owes its origin to causes like these.

Notwithstanding the deep rooted prejudices which pride of opinion has induced, and the pretensions of science and motives of interest have attempted to sustain, the novelty of the system and its humble origin have not been able to retard its influence or arrest its march.

We know our opponents will tell of the mighty minds and scientific pens, by which all the resources of human genius

have been put in requisition, to establish learned theories of medicine, and pour forth their literary prescriptions to heal the sick. But what kind of learning will arrest disease and restore the sick? Will a dose of mathematics, or a portion of Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, reduce a fractured limb, a luxated joint, or heal a lacerated wound? Will a tincture of the classics check the ague, expel the dropsy, or cure the consumption?

What great discoveries have been made by the schools of medicine for the removal of disease, which is the great desideratum with the sick? Many of the discoveries accounted most interesting in the healing art can be traced to accident or a combination of incidents that were independent of the efforts of deep, laborious, scientific research.

The most probable history of the discovery of the febrifuge virtues of the cinchona or Jesuit's bark, is found in Humboldt's Dissertation on the cinchona of the Forests. The Jesuits, at the felling of the wood, had taken notice of the considerable bitterness of the cinchona; an infusion was tried by some practitioners in the tertian ague. Others say, that the natives, drinking of the water standing in places where these trees had been blown up and the roots had been soaked, being cured, first suggested the idea of its usefulness. The first knowledge of the medical virtues furnished by the flora of our country, has been derived from savages, or from illiterate persons urged by necessity to make experiments.

The scientific faculty are more indebted to the illiterate for rudimental knowledge of the virtues of most of our simple remedies, than the illiterate are to all the learned labours of the world. On this ground we are led to estimate medical pretensions, not by the size, workmanship and pomposity of a diploma, or ponderous volumes contained in the libraries of the sons of science, but by the real usefulness and success of the individual in relieving the maladies of the sick and suffering.

The longevity of the antediluvian fathers, among whom medical science was never named, casts no great lustre on its importance in relation to the health and lives of men.

Who enjoys better health, and where do we find more hardy individuals full of days than among the aborigines of North America, or the pioneers of the West, destitute of colleges, universities, and medical professors? True, scientific acquirements furnish a wide field for intellectual amusement and pleasurable enjoyments. But the most exquisite refinements of taste do not furnish us with the necessaries of life. These will not shield us from the cold of winter or the heat of summer—they cannot relieve hunger, thirst, fatigue or sickness. Philosophical research has gone far in exploring the principles

on which depend the means of relieving our wants and alleviating our miseries; these are desirable attainments, but few of the most laborious sons of science have added much to the general stock of valuable practical knowledge in the healing art.

The discovery of the cow-pox, as a preventive of small-pox, has given much celebrity to the name of Dr Jenner; but was this a discovery strictly his own? True, he investigated the subject, and is entitled, for his ingenious efforts, to the gratitude of the world. But how stands the history of the facts? "In many of the dairy countries," says Dr Thomas, "it has been long known, that the cows are liable to an eruption on their paps or udders, which was occasionally communicated to the hands or arms of those who milked them, producing an ulcer and some degree of fever; and it had been observed by the people of those countries, that those who had gone through this disease, known by the name of the cow-pox, were not liable to the small-pox."

Thus we trace this extraordinary discovery of an antidote against the most formidable disease, as originating by casualty among the milk maids, and not to the philosophical researches of medical professors.

We are often told that diseases are so numerous, their symptoms so various in different diseases, and differ so widely at different stages of the same disease, and the remedies adapted to all these peculiar situations so diversified and numerous, that none but an adept in medical science is competent to the task. But let me inquire, are the cardinal remedies on which the faculty rely so numerous as pretended? Take from the faculty their emetic tartar, opium, calomel, nitre, cantharides, purgatives and the lancet, and you sweep from the arena of medical combat their main dependence.

Calomel and the lancet have been the sheet anchor of the craft. To divest these of all the deleterious effects and unfortunate, injurious results, requires more skill than all the learned possess. This is a desideratum that has eluded the researches of the philosophic inquirer, and defied the labours of the laboratory.

Inquire we, Is such a variety of treatment necessary and indispensable? If so, why are so few remedies commonly employed? True, the *Materia Medica* makes a pompous display of remedies, many of which some of the authors probably never saw. The packets of the diplomatic physician seldom contain much if any thing beyond what we have mentioned, or preparations of which some of these form a prominent article.

In relation to the theory and practice of Dr Thomson, they

are simple, and his whole system easy to be understood and applied. It is suited to human nature as we find it when in a diseased condition. His doctrine, contained in his Chapter of Life, is an original and interesting production. As a specimen of his doctrine, we will give you a quotation:—"When we are asked," says Dr Thomson, "what constitutes a living fibre, we might as well ask what constitutes any other property of living matter? What constitutes that in which the life of a leaf or stem of a living tree consists? What can we reason but from what we know? Every living thing has something peculiar to the nature or life with which it is endowed in the living state, whether vegetable or animal; but a living animal has heat and motion. Without this animal heat and motion, the animal becomes dead. Without a due proportion of heat, inward and outward, or outward and inward, there is no animal motion—no animal life. We know not of any vital principle, except a capacity to be brought into that peculiar mode, state and degree of warmth and action, constituting animalization, or the sensitive, living state of animal bodies.

"Warmth and action do not constitute animal life in unorganized matter—they do not constitute animal life without an organized animal structure, to which heat gives the impulse, applied to and connected with the animal structure. Caloric, or the principle of heat, rarefying and lightening air, excites action, which circumstance of being, constitutes animalization, or the living state.

"Warmth and action do not constitute animal life, only as applied to, connected with, and exercised in an organic animal body possessing a capacity inherent in its nature to be put in operation; in which state or condition of being, sensation, perception, and consciousness of identity, or individual existence, are gradually developed.

"But these circumstances of life are not life itself: there may be animal life, viz. breath and motion, in an animal body, where these functional powers are totally deranged and utterly extinct.

"Heat does not act alone and independent of its fraternal elements, but in harmony and accordance with the whole family.

"Without their elder brother, there is no life in the material universe. The elements would rest in everlasting silence and inactivity, if destitute of this generative father of life and motion.

"Abstract the element of fire from all the other elements, stillness and silence would be universal—the life of all that breathes and moves would be swallowed up in the stillness of eternal death. Earth and sea would be and remain a solid, unmoving, immovable mass—the fluid air would be consolidated to the

flinty hardness of the diamond on its native rock—creation would be a blank—and here I pause !”

This is the Thomsonian doctrine, as explained by Dr Thomson himself. Demonstration stands plain in every sentence, and needs only to be read and understood, to command the assent of every candid mind.

In relation to the Thomsonian practice, it is equally simple and easy to understand. On this point, we will first contrast it with the practice taught in the schools of medicine.

The general course of the faculty, in all acute forms of disease, is depletion. By puking, purging, bleeding, blistering and restricting the diet, reduce the patient. If all the citizens now in perfect health in this state should commence on to-morrow morning to be bled, purged, puked, blistered, calomelized and dosed with narcotics, in the same manner the sick man is often treated, and sometimes even child-bed women ; I have not an isolated doubt, but that a multitude would meet an untimely grave in a few days, and a million of human beings, if living, be brought into a deplorable condition. This is an appalling reflection. How preposterous to pursue measures for the recovery of the sick, which, if applied to our hardiest citizens in common, would crowd the nations of the dead.

2d. We would remark, that not one of the medicines we have mentioned as belonging to the old school, has any place in the Thomsonian Practice. Nothing like depletion, reduction of strength, exhaustion of vital energy, is admitted. Such measures have been dispensed with as unnecessary, and often known to be injurious.

3d. Our patients of course will escape the ravages of the mercurial practice. This is an important consideration. It is not our intention to deny that calomel, one of the mildest of mercurials, has never been of any temporary service ; but we insist that it is always precarious in its operation, and often dangerous in its consequences. If we look into works of antiquity : as to the use of mercury in medicine, says Dr Cox, we are left in the dark. Aristotle and Theophrastus merely mention it, but say nothing of its use. Galen affirms it to be deleterious in its effects, and never useful to sick or well. This eminent father in the healing art, contends that it is deadly in its nature, and that the smallest amount is necessarily injurious. Pliny, Heraclides and Nicander, consider it as a poison. Ætius speaks of the caustic powers, and Paulus Æginata of the poisonous qualities of mercury. Actuarius repeats the words of Ætius. We could readily multiply names of high and ancient authority, rising like a cloud for its condemnation.

Among the moderns, there is a formidable array of talents

against it both in Europe and America. Not only Thomsonians, already numerous, but learned individuals among the regular faculty, and medical colleges of deserved fame bear solemn testimony against it. If all the individuals who have been disfigured, crippled and ruined by its use, could be collected in one group, what a melancholy spectacle would they present to the astonished beholder.

The fearful responsibility to God and man for these results, rests not with Thomsonians. Their skirts are clear of the blood of the victims of mercury.

4th. Thomsonian practitioners reject not only all the mineral, but all vegetable poisons from their list of medicines. Their remedies are known to be innocent, congenial with nature, and efficacious to a wonder. Why should any man be alarmed at their success, or angry at their prosperity? Why should so many of our time honoured faculty, without faithful inquiry, place themselves in a hostile position, and draw the sword of persecution against a system devoted to humanity; which sustains itself with increasing reputation amidst ten thousand fires kindled for its immolation? How is it that the diplomatic physician puts down a pound of calomel into a single patient, or gives a dose of emetic tartar, and the patient dies in the operation, and there is no complaining? But, in a hopeless case, a patient takes a dose of cayenne, a common condiment at our tables, or a dose of lobelia inflata, so celebrated by Drs Barton, Eberle, Thatcher, &c. and known to be one of the most harmless and efficient medicines the materia medica can furnish: some few days after the patient dies; a post mortem examination is insisted on, and the cry of murder echoes round the country?

5th. We remark that, in relation to the successfulness of the Thomsonian practice, it has been said that we rely on assertions exclusively. This is not so; for we rely on sound reasoning, sustained by a host of facts. It is not merely our opinion that is to be taken in evidence, but facts, substantiated by positive and credible testimony. Why should any one be unwilling to investigate the subject by appealing to matters of fact? Dr Hixon has judiciously observed, in the first number of his reply to Dr Lawson, that he, Lawson, is not the first opponent whom we have seen shrink from an investigation of the testimony now offering to the world in support of the cures effected by Thomsonian remedies. We hear a general complaint from our opponents that we boast too much; that we rely too much on assertion; that we do not support our positions by reasoning. But we find our Thomsonians, from one end of the country to the other, resorting to the same mode of

reasoning. It runs thus: "Mrs A, who was pronounced incurable by her physicians, has been relieved by our remedies, of which we are witnesses, and so also are Mrs A and all her family." "This," adds the intelligent writer, "is what Dr Lawson is pleased to call assertion; and it is an argument that he cannot answer, and one that is spreading the use of our medicines from family to family in this city and vicinity; and not only here, but in every state of the union."

6th. Dr Thomson's practice proceeds upon the principle that disease is a unit, whatever livery it wears. When he visits a patient, he does not first study out a name for his complaint, and then administer to the name, but for the removal of disease. He is not a believer in that endless variety of fevers, on which learned fancy oft minutely dwells. Ask him to define a fever. He will tell you it is an unequal distribution; a deranged condition or disturbed operation of animal heat. He will ask you how many kinds of heat warm the human system. Is not animal heat the same in principle, whether in regular and healthy, or deranged and morbid position?

Dr Thomson inquires, Is there, in the human frame, more than one kind of heat? He adds, Yes, says the physician, (strange as it may appear) there is the pleuritic heat, the slow, nervous heat, the putrid heat, the hectic heat, the yellow heat, the spotted or cold heat, and many other heats, and sometimes (calamitous to tell) one poor patient has the most or the whole of these fevers, and dies at last for the want of heat!

Fever is the effect, and not the cause of disease. It is the effort of nature to rid herself of disease.

Dr Buchan, who, by the way, is not contemptible authority, makes this assertion: "Our bodies are so framed as to have a constant tendency to expel or throw off whatever is injurious to health." This sentiment is nearly allied to that of Dr Brown, who asserts that life is a forced state: if the exciting powers are withdrawn death ensues, as certainly as if the excitability was gone.

