

opinion is comparatively small. But the doctor in his daily round enters the house of prince and of pauper; he knows and is known by everybody, and his lightest word is the word of an initiate rendered authoritative by his accredited access to the latest spoils of contemporary research. The deference we are accustomed to expect, and upon the whole to receive, is not merely a personal deference, it is also the allegiance of uninstructed to expert opinion, to an impersonal authority whose mouthpiece we are or profess to be. If our confident predictions are falsified, our advice proved untrustworthy, our treatment disastrous, it is not we only whose reputations are impaired. By our failures the glory of Science herself, whose methods we claim to exemplify, is brought into question, and sometimes into ridicule or denial. By our successes, not few or of small account, I hope, the rightful supremacy of these methods is vividly enforced. So it is that in a given community the good or ill repute of our profession is a fair index to the condition and prospects of Science in general.

The economic support of the public is an essential condition of scientific progress, and will no doubt be favorably or adversely affected by the good or bad impression which we, as the accepted representatives of scientific method, produce on the minds of our patrons. An interesting point in this connection is the influence of democratic ideas and institutions on the position and authority of the expert. The typical democrat is, as a rule, somewhat jealous of the claims of the expert, he regards them with suspicion, defers to them grudgingly if at all, and without perhaps in the least understanding the matter, is apt to proclaim disbelief in their validity with a confidence worthy of a better cause. A certain amount of moral and intellectual insubordination, an all-round scepticism, is a logical correlative of democratic tendencies, and the doctor, in common with other authorities, has in these days to be prepared to justify his proceedings at every turn. He cannot vaccinate a baby without first submitting to cross-examination on the statistics of variolous immunity, or administer a dose of calomel without allaying the terrors of the anti-mercurial zealot. Your ultra-radical will insist that his primiparous wife must be delivered by "natural" means only; he "does not believe" in instrumental interference or the use of anaesthetics. I make these observations, the truth of which your experience will doubtless compel you to confirm, with no intention of belittling popular government, but as a simple statement of fact. Science does not fear criticism, but welcomes it, and thrives upon it as we know. A critical atmosphere hardens and fortifies the spirit of research, as cold pure air braces the human organism. But captious quibbling and prejudiced question-begging are of course another matter, and of them too we have