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ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

NATURE VERSUS ART IN THE CURE OF DISEASE.¹

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The constitution of our society requires that its president, on retiring from office, shall deliver to the society a public address. It is expected of the one who undertakes such a task to act the part of a leader and conduct his hearers into new regions of thought. For such a task I feel myself entirely unfit. Instead, therefore, of acting as your conductor, let me take the more humble position of brakeman upon the train of medical progress. It has seemed to me that in our desire to get ahead we have been going too fast, and that there is danger of the train getting off the track unless the brakes be applied. Let us stop for one moment in our search for something new and return to first principles. In what I shall have to say I will refer to what I regard as mistakes which we, as a profession, have been and are still making. I shall refer to three: 1. *A want of confidence in nature*; 2. *An over-confidence in drugs*; 3. *The use of placebos*.

First, I remark that our profession has *always* made a mistake and got off the track when it has shown a want of respect for the unaided powers of nature, and has gone counter to the natural desires and appetites. This I propose to illustrate by a few preliminary remarks upon instinct and the natural appetites.

"Instinct" is defined as "a certain power or disposition of mind, by which, independently of all instruction or experience, without deliberation and without having any end in view, animals are unerringly directed to do spontaneously whatever is necessary for the preservation of the individual or the continuation of the kind." Such in the human species, is the instinct of sucking exerted immediately after birth; and such in the inferior creation is the instinct by which insects invariably deposit their eggs in situations most favorable for hatching and affording nourishment to their future progeny. These operations are necessary for the preservation of the individual and the continuation of the kind. But neither the infant nor the insect knows that they

are necessary; they both act without having any end in view, and act uniformly without instruction, and without experience. The actions of the inferior animals are generally directed by instinct; and in the savage state man is little less the slave of instinct than the brute.

Concerning human instincts, philosophers differ widely in opinion, some maintaining that man is endowed with a greater number of instincts than any species of brutes, whilst others deny that in human nature there is any power or principle which can properly be called instinctive.

As an example of instinct, it is said that caterpillars, when shaken off a tree in every direction, instinctively turn around toward the trunk and climb up, though they have never before been on the ground. This is a striking instance of instinct. On the tree, and not upon the ground, the caterpillar finds its food. If, therefore, it did not turn and climb up the trunk, it would inevitably perish. But surely the caterpillar does not know that such an exertion is necessary for its preservation; it acts not from motive, but from blind impulse.

The bee and the beaver are endowed with an instinct which has the appearance of foresight. They build magazines and fill them with provisions, thus providing against a time of need. The solitary wasp digs holes in the sand, into each of which she deposits an egg, though she certainly does not know that an animal is to be produced therefrom.

Familiar examples of instinct are the construction of the nest of the bird, the cobweb of the spider, and the honeycomb of the bee, all of which are so well adapted for their use, and constructed with such mathematical accuracy. Other familiar examples are the migration of birds and fishes toward more genial climes.

It would not be difficult, did time permit, to show that many of the acts of the human species, which are most essential to the preservation of the individual and the continuation of the race, are alike the result of instinct. A healthy, vigorous infant, within a few minutes of its birth, gives the plainest and most unequivocal evidence of a desire to suck, even before anything has been brought into actual contact with its mouth. It stretches out its neck and turns its head from side to side, apparently in quest of something; and that the object of its pursuit is something which it may suck anyone may satisfy himself by a very convincing experiment. When the infant is thus stretching out its neck and moving its head, if anything be made to touch any part of its

¹ An address delivered before the Allegheny County, Pa., Medical Society, March 17, 1885, by the retiring president.

face the little creature will instantly turn toward the object and endeavor, by quick, alternate movements of its head from side to side, to seize it with its mouth, in the very same manner in which it always seizes the nipple, till taught by experience to distinguish objects by the sense of sight, when these alternate motions, being no longer useful, are no longer employed. I have dwelt thus long upon this portion of my subject for the purpose of showing what great results are accomplished by simply permitting animals to have their own way. By following instinct alone, the great mass of animal life is preserved upon the earth.