The doctrines of Drs Darwin, Rush and Brown, were more nearly allied than they were disposed to admit. Dr Thomson, in his plain, unostentatious manner, calls fever the struggle of nature to throw off disease. He confirms the sentiment by the cogent remark, that no person ever yet died of a fever! for, as death approaches, the patient grows cold, until, in death, the last spark of heat is extinguished. Dr Thomson directs his practice to remove obstructions occasioned by cold, to restore equalization to the unequal distribution of elementary animal heat attending the diseased state, and recover the derangement of the stomach and vital organs, thereby imparting new tone

and energy to the whole system. Hence he rejects the depletive, cooling, debilitating plan of treating disease. The life-draining lancet, skin-rending cantharides; the salivating, bile-vitiating, bone-rotting mercury and drastic purgatives are proscribed.

The refrigerating practice can no more sustain the vital heat essential to the living and healthy state, than removing half the wood from a fire-place, and pouring water, snow and ice on the remainder, can increase and perpetuate a common fire.

May God bless the man, who has so nobly and successfully combated with both ignorant and learned superstition, who is the wonder of the age, and a benefactor of mankind.

One of the principal recommendations of the Thomsonian system of medicine, to my mind, is its simplicity. Instead of presenting us with a long catalogue of diseases, with their various symptoms and stages, and prescribing a variety of modes of treatment equal to the variety of the forms of disease, it points out one general remedy, applicable to disease in all its various forms, and adequate to all the purposes of medicine. While I mention this as a peculiar excellency of the system, I do not forget that it is generally considered its most objectionable feature. Most people have been taught, from their infancy, that there are hundreds of diseases, each requiring in its various forms and stages, an unknown variety of modes of treatment, and thus the mode of treatment best adapted to one disease, in one of its stages, may, in every other case, be productive of certain death. These things they take for granted, not because there is evidence of their correctness, but because they have been taught so by their parents and their physicians. And he who would convince them that they may be erroneous, must first get his own consent to be accounted either an idiot or a madman.

This, I doubt not, is one principal reason why the progress of the art of healing has been so slow, or rather why nearly all the attempts at improvement in the art of healing have resulted only in the invention of new modes of killing. Men have commenced their investigations by taking for granted a fundamental error. They have taken it for granted that the subject of medicine is in the highest degree difficult and complex, requiring laboured and learned investigations, and especially an accurate knowledge of all the various forms of disease.

Let no one be surprised that investigations conducted on this principle should lead to error. The simplest question that ever presented itself to the mind of a human being may be presented to the mightiest genius on earth, and if he mistakes the mode of investigating—if he takes it for granted, that in order to ascertain the truth he must solve a number of abstruse and per-

plexing queries—the probability is that he will never ascertain the truth as to the question proposed; but will end his inquiries just as ignorant as he commenced them, or come to some grossly absurd conclusion.

It is easily proved that the popular notion about the vast variety of modes of treating disease is extremely gloomy, and utterly destitute of evidence. My design, at this time, is to show that it is false and absurd, or, in other words, to prove the correctness of Dr Thomson's principle, "*that all disease is the effect of one general cause, and may be cured by one general remedy.*"

In support of this principle, I appeal, first, to *evidence afforded by the faculty themselves.*

That disease is a unit, is a principle which, though now generally ridiculed as an idle dream of Dr Thomson, was asserted by one who, in point of medical fame, was never excelled, and perhaps never equalled by any other American physician—I mean the celebrated Dr Rush. Strange that the followers and admirers of Dr Rush should condemn and even despise Dr Thomson for teaching the very same doctrine that Dr Rush taught. If the proposition "disease is a unit," be correct when asserted by Dr Rush, it is surely correct when asserted by Dr Thomson. If the former did not deserve to be hated and despised as a quack for asserting it; neither does the latter, for asserting the same doctrine, and drawing from it the unavoidable conclusion that "all disease may be removed by one general remedy." This principle (the unity of disease) is asserted by Dr Jennings, and in accordance with it, he offers his patent steam bath as a general remedy. He tells us, also, that this doctrine is practically acknowledged by skilful physicians generally. "In consequence of the unity of disease," says he, "skilful physicians have imperceptibly run into a uniformity of practice. Hence we find that blood-letting, puking, purging, blisters, &c., for many years have been the general remedies which they have employed for the cure of disease, although they have called it by a very great variety of names. In offering the patent portable hot bath as a general remedy, it is obvious, therefore, that no more is assumed in its favour than has been assumed by physicians generally in favour of the almost universal practise of bleeding, purging, blistering and salivating, in almost any and every case."

Such is the statement of Dr Jennings, and the truth of what he has stated is so well known to us all that I need not have made the quotation. I have thought it proper to mention the fact that the doctors generally acknowledge in practice the principle which I am to defend, not because I thought this

decisive evidence of its correctness—the popular demonstration, *the doctor says so*, having ceased to have any weight with me—but because I wished to show how inconsistent the doctors and their adherents are, when, in their wrathful declamations against Thomsonism, they tell us how incredible it is that the same medicine should be good for diseases which are opposite in their nature.

The celebrated Dr Brown divides all diseases into two classes—the sthenic or inflammatory, and the asthenic: the former to be cured by depletive remedies; the latter by repletive remedies or stimulants. This division of diseases, I believe, is that which is commonly adopted by the physicians of our country. As to those diseases which are called asthenic, it is acknowledged by all that they are to be removed by stimulants. Let us inquire, then, Is it proper to use depletive remedies for inflammatory diseases, or should they also be cured by the use of stimulants? An invariable attendant of inflammatory disorder is fever, and one of the principle intentions in using the depletive system, and especially in bleeding, is to *cool the fever*. But what is fever? Let Dr Buchan answer. “Fever is an effort of nature to free herself from an offending cause.” Thus you see, that opinion of Dr Thomson which is so much ridiculed, which seems to be considered by many as a sufficient proof that he is a quack, and even destitute of common sense—that opinion of Dr Thomson, that “fever is a friend,” is not entirely destitute of support, even from the learned and the famous. Dr Buchan asserts the same doctrine in his “*Domestic Medicine*,” a book which Professor Griffith does not scruple to pronounce “one of the most sensible and judicious performances of the kind that has hitherto appeared.”

That Dr Buchan’s idea, which I have just quoted, is correct, might be clearly proved from a variety of considerations. My time will permit me to name but one: that fever is not a mere unimportant circumstance; that it is either disease or an effort of nature to throw off disease, is evident from its being an invariable attendant of so many forms of disease. Then, is fever a disease? Let it suddenly disappear without any other change of symptoms: let the pulse which lately beat violently flutter in a manner so feeble as scarcely to be perceptible, instead of the intense heat which lately pervaded the system; let cold seize the extremities and approach nearer and nearer the seat of life: Is this change of circumstances favourable? Is it not among the surest tokens of approaching dissolution? On the other hand, was such a thing ever known, as for a man to die with a fever on him? If, then, fever be a disease, it has

certainly two peculiarities which exist in no other disease whatever: it is a disease which must depart before the work of disease is done; and whose sudden and utter departure is among the surest signs of approaching dissolution. Whether there can exist such a disease, I refer to the decision of common sense. Fever is, therefore, an effort of nature to throw off disease.

And is it rational, then, to bleed and give cooling medicines for the purpose of removing fever? To attempt to remove disease by opposing the efforts by which nature is endeavouring to remove it? Yet this is the practice of the regular physicians, and this is what they mean by curing sthenic diseases by depletive remedies. I cannot avoid applying to them what Pollock says about a dressy female:

“They are convinced
That God has made them greatly out of taste,
And take much pains to make themselves anew.”

The efforts of nature for the removal of disease, are certainly very powerful. Dr Ewell tells us, “that what are commonly called active medicines, arsenic, corrosive sublimate, calomel, &c. can never be neutral in their operations. Whenever administered, they assume a side in the pending contest, and exert all their might either for the patient or the disease till one or the other yields.” And yet it not unfrequently happens that a person attacked with a dangerous disorder, is attended by a physician who gives him freely the most deadly poisons in the materia medica, and at last gives him up, acknowledging that the case is hopeless; that the medicines take part with the disease, and that he can do nothing for the patient. And yet the patient, thus deserted by his physician, oppressed by despair, weakened by the combined force of a dangerous disease and active mineral poisons, recovers! Recovers by the efforts of nature almost entirely unaided—so great is the medicinal power of nature! Can it be proper to oppose it? Is it not evident that whatever opposes the operations of this salutary principle is hurtful and dangerous in the extreme?

In speaking of inflammatory diseases, Dr Ewell has fallen into a very glaring inconsistency. In his *Medical Companion*, 2d edition, page 40, he tells us, “cold is found, by universal experience, to give a disposition to inflammatory diseases:” and yet, at page 85, he gives us to understand that “in all cases of disease highly inflammatory, bleeding, purging, and other cooling means are proper.” That is, cold must be employed for the cure of those diseases which proceed from cold: the disease must be cured by increasing its cause. Strange pre-

scription! yet it proceeds from high authority. It is found in a book which is highly recommended by professors Shippen, Woodhouse, Chapman and Barton, and many other men of high medical reputation.

Dr Rush charges Dr Brown with prescribing, in some cases, for the names of diseases, rather than for their proximate causes. Truly, in prescribing for inflammatory diseases, Dr Ewell has prescribed for their cause. Yes, I repeat it with emphasis, *he has prescribed for, and in favour of their cause!* But, can a repetition or an increase of the cause of disease cure it? If so, the prescription which Dr Ewell has given is sufficient for the cure of inflammatory diseases. But there are doubtless some cases in which the repetition or increase of a cause will remove its effect. If a man accidentally strikes me with a sword and cuts off my right hand, it will occasion pain; but no speedier method can be invented for removing the pain occasioned by the wound, than to repeat the blow and take off my head. On the same principle, no doubt, a disease occasioned by cold may be removed by increasing the power of cold.

From the remarks which I have now offered, it appears that notwithstanding the ridicule which the physicians heap on Thomson and Thomsonians in consequence of their believing in the unity of disease, this same doctrine has been held by one at least of the very heads of the faculty, is practically acknowledged by the physicians generally, and easily deducible from principles acknowledged by them all.

But the truth, "that all disease is the effect of one general cause, and may be removed (if in its nature curable) by one general remedy," may be clearly proved from the *nature of things*. The argument which I shall derive from this source, may be briefly stated as follows: In all cases of disease the vital heat is diminished, the digestive powers are enfeebled, and there is morbid matter in the system. If these evils are removed, the patient is restored to health, otherwise not. If, therefore, we can find those means which are best suited to remove these evils, and the means best suited to sustain the patient and prevent the farther progress of decay, while these evils may be removed; we have found one general mode of treatment adapted alike to all diseases, and sure to cure all curable diseases in which it is duly followed.

Whoever has the least knowledge of the structure of the human frame must know that it is among the most wonderful productions of infinite power and goodness of which we have any knowledge. Well might the psalmist exclaim, "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Vastly complicated as is this wonderful frame, all its parts act in per-

fect harmony and in mutual dependence. Food taken into the stomach nourishes every part: an injury of any one part, and obstruction of any one function, injures the whole frame.

From the harmony which exists throughout the system, and the mutual dependence of all the parts on one another, we are unavoidably led to the conclusion that the whole action of the system depends on the operation of some one principle, which, therefore, we may properly denominate the principle of life or vital power. As to the existence of such a principle, there is, I think, but one opinion. But what is this principle? Dr Thomson says it is heat; and however much the faculty may deride the idea, it is just the substance of what they tell us (in terms less plain, it is true) when they say that life is a forced state, depending on the operation of stimuli.

