

King J.

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PROF. J. KING'S INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

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GENTLEMEN:

m | The age in which we live, is characterized by the rapid progress and extension of learning and civilization; and the knowledge which in former ages was confined exclusively to the closet and the cloister, or carefully and sacredly enwrapped in mystery and superstition, is now diffusing its rays of usefulness over the Christian world, and facilitating the march onward to the maximum degree of mental perfection. New discoveries and improvements in the arts and sciences are presented to our view, in almost an uninterrupted progression; hardly has a discovery as astonishing as it is useful to the human family overturned all preconceived ideas and prejudices, and effected a thorough change in our mental operations, than another is presented equally as wonderful and important, and it requires of the philosopher, great activity, untiring energy and perseverance, and unceasing watchfulness, to prevent him from becoming in a short space of time vastly behind the information of the day.

And though we perceive lingering among us the remnants of that ignoble spirit which so blindly and obstinately repelled the sublime facts made known by Galileo—which endeavored to cheek the magnificent enterprise of a Columbus—which resisted with incessant hostility the brilliant and important discoveries of a Harvey,—and, which has, in fact, compelled all great truths, even from the earliest ages, to struggle and contest their progress, with unshrinking boldness and determination; yet, we have the gratification of knowing that this is ever the offspring of prejudice and ignorance, confined to little minds alone; and must ever yield to the powerful and invincible force of truth, whenever such submission is imperiously demanded.

In the present age we discover manifested a greater disposition to an acquaintance with facts; and the candid and enquiring mind is led in the true spirit of philosophy, to investigate every novel discovery with impartiality and thoroughness, and to select that alone, which is found to accord with reason and truth.

This may be considered as one great cause of the onward and prompt advance of all the sciences, save that of medicine. They, untrammelled and unprotected by legislative enactments—confiding their advancement, solely on the truth or falsity existing in them; courting the severest disquisition, and not confined to a select few and kept from the many, but free and open to all; have made such astounding and invaluable additions to the

knowledge and power of the human race, as might lead us to believe, that the mind of man is unlimited.

But how opposite has been the result with regard to the science of medicine! Clothed in mystery, and rendered unintelligible to all but the favored few; shrinking from the inspection of even the superficial enquirer, and sheltering herself securely under the wings of legislative partiality, her advancement has been greatly retarded, and, but for the efforts of some talented and fearlessly enquiring minds, who have dared to rend the chains of medical despotism and oppression, by exhibiting sufficient courage and independence to examine for themselves, and make the results known to the world, notwithstanding ridicule, slander, and persecution,—the Theory and Practice of medicine would have been at the present time nearly the same as in the days of Paracelsus; and the multitude would have been unable to judge for themselves, and choose the right from the wrong.

But, thanks to those noble spirits, who, throwing aside the execrable yoke of despotism under which the mental and physical existence of man had been groaning for ages, dared to think,—to will—to execute,—and to effect for themselves and their posterity, that political liberty which we now enjoy; we say, thanks to them, a scene of a different character is now presented; in accomplishing their results they achieved the greatest blessing for their fellow-creatures; they planted the germ of truth, liberality, and forbearance, and which, although it has only sprouted and blossomed, is destined to develop itself into a tree, whose branches will shelter and protect all the nations of the earth. In the science of medicine only, has *the germ* delayed its period of shooting forth, the soil has been less cultivated, and the *laborers* have been few, with a great array of *dignified idlers*; yet happily for mankind, it has taken deep root; the spirit of investigation has entered the medical world; the despotic talisman, “high authority,” has lost its magic influence, and *error* is now fearlessly combatted without regard to its source, or to the numbers of those who madly cling to it with an obstinacy worthy a better cause.

The errors, inconsistencies, and absurdities of Paracelsianism, or Hunkerism, at this day, when the mind may think freely, and the tongue as freely utter the conclusions which the mind has determined, have been pointed out, to the medical world; and the various investigations pursued in it several divisions, have resulted in new medical sects, as Homœopathic, Chrono-Thermal, Hydropathic, Physio-pathic, Eclectic, and a few others, each sect denouncing the old Allopathic system as being fraught with many useless and dangerous theories and measures. That system of medical practice termed Eclectic, is the one which we pursue, and which is about being taught to you in the Halls of our College, and, if I have rightly interpreted your wishes, as expressed through your committee to me, a few remarks on Eclecticism will be approbated.