Closely allied to, if not identical with, instinct are the natural appetites by which all animals will select their natural food; that which is pleasing to their taste being usually beneficial, and that which is offensive being injurious.

Animals and savage man, when sick, will be led by their natural desires and appetites to place themselves in the best conditions and make use of the best means within their reach for their recovery. They will select the place most sheltered from the storm; if they have fever they drink the purest and coldest water; having no appetite they take no food, and when hungry they eat of the most agreeable substance to be obtained. By these natural instincts and appetites, before the existence of the medical art, the whole animal kingdom was kept alive in health and cured when sick.

This being the case, it would be natural to think that the first attempts of the fathers in medicine would have been in imitation of nature. One would naturally think that they would have studied the manner in which unassisted nature cured her diseases and endeavored to assist herself. Such does not, however, seem to have been their way. They seem to have been imbued with the idea that nature was totally depraved; that every appetite and desire, if granted, would lead to the destruction of the individual; that a sick man unrestrained was bent upon suicide. They seem to have thought that it was their mission to thwart all natural desires. I could show this in many ways—by the painful and injurious dressings to wounds, by the loathsome substances which the sick were compelled to swallow, which we now know to have been injurious, and which, had the patient followed his own desires, would have been avoided.

As science advances, as the natural processes are better understood, as our knowledge becomes more exact, we see the wisdom of these natural desires; and in the treatment of disease we now use many of the same means, and in the same way, which man naturally would have used in following his own desires and appetites. I propose to illustrate this thought briefly, in the manner in which water has been and is now used as a therapeutic agent. It is within the memory of the elder physicians present, when not one drop of cold water was allowed to a patient suffering with fever. No matter how dry his tongue or parched his throat; no matter how delicious it might be to his taste, he must bear his torture. The profession never learned that the use of

water was not only harmless, but, on the contrary, beneficial, until the more unruly and stubborn of its patients rebelled under the restriction and drank all the water they wished, being thereby greatly refreshed and benefited. So, also, with regard to the external use of cold water in fevers; it is but a few years ago when anyone who would have proposed such a measure would have been thought a fool. To have sponged the body of a fever patient with cold water would have been thought madness; and to have put one in a cold bath, murder. The fact that a patient longed for the taste of cold water to quench his thirst, and that to have his skin sponged with the same agent was agreeable, does not seem to have operated at all in the minds of his medical attendants as a reason for permitting its use. Perhaps the fact that he desired it was the reason it was denied. But how is it now, since our knowledge has become more exact, and we have learned by the use of the thermometer the elevation of temperature which takes place in fever, and also the power which cold drinks, sponging, and baths of cold water, have in reducing the temperature? We now know that the very means which are agreeable are the best which can be employed.

I have dwelt too long upon the practice of our Fathers. I believe that we, their sons, are today making as great mistakes as they did in going counter to the natural desires and appetites of our patients. The fearful mortality among children during the summer months is greatly due, in my opinion, to the fact that the little ones are not placed in a condition to gratify their natural desires, and mainly from the fact that they are deprived the use of cold water. Children, during the extreme hot weather, perspire freely; this would be caused by the extreme heat; but they are often against their will kept sweltering in flannel garments, which increases their heat and perspiration, and they are consequently very thirsty. If the child cries for drink, the nipple of the nursing-bottle is thrust into its mouth. The child is thirsty, not hungry; but not getting the water which it does want, it takes milk, of which its stomach is already full. The consequence is, the milk, not being digested, ferments; and vomiting, diarrhoea, cholera morbus and death result.

So also in the treatment of dyspepsia this same idea can be illustrated. It is now admitted that the best results are obtained in the treatment of this disease by following the natural desires of the patient, as indicated by his appetite.