That this is true, that life (that is, the principle of life) is heat, may be easily proved. Among the operations of nature, carried on by means of the vital power, the most important, that on which all the rest peculiarly depend, is evidently the circulation of the blood. Hence that assertion of the Bible which is so frequently quoted, "The life of all flesh is the blood thereof;" the consistency of which assertion with the common idea, that in many cases blood letting is necessary to preserve life, I submit to the decision of common sense. Now, then, if we can learn by what means the blood is kept in circulation, we shall know what is the principle of life; for first, we have already seen that all the functions are carried on by the operation of one principle. If, therefore, we know the principle on which any one of them depends, we may easily infer that all the rest depend on the same. Secondly, as all the other functions depend peculiarly on the circulation of the blood, that which produces this function thereby produces all the rest. Now nothing is more certain than that the principle on which the circulation of the blood depends, is heat; for we all know that a high fever is always attended with increased action of the sanguiferous system: we all know that if the physician wishes to increase the action of the blood vessels, he endeavours to do so by the use of stimulants, and he must do it in this way or not at all. The physician, when he uses the lancet, not only reduces the action of the blood vessels, but also the heat of the system; and when he gives cooling medicines, he thereby reduces the action of the blood vessels as well as the heat; and one of the surest indications that the vital heat is about to take its final leave of the system, is a feeble, scarcely perceptible pulse.

Thus it is evident that heat is the vital principle on which all the operations of nature depend. Now, therefore, it is also

evident, that whatever does not oppose the operations of this principle, can have no power to produce death, or any tendency towards death. Until, then, a disease can be found which does not oppose any of the operations of nature, and which has no tendency to produce death, we must hold, that disease in every case, implies a diminution of the internal vital heat.

Among the operations of nature, carried on by means of the principle of life, are the various evacuations by which matter, the continuance of which in the system would be hurtful, is thrown off. If, then, there is offensive matter in the system, the principle of life tends to remove it; but if it be not removed, existing in the system in opposition to the principle of life, it must necessarily weaken that principle, for no principle can be opposed in its operations without being weakened, so long as the opposition lasts. On the other hand, if the vital principle be weakened, those operations of nature, by which she throws off offensive matter, cannot be duly performed, and morbid matter must necessarily collect in the system. Then can there exist in the system too much vital heat? or, in other words, can there be too much vital power? Can a man have too much life? On first thought, one might almost consider himself insulted by being asked such a question; yet we have seen that the doctors practically answer it in the affirmative. Yes, and Dr Jennings answers it theoretically and directly in the affirmative. He tells us that "art can accomplish no more than three great and leading intentions for effecting a cure;" the second of which is "to extinguish any excess of vital power." Strange that a man should be in danger of death by having too much life! But let us hear Dr Jennings's own explanation: "Animal heat must be produced and maintained through the functions upon which animal life depends. And an equable distribution of animal heat must be carried on through the medium of the circulating blood. The vital power upon which the circulation of the blood depends must be incessantly produced; otherwise the circulation could not be incessant. In health, therefore, the generation of vital power, and the circulation which expends it, must continue in a state of balance. Vital heat must be also regularly maintained: the warmth of the surface must be fitly adapted to that of the central vessels, and the whole system regularly kept in a state of natural temperature." "*If the circulation is suspended or rendered languid, vital power may become too much increased, so as to make the system liable to disease.*" "Damp or cold weather lessens the circulation of the blood in the vessels of the surface, and if the exposure be continued too long, such an increase is the consequence."

These ideas appear to me to be exceedingly singular. It would appear from Dr Jennings's statement, that the injury which the system receives from exposure to cold or damp weather, arises from an excess of vital power. I contend, on the contrary, that it arises from a defect of vital power. I think I have already proven that whatever opposes any of the operations of nature, opposes the principle of life, and of course is opposed by it. Now among the operations of nature is the circulation of the blood in the vessels of the surface; the lessening of which Dr Jennings considers as the cause of the evils arising from exposure to cold or damp weather. Therefore, if the principle of life be kept in full vigour, the circulation in the vessels of the surface cannot be lessened, and the evil in question cannot be experienced.

The question, whether the evil arising from improper exposure to cold and damp weather arises from excess or from defect of vital power, I refer to the sure testimony of experience. If it arises from excess of vital power, then it can never be experienced by any in whom that excess does not exist. Is this the case? A very hot bath, extensive blistering, small, frequently repeated blood letting, cathartics, nauseating doses of antimony (or tartar emetic), or of ipecacuanha, or senna, &c., are the means which he recommends for reducing vital power, and no doubt they are well calculated to produce this effect. Now let these means be used as long as they can be used without producing fatal effects; then, if Dr Jennings's theory be correct, the person may be exposed to cold or damp weather with as little danger as in any condition whatever, for he has no excess of vital power, but is so far from it that he can bear a considerable increase of it without danger. But is this the case? Can a reduction of the vital power enable one to bear the exposure of which we are speaking with less injury. We all know its effects are just the contrary. All experience proves that the less the vital power, the greater is the danger of exposure to cold or damp weather. Thus it is evident, Dr Jennings's opinion to the contrary notwithstanding, that the injury which he has mentioned as arising from an excess of vital power, arises from an opposite cause.

I know it will be said, that the idea that there is a diminution of vital heat in all cases of disease, is contradicted by actual experience; that in many forms of disease the heat is excessive. In answer to this objection, it is only necessary to observe, that every agent will show itself more evidently, and will appear to act with greater vigour when opposed than at other times. Let any thing be in the system which operates powerfully against the principle of life, and unless it overcomes the

vital power and produces death immediately, the power of the vital principle will be made evident; all the efforts of which nature is capable will be put forth for the removal of the offending cause.

I have dwelt longer on the idea, that in every case of disease there is a diminution of vital heat, than I would have done, had I not been aware of the strong prejudices which most people entertain against it. Yes, multitudes entertain such prejudices against this idea, that to them it appears not a subject for investigation, but for ridicule; and all the evidence of its correctness afforded by reason or experience, cannot induce them to bestow on it one serious thought. And what is this much ridiculed doctrine? It is comprised in two propositions: the principle of life is heat; or, in other words, internal vital heat is the agent on which the operations of nature depend. This is the first proposition: and the other is, that all disease is, in its nature, opposed to life; and, therefore, diminishes the vital power.

That the digestive powers are weakened in all cases of disease, so that food taken into the stomach does not duly nourish the system, is a truth so evident that no one will deny it; and, therefore, I shall not waste time in endeavouring to prove it.

That there is offensive matter in the system in all cases of disease, is likewise very evident. Morbific matter is produced in the system, even in time of health; but then it is thrown off by the various evacuations before it can injure the system. But let the vital power be diminished, and the operations of nature to throw off the offensive matter are impeded at the same time that the offensive matter collects more rapidly. The food taken into the stomach becomes corrupted before it is digested, and thus, instead of nourishing the system, it corrupts it. The blood is tainted, and thus disease is conveyed to every part of the system. *Perspiration is the great means by which the blood is purified; hence the importance of this evacuation, both to the preservation and the recovery of health.* "Insensible perspiration," says Dr Buchan, "is generally reckoned the greatest of all the discharges from the human body. It is of so great importance to health, that few diseases attack us while it goes properly on, but when it is obstructed, the whole frame is soon disordered. This discharge, however, being less perceptible than any of the rest, is consequently less attended to. Hence it is that acute fevers, rheumatisms, agues, &c., often proceed from obstructed perspiration before we are aware of its having taken place. On examining our patients, we find most of them impute their diseases either to violent colds

which they had caught, or to slight ones which had been neglected.”

I urge, therefore, *that since perspiration is an evacuation of so great importance—since health cannot be preserved without it—since it is the great means employed by nature for purifying the blood, which is tainted in all cases of disease—I urge that, since these things are so, perspiration should be promoted in all cases of disease.* That, in all cases of disease, there is offensive matter in the stomach and bowels, which must be thrown off, in order that health may be restored, is a truth which I imagine no one will deny ; and, therefore, I shall not spend time in endeavouring to prove it.

It appears, then, that in all cases of disease, the vital heat should be restored, digestion should be promoted, the blood should be purified by perspiration, and the stomach and bowels should be cleansed from morbid matter. And if these objects are accomplished, whatever may be the name or form of the disease, it is removed. Was it ever known that a man was sick, while in him the principle of life was in full vigour, his digestion good, his blood pure, and his stomach and bowels free from offensive matter? Surely not. If, then, a mode of treatment can be found, adapted to accomplish all the intentions which I have now named, that mode of treatment is certainly proper in every case of disease, and that under all the varieties of symptoms and stages. If the further progress of decay can be guarded against, the system supported, the principle of life enabled to act with vigour, and to derive due nourishment from digestion, the blood purified, and the morbid matter expelled from the stomach and bowels; what more is needful? Dr Jennings (as I have already mentioned) tells us that “art can accomplish but three great and leading intentions for effecting a cure.” Of these “the second is to extinguish any excess of vital power,” which has already been considered. “The third is to support the system in any case of debility:” which is certainly proper. “The first is to put down or diminish excess in circulation or excitement.” The explanation which he gives on this point is, that “if the circulation or excitement is raised too high, the vital power may become too much exhausted, and in that way make the system liable to disease.” And now let us hear how this evil is to be removed. “Excessive or violent action or excitement is lessened, first directly by blood letting, which at once strips the system of its most vital fluid. It may also be done indirectly, by means of a *very hot bath*. By this method, the vital power of the system is safely expended by increasing the action of the vessels of the surface. The same intention may be answered in a mixed way, by cathartics or purges, by emetics or pukes, by

sweating and by blisters, if the blisters are sufficiently large." In looking over this prescription, the attentive reader cannot fail to notice a very striking inconsistency. The evil proposed to be removed, is a want of balance between the vital power and the circulation which expends it, by which the latter becomes too great for the former; and yet one means which he prescribes for its removal is, "to strip the system of its most vital fluid;" and all the means are the same as those which he prescribes for destroying the excess of vital power. Now it is manifest that the excitement cannot be diminished by diminishing the vital power, except in proportion as the vital power is diminished; and therefore, it is utterly impossible that, in the case supposed, the balance should be restored by those means by which the vital power is diminished.

It is freely admitted, that in many cases of disease, the excitement is greater than it would be if the person were in perfect health; while, at the same time, the vital power is less. And this necessarily results from the truth, that the principle of life being opposed, exerts all its power against that which opposes it. In this case, therefore, let that which opposes the vital principle be removed, and the excessive excitement will cease of course: for nothing can contend when there is nothing for it to contend against.

I repeat it then, in any case of disease, let the principle of life, the internal vital heat be restored, the digestive powers duly strengthened, the blood purified, and the stomach and bowels freed from morbid matter, and nothing more is necessary—the patient is restored to health.

On the other hand, if all these ends are not accomplished, either by nature unaided, or by nature with the assistance of art, *there is no cure*. I know that nature sometimes produces these effects without the aid of medicine, and often against the operations of those things which are given as medicine; but if these effects be not produced, *nothing but death can remove the disease*. Thus it appears to me evident, that *all disease is the effect of one general cause, and may be removed (if in its nature curable) by one general remedy*.

But I rejoice that, on this subject, I can point to a source of evidence more satisfactory than all the arguments which can be drawn from the nature of things. Our confidence on this subject does not hang on the spider's web of ephemeral theory. No, it is founded on a sure basis—the unequivocal testimony of experience. The Thomsonian system of medicine is founded on the truth which I have been endeavouring to advocate—it recognizes this doctrine in all its bearings, and prescribes nothing which is not in perfect accordance with it. This system has been effectually tried in consumptions, in rheumatisms, in

dropsies, in gout, in palsies, in cholera, in fevers, intermittent and remittent, and nervous, and continued, and scarlet, and yellow, and spotted, &c. &c. &c.—in fine, in every form of disease incident to our country, in all its various stages; and, when faithfully and timely applied, it has never disappointed the most sanguine hopes of its warmest friends. These have not been occasional things, they have not been done once or twice merely, but times beyond numbering. They are not secret things, done in a corner, but they have been done in every part of our country; and they can be proven by the concurrent testimony of thousands of respectable and disinterested witnesses. While, therefore, it is admitted that the cure of a disease is a fact susceptible of being established by testimony; that the testimony of many thousands, some relating what they have felt, and others what they saw, all concurring in the establishment of the same truth; and that what a medicine has uniformly done, in thousands of cases, for a long series of years, it is calculated to do—I say, while these truths are admitted, we must hold that all curable disease may be removed by one general remedy. And, I trust I have been able to show that the testimony of the doctors, the nature of things, and the sure testimony of experience, afford evidence sufficient to convince every candid mind of the truth of that much ridiculed doctrine of Dr Thomson's, "*that all disease is the effect of one general cause, and may be removed by one general remedy.*"

On the subject of number and measure, reason has never been chargeable with fluctuations. The reason why the three angles of a triangle are equal to a semicircle, or to two right angles; why twelve times twelve are equal to one hundred and forty-four; or why the area of a square is equal to the sum of the areas of two other squares based upon the legs of a right angled triangle, whose hypotenuse forms one side of that square, are precisely now the same that they were in the days of Euclid or Diophantus.