To enter into a full and minute investigation of the Eclectic system of medicine, within the limits of one short address, is an impossibility; indeed, this will be presented to you during the present session by your professors in the various departments. I will therefore, call your attention to a brief explanation of Eclecticism, and of its advantages over other medical systems. The subject may be divided into the following considerations, viz; Eclecticism, in reference to other medical systems—Eclecticism, in regard to itself—Eclecticism, in relation to society.

1. Eclecticism in reference to other systems. The word Eclectic is defined as choosing or selecting from various systems such principles and opinions as are considered *sound* and *rational*. Certainly, there can be no plausible objection to the word, with this application, when applied to the science of medicine or any other science, for if rightly carried out, a vast amount of benefit must necessarily accrue to the human family. However, this is not our application of the word as employed to distinguish our medical system from the systems of others; we understand by the Eclectic system of medicine, one based upon certain principles and theories especially peculiar to itself, at the same time maintaining, as a *right* and as a *duty*, the freedom of adopting all that is considered beneficial in other systems, and of rejecting whatever is found to be evil. In reality, this is the true foundation of all science. Science, is a *collection* and *comprehension* of *truths*; and as on any one subject there can exist but *one* truth, so can there be but *one* science. We have but one science of chemistry, but one science of astronomy, but one science of botany, mineralogy, &c., and all these sciences are founded upon truths which have been gathered from various sources. All science, is, therefore, Eclectic,—for *theorize* as we will, or believe as we may,—*error* is always compelled to submit to the omnipotent power of truth, whatever may be the origin of its emanation.

There is also but one science of medicine, and notwithstanding it may be divided and subdivided into sects and parties, still the *true* medical system must from the very nature of things, be that which collects facts based upon experience and observation—Eclectic.

Can we be led to believe that the true system of medicine is that which has for over 300 years, maintained the principle, that although various valuable discoveries have been made in medicine, yet the lancet, opium, and mercury, with their consequent destructive results, rank superior,—and which persecutes all those who will not blindly acknowledge this absurd idea as a sacred and eternal truth?

Or, can we believe it to exist in that system which obstinately adheres to the assertion, that by the millionth part of an atom of some or any medical substance, the constitution of man is to be renovated, and purified from disease?

Or, can we believe it to exist in *any* system, which, after having reared a splendid superstructure upon a tottering foundation, closes all the avenues which might inform the intelligence of other truths, and with the illiberal spirit of despotism, ostracises all who dare to dream beyond its temple of imagined perfection?

No, it is an impossibility for the courageous, unprejudiced, and independent mind, to bow to any one of these as the true science of medicine; it must be sought where it can be found, among those who are truly Eclectic.

We, therefore, *claim* to be Eclectic, among other reasons, because we reject, more especially, the well known evils of other systems, and adopt that portion of *their* good, which we have demonstrated to be better than our own. I shall in this discourse more particularly refer to the evils just spoken of, among which I will briefly allude to the indiscriminate, and often culpable operations, which are so frequently taught and practised in the Allopathic schools, and to which, we object most strongly.

Our principles of Surgery, are to save, not maim, nor mutilate; to effect cures in every possible instance without the use of the knife, and without a sinful desire to display our operative skill by depriving a fellow creature of a limb, in order to gain popular fame and approbation. True, there are many instances where an operation is imperatively called for, and to perform which, gentlemen, whenever they present, it is your *duty*, as well as your *interest* to fully qualify yourselves; and may you never be classed with those half-fledged doctors manufactured by some colleges, to sport and trifle with the health and lives of their afflicted fellow creatures.

But, though we will frequently have cases presented to us where it would be unpardonable ignorance to delay an operation; yet there are many forms of surgical disease, in which, while Allopathy astonishes and bedazzles the world with its skilful and brilliant, but unfortunately, very often, unsuccessful operations, Eclecticism humbly cures by the most simple means, and thus fails to secure the encomiums of the public.