This fact is well shown by the case of the late Hon. Charles O'Connor, the distinguished barrister of New York city. He had been a sufferer from some gastric derangement for years, and was under the care of those justly distinguished physicians, Drs. Van Buren and Keyes. He at last became so feeble that a consultation was arranged for with Dr. Austin Flint. Dr. Flint was not able to keep the appointment, and happening to meet Dr. Keyes he so stated. Dr. Keyes then informed Dr. Flint that it would be useless to arrange for another consultation, for the patient was dying and would probably be dead before another day. This news was circulated through the city and was so generally believed that obituary notices of

Mr. O'Connor were published the next day in the daily papers, together with an account of the *post-mortem* examination, and the cause of death stated to be degeneration of the gastric tubules. But, notwithstanding all this, Mr. O'Connor did not die. He commenced eating just such articles of food, and in just such quantities, as he desired, commencing with a little brown bread upon which some sweet preserves were spread. He continued in this course, eating such articles of food as his appetite craved, and lived for many years afterward in tolerably good health.

Lest some should doubt my opinion regarding the benefits to be derived from simply following the natural appetite in cases of this kind, let me quote what Dr. Flint says in a recent lecture:

"It is a sound maxim in medicine that the therapeutic indications derived from science and from nature, as a rule, should harmonize. If they be in conflict, the scientific indications are open to suspicion. I will add, as another maxim, that the true principles of therapeutics are in accordance with the dictates of common sense. If there be antagonism here, when are considered the liabilities to error in scientific deductions, it is reasonable to suspect the correctness of the latter. These maxims are applicable to the dietetic treatment in diseases. Nature's indications as regards diet relate to appetite and the sense of taste. That appetite and taste were intended to govern the choice and quantity of aliment in health no one can doubt, especially if it be added that the indications derived therefrom are to be regulated, to a certain extent, by reason and experience. But it is a popular error that these natural indications are necessarily morbid in cases of disease, and that, instead of being recognized as constituting a governing principle, they are to be opposed. This popular error prevails to a certain extent in the medical profession. How often, perhaps I should say how common, is it that patients with different diseases are denied food when nature indicates the need of it by the sense of hunger! How common, when food is allowed, for patients to be denied the articles of food which they desire and made to take articles which they dislike! I look upon this disregard of nature's indications in the same light as upon the exclusion of fresh air from the sick room, against which Sydenham was the first to rebel, and upon those restrictions in the use of water internally and externally which have not even now become obsolete. The dietetic regulations, in cases of disease, need reform today fully as much as reform was heretofore needed in regard to air and water. It is evidence that science is astray whenever it opposes, instead of coöperating with, the indications of nature."

Were anything more needed to prove the truth of the power of nature to cure disease, I could refer to the success of homœopathy. I do not allude to the modern homœopothist who surreptitiously and dishonestly makes use of potential agents, but to the honest followers of Hahnemann who uses high dilutions and triturations. It cannot be denied but that a fair share of their patients recover, although no sane man can believe that the infinitesimal dose has any effect upon disease.

This interference with natural processes pervades every branch of medicine. Very few women are permitted to have their children in the way which their own inclinations would dictate. They are kept upon their backs or sides at the caprice of their accoucheur, some even going so far as to restrain them in a sort of harness. If she be a primipara, the old women of both sexes deem it necessary to direct when she should hold her breath and when she should bear down. Now, this is all wrong; the girl of fifteen with her first baby knows as well as does her grandmother how to send her baby into this wicked world, and she should be permitted to do it in her own way. She should be permitted to stand, sit, kneel, or lie down upon her back or side, just as she pleases. By giving her every freedom, she will have her baby in the easiest way for herself. Perfection in the arts of painting and sculpture consists in being true to nature. A great elocutionist has said that no gestures are more graceful than those first made by a child. So in the art of medicine; we will do well by closely observing nature and the manner in which she works.