From the foregoing facts, and others of the same nature, we are warranted in the conclusion that,

1. The reasons we offer for our opinions, on any subject, are correct or incorrect according to the extent and accuracy, or the scantiness and confusion of our examinations of the whole bearing of the subject.

2. That when we know all that can be known of a subject, and have examined it in all its possible bearings (as in the mathematical examples), our reason will be perfect and permanent.

3. That we ought not to be satisfied with our conclusions on any subject, till our knowledge is as full and perfect as the nature of the subject will admit.

4. That whenever we pronounce unreasonable any thing about which we have not (as in the mathematical cases) had all the information that can affect our conclusions, we injure ourselves in two ways. 1st. We prevent ourselves from seeking or receiving more correct information; and 2d. We expose our want of knowledge, and, what is worse, of mental discipline, to the pity, if not to the ridicule of those who are better educated.

Let us now examine, in detail, some of the prominent notions in society, and see how far they who advance or countenance them are entitled to the honourable appellation of rational beings.

First, it is thought impossible for a man whose education has not enabled him to profit by the experience of those who have lived before him, to discover natural laws and lay down rules of science which shall be worthy of the attention of the most profound scholars of the age. But is it more unreasonable than that Galileo should show the practical navigator how to traverse the ocean? That John Faust should teach the philosopher, the politician and the divine to multiply their tracts and books ten thousand fold, and speak to all the world through the simple medium of the press? That Robert Fulton should tell all the mechanists of the world how to navigate the ocean by the power of steam? That Whitney should discover to the planter a simple means of clearing out the seeds of his cotton, and thus to multiply the value of its products? Are not the store-houses of nature equally open to all? Cannot one man observe a plain matter of fact nearly as well as another? And is it reasonable to say that any thing is perfect, susceptible of no further improvement, so long as it does not answer the end for which it was designed?

It is said that Dr Thomson was, and is, an ignorant man, and, therefore, certainly unqualified to teach professors their art. Ignorant! Of what was he ignorant? Of Latin and Greek, and the names applied to disease? Grant it. But of what use is Latin and Greek, in helping a man to discover the effect of an external agent on the body? Cannot a man witness the operation of lobelia without knowing that the doctors call this peculiar effect on the system emesis? Is it not as easy to discover the effect of that which relieved a man of disease, as that which removed his hunger and thirst? And does it require a vast amount of Latin and Greek to describe, *in English*, these operations and their causes? Can that man be called ignorant of what will relieve hunger who has used bread, meat, &c. for this purpose, for twenty years, and never known them to fail? As well may Dr Thomson be said to be igno-

rant of what will cleanse the phlegm and canker from the stomach, overpower the cold, remove obstructions, and reinstate the system: for he has been engaged in this business more than forty years, and with complete success, wherever there were faithfulness in the patient, and a constitution to recruit. Can he not tell to plain men, in a plain way, *how*, with *what means*, and *why* he does this, without an acquaintance with Latin and Greek, or even with the endless and fruitless speculations of the learned on the same subject, who, with all their knowledge of each other's errors in theory, and mischiefs in practice, have never yet discovered how to accomplish this desirable object?*

The notion that those who study the longest after a particular object will be the most sure to find it in the end, reminds us of the argument of a boy that had been angling. A and his brother went a fishing to the same brook: A went where the fish resorted; A caught many and soon returned home: B toiled hard and long to little purpose, because he fished at random; and when he came home was invited by A to partake of a noble dish of well served fishes; but he strenuously refused, giving it as a reason, that as he had laboured long and hard about the same stream and caught nothing, it was impossible that A should have provided the dish of which he was invited to partake. A stranger was informed that it was only fifteen minutes walk to the place he wished to find. 'That can't be true, says he, for I have already walked an hour, and have not found it yet! Dr Thomson tells physicians that *under their very feet* grow sure and safe remedies for all diseases. 'That can't be, say they, for we have searched four thousand years without finding them. You have searched afar for poisons, instead of antidotes, says Dr Thomson. But we are numerous and learned, and therefore must know better than you where and for what

* In the sequel of this discourse we shall have frequent occasion to use the term Physicians; but we wish it to be distinctly understood that our warfare is against errors and not men. It has been very pleasant to us to be acquainted with many distinguished men of this profession; and though, as among all other classes, there are many narrow and prejudiced minds, and some mean and grovelling hearts; yet, as a body, we esteem them as laborious and faithful in their profession; as anxious as any others to relieve the sufferings of their fellow men, and as willing to make or adopt any thing which in their opinion can be considered a real improvement in their art. We hope, therefore, that no expression of ours may give personal offence; for certainly no such thing is intended. We believe that the "science of medicine" is entirely constructed upon a false foundation, and our only objection to its supporters is, that they will not open their eyes to the light that might enable them to discover their error.

to search. If you prefer your blind sophistry to plain matter of fact, take your own course, is the reply.

It is said, grant that Dr Thomson may have discovered something that is good in certain forms of disease, it is unreasonable to believe that one remedy can cure all diseases. In the first place, we remark, that Dr Thomson does not pretend to cure all diseases with one remedy. He has pointed out more than seventy of the best articles of *Materia Medica*, and given his followers certain plain rules for the discovery of as *many more as they please*. But suppose he had said that all diseases might be cured by the administration of a single article, it would not be unreasonable, because it is not impossible: indeed analogy proves it quite possible. We well know that the single article of bread will sustain the life of man, and promote the growth of animals of almost every kind. I have seen a full grown ox never eat any thing but milk. These articles of food will produce, in man, nails and hair; in horses, solid hoofs; in oxen, divided hoofs and horns; in cats, fur and claws; and in fowls, feathers; in fishes, wholesome food; in serpents, poison, &c. Is it not, therefore, not only *possible*, but even *probable*, that one substance may yet be found that will remove all the aches and ills that flesh is heir to? Would such a discovery surprise the thinking and ingenious of the present day, more than the sight of a locomotive steam engine would have surprised the dwellers upon earth a century ago? And would *they* not have been as reasonable in declaring impossible what our eyes now see, as *we* are in saying that it is impossible even to discover a universal remedy for all diseases? Again, it is said that the vast variety of diseases to which the human frame is subject cannot be traced to the same cause. You are therefore wrong in saying that disease is *one*. We answer, first—if in this assertion we *err*, we are in company with not a few of the greatest men that ever devoted their attention to the science of medicine.

But how is the error proved? The Thomsonian believes in the *unity* of disease; others believe in a great diversity of diseases: each acts according to his faith. He with universal remedies, and they with an endless variety of *local*. What is the result? He *cures* all that are not constitutionally dead; they lose often the most robust and promising youth. To illustrate: I doubt not, says one, that the Thomsonian System is good in many cases; but it is unreasonable to suppose that the icy grasp of cholera, and the scorching flame of a bilious fever, should be met upon the same principles, or with the same remedies. Let us see.

There is a cholera patient with the premonitory symptoms

fairly developed, surrounded with a host of the regular faculty. A exclaims, "Ah! this is a bad case. What shall be done?" "Bleed him freely," says B. "But this is too late for bleeding," says A. "Bleed as long as the pulse can be felt," says B, "and then you may use blisters and other remedies with some prospect of success." "Calomel is my sheet anchor," says C. "But the case is too far advanced; the patient will die before calomel will take effect" (see Dr Clary's letter). "I have nothing better," says one, "but let us be cautious, and give ten grains every hour till it operates." "Ten grains!" says another; "violent cases require a bold practice! I give two hundred and fifty at once!" "Don't deal so rashly," says D. "Dip him in a warm bath, and give him a drop or so of camphor, and repeat." "Emetics are my chief dependence," says E. "They'll do in the first stage," says D, "but I think this patient is too far gone." "Friction, friction," says F. "Yes, with cayenne," says one. "No, with spirits of turpentine," says another. "Brandy or vinegar will do," says a third. "Gastric excitement," says G; "an emetic, and a blister to the whole epigastrium." "Heat him," says H, "give him something hot, and put hot bricks to him, rub him with hot liniments, bottles of hot water will be good by his side; and if you can't bring him to his senses without, sear his back with a hot poker! Immerse him in a hot bath!" "I think his stomach is hot enough now," says I; "I am for giving him ice." "Just think of that," says J, "I is for cramming ice into his stomach, and yet that is the only part about him that is not already as cold as ice. Judge whether any thing else is wanting to kill him." "Kill him," says K, "every thing I have heard proposed yet is better calculated to *kill* than to *cure* him." "Laudanum," says L, "will check the disease, till something else can be done." "Mustard plasters should be made immediately," says M. "Nitre will cool the internal fever," says N. "Opium and camphor are my dependence," says O. "Precisely opposite," says P, "a stimulant with a sedative!" "Whatever is done, must be done quickly," says Q. "Rub the extremities," says R; "this can't be wrong, if it should not be relevant." "I have some confidence in saline emetics, and even saline injections into the veins," says S: "I believe the serum of the blood must be restored." "That's been often tried in vain," says T, "and the operation is tedious and troublesome." "Venesection is doubtless proper sometimes," says V, "but it is vain in this case." "If you wait much longer it *will* be," says W. "Ten grains of calomel every hour, till it operates, can do no harm," says X. "Your theories and your practices

are all wrong," says Y. "You may take your own courses, (*aside*) I shall imitate the Thomsonians as closely as I can, without appearing to countenance empiricism, or to acknowledge any obligations to that arrant system of quackery. (See the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. IX. p. 122.) I shall give eupatorium and ipecac. and cover with blankets, till I have cleansed the stomach and promoted perspiration, and finish with half a grain of calomel, one and a half grains of camphor, ten or twenty of cream of tartar, just to appear scientific, and then, if my patient gets well, the fact will afford abundant evidence that emetics and sudorifics are good medicines in skilful hands!"

It is known to every one, who has seen any cholera treatment, that this is no picture of the fancy. It is a very imperfect sketch, falling far behind the reality of what many of us have seen and heard of medical views and practice.

Could there have been greater confusion, even at the foot of the Babylonian tower? Would any one imagine that all these diverse and opposite opinions, and empirical modes and means of practice were learned at the footstool of the "highly cultivated and progressively improving science of medicine," which scorns to stoop, in any respect, "to a level with mere charlatanism?" (See Dr M. Burton's letter to the city of Richmond, after his return from an inspection of the cholera, in 1832.)

Would he not rather conclude with Z, the spectator of the above consultation, that all the learned have yet discovered and disclosed, in relation to this disease, is a "zeal without knowledge?" a zeal for success in the exercise of their profession, without the knowledge of the proper mode and means by which it may be obtained?

But yonder is a different scene. A miserable victim of cholera, cramped in the chest and bowels, pulseless, cold and purple at the extremities, begging for water with an unearthly voice, echoing as it were from the long dark vista to the valley of death? But there come a dozen Thomsonians, who perhaps never saw a case of cholera in their lives. The first one that touches him calls out "He is cold." With united voice they cry, "Raise the heat; throw out the obstructions, and tone up the system." One asks, "How is all this to be done?" Do *you* profess to be a Thomsonian, and start such a question as that? Away with such a wolf in sheep's clothing. A says, "I've No. 6:" B, "here's third preparation:" C, "I've cholera syrup:" D cries, "*Anything that is hot; and he that gives it first is the best physician in the case.*" There is no argument here; every one knows what is to be done, and no one stands idle till all is accomplished. Thus, not unfrequently,

in three hours, the man is in better health than he had enjoyed for a long time.

Take another example.

Bring into the first consultation room a violent case of fever. Dr A says it proceeds from cold; the patient must be bled, to reduce the inflammatory diathesis. B says, put a blister to the side to guard against pleurisy, and then give mild sudorifics, such as spirits of nitre, &c. ! But C declares he is bilious, and must have fifteen grains of calomel, repeated, if necessary, i. e. if this dose does not completely subdue the effort of nature to throw off the disease. And so they go. We have seen the above practice where it was afterwards proved that the fever did not proceed from any of the causes enumerated, and of course, all this cruel treatment was wrong, upon their own principles.