In obstetrics, we allow nature to perform her own work, and object to the presumptuous interference that would thwart her kind intentions, and thus destroy the health, and perhaps the life of a being, to whom on such occasions, we ought to become doubly bound by the dearest and most sacred bonds of sympathy and regard; recommending *art*, only when *nature* is perplexed, prevented, or inadequate to continue the grand work which she has commenced.

But the most essential difference between Eclecticism and Allopathy, is in the means employed for the cure of disease. While for this purpose, they rely almost exclusively upon the lancet and mercury, we, knowing them to be evils, proscribe them entirely, and make use of agents and means, the utility of which, facts

and experience have given ample demonstration. And we denounce them as remedial agents, because they are violent in their effects and unnatural, because they are very frequently incapable of fulfilling the indications for which they are recommended, because they injure the human constitution, often leaving within it the seeds of an incurable disorder, and because we have other and better remedies, simple and more natural, fully capable of meeting all indications, and leaving no evil after consequences engrafted upon the system.

It is unnecessary, here, to refer to the many statements of the most eminent Allopathic writers for testimony in corroboration of our views in relation to these agents; and who admit that bleeding occasions a great proportion of the fatal cases of infancy; that it produces a disease simulating dropsy of the head; that it causes chronic disease, nervousness, dizziness, debility, faintings, convulsions, epilepsy, apoplexy, dropsical affections, and even death; and that mercury paralyses muscular action, rendering the limbs feeble, the hand tremulous, the countenance sallow, the gums spongy, and the teeth gone, that it increases the severity and danger of febrile diseases, and permanently fastens chronic affections upon the system, often hastening the patient to the tomb.

I say it is unnecessary to harrow your feelings by quotations from these authors, given in language calculated to make the stoutest heart quail, and the most stubborn eye, weep; you will meet with them sufficiently often during your medical studies, and may you prove so fortunate as to have them fall under observation in your reading alone,—that you may not experience the frightful and heart-rending sights which your speaker has unfortunately witnessed, where, in many instances, from the effects of mercurial action, the whole of the lips, cheeks, eyes, ear, and portion of the scalp have sloughed off, exposing the whole of the bony structure, and presenting the horrible and ghastly spectacle of a living skull. Words are inadequate to express the painful and sickening sensations produced by such fearful and melancholy appearances; and I will leave them here, having no delight nor interest in a recital of them.

Were the Eclectic system of practice only EQUAL in point of *success* to that of Allopathy, the simple fact, that it entailed no disease whatever upon the organic system, that it caused no excruciating pains, no incurable diseases; that limbs were never lost by it, nor patients made halt, lame, or blind; would be sufficient reason for us to adhere to it, even as tenaciously as we now do, knowing it to be in every other respect, immensely superior.

In addition to the lancet and mercury, which effect such disastrous consequences to the human family, we likewise denounce as remedial agents, other articles introduced into the *Materia*

Medica of the old school, which are equally as unsafe, uncertain and dangerous, and in proof of which, we have the fullest testimony of the most celebrated Allopathic authors and professors. We refer more especially to tartar emetic and other antimonial preparations, arsenic, compounds of lead, and other metallic articles, which exert a permanent injury upon the system, and which are so highly recommended, and so often prescribed at the present day:

For these pernicious and health-destroying agents, we, as a general rule, substitute medicinal plants,—and, in addition to which, our peculiar treatment enables us to thoroughly and permanently cure many diseases, which Allopathics pronounce incurable, and which, for ages, have been termed the “opprobrium of the profession,”—among which may be named cancers, fungus-hematodes, lupus, ulcers, several forms of scrofula, of dropsy, of hepatic disease, and of derangements of the nervous system. In pneumonia, scarlatina, and typhoid fever, diseases which, under their treatment, usually prove exceedingly fatal, we find our measures tend to a rapid restoration to health almost universally, and it is rare to find a death from them, where Eclectic means have been pursued throughout.

In the treatment of acute forms of disease generally, the principles and practice adopted by Eclectics, effect speedy convalescence, without the prostration usually following the old mercurial course, and without the risk of developing future incurable chronic affections;—and the difference in the results of treatment in these diseases, between the two schools gives, as far as has been ascertained, a ratio of at least 40 per cent. in our favor.

