

with these disorders consigned themselves to the protection of itinerant charlatans and other imposters. Of the notorious few who then acquired popularity, was no less a person than Martin Van Buehell, whose eccentricities have gained him a place among other bygone curiosities who have strutted their fretful hour on earth's slight stage. He devoted himself at once to the study of medicine and to that of mechanics, and his genius seeming to lie in a happy reunion of the intellectual and the muscular, he gave it full scope—first in tooth drawing, then in truss making, and subsequently in curing fistulae. Of his own pretensions and peculiarities, he speaks himself in the following extract from one of his singular advertisements. "Am not I the first healer (at this day) of bad fistulae? With an handsome beard like Hippocrates! The combing I sell one guinea each hair. (Of use to the fur that want fine children. I can tell them how; it is a secret.)" Of Van B.'s mode of cure we have no account in our possession, but we do happen to have an account of the practice of one of his contemporaries, which may serve, if no better purpose, at least to convey some information as to the ideas then entertained of fistulae, and of human feeling. Dionis, in reference to one Le Moyne, says, "His method consisted in the use of caustics, that is to say, with a corrosive unguent with which he covered a small tent, which he thrust into the ulcer, by which he daily, little by little, consumed the circumference, taking care to enlarge the tent daily; so that by widening of the fistula he discovered the bottom. If he found there any callosity, he corroded it with his ointment, which also served to destroy the coney burrows, and at last with patience he cured many."

Although at the present day we have risen high beyond such ignorance, yet the literature of the subject is rather in a backward state than otherwise. It is true that several writers have ushered into the world their contributions, and in all shapes, from the meagre article to the portly compendium, but yet expectation has not been satisfied, and the reviews, at least those deserving of consideration as such, have been far from being commendatory or flattering. Even two of the most familiar,—the books of Syme and Bushe on diseases of the rectum—have in the pages of Forbes' Quarterly, met with a discussion by no means favorable. It would follow, then, that an opening did exist for a good publication on this particular topic before the appearance of Dr. A.'s work.

We would not it were supposed that our author thus introduced himself to notice—that he rendered himself obvious through the defects he had disclosed in others. For far from such a method, he admits in his title page, the obligations under which he rests to both the gentlemen