Carry a similar case to a Thomsonian club. He has a fever, says one. There are obstructions somewhere, cry the rest. Raise the heat, open the pores, relax the system, drive out the obstructions, and tone him up.

No sooner said than done. Sometimes a cold chill is driven to the surface; large quantities of phlegm are thrown from the stomach, a warm perspiration succeeds, and the man is well. *The Patent Doctors* declare, 'twas only a severe cold, and patient and all rejoice in his escape from it, with something of the feeling with which the traveller reviews, in the morning, the dangerous precipice along whose brow he had unconsciously walked the dark evening before.

In another case the skin would have been covered with morbid secretions; acrid bile and rotten canker would have been thrown from the stomach, &c. without any of the chills, cold sweat or phlegm exhibited in the first. Indeed, say the doctors, yours was a real case of bilious obstruction. We hope the bile will be better employed hereafter, than in souring the stomach, or travelling through the pores to the skin. Take your supper, tone the stomach, keep up the heat, and all will be well. These comparisons are but the simple relations of matters of fact, that have come under our own observation.

Whether it is most reasonable to approve, because it is fashionable, the course that lost the patients, and to reject, because they who exercise it are said to be ignorant, that which restores them to health, or to adopt that, wherever you find it, which is known by its fruits to be sure and safe, we leave every one to determine for himself.

But we are willing to compare theory as well as practice. We proved that all sound reason is the fruit of experience. Having examined the parent, we need not fear to catechise the

child. What is then the opinion of physicians about the origin, the nature, and the proper treatment of cholera? We have already shown what every news reader knows, that there are few opinions on either of these points in which any two of the faculty agree.

To give reasons for their practice, then, we confess we are altogether too ignorant; but, ignorant as we are, we will give you the reasons on which Thomsonians act.

1st. In every case of cholera, they find the natural quantity of vital heat diminished. Reason says this loss should be restored.

2d. All their experience tells them, that whenever the health is bad, there are proportionate obstructions in the system, or loss of power in the digestive organs, or both. No known case of cholera is exempt from these defects.

3d. Reason, therefore, teaches them, whenever they find a new case, to remove those obstructions and strengthen the system. This done, the patient is well.

4th. But what is the immediate cause? Answer: Sudden cessation of powerful excitement, which carries off the heat faster than it is generated, till the internal preponderance is lost. Hence, reason teaches us to restore the balance of power, and experience proves that reason *right*.

What are the remote causes? Answer: Too large a proportion of nitrogen in the atmosphere, combined with the loss of vital power occasioned by obstructions in the stomach.

What are the several excitements? Crude food, inebriation, fear, and severe exercise are the principal, as every case proves.

But must not a physician treat his case according to symptoms? Certainly. This is just the way Thomsonians work. If they find the patient cold, they heat him; if feverish, they sweat him; if vomiting, they clear out the offensive matter; if weak, they strengthen him; if cramped, they relax his muscles; if obstructed, they remove the obstacles; if hungry, they feed him, &c. Is not this conduct reasonable? But is it not unreasonable to undertake to cure the man before you tell him his disease? As unreasonable as it would be to put an eye stone into the eye before you explained the peculiar nature and form of the mote it is designed to extract. There is no harm in telling him, *if you know*. But the most important matter with him is to get rid of the disease; then he will be *more certain* what it was, and converse about it with more satisfaction.

But you Thomsonians must sometimes do great harm, by giving your medicines at random, without knowing what the

disease is. That *would* be true, if, like our opponents, we used what could do injury in any case ; but all our medicines are in *harmony* with life, at war only with disease, and hostile to that in all its Protean forms.

Now we know that you are unreasonable ; for, that is as much as to say that all diseases are one, and that you have a universal remedy.

We do say that all diseases are one ; and we confidently declare that the wisest men that ever ranged them under different names, have never been able to distinguish between them, or to find a remedy that would infallibly cure one (without injury to the body), that would not also cure others. What means the pretension, for example, that Swaim's and Phillips's Panacea will cure a long list of diseases, if not that these diseases have one common origin ? We are sure that we have as good reason for believing that all natural diseases spring from one cause, and may be cured by one remedy, as you have for believing that all the moral symptoms, as exhibited by the inmates of our prisons, proceed from one cause, the corruption of the human heart, and may be cured by one medicine, the blood of Christ. If the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, and it as easy for Him who provided one universal remedy for the sick soul, to provide another for the body, is it unreasonable in us to suppose that He *may* have done it ? Nay, is it not most reasonable to suppose that he has ? But, you say, if so, he would have told us what the remedy is. As well might you undertake to prove that there is no Gospel, because it is not revealed to every heathen. It is not impossible that one remedy may yet be found which will contain all the qualities which we find in many, and be so adapted to the human system, as to aid it successively in a regular process against disease, and in favour of life, till the desired object be fully accomplished. Dr Thomson does not pretend to have discovered such a single article ; but he has discovered sundry different articles, which, used in due succession, will do more to remove disease than all the remedies that were ever discovered before, and that may be so compounded, even by art, as to be given at the same time with almost equal success. He, therefore, that has put the several remedial qualities into a few different vegetable forms, *can* and *may* have made one plant contain them all. I dare not say he *has not* ; and I will add, some ploughboy is as likely to discover that plant as a Hippocrates, a Galen, a Sydenham, a Cullen, a Rush or a Waterhouse. Of one thing we are certain ; the Thomsonian remedies are *not only* the most *valuable remedies* that have ever been discovered, but they may be safely and successfully

administered by the hand of every man or woman who is worthy to be counted the head of a family: and though we have no objection to the future discovery of the one remedy, to which we have alluded, yet we do feel it to be one of the most important duties we owe to our suffering fellow beings, to use all our influence that the knowledge of the virtues and uses of those already discovered should be universally diffused.

The Botanic system of medical practice is altogether the fruit of experience. It had no part of its origin in hypothesis, nor has it ever been the least improved by mere abstract speculation.

In his youth, the author of this system providentially discovered that a certain plant possessed the power to eject, in a short time, with very little pain or inconvenience, and with no evil consequence whatever, any foreign or morbid matter from the human stomach. He afterwards observed, that whenever this operation had been thoroughly performed, sickness at the stomach, headachs, vertigo, fever, pain over and in the eyes, morbid appetite, indigestion or dyspepsia, mental aberrations, nightmare, and a host of other aches and ills that flesh is heir to, took a speedy departure from the fortunate patient. The experiment was continued on others, who suffered under the same maladies, and the result was uniformly the same.

It was observed, however, that in cases where the patient was cold, or the stomach acid, the operation, though in character the same, was more tedious, and less thorough. To obviate these difficulties, resort was had to those warming stimulants which experience, in their use for food, &c. had abundantly proved to be calculated to generate heat in the stomach, and diffuse it over the body; and to the use of pearlash, whose well known property is to neutralize the acid. In the mean time, observation had disclosed the fact that certain vegetable decoctions would detach the cold phlegm and morbid canker from the folds of the mucous membrane of the stomach, and thus greatly facilitate as well as enhance the value of the operation. These same medicines were found to produce the same effect upon the bowels, whenever *they* were disordered.

Experience has ever taught that no man suffers under the influence of a scorching fever while in a state of free perspiration. The same experience teaches that the most favourable situation to induce that condition of the body is immersion in some kind of warm vapour. The boy that stows away the new made hay, or he that explores the tobacco sweat-house, always returns under the influence of a free perspiration. It

only remained then for art to devise the most convenient and effectual means of imitating Nature's own plan, of throwing morbid obstructions from the pores of the external surface, to complete the process of discharging morbid matter of every character and description from every portion of the system. The various modes by which steam, either simple or medicated, is applied to the surface of the body, sufficiently answer this purpose.

In cases where disease or improper medical treatment had debilitated the system, it was observed that something more was necessary to complete a cure than merely to rid the patient of disease.

It was observed that the debilitated system was unable, without assistance, to maintain an amount of vital heat sufficient to sustain a free circulation; and that the digestive organs needed the aid of tonics to regain their elasticity. For the former of these purposes the most pure and wholesome stimulants were applied; and for the latter, bitters in various forms were added to the most nutritious diet and beverage.

So far as it regarded the removal of disease from the body, and the restoration of debilitated organs to a healthy state, experience had now completed her work. I purposely omit, in this place, any special notice of the branch of medical practice called surgery, though I should do injustice to the process already disclosed did I not state that, by expelling all morbid matter from every portion of the system, it prevents the formation of those abscesses, tumours, &c., which, under other circumstances, afford the principal subjects for surgical operations.

It now remains only to explain, for the benefit of those who have not discovered them for themselves, the nature of the human system, the principle of life, the nature and character of disease, the manner in which it invades the body, the proper mode and means of expelling it from the system, and of restoring to a healthy state the debilitated organs.

Then, correct observation will show that the human body is an organized structure, containing an outer and an inner surface, every portion of which is a net-work, composed of the *ends* or *mouths* of an innumerable multitude of tubes, whose main bodies and ramifications extend through every portion of the system, and whose office it is to absorb or discharge the various fluids that are received into or formed in it. Into this body is implanted, at its formation, a principle called *life*; a principle which, whatever be its nature, is accompanied with an amount or a degree of heat always considerably above that of the atmosphere in which the man is destined to dwell, and with

the power to bring all the digestive, absorbent and secretive organs into action upon the food that is received for the nourishment of the body. Experience shows that any obstruction lodged in any one or more of these absorbent or secretive organs is the cause of disease, i. e. a hindrance to the full and free exercise of the principle of life, in its processes of digestion and nourishment.

Should the stomach, the *head* and *prince* of all the digestive organs be the seat of obstructions, the amount of vital heat is proportionally lessened at the fountain, and the extremities become cold, the whole system is languid and full of pain, and tormented with alternate chills and fevers, till the obstructions are removed and the heat regains its empire.

Whenever obstructions clog the operations of life at the fountain, the vital heat diminishes, the arteries and veins of the extremities become partially collapsed for want of heat in the blood to keep them expanded, a smaller quantity of blood than usual flows through them, and of course the vibrations must become more frequent to pass the whole through the heart in a given time. Another consequence is, an undue accumulation of blood and heat in the heart, lungs and brain, which heat presently finds its way to the contracted skin, where it accumulates, looks angry, and produces the peculiar effect denominated fever.

To expel this fever, we supply the fountain with additional heat, apply warmth and moisture to the surface to relax the pores, and then excite to action the secretory vessels by means of diffusive stimulants. When all the proper evacuations from the pores of the surface, the stomach, &c. are effected, that is, when the obstructions are removed, the cause of fever is gone; the arteries and veins being warmed and expanded, the blood returns through them in its usual quantity; the digestive organs, being relieved, are enabled to resume their duty; there is no more occasion for fever; the man is well.

In regard to its porosity, and the fluids it contains, the human system very closely resembles a sponge saturated with water. Every one knows that an undue pressure upon any part of this sponge collapses the pores in that part, and forces the water which was contained in it towards the centre of the sponge. To make room for this, that which is near some other portion of the surface must necessarily be discharged. It is evident that if the pressure be increased and extended the discharge will continue till no fluid remains. So of the human system. While there is no undue local pressure upon it all the natural fluids remain in it, in hydrostatic equilibrium, till they have undergone their accustomed changes, and then are

discharged through their proper channels, in the manner prescribed by the laws of healthy action. But whenever any undue pressure collapses the vessels of any one portion of the system, and extends itself towards other portions, the fluids are forced from these to the tenderest places of egress, where they rush with violence from the body.