In the diseases of women, which, unfortunately, are so very common in this Western section of country, if I may be allowed to judge of the success of other Eclectic physicians by my own, I can most unhesitatingly assert, that there is no medical sect now in existence, who are as successful in their treatment of these distressing diseases, as Eclectics, by fifty per cent.

In tetanus and hydrophobia, two forms of disease in which Allopathic measures prove almost uniformly fatal; and, indeed, which are considered as being absolutely beyond the power of human aid, our treatment has, thus far, resulted in a success unknown in the scientific world.

Many other forms of disease might be named, in the treatment of which Paracelsianism has been generally unsuccessful, and in which the results are in favor of Eclecticism, by a difference of from 30 to 50 per cent.; but it is unnecessary to proceed any further, as you will derive a thorough knowledge of them during the course, and in a manner more minute and satisfactory than can be expected in the brief limits of a single address.

In relation to Homœopathy, it is a fact, well-known to every

experienced practitioner, that about two-thirds of the common diseases of the day, can be cured by dispensing with drugs, and substituting in their stead, a correct regimen and diet. It is in these cases that Homœopathy is found successful, and to which it owes its popularity among a certain class in society. But, when a disease is presented, in which a course of active treatment is absolutely required, this trifling medication is found to fail in effecting any good results; and, if the Homœopathic practitioner confines himself to the ethereal reflection of medicines—the infinitesimal doses—he inevitably loses his patient, either by death, or by having him placed under the care of some other practitioner. Many, very many cases, have come under my observation, in which, after Homœopathy had exerted all its infinitesimal skill and judgment, Eclecticism has been invited to give its aid, which has resulted in a speedy relief. And if all such instances, which may have fallen under the notice of various practitioners could be collected together into one mass, there is no doubt that evidence could be gleaned from them, sufficient to condemn this system as a *true* medical platform.

Yet, we must admit, that there has been no medical sect presented to the world, however imperfect it may have been, or is, in the aggregate, but in which some truths and advantages have existed. This is the case with Homœopathy—to which we are indebted not only for a knowledge of several useful agents—their therapeutic actions and applications, but it has likewise exerted an *influence* upon the ancient mode of drugging with enormous doses of active medicines,—much to the injury or discomfort of the patient—which has materially lessened the quantities of these agents in the treatment of disease, by nearly all classes of practitioners; though not to the extent of intangibility.

We strenuously oppose, however, their arsenical and mercurial agents, even when administered in spiritual doses,—indeed, there are on record, several well marked cases of salivation from the Homœopathic use of mercurials,—though we suspect, infinitesimality, in these was not absolutely regarded.

Homœopathy, Chrono-Thermalism, Physio-pathology, and some other sects, all claim to be improvements upon the old Allopathic system, and though they *may, perhaps*, be preferable to this system, yet we object to them on account of their exclusivism, which would fetter the mind to certain fixed theories, whether right or wrong, instead of allowing it to roam in the field of close observation, and collect and classify truths as fast as presented. To be a physician in the true sense, the mind must be unrestrained, and not warped by prejudice; there must be a freedom of choosing and selecting such medical views, and such remedial agents, without regard to theory, or devotedness to party, as have been fully demonstrated by facts and experience, to be the most in accordance with nature, and the most effectual in restoring to health. Such a course is not permitted among the followers of

these several medical paries—they are not allowed the advantages of valuable discoveries or improvements, which may be made by those who are exercising their intellects beyond the prescribed limits of sectarian doctrines—or should one of their adherents venture to rend the chains of mental despotism which bind him to party, the indignation, the slander, and the ridicule of all his professional brethren, are at once levelled at him, to bring him to yield allegiance to their opinions and prejudices, or to effect his exile from the field of medical science.

This, however, is not the case with Eclecticism, unlike all sects in medicine, it admits free investigation upon all matters pertaining to the science; it does not hesitate to adopt whatever is found valuable, without regard to its origin; it combats error, and supports truth, and enslaves the mind to no one-sided opinions; and, if our friends prefer leaving our ranks to unite with some other party, although we may deeply regret such procedure, yet we aim no venomous shafts to destroy them; still we prefer that such change should be made openly and honorably, without fear or dissimulation.

