

heat to be generated upon the surface, and this he called fever. Bozelli, an Italian physician, believed that the proximate cause of fever was seated in the nervous system, which by some unknown operation or agency, caused an undue accumulation of heat throughout the whole surface of the system. Hoffman's views were apalogous to those of Bozelli, differing only in some minor points. Cullen, an eminent Scotch physician, embraced the opinions of Cole, Bozelli, and Hoffman, and labored to form to himself a theory of fever, by reconciling the discrepancies of his brethren, and contended that the cause of fever was a *universal spasm of the extreme arteries*. Dr. Jackson, who examined these theories thoroughly, came to the conclusion that these hypotheses "were mere subterfuges, and mysterious ways of acknowledging the grossest ignorance of the subject;" and says that "the proximate cause of fever is a certain peculiar state of the body on which the disease or the subsequent parts of the disease necessarily depend." He further adds, "it is in short, the *first essential action of the febrile cause*; but this action is so intricate and difficult to be discovered, that physicians have sought for it in vain for two thousand years."* Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, contended that the essence of fever consisted in an irregular action, or absence of the regular order of motion, produced or invited by predisposing debility; that fever is caused by *excitement*; that there is but one exciting cause which is *excitement!!*" Now, reader, we have lead you through this collection of inanity and learned nonsense to the end that you might be enabled to form some idea of the clear and harmonious views which physicians have entertained of this disease, and if you have been able to glean one idea from the whole of it, or even a fraction of sense, we readily acknowledge our ignorance, and your superior discernment. One tells us that fever is caused by an excess of heat in the heart; another that the cause is debility of the brain, &c.; another that it is located in the nervous system; another

er that fever is caused by excitement; that there is but one exciting cause, and that is excitement, &c. &c.

But secondly, of the present views of physicians relative to fever. As to the views of physicians at the present day, relative to the remote or proximate cause of fever, they appear to be as much in fog and doubt as in ancient times; for we have never as yet been able to obtain from any one of them any direct answer upon this point, and in proof that they have no conception of the cause or origin of this form of disease, we need only cite to the trial of Dr. Frost, in the city of New York, during the month of December last. John G. Cheeseman and Joseph M. Smith, both physicians, who have practised in the city of New York for twenty-seven years, on being interrogated by the counsel for the prosecution relative to fever, answered, "FEVER IS FEVER!" And can it be expected that men who in a public court in the city of New York, in the presence of thousands, would betray such gross ignorance relative to the cause of disease, could themselves be capable of prescribing for its cure? As to the present treatment of fever by the mineral faculty, little need be said, for the public are perfectly well aware, that the fever is considered the deadly enemy of the patient, and the cardinal weapons which are brought to bear upon it are, blistering, calomel and the lancet, and they generally produce their natural fruits, which is death, or that which is even still more to be dreaded—a broken constitution.

We come now to speak of Dr. Thomson's theory of fever, the brevity and exceeding simplicity of which, compared with the long winded and fine spun theories of the mineral doctors, may almost, before reflection, excite the smile of derision upon the reader. Dr. Thomson holds that the human system is composed of the four cardinal elements, earth, air, caloric and water, and that a state of perfect health depends upon the proper balance or temperature of these elements; that caloric or heat is the great animating principle throughout nature, and a certain portion of heat is always requisite for a healthy action in the

* If two thousand years have not brought it to light, what period of time will?