This is the true cause of all hemorrhages, and every other unnatural and excessive discharge. To illustrate: A patient was threatened with hemorrhage; a botanic physician was immediately called; the process of raising the heat, relieving the local pressure, and discharging the obstructions, was strictly followed, and no hemorrhage occurred. A second person was threatened with the same disease, from the same cause. A learned physician of the old school was called; he prescribed ice to be eaten (and applied to the body if necessary), and a quantity of pills of the acetate of lead, sulphate of morphia, with other minor articles; one to be taken every six hours till a dozen should be taken; promising the patient that there would be some check to the hemorrhage after the reception of the third pill. The pills were taken and the ice eaten as directed, but, instead of diminishing, the hemorrhage increased to an alarming extent. After twenty-four hours a botanic physician was called. He used heat instead of ice, and relaxing fluids instead of astringent metals. In fifteen minutes the hemorrhage was evidently controlled, and in ninety minutes it entirely disappeared, no more to return. In a few days the patient was as well as usual. A third patient was threatened with the same disease, from the same cause; the regular practice was pursued under the direction of several eminent physicians, and in three weeks the patient was—dead!

The first patient followed the new practice from the beginning, and no bad consequences ensued. The second commenced with the old practice, grew worse, resorted to the new, and was soon cured. The third took the old course from first to last, when death closed the scene! We leave you to comment.

Another patient was labouring under an unnatural discharge of a different fluid. The prescriptions of the physician, for three weeks, seemed only to aggravate the disease. A botanic physician stepped in one evening, raised the heat, threw off the pressure, discharged the obstructions, and left the patient entirely free from trouble.

We do not pretend to any skill in surgery. But let us take a bird's-eye view of bloodletting, the extraction of tumours from the flesh, the discharge of abscesses and of morbid matter from the deep recesses of the body, the reduction of calculi, &c. It has already been proved that bleeding is not required in any

kind of fevers ; it being necessary in these cases only to warm and expand the collapsed veins and arteries, and remove the undue pressure.

A young man was thrown from his horse and taken up senseless. He was carried into a house, where he fainted immediately. A surgeon would undoubtedly have bled him after his recovery from syncope, but a botanic physician entered the instant he fainted, and poured into his mouth some very hot medicine ; he instantly revived, complained of cold, and was laid upon a sofa and covered with blankets. The hot medicine was repeated, a chill succeeded, the man talked at random for about half an hour, when a free perspiration broke out, his reason returned, and all was right. In another half hour he rose and walked a mile to his lodgings, as though nothing had happened.

A young lady fell from a carriage upon her face, where she lay speechless for ten minutes. A botanic doctor poured into her mouth a strong heat and an emetic ; she immediately opened her eyes (and her mouth, which had been set), and asked what he was doing ? He assisted her into the carriage, drove three miles, giving occasionally, as she appeared to droop, a little more of the medicine, and when she was carried into a house, she vomited, and in a few minutes became rational ; she was carried three miles further, where she passed the night, and where her friends strongly insisted that she should be bled by a surgeon present. The botanist objected, and she was well the next day.

Tumours.—Mr W. had a rising just below his knee of more than twelve months growth. A surgeon made an incision one inch and a half long, and down to the bone ; but nothing was discharged save a little blood. A botanist was called. He cleansed the general system, applied poultices to the tumour, and in less than a week the surgeon's incision was entirely healed, while a natural opening was made about an inch below, which discharged a large quantity of pus, and from which, in a few days, he drew a white core an inch long and half an inch thick.

A gentleman had the rheumatism, it settled in his leg and made it very painful. A physician poulticed it, and gave him medicine till he became tired of the process, and quitted the patient, saying that the flesh must be laid open and the bone scraped. Not much liking the scraping, he applied to a botanic doctor, who soon restored his general health, drove out his rheumatic pains, and in a few months entirely healed the sore leg, *without any scraping.*

Abscess.—A young man had an abscess, formed on the lungs.

After a few courses of medicine, a half pint or more of morbid matter was voluntarily discharged, the sore soon healed, and the pain in the breast, that had been endured for years, departed.

Calculi.—Two gentlemen were much afflicted with calculi: one went to Dr Physick and underwent the operation of lithotomy. The other had been confined to his bed many months, and was told by his physicians he could never be cured. He called a botanic doctor who cured him in a single evening. His infusions had the power to dissolve the calculi and carry off the solution.

Reduction of Dislocations.—Experience has abundantly tested the fact, that dislocations may easily be reduced after the relaxation that may be produced by a judicious use of steam and lobelia, &c.; and fractured limbs, after being splintered up, are easily preserved from mortification and soreness, and healed in a very short time, by a course of treatment which every one who understands the botanic principles can easily apply.

But let us not be satisfied with the arguments and testimony of friends only, especially as we can find the best authority for almost all we believe and teach among the writings of the most eminent for learning and experience in the old school theory and practice.

In the 1st place, it was the opinion of the celebrated medico-electrician, Dr Graham, of London, of Dr Brown, of Edinburgh, and of Dr Rush, of Philadelphia, as well as Dr Thomson, that disease was a unit.

2d. The most important writers on the medical properties of the herb called Lobelia Inflata, are Drs Thatcher, of Massachusetts, and Barton and Eberle, of Philadelphia. Dr Thatcher highly recommends lobelia for croup, whooping cough and hydrophobia. Dr Barton recommends it in croup instead of the antimonials, on account of its more certain action; and Dr Eberle speaks of its excellence in croup, hernia, &c. It is true these physicians caution us against the empirical use of the article, telling us that in unskillful hands, and in over doses, it has been *supposed* to have produced alarming and even fatal effects. But in every case in which *they used it themselves*, they declare that it produced the *desired* effect. Their only objection to it, drawn from their own experience, was its speedy and violent action. We have no objection to its speedy and violent action, because experience has assured us that this action is altogether in favour of life. Dr Barton states, that the United States do not contain a plant of more unequivocal action on the system. Unequivocal, that is, uniformly the same on the same persons at different times, and different persons at the same time. In this high commendation of Dr Barton, we can

cordially unite. It is surprising with what accuracy an experienced practitioner will predict the time and mode of operation of lobelia, in a given case. I have known them before they began, to predict the time within from three to five minutes, when a full course should be completed.

3d. In the Edinburgh Dispensatory, we are told that *Capsicum annuum* is the purest stimulant known; and in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal it is stated, that there is no other single article equal to it for the suppression of hemorrhage.

4th. In Dr Barton's Medical Botany, the *Hydrastis Canadensis*, or bitter Golden Seal of the botanic system, is pronounced one of the very best of all the vegetable tonics. Myrrh is considered, by medical writers, a valuable antiseptic, and sundry other articles, very important articles in the system, we expect will be as highly commended whenever their value shall become known to the faculty.

5th. *A word of commendation for Steam.*—An eminent medical writer remarks: "It has been generally thought that one constant effect of the warm bath is, to relax and debilitate the body; but this idea is now admitted to be founded in mistake. It is an error to suppose that persons who have been immersed in the warm bath are more liable to take cold; for the body is better able to resist cold after warm and vapour bathing than at any other time. The vapour bath used in this country (England) is simple in construction and effectual in application. It is an apparatus to which the steam of boiling water, either simple or medicated, is conveyed through pipes from a common steam boiler. In this apparatus the stimulant power of heat is tempered and modified by the moisture diffused through the air, and as the elastic vapour, like air, is a less powerful conductor of heat than a watery fluid, the effect of vapour in raising the temperature of the body is much less than that of the hot bath. Its heating effects are also further diminished by the copious perspiration which ensues: so that, on every account, the vapor bath is safer, in most cases more effectual, than the hot water bath, and may be employed with success when the latter would be attended with danger. It may be applied also to the whole or to any part of the body. To effect this the steam is conveyed into a wagon-roof frame, under a blanket or other covering, to confine the steam. The temperature of the vapour bath is from one hundred and ten to one hundred and twenty degrees; and though from ten to fifteen minutes is generally sufficient, there may be cases where an hour may be necessary.

"Whenever the cold bath is deemed proper, the warm bath should first be used as a preparative. The bather should

always go into the cold bath when warm, and seldom exceed one plunge, which produces a glowing and healthful appearance of the countenance, and an additional flow of spirits. After the body is properly dried and rubbed, the cool air is grateful and perfectly safe. There is no danger whatever from cold. We are less liable to take cold after warm and vapour bathing than at any other time. When the bath is used for cleanliness, refreshment, or as a luxury, the above rule admits of no exceptions. The vapour bath is to be used in all cases of fever, when perspiration is particularly desirable. The more immediate and general effects of this bath in fever are, that it disposes to a calm and sound sleep, and regulates the discharge from the skin; the increase of the symptoms is lessened, if not prevented; the head is prevented from delirium, and the symptoms are moderated till the disease terminates. It has also been found beneficial in inflammation of the bowels, complaints of the liver, dropsy, water in the head, glandular swellings of the neck, calculous complaints, gout, leprosy, white swellings, strangulated hernia, affections of the skin, &c." Our author then gives a long list of diseases, in which he says the cold bath is injurious, and adds: "On the other hand, the warm and vapour baths, properly regulated, will be found principal agents in curing most of the foregoing disorders. In eruptions of every kind, in œdematous (dough-like) swellings of the limbs; in stiffness and contraction of the joints; in all those diseases called nervous; in every case requiring a course of mercury (I should rather say, that has had a course of mercury, I know of none that requires it); in early infancy; in the decline of life to the last stage of existence, the warm and vapour baths may be used with advantage and safety."

Let it be remembered that, by our author, steam is considered the principal agent in curing not only the diseases enumerated, but no body knows how many others, represented by the significant, &c.; and that the Thomsonians use internal remedies so much more active against disease, and in favour of life, as to throw steam, valuable as it is, into the character of a mere auxiliary—a faithful nurse only, that waits on the doctor. If steam alone, then, merits the high commendations I have quoted, what should be the meed of praise awarded to a full Thomsonian course. Could even the author of the botanic system himself, have desired a more particular or accurate description of his steam bath, or a more commendatory account of its usefulness and safety, than what is given in the above quotations? How completely does this author sweep away the objections of "weakening, rendering liable to take cold, causing inflammations, congestions, delirium, engorgements, hemor-

rhages," and a thousand other bug-bear evils? But it may be said, this is only his opinion; he does not give the proof. Very well, let us draw the proof from other testimony.

Facts.—Dr Willich says—(Domestic Encyclopedia, vol. 1, page 160)—“The sweating or vapour bath is used in Russia by persons of every rank and age, in almost every disorder, before and after a journey, hard work, &c. These are frequented at least once a week, or as often as possible, whether in a state of health or sickness.

“The extraordinary degree of heat produced by the evaporation of water thrown upon red hot stones, in a close room, raises the thermometer to 146 or 168 degrees, a degree of heat considerably above that which melts wax, and only 12 degrees below that for boiling spirit of wine. In such a bath the Russians lie naked on a bench, notwithstanding a profuse perspiration, sometimes for two hours, occasionally pouring hot water over their bodies, and at length plunge over head into a large tub of water. Many rush out almost dissolved in sweat, and either throw themselves into the adjoining river, or roll themselves in snow during the most piercing cold, without suffering any inconvenience, and probably with advantage; for we understand that rheumatism is scarcely known in Russia, and there is great reason to attribute this exemption to the vapour bath.” Dr Charleton, who used the warm bath freely, says: “Of 996 paralytics, most of whom had resisted the power of medicine, 813 were benefited by the proper application of the warm bath.” In his Views of the Russian Empire, the Rev. W. Tooke says: “It is not to be doubted that the Russians owe their longevity, their robust state of health, their little disposition to certain mortal diseases, and their happy cheerful temper mostly to their baths.” This remedy of nature’s own invention was employed with so much success, that for 500 years Rome had no other physicians. M. Sanay, in his letters on Egypt, says: “The Egyptians employ the vapour bath for the purpose of procuring delightful sensations, and removing that irksomeness and apathy which is the concomitant of an idle and sensual life,” &c.

Remark.—The Turks, Egyptians and Russians bathe; the Persians and Hindoos shampoo; the Russians plunge from the steam room into rivers, or wallow in snow, and all for “pleasure, luxury, delightful sensations,” &c.; and shall we be told that a Thomsonian steam bath, with all its concomitant circumstances, which would immeasurably enhance the value of the above mentioned vapour baths, is almost as much to be dreaded as death itself? Be assured that they who speak any evil of such a bath are either very ignorant themselves, or else

they presume on an ignorance in you that is, to say the least of it, disgraceful to a free and enlightened community.