The second mistake to which I wish to call attention is to what I conceive to be an overconfidence in the power of drugs. This overconfidence usually exists to the greatest extent in those minds which underrate the powers of nature. It is the general opinion of the laity, and this opinion is shared by a few of the profession, that for every disease there is a specific somewhere in nature, and that it is the whole duty of the physician to find this specific; to find some drug which will cure this disease, without any regard to the condition of the patient or the stage of the disease. Now, we should remember that disease is a process, and that the laws which govern pathological processes are as regular and orderly as are other natural laws. And just as in the growth of the grain we have first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, so in disease we have its different stages of growth and decline, some diseases being necessarily fatal, while others tend naturally to recovery. The duty of the physician is to be able to recognize the disease, to know its natural history, to be able to recognize the different stages, and meet the conditions as they arise. This is so well put in an article on new remedies published in a recent number of the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, by Dr. J. Chris. Lange, a member of this society, that I cannot resist making the quotation:

"The attempts to control disease by potential agents, irrespective of its natural course, constantly afflict the possessor of this desire with the disappointments and vexations of failure. His not less earnest because mistaken course is thus beset with unpleasant experiences, which are substituted for the satisfaction and pleasure which should cheer the physician as he daily observes the expected and interesting course of diseases and their intrinsic tendency to recovery. A physician who, in the hope of achieving abortive effects upon disease by the exhibition of potential agents, habitually interferes with the normal course of disease, will not grow and gather the reliable

and valuable experience which he would accumulate were he to content himself with observing, and when necessary, directing the course of disease."

It is nature, and nature alone, which cures disease. All that the physician can do is to place his patient in the best condition for the application of her laws. We do not deny that medicines are often useful in removing obstructions which stand in the way of recovery; but they are by no means the only, nor are they the most important, means to be relied upon. Air, water, food, exercise, temperature—in fact, the total environment of the patient—are far more important considerations than the particular drug to be administered. But notwithstanding we know this, and also know that it is clinical experience alone which can establish the value of any drug, still it must be admitted, in the language of Dr. Flint, in the lecture already quoted, that pharmacomania is a form of mental aberration affecting alike certain physicians and patients; the latter have a morbid craving for, and the former an abnormal propensity to prescribe, drugs.

"The pharmacomaniacal practitioner never tires in the use of remedies. He has a distinct drug for every symptom, and remedies are multiplied in proportion as new symptoms appear. One may know that to this extreme a practitioner belongs by a glance at the array of phials, cups and glasses at the bedside of the patient. The prescriptions, which accumulate daily, contain a multiplicity of ingredients, each, perhaps, designed for a particular object. His patients after recovery have a large collection of souvenirs consisting of the daily surplus of prescribed remedies. To the apothecary he is a 'joy for ever.' A catalogue of the medicaments presented by the apothecary as a memento shows that Molière did not exaggerate in the enumeration with which he opens his play, '*La malade imaginaire*.' The pharmacomaniacal practitioner is never discouraged in the use of new remedies. He reads medical treatises and journals with special reference to these, and he loses no time in giving his patients the benefit of all in succession. As one new remedy after another becomes obsolete in consequence of having been found useless or injurious, he relinquishes it only to supply its place by one still more recent, always accepting the latest with as much avidity as he had accepted the remedies which he has discarded."

The manner in which the ignorant public run after and swallow patent medicines, which are advertised in the public prints, is not more ridiculous than is the credulity exhibited by members of our profession in the statements regarding drugs and medicines. We are made the dupes of the pharmacist and manufacturing chemist. Some plant or root is found in New Mexico or upon the Rocky Mountains, having a peculiar taste or smell, and forthwith the manufacturing chemist (all for the good of the profession) makes an extract from it and sends it forth to the world with recommendations from doctors of high and low degree. Agents are employed, and forthwith every doctor's office in the land is abundantly supplied with samples of this most wonderful extract, together with recommendations from the

