

Medical knowledge has been disturbed, also, by that restless spirit of enquiry that is abroad at the present day, and which leads its possessors to question the truth of existing institutions, and seize with avidity every new theory brought forward, having the merit of novelty to recommend it. As has been well observed:—"This temper of mind, so restless and credulous, which harbours with avidity the teeming brood of rapidly developed novelties which successively appear, and whose very appearance is ever proving the vanity of those which went before, has no favour or patience for medical science as recognized and taught in our schools. It seeks and believes that it has found for the time at least a sure and infallible panacea for all the ills to which flesh is heir, and regards, as a narrow-minded and selfish bigot, every member of our profession who holds fast by the old fashioned modes of treatment. But persons who are animated by this unsettled, flighty and morbid temper of mind are not to be reasoned with and we have little hope of convincing them, by any arguments, of the folly and fallaciousness of their sweeping condemnation. The science of medicine has always been a plant of slow and stately growth; it has gathered strength through all the changing scenes of two thousand years; it has been watered, and pruned and cared for by wise and good and earnest men of many generations; it is still an object of honest pride and zealous culture to numbers who know it best, and they feel no temptation, though others may, to barter its ancestral strength and long tried stability for any of the mushroom growths which spring up and perish in a day. Those persons, therefore, must be regarded as foolish, who despise and would set aside the healing art as it now exists, for this reason, that in so doing, they overlook not merely the pregnant fact, that crowds of able and educated, and honest minds have contributed their best energies towards its advancement during so long a period of the world's history, but also this other fact, that medicine has always been eclectic in its nature, neglecting no useful hint but gathering and adopting its means and appliances from all the elements and from every available field. Hence also, there is an obvious fallacy in the idea which many entertain, or at least express, that the members of our profession are hindered by narrow-minded bigotry or by the fear of endangering their craft, from hailing with open arms, every new and popular plan of treatment. The truth is, that we are ever ready to incorporate with our own views every element of truth, however small, which those systems may contain; we only demur to their vain pretensions to be regarded as panaceas. And then, as to our craft being in danger, surely every one must see, that were self interest our guiding star, our policy in that case would be to adopt the quackery *in toto* and so supersede the cavillers who now accuse us of bigotry and selfishness.

Orthodox and upright members of the medical profession are, as a rule, not "so far behind the times" as certain petty detractors of their fair fame would fain made the public believe. Because, forsooth, the thinking philosophic minds in medicine do not assent to and immediately embrace every wild and extravagant medical theory let loose on the world by the singularly erratic minds that abound at the present day they must be stigmatised as obstructionists. Never before in the history of this world did their exist so widespread an inclination to sneer at and depreciate everything having the authority of ages of existence,