Dr Cooper, of South Carolina, recommends a steam apparatus much like those used by botanic practitioners, and says he has often used it with a happy effect. Can the steam that is sanative and luxurious in South Carolina and Russia—that procures delightful sensations and a beautiful glow in the countenance in Egypt, Turkey and Persia, destroy all the health and beauty of the robust sons and fair daughters of this enlightened country? For myself, I can safely declare, that in all my observations of the practice on persons of all ages, of both sexes, in a great variety of conditions and diseases, I have never known steam to do the least harm. On the contrary, I agree most cordially with the authors quoted, “that when properly regulated, the steam bath will always be attended with advantage and safety.”

Here, perhaps, I ought to close; but the simplicity, efficacy and value of the new mode of treating diseases appear so much more evident, when contrasted with the old, that I feel it my duty to present a sketch of what a young man has to do, before he is prepared to exercise the healing art in what is called the regular mode.

First, he must learn the situation, figure and proportion of (according to some authors 210, according to others 248) bones in the human system. To this knowledge he must add a similar acquaintance with —— pairs and —— separate muscles; a vast number and variety of arteries and veins; of nerves and their ramifications; and last but not least, he must become thoroughly acquainted with the structure, uses, position, &c. of the organs of respiration, of digestion, absorption and secretion. These being all tangible objects, time, patience and diligence may enable the student to fasten their images on his mind. But his labour is but just begun. He has now to learn the classes, orders, genera and species of diseases, with a compound definition to each, especially the latter, which amount, according to different nosologists, to from 1800 to 2500. In one work he will find different species of disease ranged under the same genus, while in another, these species will not be deemed worthy of a place in the same class, and in a third they will be considered anomalous, and thrown into an appendix as unworthy of a place in any particular class.

An eminent medical writer remarks, that the acquisition and retention of the specific descriptions of diseases is utterly impossible, even to the most tenacious mind; and Dr Rush, in the exercise of the same feeling, scattered all nosologies to the four winds of heaven, directing his followers to notice only

whether the symptoms were atonic or tonic, and to stimulate or deplete accordingly.

But there are yet to be learned the history, description and properties of 20,000 remedies, and their association with the several diseases which they *are supposed to counteract*. And, lastly, he must learn his lesson in toxicology, that is, how to counteract the influence of these medicines when they act as poisons instead of remedies! Thus caparisoned, he offers his services as a practitioner of medicine; but just before he is called to a violent case of fever, he takes up a book entitled "The Application of the Principles of Philosophical Investigation to the Theory and Practice of Medicine, by John Abercrombie, M.D. F.R.S.E., and First Physician to his Majesty in Scotland," and reads as follows:

"A writer of high eminence has even hazarded the assertion that those persons are most confident in regard to the characters of disease whose knowledge is most limited, and that extended observation generally leads to doubt. When, in the practice of medicine, we apply to new cases the knowledge acquired from others which we believe to have been of the same nature, the difficulties are so great that it is doubtful whether, in any case, we can be said to act upon experience, as we do in other departments of science. For we have not the means of determining with certainty that the condition of the disease, the habit of the patient, and all the circumstances which enter into the character of the affection, are, in any two cases, precisely the same; and if they differ in any one particular, we cannot be said to act from experience, but only from analogy. The difficulties and sources of uncertainty which meet us at every stage of such investigations, are in fact so numerous and great, that those who have had the most extensive opportunities for observation, will be the first to acknowledge that our pretended experience must in general sink into analogy, and even our analogy too often into conjecture."

The following apologue, says Dr Alambert, made by a physician, a man of wit and of philosophy, represents very well the state of that science. "Nature," says he, "is fighting with disease; a blind man armed with a club, that is, the physician, comes to settle the difference. He first tries to make peace; when he cannot accomplish this, he lifts his club and strikes at random; if he strikes the disease, he kills it; if he strikes nature, he slays her." An eminent physician, says the same writer, renouncing a practice which he had exercised for thirty years, said, I am wearied of guessing.

"But," continues our author, "even after we have ascertained the true relations and tendencies of things, we are constantly

liable to disappointment in medicine, when we endeavour to produce certain results by bringing these tendencies into action. This arises from the silent operation of a new order of causes, by which the phenomena of diseases are varied and modified, and by which the action of external agents is aided, modified or counteracted in a manner which altogether eludes our researches. The causes which thus operate are certain powers in the living body itself, the action of which is entirely beyond our control; and others arising out of the peculiarities of age, sex, temperament of body or mind, and mental emotions; constituting a class of agents of a most powerful kind, of which it is impossible to estimate the combined operation.

“It is farther to be kept in view, that these various agents may be acting together, or in opposition to each other, or under a variety of combinations; and that, in reference to our attempts to act upon the body by remedies, they may be operating in concert with, or in opposition to, those attempts. Hence arises a most extensive source of uncertainty in all our investigations, of which it is impossible to calculate the effect or the extent. Hence arises also that apparent want of uniformity in the phenomena of disease, by which we are so much impeded in our researches; and in the action of remedies, by which our efforts in their use are so often frustrated.” Indeed, “why one medicine acts upon the stomach, another upon the bowels, a third upon the kidneys, a fourth upon the skin, we have not the smallest conception. We know only the uniformity of the facts.”

In his Dispensatory, he reads, “Of the *modus operandi* of mercury we know nothing. It seems to subvert diseased action, by substituting its own peculiar action for that of the disease.” Well, then, says the student, what is the peculiar action of this remedy? He turns to his manual of toxicology, and is there informed that mercury is a poison, which, if the constitution of the patient should be unable to shake it off, as the apostle did the viper, without injury, acts through the medium of the circulation, promotes salivation, rots the gums, loosens and destroys the teeth, and often the bones of the face, produces stiff and incurvated limbs, œdematous swelling, with loss of appetite, till death, in a few years, with a friendly stroke, puts a period to his sufferings. To a benevolent heart, such as we delight to accord to every student of medicine, already bounding with the desire, and high in the ecstasy of the hope of soon being able to relieve the suffering of his fellow creatures, the perusal of such paragraphs as I have just now quoted must prove what in common language would be styled a real damper. And so it appears to our young friend. What, says

he, dropping the book upon the table, and leisurely raising his spectacles from his eyes, after all my labour and expense, am I now to be assured that I cannot determine with certainty the characters of the most common diseases, and, whether I can or not, are my exertions to cure them limited to the use of those means which, if they should fail to produce the desired effect, will most certainly undermine and ruin the constitution of my patient? For he had just now read as follows: "The action of external agents on the body demands our attention in two respects; as causes of disease and as remedies, in both which respects their action is fraught with the highest degree of uncertainty." Ah! says he, medicines are then to be considered both our poison and our antidote; our bane and our blessing! I almost wish I had never put up my sign.

"Doctor," cries a messenger at the door, "Mr A is very sick and requests your presence immediately." Though he would gladly be excused, yet for consistency's sake he must go. He musters his lancet, his opium and calomel, and waits on the patient. Here is a sick man to be sure, but the symptoms do not enable him to determine to which of all the two thousand five hundred descriptions of disease in his nosology he ought to refer the case before him, and he feels the full force of the passage in Dr Abercrombie's work which he had just read. It being impossible to determine the exact state of the case, he determines to treat it on general principles. The fever rages, he bleeds; the head is delirious, opium is administered. The tongue is rough and the skin sallow; so, though with much reluctance and many misgivings, yet because no substitute is known, down goes a dose of calomel, with orders to clear it out with a cathartic as speedily as possible, and the physician departs with a trembling step and a heavy heart.

With what different views and feelings the botanic physician approaches a similar case, they only can tell who have enjoyed them. He enters the room: Ho! my friend, you have a fever. I am glad of that. It shows that you have some life in you. We have only to add a little more to it and you will soon be able to put your disease to flight. He feels none of the responsibility of destroying the constitution of the patient, for he intends to give him nothing that would hurt him if well. He does not fear being unable to reduce the inflammatory action, because he knows that all such effects are produced from obstructions, and that the remedies he uses, in the language of Dr Barton, "act most unequivocally on the system," and if given in sufficient quantities, under proper circumstances, will infallibly disengage the obstructions, expand the arteries and veins, and restore regularity to the action of the blood and heat.

In the course of three hours all this work is completed; and a few after tonics, with nutritious diet, restores the patient to his wonted health and activity.

In addition to the testimony of Dr Abercrombie and others adduced, I may state that instances not a few have come under my own observation, in which experienced physicians have totally misunderstood the character of the diseases, and practised improperly according to their own principles. In not a few of those cases, after the physicians had exhausted their skill, the botanist speedily restored the patient to health. Our time forbids me to give the particulars.

Finally, I have given you a history of the discovery of the botanic remedies, and of the arrangement into a system of the principles they developed. I have given you the most flattering testimony of the most eminent medical men, as to the correctness of the system and the value of the principal remedies. I have contrasted the simplicity of this system, the ease and expedition with which it may be acquired, and the safety and success with which it may be practised by any man or woman of common sense and decent education; with the vast labour, expense, time, &c. of acquiring even a moderate acquaintance with the regular practice, and the great danger and uncertainty in its exhibition when acquired. I hope, therefore, I shall not be criticised harshly, or judged uncharitably, if I conclude this address by stating that, for simplicity of theory, facility of attainment, certainty, safety, and efficacy of remedial action, and last, but not least, the accommodation of the practice to the capacity of the heads of every family, thus enabling them to afford instant relief often, when if they were obliged to send for a physician the disease would accomplish the work of death before he could arrive; the Botanic System of Medical Practice, in the opinion of your humble speaker, is worthy of all acceptance.

“I was educated,” says Dr Donaldson, “in the Gregorian doctrines of the Edinburgh school of medicine; I was taught the theory of medicine as delivered in his *Conspectus*, and was exercised in the Cullenian discipline, divested of all his hypothetical errors of spasm and atony of the extremities of arteries. I learned all the branches of the medical science under the distinguished erudite professors of the most celebrated university and school of medicine in the world. I always embraced plausible truths, and rejected visible errors, in theory and practice. I admitted doubtful hypotheses to have no place in my mind to influence my future practice. Even during my discipleship I thought for myself, and digested their instructions with an unfettered and independent judgment and reasoning,

and I had no sooner completed my studies of the theoretical and practical science of medicine, and other branches of learning, in the college of Edinburgh, than I repaired to the schools of London, so famous for anatomy and physiology.

“Having finished my intended course in the metropolis of the British empire, I launched into practice under the auspices of a real imitator of the Edinburgh school, and a follower of Clark, Blane, Lind, Thomas, &c. and soon had ample opportunities of witnessing the great insufficiencies of the medical practice of the present day, in the hands of the most skilful administrators and practitioners. In this situation I soon had occasion to dissent from the doctrines of the schools; but years elapsed before I could bring myself to deviate from the practice which they, and the most esteemed authors, taught in their instructions and works. I hesitated in the old road until I should discover a new way by experience and observation, to keep me from stumbling on the dark mountains of doubts and errors. I consulted all the most celebrated writings of ancient and modern physicians; I searched for light in vain to direct my steps. During my travels in the East Indies, in the years 1810, 1811, 1814, 1815 and 1816, I had many opportunities of trying every method of curing diseases of all descriptions, and of proving the virtues and efficacies of all remedies commonly employed by practitioners, as well as of making all necessary alterations in former modes of treatment, and in the choice of remedies. Fevers, fluxes, inflammations, affections of the spleen and liver, apoplexies, palsies, spasms, &c. were the great diseases that first attracted my attention, being under my own care and treatment in those warm regions; and I was extremely mortified to find all my remedies ineffectual to reduce inflammation or subdue many of those diseases by the common method of treatment, and my pride was humbled at the repeated disappointments I encountered in being baffled to cure them with the common remedies, carried to the same extent, and administered with the same diligence, as recommended in books or by professors of medicine; I administered purges, barks, and wine, with the utmost rigour, in all cases of inter- and remittent fevers; I exhibited saline purges, opiates, mercurials, sudorifics, and nutrients, in cases of dysentery, and found them all ineffectual to arrest the progress of fevers, or to cure the affections of dysentery in many severe cases. I could not produce an immediate crisis in fevers, nor remove the agonies of fluxes; they still continued to return, or to torture my patients, in defiance of all the remedies that have been recommended by Drs Blane, Lind, Clark, Chisholm, Cullen, Thomas, Philip, Hoffman, Boerhave, Brown, Farriar, Fordyce, Currie, Darwin,

