

is an expensive virtue, and is not to be looked for in men of limited pecuniary means; whilst, on the other hand, the men of matured experience and extensive observation, too rarely find time to commit their thoughts to paper, and too commonly lack all inclination to do so.

The fact, however, is not to be put out of sight, that the free dissemination of a negative Medical literature, such as I have been advocating, would present to imposters and charlatans, a weapon of assailment which they would not be slow to seize, and to turn against us—nay, indeed—which they ever *have* wielded with villainous artifice, and with woful success.

The honest and well-trained physician hesitates not when confronted by several fatal diseases, which have long been regarded as the standing *opprobria medicina*, to confess his utter powerlessness; but the quack knows better than to imitate his modesty. What malady is there—from tetanus to toothache—from malignant cholera to malignant scarlatina—from chronic epilepsy to hydrophobia, against which he fails to proclaim his potency? “As fools rush in where angels fear to tread,” so with the quack: failure or incompetency he never realized, and of course never confessed.

But let quacking take its own course. It has a long past existence, and it is destined, unless human nature undergoes a change, not to be looked for in any age posterior to the miraculous, to a very long future. In the rude conditions of society, it managed to do a profitable business with but rude materials; and where those conditions still remain, it still flourishes in the like traffic; but as civilization advances, and knowledge, or the conceit of it, becomes more diffused, quackery changes its tactics and its form, and proves itself “master of the situation.” It thoroughly understands the might of mystery, and it fails not to retain in its service this powerful ally.

Tell men how they may, by faithful obedience to the inflexible laws of nature, avoid becoming sick; or how, and by what remedies, they may be restored from sickness to health, divesting your explanations of all semblance of mystery, and what is your success? In ninety-five instances in the hundred you will have shaken their faith in your therapeutic competency. Offer to them, instead, some mysterious globule with even the ghost of an incomprehensible medicament, and tell them its operation will be an infallible consequence with a well established law of *catalysis* (or any other word of learned sound), and their faith at once waxes stronger, even to propagandic enthusiasm. It boots little to tell such people, that the very water pumped up from our bay, and drunk by them daily and hourly, the whole year round, is as thoroughly impregnated from the