

important item in the pathological department, must be carefully studied.

VII. *Surgery*, which is the practical part of Anatomy, requires great attention; a firm hand, a fixed eye, and determined soul, are absolutely necessary in the manual operations of surgery. For want of these, I saw a patient perish under the hands of one of the most skillful surgeons. His nerves trembled, his hand shook, and he was forced to desist in the midst of his operation. The operation was upon the windpipe, to extract a substance that had entered. The patient expired. And when we add to all these, the science of

VIII. *Obstetrics*, you will perceive that the medical profession commands a most extensive and boundless field. No idler can be, or ought to be, admitted in this laborious vineyard. For it is no matter, in the language of Dr. Rush, whether acting under the cover of a diploma, or the pompous folly of an advertisement; if they are idle, they are equally empirics, and are only calculated for incomparable mischief.

A few remarks on these different parts of medicine, shall close this lecture.

The investigations of physic are not only peculiarly interesting to the physician, but they are eminently so to all mankind. For an acquaintance with the nature of human life and health, and their various states and affections, is undoubtedly of greater moment and importance to us all, than any other natural subject. The religion of the Bible is supernatural. For, although by this knowledge, men may not become adepts in the art of healing, they may yet guard and defend themselves from much misery and disease.

There is in all living animals, a principle, the effects of which are very visible and obvious to all men. During its presence there is life; in its absence, death. This we denominate vitality, or the living principle. It is infused by the Supreme Being, and is the work of his hands.

He is the Father of Spirits.

It is neither the *dura mater* of Bagliva, nor the *medulla* of Haller; nor the *nervous fluid* of Hoffman; nor the *ensorium* of Darwin: nor the *excitability* of Brown; nor, the *excitability*,

and *sensibility*, and *stimuli* of Rush; no! nor the *heat* of Thomson; but the living spirit which is made and implanted in the breast by the Almighty. All these that I have enumerated, and ten times as many more, that I might enumerate, are the mere effects of the vital principle, which have been so egregiously mistaken for the principle itself. It is very easy to distinguish a living dog from a dead lion. The most stupid can perceive this. And yet the most learned cannot explain the intimate nature of that living principle, which has forsaken the one, and animates the other.

But although we are equally ignorant of the principle of life, as we are of the principle of gravity, yet their effects are abundantly obvious to reason and experience. And when we have collected and digested the various modes and operations and phenomena, which life exhibits, under all the aspects of health and disease, by careful observation, experience and reason, the sum total may be called the philosophy of life.

Animal life, as it operates on the human body in health and disease, has been considered the primary and grand object of the attention of the physician. And some of its most obvious properties are sensibility, irritability and excitability. These are the effects of vitality, which have been mistaken for vitality itself.

Some physicians have supposed that the vital principle may lie dormant in a quiescent state, like latent heat, and afterwards be made to show itself, like heat, by the application of stimuli. But the reasoning is fallacious; it is merely analogical, drawn from a material subject, *heat*, to prove the phenomena of an immaterial subject, the *spirit* of life. It would be better reason, to attempt to prove that the spirit is latent, when the body is dead, because we cannot perceive its effects, than to attempt to establish from latent heat, a latent state of mind. For if in fainting, or catalepsy, it can be established that the spirit is merely latent, it may as well be latent in the grave to the day of judgment; for in the argument respecting an immaterial substance, whose very essential quality is activity, and without which it could not be; the latency of one hour, or one hundred thousand millions, could not at all change the con-