

lations, in which professors appear, like the Roman gladiators on the arena of combat, only to hew each other down?

Galen was converted from atheism, by the study of anatomy, and wrote a hymn of praise to the Deity, to celebrate his wisdom and power, in the admirable structure of the human form. Having observed the exact distribution of the nerves to the muscles, the arrangements of the face for expression and beauty, the structure of the bones for strength and motion, he exclaims, "*Hæc enim fortuna sunt operæ!*"* &c. Galen having substantially refuted the Epicurean principles of Asclepiades, by showing his ignorance in anatomy and philosophy; and by demonstrating all the causes to be evidently in the works of nature, viz: *final, efficient, instrumental, material and formal*; concludes thus, against his fortuitous atoms: "*Ex quibus intelligi potest, conditorem nostrum in formandis particulis unam hunc sequi scopum, nempe ut quod melius est eligat.*"† The skill of that ingenious and famed heathen, in his illustration of the mechanism of the fingers is most admirable. The reason which he gives for the different lengths of the fingers, is, that the tops may come to an equality in grasping round or spiral objects, which makes the hold firmer. "*Cum magnas aliqua moles in circuita comprehendunt et cum in scipsis humidum vel parvum corpus continere, conantur.*"‡ GALEN, l. xi. c. 7. g. l. i. 6. c. 13. l. i. 14.

It has been observed, that nature presented one continued series of composition and decomposition, still going forward within us, and without us: That all material things are sinking in decay, to rise and reappear in new and renovated beauty; and having reached their acme, descended again into the dust, to spring once more upon the face of day, in varied and in endless progression. This cease-

* These are the productions of divine wisdom.

† From which we arrive at this conclusion, that our Creator even in the formation of the least particles of matter had or followed but one design, that whatever was best he chose.

‡ When they grasp large objects, and when they seize upon small and moist bodies, the use of each finger is equally exerted and felt.

less mutation has been considered the most formidable obstruction to a fixed and permanent system of medical science. Dr. Barnwell remarks, it must be allowed that we are not yet in possession of scientific proofs or analytical demonstrations of medical rules and observations, so that we might reduce them to first and general principles. Our indications for ascertaining their reality, are not sufficiently established; and, consequently, have had hitherto only a technical, not a scientific meaning.

Medicine, he says, considered as an art, is still in its infancy: an assertion which no candid and intelligent practitioner will attempt to contradict; even for the most valuable therapeutic or dietetic discoveries and improvements. We are more indebted, he continues, to accidental observations, and analogical conjectures, than to an established scientific theory. The *modus operandi* of medicines, as well as regimen, are so far obscure, that the whole difference between the rational prescriptions and those which are termed specifics, depends upon the application of rules, by which the technical application of the remedy is, in every instance, determined.

Notwithstanding these defects in medical science, there is a constant and strong desire in the human mind to reduce all the phenomena of animal bodies to general principles, and to explain from these, by scientific deductions, the most suitable technical methods; not merely in an empirical, but a philosophic manner, to vindicate our medical treatment, says Dr. Barnwell, *a priori* by the general laws of nature; and thus to effect a gradual, though indissoluble, connection between the scientific theory and practice. And to this object every scientific mind in the pursuit of a correct theory, should be directed. If we had evident and sensible marks, and accurately defined terms, for every degree of variation of the human body from the state of perfect health, the practice would become a far more easy and more certain study.

Dr. Sydenham first suggested something of this nature. And an endeavor to attempt