

ART. XXIV.—*Medical Depreciation.* By E. B. SPARHAM, M. D.,
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The science of medicine is noble, though some may be unworthy and many may ridicule. Apart from private interest, the debasing source of science, we fear that those actuated by a due sense of its importance, intellectually and morally, are comparatively few. These are noble exceptions, but can they stem the torrent? This is an age of self-advancement; a republican "*vox populi, vox dei*," reduced to individualism. We may feel how much we are indebted to the struggles of our predecessors, yet while we admire and appreciate, we are not blind adherents. The experience of the past is a lamp to our feet and a guide to our path. Still hosts of earnest unwearied forms are pressing forward, "upward and onward." Some keeping up in the full panoply of light, some self-satisfied lazy ones, lagging behind; many advancing as far as a ray is discernible; others, too eager for discoveries, rushing into obscurity and groping about in order to find something on which to start a theory—often more fanciful than plausible. All, however, who are not engaged exclusively in scientific researches, and who are satisfied with arms tried and proved, are jealous of their cotemporaries, knowing that those must borrow, and that they too should be as perfect.

The mysterious mechanism of man; his complex arrangement; the beauty and perfection of all his developments, chemically and mechanically, so constituted as to elicit even the involuntary admiration of the medical philosopher, while it escapes his subtlest scrutiny; the change from death to disease, involving points deeply investigated and earnestly contested by the most eminent and indefatigable of the age, past or present; the vital principles, wherein generation, growth, nutrition, secretion, motion and sensation, are exhibited; the influence of mind on matter, aiding, resisting and controlling our best directed efforts; all tend to prove that our remedial agents must be adapted to the entire man, physical, chemical, and intellectual. While medicine, therefore, levies her contributions from every branch of science, should not her votaries be characterized by a spirit elevating and disinterested, and exhibit a due sense of their important responsibilities by an earnest and faithful desire for her advancement? Should they not be modest in their public assertions? Science never receives advantage, nor one's own high hopes and aims accomplishment, where selfishness and egotism have the ascendancy. Look at the unlimited and fast increasing growth of patent medicines, got up by selfish doctors. Can they themselves have faith in their unfailing efficacy? They have studied human gullibility and got rich by pampering it. What to them whether the boasted