

and cross-examination meant only an indirect examination. The ignorant, who take things in the wrong sense, often show ill-humor, and put themselves in an attitude to be cross, because they are to be cross-examined. With the candid and enlightened, it proves often an agreeable mode of discussion, and is particularly so to our profession, when it gives us occasion to extract from those of superior learning, knowledge, which we might not otherwise have the means of acquiring.]

*Mr. Sampson.* What do you think, doctor, of the opinions of Plato, touching the principles of generation? Do you mean also to ask me Pythagoras' opinion on wild fowl? Far be it from me, sir; that question might serve to puzzle a man who was in the dark—mine are meant to elicit light from a source where it abounds. I do not know, sir, to what particular opinions you allude. To his triangle of generation, as well as to the harmonies and mysteries of the Number Three. I have never devoted any attention to such mysteries. A triangle has three sides and three angles, if you can find out the mystery of that. Has not a prism three sides and three angles? It has. Could Plato have meant that any thing resembling a prism could have an influence in generation? You seem, sir, to have thought enough upon the subject to judge. Sometimes the more we look the less we see. Can you, upon any principles of plain or spheric trigonometry, produce a triangle which shall be flat on one side and round on the other? That, perhaps, is an Irish triangle; if so, you can produce it yourself. Will you permit me now, sir, to examine you a little? Oh, doctor, you cannot be serious—not surely in the face of the court?

*The Mayor.* I think, Mr. Sampson, after the manner in

which you have examined the witness, he is entitled to what he desires.

*Mr. Sampson.* Alas, sir, I am but a poor tradesman, laboring at my vocation; if I let him wind that long chain of causes and effects round me, I shall be so entangled I shall never be myself again. It is play to him but death to me. I pray the court to let the shoemaker stick to his last. —Doctor, are you familiar with the opinions of Aristotle upon matter and motion? Your question, sir, is very general. I shall be more particular. Do you believe that matter is the capacity of receiving form? I believe there is a first cause which is the law to which all matter is subject. The first cause is too far off for my span; let us keep to one less remote. Is it not a corollary from the opinion of Aristotle, that the son should resemble his father? I do not see that it is. I wish, doctor, I could establish some difference between you and those great luminaries of ancient times. The authority of your opinion requires some such powerful counter poise. Well, sir, propose your questions.

*Mr. Sampson.* Since I cannot press these great men of antiquity into our service, I shall endeavor to find something in doctor Mitchill, to set off against doctor Mitchill. The counsel on