Eclecticism widely differs from other systems, and especially from Allopathy, in its liberality and forbearance towards all who entertain opposite views and opinions. Eclectic students, instead of being taught to limit their thoughts and investigations within circumscribed bounds or rules, regardless of their correctness or falsity—the usual course pursued in medical teachings—are trained to cultivate and maintain the utmost freedom of mental action; to listen with patience and respect to the views and opinions of others, no matter how seriously they may conflict with their own; to test their truthfulness, and adopt them, if good; or, if bad, to pass them by, without regard to theories, pre-conceptions, sects, interests, popular favor, or any thing, save a knowledge of truth, and truth alone.

Thus, like the industrious bee, we do not confine ourselves to the circumference of our own hive, as though Heaven had specially favored us with all truth and knowledge in medical matters, to the exclusion of all others; but, knowing that they exist every where, however obscured they may be by error and ignorance, we roam abroad, and carefully gathering them, prepare from them the cera and honey, which adds strength and beauty to our Medical Reform.

Such being the fact, Eclecticism, in reference to other medical systems, must undoubtedly rank as the one and only true system of medicine; and we believe the time is approaching when all other sects will merge into Eclecticism, which will then reign undisputed over the medical world as long as it opposes error, vindicates truth, and admits of free and unbiassed investigation.

2. Eclecticism in regard to itself. By many individuals, and, indeed, by some, who must undoubtedly have had a more thor-

ough acquaintance with the facts, a disposition has been evinced to depreciate our system of medical practice, by representing it as one possessing no merits of its own, but as being based entirely upon materials collected from other systems; this, however, is not true,—and it must be borne in mind, that the title Eclectic was assumed, *not* as designating the therapeutic theory of our system, but, as especially indicating the liberal principles already alluded to, of free and impartial investigation. Instead of having no inherent truths, or fixed principles of regulation, we find the very reverse to be the case. The first and leading principle, and which is found in no other medical system extant is, to discard all those remedial agents, which, after having fulfilled desired indications, continue to exert a pernicious influence upon the system, substituting in their stead, all those simple measures which experience has amply demonstrated to be safe, salutary, and in accordance with the recognized laws of the human constitution.

This one principle *alone*, is of the utmost importance to science and to society; it reveals a desire for truth, conjoined with a laudable regard for the best interests of the afflicted; it places Eclecticism pre-eminently above all other systems; and must ultimately contribute in obtaining the confidence of every candid and unprepossessed mind.

Independent of the views gathered from other sources, and received into our system, we have, in the treatment of disease, not only original, and as we conceive them, correct *theories*, but also original and peculiar methods of *management*, and *selections* of remedies. In relation to febrile diseases, inflammatory attacks, spasmodic, nervous, and arthritic affections, it will be ascertained during the session, not only that we essentially differ, in many instances, from the opinions usually held among the various medical sects concerning these diseases, but that our doctrines are *sui generis* to Eclecticism, and are to be learned in no other school whatever. It is upon these doctrines that we have established treatment adapted to each form of disease, and which a minute research, and a hitherto unrivalled success, have proved to be in every way worthy our entire reliance.

The treatment which we have thus founded, varies from that of other sects, both in respect to the indications to be fulfilled, in order to overcome abnormal influences, as well as in the employment of the medicinal articles prescribed to insure the desired results; those of you, who have already attended a course of lectures in our Institution, are well aware that in the treatment of febrile and inflammatory affections, the course recommended is entirely unlike that pursued by Allopathists, Homœopathists, Chrono-Thermalists, or others, and, therefore, cannot have been selected from either, but must of necessity have been original with, and essential to our own peculiar system. True, there are

many diseases, in which the only difference of treatment is in the character of the remedies, and their application and doses; but, in the aggregate, and considered in the light of a distinct system, there is a well defined line of demarcation between Eclecticism and other medical parties, sufficiently palpable, not to be mistaken for, nor confounded with them.

It is not only in the peculiar theories and treatment of disease that we recognize Eclecticism as an original and distinct system, but also in the useful and astonishing discoveries effected by it, and which, when we consider the limited period of its existence in comparison with that of other systems, are unparalleled in the records of medical history. The spirit of enquiry to which it gives birth, has effected a knowledge of many invaluable agents never before known or recognized in medicine,—and those which were pronounced inert by a sect devoted to the lancet and mercury, have undergone new analyses, and have been found active and efficacious. And were we, at this time, to divest ourselves of all theory, treatment, and remedies, save those original with Eclecticism, we would have ample means to treat all human afflictions, with peerless success and safety.

