

sufficient amount of solvent ignorance to prevent that crisis. Certainty of science, forsooth? Did Galileo perfect the telescope? Did Kepler reveal the law of gravitation? Did Newton derive no help from Kepler's three prime laws? Did Franklin exhaust the wonders of electricity? Certainty of science! Was it not she who burned hundreds of lunatics as witches; sent Giordino Bruno to the stake for teaching that the planets revolve around the sun; forced Galileo to swear this doctrine blasphemous heresy; sneered at Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood; and, in our own time, declared ocean steam navigation impracticable; forbade George Stevenson's locomotive to go faster than ten miles an hour, and ridiculed his project of crossing Chat's Moss? Humble science to-day meekly bows the head in the presence of dethroned mind, and protects and shelters the lunatic as an object of pity and christian benevolence. So far from burning Brunos at the stake, we hail with raptures one of the family now fixed in the centre of gravitation—all the planets, and some comets, obeying his behests and rejoicing in his smiles, or dreading their withdrawal. Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood is learned almost with our A, B, C. The railway locomotive outstrips the wind, and competes with the swallow, and the crossing of Chat's Moss has been left far in the shade by later herculean achievements.

But has science reached perfection? Can it ever climb to that summit? Who that possesses ever so trivial, or ever so great an amount of knowledge, could or would desire such a consummation? What but cessation of all action, all progress, would be this stupendous climax, and to what condition, formed as he is for mental and bodily effort, would man sink, when no more truths remain to be discovered, no more mysteries to be unearthed, no more battles of intellect to be fought, and no more wreaths of victory to be won?

Away, then, with the vapid twaddle! Doctors in medicine unquestionably *do* differ, and, thank God, they always *have* differed since medicine became a progressive science, and there is little reason to fear that we shall ever cease to differ.

But you will not, gentlemen, so grievously misunderstand me, when thus speaking of salutary rational differences, as to suppose that I do not, as well as every one of you, deplore those petty,

unseemly, angry, and utterly non-scientific squabbles and dignity-ignoring wranglings, which, in but too many instances, bring discredit on our whole body, and divest the combatants of all pretensions to educated, or even instinctive, gentlemanhood. This is surely one of the *opprobria medicinae* which it behooves us all to struggle to remove; but in our exhibition of disapproval of the evil, let us remember that "blessed are the peacemakers."

It is much to be feared that though medical education in this country has undergone considerable improvement, or at least large extension, within the last quarter of a century, there is one essential branch of it, which might be more sedulously inculcated than it would seem to be; and indeed it has occurred to me that a chair in every medical school might very profitably be filled by its teacher. I doubt not you all have anticipated the announcement, that I mean the science of medical decorum and general gentility. Among the many witty utterances of Voltaire, the following was not the least incisive: "There is a vacant chair in all the colleges for unknown truths."

Might not the branch of medical education for which I now plead, claim rank in the above class, and thus be rescued from the limbo of the forgotten; or might it be advantageously associated with sanitary science and mental hygiene? We must not overlook the fact, that the eight medical schools of this Dominion are now turning out a quarter of a thousand new aspirants yearly. A year ago the number of practicing physicians was 3000, or about one to every 1200 of the population. If we go on increasing in numbers, in continuous arithmetical progression, as we have certainly been doing for some time past, I fail to conjecture what will become of the young fries, unless they take to cannibalism, and thus verify the Darwinian theory of "the survival of the fittest." Should our schools receive, with cheerful acquiescence, the suggestion above made as to the occupancy of the vacant chair, we might entertain the hope that our over-crowded ranks would be thinned in strict accord with the laws of chivalrous warfare, and that our politely trained successors will exterminate one another as gentlemen should do. I may be much in error, or I may be over the threshold of dotage, but if so, I began to dote before yesterday, and my thought has been in this direction, to wit: our province is laboring under a