

Hasty Opinion.

By J. H. SPRINGLE, D.D.S., L.D.S., Montreal.

In looking over contemporary American dental literature, one is struck by the number of antagonistic classifications and peculiar nomenclature given to the different conditions with which we are concerned as dentists. It seems as if every man who has, or who thinks he has, any standing, deems it necessary to announce new and often startling theories and names for the conditions which he meets in his practice. Usually no attempt is made to conclusively prove these assertions, either by accurate experiment or by known scientific facts. The work is gone over too hastily, and as soon as it is announced, half a hundred men, who see flaws in it, immediately point them out and take advantage of the opportunity to air their own ideas, and squelch the unfortunate writer, although they are in turn picked to pieces by everybody else. Our American cousins are, perhaps, apt to look at things in a too superficial manner. Life is too short with them to consider a case in all its bearings; it is only seen in the light in which it first strikes them. Each individual member of the greatest nation on earth is generally of the opinion that mentally he is quite as good a man as his neighbor, if not a few degrees better. Few are willing to recognize and look up to the really scientific investigators, of whom they have not a few, and, in consequence, these men are perhaps better known in foreign lands than in their own, where the loud voices of their pigmy *confreres* dim their brightness. An instance of this is found in the way Dr. Black's scholarly and truly scientific articles in the *American System of Dentistry*, have been received by the different college staffs. Is it not the case that almost every professor of pathology will give a pet classification of his own, rarely supported by experiment or proof and often consisting of several conflicting theories? In every second article we see the expressions, "I hold" this or that idea, "*my* opinion" is so and so. In a recent number of a prominent dental journal, is a controversy between two gentlemen on the presence of uric acid in the disease known as *pyorrhæa alveolaris*. One of them has proved by a few experiments, to his own satisfaction, that uric acid is present; the other, on the authority of a lesser number of experiments, states positively that it is not present, or if so, is in unimportant quantities. Now, it is evident that one of these gentlemen is wrong, although both write with the calmness of conviction. Would it not have been better if they had both taken a little more time and trouble about these experiments? Even if they had not announced their important conclusions for a year or so, the world would have wagged on in the