

few of the inmates are permitted to walk out in front, in the extensive yard. The lower rooms of the middle building are large, for the accommodation of the steward, matron and physician. The rooms of the upper stories and those of the wings are small, though sufficiently commodious, and are heated without fire places or stoves, in such a way as to render the patients comfortable in cold weather, and at the same time to prevent the infliction of the least bodily injury. The patients are treated with all possible mildness, and it is highly gratifying to the feelings of philanthropy to witness the order and neatness which prevail throughout the establishment.

In a late visit to this asylum, Dr. Drake took the following notice of it. "The noblest institution in this city is the hospital for insane persons, established by the State of Kentucky, and admirably managed by a number of intelligent and respectable citizens of Lexington. On a visit to it I have been gratified to meet, among its managers, not a few of the same gentlemen whom I used to meet ten years before, when acting as one of its medical attendants. This continuance in office is as it should be. No charitable institution can flourish under a perpetual change of managers. Even the same kind-hearted steward and matron were there still; and the attending physician, Dr. Theobald, whose urbanity and experience are what the situation requires, has been for several years devoted to the duties of his office. The accommodations, afforded in this establishment, are extensive and well arranged; the warming and ventilation are effected by proper means; cleanliness, quiet and order are obvious in every part; and I feel it quite a duty to recommend the establishment to the friends and physicians of the insane in every western State which has not yet erected a similar edifice, and brought its internal administration to an adequate degree of perfection."

I expect to leave this place to-morrow for Cincinnati, whence I will write you, perhaps, about the first of July.

Lexington, Ky., June 20, 1839.

Yours, &c.

W. J. B.

QUACKERY.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

HERE never was a period in which such swarms of quacks and impostors overspread the land, as at the present time. We should deem it astonishing all but incredible, that men should be so perverse as to die, when so many infallible remedies, to insure their health and to prolong their lives, are held out to them. We can scarcely take up a public print, without meeting with scores of advertisements of "infallible cures," "enviable distinctions," "genuine pills," "specific mixtures," and a thousand other similar announcements.

If we had nothing higher than pecuniary interest in view, we should never open our mouths against this horde of scavengers, in the form of quacks, that pollute everything with which they come in contact. For instead of injuring our profession—instead of taking away our practice and thereby rendering our calling less profitable—they produce precisely a contrary effect. For in nine cases out of ten, when a man puts

himself under their care—when he begins to be dosed, to be steamed, to be peppered, and to be gorged with whatever other things ignorance and unblushing pretension can invent—if he escape with his life he will be sure to require the aid of the physician to restore him to that state of health in which he was before he surrendered himself into the hands of his tormentors. No, we trust we are actuated by higher and purer motives than the mere love of gain, when we lift up our voice against this set of impostors, and warn the public of the disgraceful practices of which they are guilty in order to snatch the means of a precarious subsistence from those who are so unhappy as to fall victims to their savage rapacity.

I once used to wonder, that in our enlightened age—an age in which men require skill and knowledge in every other profession and trade—they should be willing to trust their lives and their health in the hands of those without education, honesty, or even common sense. But when I recollect that men could once believe in the reality of witchcraft, and punish with death those whom they supposed guilty of practising it—when I recollect that nearly all men have at different times been somewhat tinctured with the belief in ghosts and goblins—and that in our own times, and among our most enlightened and educated men, may be found those who believe in the jugglery of “animal magnetism,” I am not surprised that men, when laboring under any real or supposed bodily disease, and influenced by the imagination, as men are at such times, should be led to trust to the arrogant pretensions of quacks and impostors. We cannot, then, depend upon the discriminating powers of the public to free itself from the horde of leeches which are now sucking its vital blood.

It is incumbent on the medical profession, in this, as in every other case, to exert itself in the cause of humanity, and do their best to diminish this great evil. And how shall we do this? Shall we enter into a contention with those contemptible plunderers of the public health, who are filling our periodical prints with advertisements of their vile compounds and poisonous mixtures? or, shall we look upon them as beneath our contempt? To enter into a contention with them is out of the question. We should, therefore, point them out to the public in the same manner as we would point out to the unwary traveller the alligator that lies in wait to destroy him.

And in order that we may keep ourselves aloof from these impostors and point out with a good grace their wholesale and unholy impositions, we ourselves must be irreproachable. We ourselves must be the first to begin the reform; we must elevate, purify, and expurgate our own profession, and make it that high and noble calling which it should be—a calling worthy of being followed by men of the greatest talents, men on whom the tongue of slander cannot have the least impression, and whom the rancor and venom of quacks will only serve to show in a more enviable light. When we can do this—when we can make the medical profession, in every respect, what it should be—quackery will of itself die away, as the mushroom, which has grown up in the night, withers beneath the glowing radiance of the noon-day sun.

And how are we to elevate our profession? We must begin *ab initio*—must begin with those who are just entering its ranks. The standard of education must be raised among medical men, and a longer time than is now required must be expended in fitting medical students for the discharge of the all-important duties of their profession. If there is any profession that requires a cultivated mind, a judgment strengthened and matured by study, and a disposition rendered mild and benevolent by the culture of the *litteras humaniores*, it is emphatically the medical profession. The profession of medicine should rank equal to, if not above, the other learned professions, instead of being the lowest on the list, as it now is; and the only way of making it such as it deserves to be, is by filling its ranks with such men as are able to support its dignity. It should be filled with men who are above all grovelling and sordid interests, and who, with undefiled hands, are able to minister at the altar of the goddess to whose service they are devoted. When this shall take place—when the medical profession shall be filled with men who are themselves free from every imputation of quackery, and who are able to look upon every approach to empiricism and frown it down with that sovereign contempt which it deserves—that host of quacks which now abound throughout the land, will fall into the obscurity which their character so richly merits.

It has too often been the case, that we ourselves have been the cause of advancing the progress of quackery. We too often have been divided on points of minor importance; we too often have entered into fierce contentions concerning things of little value; and whilst “the house has been divided against itself,” and the attention of the guardians of health been called off in another direction, the empiric has had the opportunity given him of foisting his wholesale impositions, and committing his depredations, on the public. But we hope and trust that the day has at length arrived when contentions and animosities among members of the profession are to be done away; and when quacks and quackery, and all the unholy practices of the empirics which now over-run the land, shall be numbered among the “things that were.” N. H. ALLEN.

Gray, May 28th, 1839.

HOOPING COUGH.

Mr. LINACRE stated, at a recent meeting of the Medical Society of London, that he had employed vaccination as a means of relief in two cases of hooping cough. The disease had continued for fourteen days before he inserted the vaccine lymph. As the vesicle proceeded to maturity the severity of the paroxysms of pertussis became remarkably mitigated, though in their frequency they were undiminished. The children were well in a month from the performance of the vaccination. Mr. Clifton saw nothing extraordinary in hooping cough running its entire course in six weeks. He had generally, indeed, found this to be the average duration of the disease, which was three weeks in reaching its acme of violence, and the same time in declining. When the little