

It is this which should distinguish the physician from the empiric, & this alone should determine his superior claims upon an enlightened & liberal public. The age, in which we live, is one of philosophical research, & practical inquiry. Professional characters have, at length, begun to reflect & determine for themselves. Our professional fathers, less accustomed than ourselves, to rigid investigation, & inductive reasoning, suffered many dangerous impositions upon their credulity, which has now become our professional duty to disprove & reject. In an age, like the present, we have much to hope & expect. The youthful bosom now glowing with professional ardor, & moved by a laudable ambition, usurps the forsaken steps of his predecessors, to disclaim empiricism, expose error, establish principles, & confirm truth.

We now submit the present dissertation to your impartial consideration. As error is the legitimate & acknowledged offspring of inexperience, our claims to infallibility must be small & limited. Should our positions, however, shrink beneath the touch of criticism, & be unsustainable, after rigid investigation, we will unhesitatingly forsake the task, it is now our pleasure to perform, submit to the weight of authority & fact, & embrace such principles, as in our opinion, are in strictest accordance with the established truths of our science.