

former. The reason is obvious—they have no genius—no industry. Facts, I doubt not, will show that some of these members of the “Medical Faculty” have killed more human beings than Cæsar or Bonaparte, and yet are sanctioned by the law, and extravagantly paid for their work of death. I am thankful that public opinion is fast changing on this subject, and trust the day will soon arrive when the antidote administered to counteract the influence of the pestilence will not be worse than the bane.

The people will no longer bear dictation in these matters—the public voice is now proclaiming in language not to be misunderstood, that it will be the judge of its own wants—it will select its own servants, whether they be legislators, divines, or physicians—it will rule that laws shall give equal protection to all—that the road to distinction shall be open to all—that there shall be no bar to competition between two classes of physicians, but that each individual shall stand or fall on his own merits—that he who pretends to superior attainments or endowments, shall support his claims, not by appealing to his lineage or associations, but by what he accomplishes. If a man employs another as a physician, the presumption is that he has confidence in his ability—life is sweet, and is the first object he would protect. What reason is there, then, that the man whom he selects shall not receive protection from the laws, that he may be compensated for his services? Sir, no honorable man would avail himself of a chance of depriving a creditor of his pay, and shall the legislature of the state of Maine afford facilities to knaves, that a man of common honesty will scorn to use?

If *merit* is to be the test of this question, the Thomsonians will bear comparison with the legalized physicians. In proportion to their numbers they are as skilful; and I challenge proof to the contrary. No gentlemen at the board would hazard his reputation by a contradiction. This law I believe to be opposed to your state constitution, which declares that all men are born *equally* free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and unalienable *rights*, among which are those of enjoying and defending *life* and *LIBERTY*. But the

present law, instead of defending *liberty*, tends to *restrict* men in the defence of life, and force them to gulp down calomel under the direction of legalized quacks!

Extraordinary efforts have been made throughout the union to put down the Thomsonian practitioners by arbitrary laws and libellous denunciation. But those who pursue this course mistake very much—they forget that the people “who rarely deal unjustly” judge impartially in the case—and their decision is in favor of a repeal—this is evinced by their petitions. In many states they have obtained a repeal of similar laws, and in some states of the Union the practice of physicians who dispense with the use of mineral poisons, is more extensive than the other; and so far from being “quacks,” they are allowed to have made great improvements in the science of medicine. These practitioners have done much to strip the former practice of its mystification and jugglery, and although the skilful and meritorious of the legalized class may not be injured by their competitions, yet the *quacks* in the ranks of the “regulars” are exposed and brought down.

But abolish the present law, and you raise the standard of medical practice—the Thomsonian will be encouraged, by having an open field for his labors, to applying himself to improvement; and the quack, now legalized, will either be obliged to qualify himself to support his pretensions, or withdraw from a profession he disgraces.

I have before stated that I was no friend of quacks. On the contrary, I heartily despise them, and am as willing as any body to ferret out the evil of quackery; but, my way of doing it is a little different from that of the learned faculty—I will not say *people*, for they never demanded the present law. The medical faculty had tried in vain to draw the line of distinction between that which was quackery and that which was not. Even gentlemen physicians at this board, will not deny that many who receive diplomas are but quacks, while many skilful physicians are among those that the law term impostors. It seems from this that their way of doing business is not success-