

MEDICAL CRITICISM.

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2ND SERIES.

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TESTIMONY RELATING TO MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE.

A physician of this city has kindly directed the Editor's attention to the opening words of an "Introduction" to a work by Samuel Sheldon Fitch, A.M., M.D., entitled "A Treatise on Health, its Aids and Hindrances, containing an Exposition of the Causes and Cure of Disease, and the Laws of Life, etc." The author has published "six lectures on consumption" and is the founder of a system of practice by which phthisis is found to be curable by medical art. Subjoined is an extract from this "introduction"—

"The late celebrated Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, was once asked if he believed the profession of medicine had been, on the whole, a benefit to the world. 'Do you,' he replied, 'intend to include in the profession, *old women and nurses*? If so, then I answer—Yes; if not,—Doubtful.'"

Says the eminent French physician and author, Bichat, speaking of the "Science of Medicine;"—"An incoherent assemblage of incoherent opinions, it is perhaps of all the physiological sciences, that which best shows the caprice of the human mind. What do I say? It is not a science for a methodical mind. It is a shapeless assemblage of inaccurate ideas, of observations often puerile, of deceptive remedies, and of formulæ as fantastically conceived as they are tediously arranged."

Said another French physician and professor, Magendie, in a recent lecture to his class of students in the city of Paris:—"Gentlemen, medicine is a great humbug! I know it is styled a science—science, indeed—it is nothing like science! Doctors are mere empirics, when they are not charlatans. We are as ignorant as men can be. Who knows anything in the world about medicine? Who can tell me how to cure the headache? or the gout? or disease of the heart? Nobody. Oh, you tell me, 'doctors cure people!' I grant you, people are cured; but how are they cured? Gentlemen, nature does a good deal; doctors do . . . devilish little . . . when they don't do harm!"

It would be no satisfaction to the Editor to publish facts and testimony from time to time, in harmony with the foregoing, did he not cherish the hope that the period may not be remote, when thinking men and women may insist on some steps being taken in Parliament, which shall tend to ameliorate the present order of things, in relation to what is styled the healing art.

COLORED WATER.

The next time Dr. Pollard is judicious enough to avail himself of water as a healing agent, we recommend him to condescend to follow the example of his professional brethren, and to *color the water*; ladies of the mental calibre of Mrs. Dalton, instead of defending an action in a law-court, would, under these circumstances, be perfectly satisfied that the cure was effected by the colored water.