aforesaid endorers, men entirely unknown to the profession. That these remedies are extensively used no one can doubt who visits our drug stores. To my mind this is humiliating. We have in our possession remedies which have stood the test of time, and long clinical experience; and to withhold these, if our patients need anything, and prescribe remedies whose claim of value rests upon no solid basis, is to be unjust to our patients. Practitioners who are constantly testing new remedies, in the hope of finding specifics, can have but little knowledge of morbid processes; and their patients are as wise as they when, after reading the advertisements in our public newspapers, they resort to the use of patent medicines. Indeed, the prescribing of the remedies which are put up in such attractive form by the manufacturing chemist is alike detrimental to the profession and to the public. The manner in which they are put up, the character of the recommendations which accompany them, the explicit directions given as to the manner in which the remedy is to be used, bear evidence that, although they are addressed to the profession, the design is that they shall be used by the people without any advice from the physician. But whether this be the intention or not, the fact is that they are so used by the public, and the physician who habitually prescribes these remedies is an unpaid agent, and a dupe, of the manufacturing chemist. His patients soon acquire the habit of going to the apothecary for their medicine, without going through the formality of calling upon the doctor. In the morbid desire which so many ignorant people have of everlastingly "taking something," potential agents are taken where they are not indicated, and to the injury of those taking them. Had the patient not been initiated and instructed in regard to the use of these new and elegant preparations, he would have sought advice, to the mutual benefit of both physician and himself.

The arrival of every mail brings to me, as I have no doubt it does to each one of you, a bundle of circulars laudatory of new compounds. At this moment, as I sit at my table, I see pamphlets containing the names Hydroleine, Celerina, Tonga, Tongaline, Oleo-chyle, Mentholine, Bronchines, Gastrines, Gonorrhœaines, and a host of other compounds with equally euphonious names. Among the other rubbish that encumbers my table and overruns the waste basket, are half a dozen journals devoted to the science of pharmacology and the introduction of new therapeutic agents. These journals are chiefly devoted to the introduction of new remedies. The recommendations of the preparations are very similar in character and style to the advertisements which accompany patent medicines.

It is plain to see, from their strictly scientific (?) titles, that they are meant only for the medical profession. Is it not time that a halt was called upon this intolerable nuisance? It should be discouraged in every possible manner. The whole business, including agents, samples and pamphlets, should be refused admission to our doors. Let us no longer be made the dupes of these manufacturers. Let us return to the use of the extemporaneous prescription.

I do not deny but that we are indebted to the manufacturing chemist for the elegant form in which they have presented some of our old remedies, but I do assert, without the fear of successful contradiction, that they have never, by the methods which they have adopted, given to us a remedy which has stood the crucial test of clinical experience. The manufacturing chemist is but an apothecary upon a larger scale, and it is time enough for the apothecary to compound a prescription after it has been written by the physician. The physician should be the pioneer in every case. Thanks to our colleges of pharmacy, we have now at most of our apothecaries men able to compound with elegance any prescription which we may need. Let us encourage these men, and give our prescriptions to only such druggists as will refuse to have upon their shelves *the ready made compounds* of either the patent-medicine vender or of the manufacturing chemist. By adopting some such course we could benefit ourselves, advance the science of pharmacology, and at the same time be of service to the public. Let the manufacturing chemist provide the chemicals and active principles. Let the physician do the prescribing, and let our own apothecaries do the compounding. By thus dividing the labor, and each one attending strictly to his own business, the best results will be obtained.

The physician who prescribes for a patient should have a definite aim. The remedies which influence morbid processes are not numerous; and it is better to select one of these remedies than to be running after untried agents. The physician should know well what he wishes to accomplish, and his prescription should be loaded, aimed and fired more like the rifle than the shotgun.

It is just this overconfidence in the power of drugs, and want of confidence in nature, which enables the charlatan to impose upon the public. "God cures the disease and the doctor takes the fee," is a phrase which is more often true than many think. It is no mystery to us that patients should recover while under the care of the hair-doctor, the laying-on-of-the-hands doctor, the faith-cure doctor, the infinitesimal-dose doctor, or no doctor at all. We know and recognize the ability of the "*Vis medicatrix naturæ*" to cure, and often in spite of very bad treatment. But to the public these recoveries seem marvelous, and only because of its overconfidence in remedies. Once teach the people the truth concerning the power of nature, and the occupation of the quack will be gone.