One great objection, and I believe the only one, formerly urged by patients against our practice, was in relation to the large quantities of crude medicinal substances which was administered to them during an attack of illness. For a long time, this was an almost insurmountable obstacle to the rapid progress of our cause, but the discovery of the concentrated remedies has completely obviated this difficulty, and has given a new impulse to Eclecticism. We are now enabled to combat disease with an almost unerring degree of success, and as our doses, although not infinitesimal, are yet very small, patients are pleased with the change, and no farther murmurings are heard.

The credit of discovering and introducing the active or concentrated principles of indigenous medicinal plants, justly belongs to the Eclectic school, notwithstanding they are employed and claimed by others. And the disposition to the investigation and manufacture of these concentrations, which is now manifested throughout the whole country by various sects, commenced only after several of our preparations had become established as valuable and important agents.

With Podophyllin and Leptandrin, in the treatment of those diseases in which Allopathists *insist* that mercury in some form *must* be employed,—permanent and speedy cures are effected, and the practitioner can now bid defiance to calomel, blue pill, and the whole array of mercurial preparations. Indeed, so efficacious have these agents been found, that not only are Homœopaths, employing them, but still more strange, hundreds of Allopathic practitioners who have satisfactorily tested them, are already using them successfully in practice, instead of their favor-

ite poison—mercury. And it is so evident to intelligent Allopathists that society will require them to use these articles in their profession, that a disposition is manifested to deny the right of discovery to any but themselves. However, as we are aware of their usual course in similar matters, and their extreme aversion to any indebtedness to heterodoxy, we only smile at their efforts, and feel sufficiently recompensed to have placed valuable remedies within their reach, even though they award to us no just credit.

It will be seen, therefore, that the intrinsic characters of Eclecticism, to which such very brief reference has been made,—and which stand out in bold relief, notwithstanding the despicable clamors raised by ignorance and for the purpose of obscuring them,—entitle it to rank as a *thorough* medical system,—one, which from its doctrines and teachings, *independent* of any extraneous aid, must necessarily arrive nearer perfection than those which are wedded to their one-sided views and prejudices.—Truth, simplicity and success, form the corner stone of our cause.

It is but a few years since, that all medical systems and practice, no matter how valuable or successful they were, if not in accordance with the despotic principles of Allopathy, were branded with the terms quackery, empiricism, &c., and every effort was made to render them disgraceful and contemptible in the estimation of all respectable classes of society. Nor, unfortunately for the afflicted, has the influence of such exertions wholly forsaken the community even at the present day, for many, very many are to be found, possessing such a devotion to exclusivism, and such a horror of liberalism, as to prefer death from Hunkerism, to health and life from rational treatment.

Indeed, but a comparatively short time has elapsed, since, even in our own republican country, those who were found pursuing any but the authorized system of medicine, who dared to exercise the freeman's prerogative, were subjected to a heavy fine, and in some instances torn from their families, and rudely thrust within the walls of a prison, from which they returned only to meet the ridicule and contumely of their medically enslaved citizens and neighbors. These are but faint out-lines of the spirit which has actuated the followers of the great aristocratic Allopathy, from the days of its founder, the miserable debauchee, Paracelsus. We will not assert that they are still animated by this disposition, because they are loud in their professions of liberality, philanthropy and reform, and we trust that they really possess them though, as yet we have not met with a display of any one of them among their ranks.

No change was effected in the unjust and tyrannical laws, upon which such outrageous customs were based, until Eclecticism, breathed its placed and catholic spirit over the community, and by powerful and determined efforts, and notwithstanding the tor-

rents of slander and abuse heaped upon it by its opponents, produced such a revolution in the public mind, in regard to matters where life and health are concerned, as have made the throne of Allopathy tremble from its centre to its circumference.

