

the public on the lines of public health and prophylaxis is well illustrated by the formation of an anti-vaccination society in this city. At some of the meetings of this Society, this year, some practising physicians made statements (or were reported to have made them, according to daily papers April 10th) so wide of the truth that they showed a most lamentable ignorance of the whole history of the subject. When we find the very commendable action for the enforcement of vaccination questioned by one of our own profession by the bringing in of a law at 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 inquiry, and of 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 any way, even 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 interest 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.