I contend that this overconfidence in drugs has been kept alive by *the use of the placebo*, which is my third point, which we will now consider. In a book published a few years ago, entitled "The Physician Himself, and What he should Add to His Scientific Acquirements," the manner of using the placebo is given in detail. This book has had a wide circulation, and has been highly recommended. Its author is a professor in one of our most prominent medical colleges. I would not allude to this book at this time, were it not that I believe its teachings to be pernicious upon the mind of a young man just entering our profession.

After telling us that a very good placebo is the No. 35 unmedicated homœopathic globules, a box of which can be purchased for thirty-five cents, he says: "Placebos not only amuse and satisfy people, but you will be surprised to hear that some full-of-faith persons are chanting your praise, and are actually willing to swear that they are cured of one or another awful thing by them. Cheated into health by globules, or teaspoonful doses of flavored water, or licorice-powder, as if by charm, some of whom seem to be magically benefited by a teaspoonful of—nothing, will actually thank you for saving their lives. What a sad comment on the discerning power of the nineteenth century! What a sad comment on medicine! What a gold-mine for quackery! Never prescribe bread pills; it is not right to make a patient pay for bogus medicine!"

I have no comment to make upon such teachings as this. Surely the time of young men preparing for a learned and honorable profession could be better employed than by learning how they could best impose upon a too credulous public. But there are other men—men of high standing in the profession—who, although they would blush to give such instruction as is given in the "Physician Himself," nevertheless, in their practice do not hesitate to prescribe medicines where there are no indications for their use. Not long since a patient of mine afflicted with a malignant disease made a tour among the physicians of New York and Philadelphia for the purpose of getting additional advice. He returned with his wallet well filled with prescriptions from the most eminent medical gentlemen of these two cities, prescriptions which the men who gave them must have known were utterly worthless, so far as any effect they could have upon the disease. So, also, at consultations, where eminent council has been called, perhaps from a distance. Do we not often hear in the consultation room such language as this: "Doctor, the disease of your patient is pursuing its regular course toward recovery, but it will, perhaps, be better, in order to amuse him, that he should have something to take"; or this: "The fatal termination cannot be averted; but still we will be expected to prescribe something"; and in both cases the inevitable placebo is the result. The custom of prescribing remedies in cases in which the disease is necessarily fatal, or else tends naturally to recovery, or in any case in which the morbid process is pursuing a course from which it cannot be diverted, is to pander to a popular prejudice. It is undignified; it encourages quackery. Popular prejudices in regard to medicine have their origin in the medical profession, and it is this custom of always prescribing a drug in every case of sickness which has educated the people in the belief that for every disease there is a remedy, and that in the form of some drug. This erroneous impression is kept alive by the use of the placebo.

The confidence in the powers of drugs is so rooted and grounded in the minds of the people; it is so much a fact of the warp and woof of their nature that it is not likely that it can soon be eradicated. The measure of the life of everything is the period

of its growth, and as it has required many centuries to bring the mind of the people to its present condition, it will probably be many years before it can be changed. This being the case, there can be no doubt that the physician who practices medicine solely for worldly gain will probably succeed better by giving than he would by withholding drugs. The average man who opposes popular prejudice generally succeeds in making a martyr of himself, and the average physician, who would only give a medicine when he saw a clear indication for its use, would probably soon be so disgusted with his want of success that he would either leave the practice of medicine, or the practice would leave him. The English historian Macaulay says: "He is the successful man who appreciates the spirit of the age in which he lives." The word successful is here used in its commercial sense. If success is the measure of appreciation, there can be no doubt that the manufacturing chemist, the patent-medicine vender and the quack fully appreciate the spirit of this age. The evidences of their prosperity can be seen in their palatial residences and the imposing blocks which they have erected in most of our large cities.

