

sant revolutions must ultimately terminate: And we most ardently hope, *that end* may be perfect knowledge, in the completion of the system; that simplicity and success, a fixed and permanent mode of practice, may be universally adopted; and the wavering and contending systems be banished from the earth.

I know it has been said, in defence of this perpetual change, that every science around which *new facts* are daily accumulating, requires, from time to time, an entire reform and renovation. But that this reform and renewal of the whole system of medicine, from age to age, should be accounted for, merely by the "accumulation of facts," and not the perversity of principles, I apprehend, will not bear the test of sound argument. Other sciences, as well as *medicine*, have been changed often; but it was professedly because their former principles were false, and not derived from facts, from experience, and observation: and not on account of the accumulation of facts, which only serve to confirm right principles.

The symptoms, of malignant and inflammatory fevers, appear to be the same now, that they were in the days of Hippocrates; and yet how various has been the treatment since that time.

There must be *first principles* in medicine as well as in philosophy, which are invariable and incontestible; which, like the stars of the firmament, in guiding the mariner, will conduct the physician, with assured aim, through the deep ocean of human troubles. When learning revived, the physicians of Europe employed themselves in reviving the system of Galen and Hippocrates. During the course of the sixteenth century, the study of the physicians was almost solely employed in explaining and confirming that system. Early in the same century, the noted Paracelsus had laid the foundation of a chemical system, which was in direct opposition of that of Galen. This system finally prevailed over the Galenists. But though opposed and contending, the explanations of both, of the phenomena of health and sickness, turned so entirely on the state of the fluids of the body,

that a humoral and chemical pathology prevailed, sometimes together, and sometimes apart, down to the end of the seventeenth century; and even to the end of the eighteenth, had a great share and influence on the practice of medicine.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Stahl, Hoffman, and Boerhaave, produced three new and different systems of physic, and mixed up their doctrines of *spasm*, of *morbid acromonies*, of *vis natura conservatrix*, with the humoral pathology of Riverus, and the chemical affinities and repulsions of Paracelsus. But the *Autocratia*, says Dr. Cullen, obtained and admitted, in some shape or other, by every sect, had corrupted the practice of all physicians, from Hippocrates to Stahl. This is a sweeping sentence, pronounced upon the *anima medica*, by the good doctor of Edinburgh. And his own *Nosology*, has received one more severe and decisive from the pen of Rush.

"*Sic transit gloria mundi!*"* is forced upon us as we pass along this boisterous stream of conflicting pathology. And where, alas, shall we find rest! on what rock shall our feet settle! where shall the lovely, fleeting form of happiness be found! Some of the latter philosophers of Greece, hardened and confounded by the disputes of the schools, took refuge in an universal scepticism. But let us not, my friends, despair amidst the glooms of the thickening tempest. The day will dawn and brighten, the storm shall pass away, and the bright sun of healing splendor, shine upon the world.

From the simple solids, in their state of rigidity or laxity, as a doctrine accounting for health or disease, by Dr. Boerhaave, Dr. Cullen passes off to the *solidum vivum*; and expresses his confidence, that he had seized on a clue of investigation, in laying hold of the motions and moving powers of the animal economy, more certain to detect the causes and phenomena of disease, than ever had been before discovered; for, although Hoffman had dipt into this fundamental spring of the science, he had also polluted it with his mixture of the humoral pathology.

* Thus fades the systems and glory of the world.