

AMERICAN MEDICAL JOURNALS.

It will, we think, be universally conceded, that the main objects of a medical journal are to afford a medium of expression to those whose communications are of real value, and which, consequently, advance medical science and the public weal; next, to be the archives for facts worthy to be treasured up for future reference; to prove the vehicle of question and answer upon the important topics of physiological, pathological, therapeutical and hygienic discoveries; to be the independent arbiter of professional literature; and, finally, to endeavor to unite, by a pleasant influence, all "good men and true" in the bonds of professional friendship. There are many collateral points, to which we need not refer; such will suggest themselves to every one. The chief uses of a periodical devoted to the exposition of the current questions of the day in medicine and surgery, are evidently those we have indicated.

Are these objects universally aimed at by the medical press of our country? Without censoriousness, we think not. It is remarked by excellent judges, that, if we have *more* newspapers in the United States than in European countries, we have fewer *good* ones. This is eminently true of medical journals. It is really a matter of astonishment to us how so many can be sustained; still more do we marvel at the not infrequent advent of new ones; *cui bono?* may well be asked. The truth is, that a *few* publications of this sort, faithfully conducted, and supported, as they ought to be, not only by a good subscription list, but by the pens of reliable and zealous scholars and practitioners, will effect more than hundreds "got up" for specious purposes, or by professional *cliques*; and which scramble desperately for a subsistence for a time, fill their pages with anything and everything, as starvelings are apt to do; live largely upon "*Selections*," and either die of inanition, or continue to "drag their slow length along."

In these days, it would seem that every school—nay, every *vagary* too, must have its "organ" in the shape of a journal. So we find all the "*pathies*," wrapped in blue or yellow covers, flinging themselves to the winds (especially those of *popular* favor) with erratic flight, like sickly and strange birds, wondrously ill-favored!

The remedy for this evil of *poly-journalism* is in the hands of the members of our profession; if they desire to have really good and flourishing media of communication and information, they have only to decree it, and it *must* be. Let them support with their influence, and with *their written contributions*, as well as with their purses, the truly scientific, honest and pains-taking journals we have amongst us; and others, not worthy of such epithets, will soon be shadows like the shadows they pursue; whether they are set up as special agents, or are "things of shreds and patches," receiving alike the contributions of the varying and opposing quackeries of this gullible age.

The free consideration of this subject, editorially, in our pages, may possibly be deemed open to animadversion; in view, however, of its importance, we waive any points of mere taste, and present what we believe to be *the truth*, to our readers.