Were I addressing a society of young men preparing for the practice of medicine, who desired success, simply in this commercial sense of the word, I would advise them to study the spirit of the age. I would tell them to take a six months' course of lectures at some cheap medical college, to supply themselves with the life of P. T. Barnum, a copy of "The Physician Himself," and take a journal on new remedies. With these three books, together with a handsome case well filled with placebos, and a fast trotting horse attached to a doctor's phaeton, he would have all that was necessary. Thus equipped, the young fledgling would be able to outstrip and ride down many men of ripe experience and rare attainments,—many modest, truthful, honest men, the latchet of whose shoes this impostor would not be worthy to unloose. But I trust I am addressing men who have a higher aim than the mere money which they can extract from the pockets of their patients. No amount of cheap notoriety or of ill-gotten gain can bring the happiness to its possessor which the conscientious man has in the faithful performance of duty. In the language of Dr. Flint, "The physician of the future will not be regarded as a mere therapist, but will be looked upon as a medical counsellor, whose duties embrace the preservation of health and the *prevention* not less than the *cure* of disease. When this time comes patients will congratulate themselves and be congratulated by their friends when it is decided by their physician that no drug is required."

If we can scarcely excuse the young physician struggling for a livelihood and for position for yielding to popular prejudices, we have no words which will express our contempt for the men in the front rank of the profession who resort to such contemptible practices. Authors of medical works, professors in our medical colleges, who take advantage of the ignorance of a patient to extort a paltry fee, are little better than impostors. We can never cure quackery

by resorting to the tricks of the quack. In this case, at least, the doctrine "*Similia Similibus Curantur*" will not work. So long as such customs prevail, the public cannot be educated into proper ideas regarding disease and its remedy; nor will they be able to distinguish between a recovery and a cure. When we give up the use of the placebo, and only prescribe a drug when it is clearly indicated; when we teach our patients the fact that the majority of diseases are self-limited, that others are necessarily fatal, and that there is still another class which can be greatly benefited by the judicious use of remedies; in a word, when we are honest with the public, we will receive the confidence which we deserve, and then, and not till then, will we rise above the charlatan, and all forms of irregular practice will be impossible.

Before closing, I wish again to enter my solemn protest against this continual interference with natural and salutary processes. I protest against it in the name of helpless infancy, whose cries for natural wants go unheeded; I protest against it in the name of sick and suffering humanity, whose natural desires and appetites are disregarded; I protest against it in the name of science, which is thereby disgraced; and finally, I protest against it in the name of God himself, whose wise laws are so ruthlessly violated.

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INCISED INJURIES OF THE PHARYNX, ŒSOPHAGUS AND TRACHEA, AND THEIR TREATMENT.

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Whatever may be the extent of incised injuries of the pharynx, the Œsophagus or the trachea, they are not necessarily fatal. In the operation for tracheotomy incisions are usually made in a vertical direction, and in themselves are not serious; that is to say, the patient seldom perishes from the effects of the operation. In operations upon the Œsophagus, where the incisions are also made in a vertical direction, statistics show that the percentage of deaths after such operations is small, and that the deaths which do occur are due to accidental complications, such as might occur after surgical operations in other portions of the body, rather than to any special predisposition which might exist in this particular Œsophageal region.

That which applies to injuries of the trachea and the Œsophagus and their treatment, also applies to injuries of the pharynx and their treatment. There is, perhaps, no class of incised wounds which the surgeon is called to treat, in which he experiences so much difficulty and hindrance to what we understand as "union by first intention," as in the class of injuries referred to in this paper. Especially is this true when the wounds are transverse; the principal hindrances to early union being the acts of respiration and deglutition, and the almost impossibility of fixing the head firmly.

We have thus far referred chiefly to the wounds as made in operations on these parts. The class of