Of the merits of a system which has wrought such commendable results, we may judge from the fact, that notwithstanding the foulest slanders, the grossest misrepresentations, and the most obstinate opposition and persecution have been brought to bear against it, to bring it, if possible, into disrepute, it has, in the astonishing short period of twenty years, completely revolutionized medical science,—has brought peace, happiness, and health to thousands of families,—and now claims among its friends and adherents, the majority of our fellow countrymen ;—a success, depending entirely upon the inherent truth and utility of the system.

The impulse thus given to correct medical investigations, has been such, that, as already remarked, improvements and discoveries in our *materia medica's* and treatment have been made, of an astounding and highly beneficial nature, far outstripping the original;—and Eclecticism as it now exists, improved by experience and untiring observation, would hardly be known as the infant of some twenty years since, which was struggling into notice. In many of its principles, and especially in the treatment of disease, vast improvements have been effected, and diseases in which even Eclectics failed, or in which, from an imperfect knowledge of the therapeutie influences of medicinal plants, they were compelled, much against their views and inclinations to employ minerals, can now be speedily and permanently cured, without the administration of a single particle of any known deleterious mineral preparation whatever; and the cry raised by our opponents, that we “administer mercury and other mineral poisons,” is as false as it is malicious.

Viewing it, therefore, as an original system, possessing its own particular theories, principles, and modes of treatment, and which have thus far proved to be correct and unusually successful—teaching and maintaining the utmost liberality and freedom in medical investigations, and hesitating not to receive and gather truths from other sources—we must necessarily be led to admit, that Eclecticism, both in reference to other systems, and in regard to itself, is indeed, the only true system of medical science.

3. The next consideration is, Eclecticism in relation to society; or, what are the advantages which society can obtain from it, beyond those to be derived from any other system? A reply to this question will almost amount to a repetition of our previous remarks.

The preservation of health and of life is vitally important to the happiness and best interests of society, and, in former ages, the knowledge of whatever would tend to these results, was held in such sacred estimation as to constitute an essential portion of

religion, and was entrusted wholly to the care of priests, by whom it was enveloped in heathenish superstition and mystery. But, as mankind became more enlightened, the vocations of priest and physician, united in one person, were not found compatible, as the spiritual had to be neglected while the physical was being attended to, or the physical suffered in its turn by the attention bestowed upon the spiritual. This, with other causes, served to separate the practice of medicine from that of religion, and place it in the hands of those who could exclusively devote their energies to it.

Tainted with the spirit of mystery which the priests had thrown around the healing art, and not being able to perpetuate the mystery without some authorization, the assistance of government was obtained to enact laws compelling the people to employ as physicians, those only who were legally authorized to prescribe and administer such nauseous drugs and compounds, as in their judgments or caprices might be deemed advisable. The result of such proceedings were soon manifested,—active investigation in medical matters ceased: speculative theories were advanced and supported, to be in turn supplanted by others equally as visionary,—and the whole medical profession settled down into a listless belief, that the lancet, mercury and opium, were the true specifics for the major part of human afflictions, and a contrary opinion was held and punished as the worst species of heresy.—And though a few useful discoveries were occasionally made by some energetic and daring minds, yet the whole profession was filled with pride and dignified idleness.

This condition of things could not last very long,—the evils and sufferings entailed upon society by errors in the theory and in the practice of medicine, as well as from the deleterious agents employed, gradually convinced enquirers after truth, that legislative bodies could not enchain science, nor render it submissive to their arrogant dictates,—and that as in other sciences, so in medicine, close and untrammelled observation was highly necessary to its progress and perfection. As soon as this truth became recognized, the orthodox giant, Allopathy, found itself opposed in its hitherto, unchecked career, by several new systems, each claiming to be safer, more successful, and consequently entitled to more confidence, than either of the others. Among them, Eclecticism advanced its claims, and society has recognized them to be just and true.

What then are the advantages which society can obtain from Eclecticism, beyond those to be derived from any other system?

The reply is,—it asserts and maintains that all agents which exert deleterious influences on the human constitution should be excluded from our *materia medica's*, and only those retained which are known to be consistent with health and longevity and without any evil consequences. In this principle, society have

a guarantee that no loathsome nor painful diseases will be permanently entailed upon them, and which alone is sufficient to merit their fullest confidence.

