

conviction, that even though I should have failed, the cause itself, is susceptible of vast improvement, and progressive elevation, I shall derive a solace which cannot be taken away. The prospects of ultimate success, and the view of conferring future benefits on society will fortify the mind against the danger of many evils, and the apprehension of the bitterness of censure. It will obtund the keen edge of sarcasm, and defeat the purposes of malignity, to know that we are serving the cause of humanity and truth: for though the lip of scorn is hard to bear; as we instinctively love *fame*, and desire to stand high in public estimation; yet there is a higher source of happiness than the applauses of the world. With a mind perhaps as deeply imbued with sensibility as generally falls to the lot of mortals, I was never much afraid of any thing but the *reproaches of my own heart*. Let me have but the approbation of that invisible tribunal, and I feel as secure from every pointed dart, as the Grecian warrior under the shield and armour of ACHILLES.

The physicians of whom I was obliged to speak, I have spoken with kindness and candor. I have treated them with much more deference than they have accorded to each other. To reflect on a whole community and succession of learned and eminent men, might appear to the inconsiderate, as the very essence of madness and folly. And so it was said, when GALILEO attacked the Ptolemaic system of the heavens, and LORD BACON the dialectics of ARISTOTLE. Great names may give splendor to error, but cannot transform it into *truth*. And let it be remembered, I have made an attack upon the Faculty; they, them-

selves, have alternately made it on each other. I have merely introduced passages from their own writings for the sake of argument and illustration. They have all admitted the *uncertainty* of medical practice, and its great susceptibility of improvement and reduction. To spurn the humble effort of a humble labourer, willing to toil in removing the rubbish and re-edifying the superstructure, would neither patriotic nor philosophical. Let every ray of truth shine upon a subject confessedly obscure; let every improvement and discovery be cast into the balance, so long and fatally *found wanting*; let all come forward, from every corner of the land, to aid in the reduction of the great sum of human misery suffered by disease; and close up, by all the powers of human skill, the avenues of death.

In this cause I have been laboring, and to this end I have directed my efforts; with what success let others testify. I now bid the reader farewell, with this single assurance, that if in any thing I have erred, or have been mistaken or deceived, or have set down ought in malice, let it be shown; let any point it out with kindness and candor, and

"Cuncta recantabo maledicta, priora rependam
Laudibus, et vestrum nomen in astra feram."

S. ROBINSON.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

We have assembled on this evening, for the purpose of introducing a course of lectures on Medical Botany—generally denominated Thomson's System of Medicine.

I am well aware that the prejudices against it are numerous and strong: and so they have been a-