Jackson, Wright, Fowler, Trotter, Haygarth, Heberden, Lieutaud, Huxham, Russell, Macgregor, Falconer, Desgenettes, Milne, Dewar, Bisset, Warren, Pringle, Buchan, Churchill, Friend, Mead, &c. who are supposed to have delivered the sentiments of the medical schools in their days. Neither were the remedies employed by the most noted of the ancients, as Hippocrates, Celsus, Galenus, Diocles, Aristoteles, Apollonius, Alexander, Ætius, Paulus, Hermes, Ali Ebno, L'Abbas, Almalice, &c. among Egyptians, Grecians, Asiatics, Chinese, Africans, &c. (see our history of medicine), more successful in curing febrile distempers. Having read and studied the medicine of the ancients and moderns, I was able to choose those remedies, proposed in their writings, best calculated to cure disorders of the human frame, in all climates of the earth, and employ them to the greatest advantage; but without the knowledge of the real nature of fevers and fluxes, I still laboured in the dark, and could not effect, in all cases, by the use of such remedies, a solution of the disease under my care, with any degree of certainty of success in the commencement; I was unacquainted with the principle on which those remedies acted to bring them to a favourable crisis; I longed for that day when my knowledge of the nature of the diseases, and of the virtues of the remedies employed to cure them, would enable me to cure the severest of them at pleasure, and to liberate my fellow creatures from the iron grasp of mortal affections, and I began to lament the universal ignorance of the professors of medicine respecting the nature of diseases. From that day till the present I never have used the remedies commonly prescribed by writers on medicine, neither have I followed the doctrines of the schools in the treatment of febrile diseases; I determined that no other patient of mine should ever become a victim to the common old treatment pointed out by professors of medicine, and authors of medical books. In the full belief of the doctrine which experience had taught me, I soon had the pleasure of seeing almost all my patients recover from fevers in the space of two, three, four, or five days, whereas, according to the old method of treatment, followed by my contemporaries, patients laboured a month, six weeks, two or three months, under a violent fever and its fatal dregs, and either died or were restored by the mere efforts of nature, or languished under the irremediable consequences of such disease, during the remainder of their lives in misery and infirmity.

“Thus it may be perceived by the foregoing collection of facts how I came to possess a new doctrine and theory of fevers, and to institute a new method of treatment on the foundation of a sure and certain principle of practice, deduced from this doc-

trine in the use and application of remedies, more rational and successful than appears in any system of medicine ever exhibited in ancient or modern times, as far as I know by the annals of medicine; and I now come forward to open the discovery for the general benefit of mankind. In doing this I shall be under the absolute necessity of exposing and rejecting all former opinions respecting the proximate causes or nature of diseases; I shall have to combat the errors of the learned and ignorant, both in theory and practice of medicine; I shall be forced to reject all the erroneous doctrines of the schools in which I was educated; I shall have to defend my sentiments against all the invidious malignities and contumelies of mine enemies, on the basis of infallible principles deduced from and depending on the truths and facts which I have discovered in the nature of these diseases, by experience, observation, reflecting and reasoning, so absolutely necessary to be known before we can succeed in practice.

“Many self confident and ignorant pretenders to the science and art of medicine are inclined to suppose that no errors exist in the present theories of the enlightened schools of Europe and America to combat, in the treatment of diseases. In fact, no physician whose works I have read, no professor of medicine whom I have heard speak on the nature of diseases, has ever discovered, or even hinted at the nature and cure of fevers; all have delivered theories which amount to open acknowledgements of their ignorance of it, or have candidly professed the universal ignorance of all physicians in the world, of the former and present times, respecting the nature of these diseases.

“I observed the plan of cure followed by the East Indians in fevers. I saw the practitioners cure the most vehement cases of intermittent fevers in the space of a single day, with such mathematical precision and certainty as I never beheld in any region of the earth, by purging, vomiting and sweating, &c. [The East Indians practice medicine with success; their skill is exemplified in their manner of treating the diseases here mentioned; instead of rendering the patient worse by the lancet, mercury, opium, &c. they cure a fever in the space of two days with a mathematical precision, by vomiting, sweating and purging, the most rational and powerful method that could be adopted. They reject bleeding as the most absurd treatment imaginable, and make use of vegetable productions. A gentleman well conversant with the Chinese stated, not long since, that in travelling through the largest cities in India, not a single individual could be seen with the loss of a limb; their treatment prevents the necessity of amputation.] I perceived that they also cured without knowing the nature of the disease, or

the principles of their practice, and was led to believe all diseases curable, if we could only discover the remedies against them, and would apply these remedies in due time, and to a sufficient extent to effect these possible ends. Their method of treatment consisted in the administration of a medicine that effectually purged and vomited their patients, who were obliged at the same time to use the steam bath, and to drink abundantly of warm teas, until copious or profuse sweat was produced, and the fever was mechanically reduced, leaving nothing to be done by feeble nature, as the ancient and modern practitioners of Europe were accustomed to do many ages prior to the days of Bottallus and Sydenham.

“Having acquired a knowledge of these things relative to the nature of febrile diseases, I was induced to abandon the common plan of treatment and to institute a new method of curing them, with the use of new remedies; but in the course of my investigations I learned from the annals of medical history, that there could be no advantage in deserting the old path until I had found a new one well paved with the solid rocks of experience, observation and induction, in which I would meet no impediments to my course of rational practice. On the consideration of this circumstance, I rather concluded to conform my practice in some degree and measure to the doctrine of the schools, until I should sufficiently attest and establish my new doctrines and principles by long and reiterated experience and observations, which I deemed necessary to sanction any change in the generally approved practice, and to ratify the truths of my doctrines and maxims by the success of the remedies which I proposed to myself to employ in their cure.”

Dr F. Naudin, the accomplished writer of this the concluding essay, was the student of the distinguished Dr Anthony Hunn, of Kentucky, who was educated at the celebrated universities of Jena and Erfurt, afterwards visiting the universities of Erlang, Gottingen and Keel, where he enjoyed the lectures of Reich, Stark, and the most eminent physician of the age, Hoffland. He constantly pursued his studies for five years, (not two and a half year courses, off and on) and graduated Doctor of Medicine and Surgery, as his diplomas show. From such a tutor the doctor obtained the rudiments of his medical education with all the advantages of his instruction and experience.

After he commenced his career as a physician, he had frequent opportunities of observing the invariable success and rapidity of cure that attended the Botanic practice. He had

the magnanimity of mind (notwithstanding the ardour he had manifested, and the length of time he had dedicated to the acquisition of his medical education) to devote his attention to the theory and system of practice promulgated to the world by the venerable Dr Thomson; and the result of this investigation was, his entire conviction of its superiority over every other ever offered to the acceptance of mankind, and his total relinquishment of the practice of the old faculty, and appearing before the world a thoroughgoing Thomsonian, as the following essay fully proves.

“ A copy of the Louisville Transcript was handed me to-day, in which paper I was pleased, and almost surprised to find a communication from Dr Waterhouse. I was agreeably surprised for two reasons, viz. first, the great solicitude the learned doctor seems to show in favour of 'Thomson's System, and for its general dissemination. Secondly, I was surprised to see the great change in public opinion, which has heretofore kept the press in silence upon this subject; but it has now become so free as to dare give publicity to such impartial communications as that of Dr Waterhouse on 'Thomsonism.' I have long since been convinced of the magnanimous, independent and philanthropic mind of Dr Waterhouse. When we take into consideration the force of habit, the influence that learning, whether true or false, has upon the mind, and the great bearing prejudices and personal interests have upon our actions, I think it must at once show the superiority of that intellect which can for the sake of humanity surmount all these obstacles that necessarily exist in the mind. The abilities of that gentleman cannot be questioned any more than his attachment to and eminence in the art of medicine. The high standing of Dr Waterhouse in his profession must remove all doubts as to his capacity, as well as to his disinterestedness. Man is generally fond of authorities, and this is as it should be; but we ought always to inquire into the *motives* of the author before we adopt his opinion as a sufficient evidence. In the first place we must be sure of his capacities. Secondly, we ought to *know* whether *interest* has not prompted him: and, when his honesty and integrity cannot be impeached, then we can in all confidence rely upon the authority springing from such a source. This is emphatically the case in the matter before us. As I hope, gentlemen, that you will lay the whole of Dr Waterhouse's communication before your readers, I will not attempt to review it, for I would spoil the whole. No, let it appear entire once more before the public; and I hope that every unprejudiced mind will give it a thorough examination. The importance of the subject must strike every man. It is

indeed, as the learned doctor says, 'a question of life and death;' nay more! it is a question of even more importance than life itself! I, for one, would prefer an untimely grave to a long life of continual sufferings; and I am sure that all the poor wretches who now groan under the effects of the pernicious practice of *mineral poisons* would be with me, if they should lose the hope of again enjoying the comforts of life. But sad experience proves this hope, to the sorrow of thousands, to be vain! and a gaping grave the only comforter of the miserable sufferer! Thousands of fine robust constitutions that would have blessed the possessors with a long, healthy and happy life, have been and daily are destroyed by the prevalent *mania* of administering *mineral poisons* as *medicines*. This horrid picture seems to have deeply impressed the mind of the doctor when he says, 'the practice of physic, I am bold to say, admits of great reform.' We cannot leave the doctor without noticing this fact, that he has not, like many *petty pirates*, tried to pluck the laurels from the brow of Thomson to decorate himself with them. No, indeed! his soul is too great, too magnanimous to stoop to these despicable intrigues. But he justly and boldly comes out and proclaims Thomson the '*patriarch*' of that needed '*great reform*,' and that too against the prejudices of his *order*, of his *friends*, and against *personal interest*! for the reader will remember that he has been *professor* of *physic* in one of our most renowned universities.

"The press, that powerful mind-improving engine, which, but a few years ago, refused all communications from the pen of Dr Thomson and his friends, *even in hand-bill form*, is now coming over; and those who were in constant practice of ridiculing and deriding Thomson and his system on every occasion, are now in a great measure silenced, and facts and truths generally disseminated. The unrivalled success of this system has caused it to spread and sustain itself against the torrent of popular prejudices, and the envy, intrigues and malice, of an angry and potent faculty. I would not wish here to be understood that I accuse the medical faculty of being guilty of malicious intentions against their fellow men. No, no, I do not mean any such thing. It has been said that we are creatures of circumstances; but I say, there are many who are creatures of *learning*, and they cannot know any thing else besides what has been inculcated into their brains. These, therefore, feeling that natural defect, or, in other words, the want of the capacity of judging for themselves, must condemn, *right* or *wrong*, all that they have not learned before. It is not every M. D. that possesses the mind of a Waterhouse! It is not every man

that can at once surmount all the prejudices necessarily springing from *education*. Such as can do this are not ordinary men; they must possess superior and greater intellect than has been allotted to the generality of mankind. *How could a man who has spent his whole life in the study of a subject, which he but faintly understands, possibly comprehend that an obscure, illiterate 'clodhopper' could step up and overreach him in this art, which required a lifetime to obtain but a very imperfect knowledge of?* Viewing the subject in this light, it looks impossible that it could be. This is the way that most, if not quite all, the opposers of Dr Thomson reason. But I would tell them that Dr Thomson *did not improve upon, or borrow from them*. He has found out '*a plan entirely new*' to treat diseases; he has not buried his system of practice in the rubbish of pretension and ignorance, or in the bombast of meaningless, high sounding words. No, he has taken *nothing from the old school: indeed, he generally, if not always, goes contrary to the longest established rules of the old practice*. Then, *that he might be ignorant of what is taught in our medical colleges is no argument against him, since his system of practice has no similarity with theirs*; and, as Dr Waterhouse has remarked, '*if he is a quack, he is a quack sui generis*.' *He is not indebted to any person, or craft, or faculty, or any thing but his own powerful inventive genius and sagacious mind for all he teaches and practises*; then the above objections can no longer be urged against his system. Let us, then, no more *hear ignorance* thrown out as a reproach. I will here make a bold assertion, without fear of being contradicted by philosophy and common sense, which is, that all the systems of medicines preached and taught, from Hippocrates down to the present time, are founded on no better grounds than that of Samuel Thomson.

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