But aside from all its other advantages, which have been already referred to—that of Eclectic liberality—a feature so entirely at variance with all other systems of medicine, which provides for the admission of all recognized truths, and the rejection of all known evils,—presents a claim to society, much more potent, and more closely allied to their dearest interests than the combined claims of all the other systems.

Facts and discoveries of paramount importance to the welfare of society, but which are opposed to the exclusivism or dogmatism of these systems, must necessarily be rejected by them, without regard to the injury or inconvenience to the public,—while, on the contrary, Eclecticism is morally bound to receive and adopt every medical truth which a rigorous trial has demonstrated to be of value and utility.

It has been stated by Allopathists, “that society, no matter how high its character may be for general intelligence, cannot, in relation to medical improvements, be supposed to apprehend the full force of arguments upon theories and principles of medical practice, and consequently their views or sympathies on these subjects should be disregarded.”

This however, is not our opinion,—we consider the cause of Medical Reform, emphatically the cause of the people, individually and collectively—it is the cause of physical happiness, and the cause of humanity. True, community may not be intimately versed in the various theories and departments necessary to constitute an able physician, or a proper system of medicine, nor is it necessary that such should be the case; all they require is to ascertain the *results* of the practice based upon any set of opinions or facts. An intimate knowledge of all the departments of medicine is not essential in order to become acquainted with the system which effects in the most speedy manner the largest amount of cures; they can readily determine this, as well as the beneficial or pernicious tendencies of medicinal agents upon their own constitutions as well as their friends, by *common observation*. We do not ask, nor expect them to devote their time to a scientific investigation of the various systems of medicine, in order to determine the truthfulness of any; but we do ask, and fully expect, that, if not for the benefit of science, at least for their own protection, they will be carefully cognizant of the effects resulting from each. And such observation, will, in our humble opinion, discover that Eclecticism, in all its various relations, is closely interwoven with the very life and soul of society.

In concluding this subject, I am aware that more might have been said in regard to it, and I feel that it has received, but feeble justice from these brief and hasty remarks, so loosely thrown to-

gether, yet I shall not enter into any explanation of causes as an apology, it is unnecessary. But I trust, that as you have selected this school for your Alma-mater, you will appreciate the heavy responsibilities resting upon you, and will cheerfully practice such diligence and application in your studies, as will be found indispensably requisite to render you thorough, skilful, and successful Eclectic practitioners.

The presence of the ladies before me, a compliment which demands my grateful recognition, recalls to mind the high estimation in which they have ever held our noble profession. In the success of our cause they have always manifested a lively interest, for upon it, and the qualifications of its disciples, very often depend not only their own safety in perilous and trying seasons, but oftener still, the health and lives of those dearer to them than life itself. And it affords to the professional man the most unalloyed pleasure, whenever he has succeeded in restoring some loved one to the fond embrace of a mother, daughter, wife, or sister, even when the last spark of life was nigh extinguished, and despair was casting its dark and sombre shadows over some daughter of sorrow. Then, when despondency yields to hope, and certainty removes doubt, and the bosom heaves tumultuously with joy and thankfulness, the successful physician is honored and welcomed by the plentitude of woman's heart, which, when disclosed by her smiles of affection, and tears of joy, presents a scene, and gives rise to emotions, which even an angel might envy.

In sickness, or on the bed of death, who watches over us with more care and solicitude, than the mother? Whose words of sympathy cheer and comfort us, and sustain us in affliction; or who smooths the sick pillow, or relieves the aching brain so well as the fair hand of woman, giving to the sensitive mind, impressions which can never be effaced by the finger of time, and the remembrance of which calls up the most pleasing and grateful associations. Through her influence, the hour of trial and suffering is made to pass as a shadow—misfortunes become like golden sunshine,—and the pangs of adversity yield to her smiles and affection.

Heaven has endowed woman with a purity of nature, with a gracefulness of manner, and with a sensibility of feeling, which diffuses over everything around her a hue of its own nature. It is, therefore, in her society that we must expect to derive those lessons of morality, gracefulness of decorum, and rectitude of bearing, so indispensable to the educated physician. It is she, who is destined by an allwise Creator, as the refiner of the sterner sex, mellowing down the asperities of his rough nature, and polishing it to the standard of elegance and refinement.

