

When we find the very commendable action for the enforcement of vaccination questioned by one of our own profession who introduced a motion during the late session of the legislature for the repeal of said enactment, it is certainly time to look into the matter and ventilate it as thoroughly as possible.

We believe with Dr. Ridpath that: "Essential freedom is the right to differ, and that right must be sacredly respected, nor must the privilege of dissent be conceded with coldness or disdain, but openly, cordially, and with good will. No loss of rank, abatement of character or ostracism from society must darken the pathway of the humblest, honest seeker after truth. The right of free thought, free enquiry, and free speech to all everywhere, is as clear as the noonday, and bounteous as the air and the sea."

If all professed seekers after truth were only honest in their views we could have no quarrel with them, even though we might differ in the result of our investigations. Some talk loudly on these subjects simply for effect, and are not honest in their statements, but desirous to achieve notoriety. Others talk through ignorance, having never taken either the time or labor to obtain for themselves the facts of the case. Then, added to these classes, we have the cranks and bores who will have a word in anyway, even if it be to repeat again and again some set speech.

At the same time it is the duty of the medical profession to continue to do as they have done in the past: ascertain all the facts in the case, study out the underlying truths, and put them, so far as we can, in the possession of the public. We must, so far as in us lies, continue to protect the public from themselves, even though we may often be called hard names, and lie under the charge that we are working with interested motives. On the contrary, we have motives of the very highest and noblest character, viz., the best interests of humanity; the desire to have justice done to the poorest and humblest who have not the means of protecting themselves from the scourges, such as smallpox, etc., that may devastate and destroy countless numbers, as in the past. Smallpox, from being a dreaded scourge, has become a disease seldom seen, and its increased prevalence during the past few years may well be ascribed to our increasing carelessness in vaccination.

Unless we are occasionally wakened up by an epidemic the tendency to neglect all forms of safeguarding ourselves grows upon us, and we do not like to take the trouble to render ourselves safe. It is difficult to convince people who have never seen the ravages of smallpox that it is an essential thing that their children should be vaccinated (and run the chances of a few days' illness or a very sore arm) for the sake of being pre-