

Obstetrics was in the hands of midwives, and child-bed fever was prevalent.

Therapeutic measures were practically limited to lancing, purging and blistering.

With the exception of opium, remedies for the relief of pain were unknown.

Now, what is the position of medicine to day? In a few words I think I can demonstrate to you, that the progress made has been in no way less marvellous than in the other sciences.

Medicine can now attack any disease with an intelligence and a knowledge of the underlying morbid processes.

Physiology has set up with certainty the functions of the body. We have almost complete knowledge of the tissues in health and in disease.

Immense advances has been made in the methods of clinical diagnosis, prominent among which is the use of the X rays. Diseases have been differentiated and classified singly or in groups. And best of all, medicine has obtained an intelligent insight into the causation of disease. For a long time the causes of disease were enveloped in a mantle of theory and speculation. But now the discovery of micro-organisms, their culture, study of their forms, antagonisms, etc., has shown the way in which many of our diseases originate. The immense improvement in laboratory methods has enabled experts to study these organisms, their growth and products, and by the recognition of these products or ptomaines which act as a toxic poison on the system, there has followed, as a natural sequence, the discovery of an agent to counteract their noxious influence.

Thanks to the genius of Jenner, small-pox is no longer the dreaded scourge of former days, owing to preventive vaccination.

The anti-diphtheritic serum of Behring has proved itself of immense benefit in lowering the mortality in diphtheria.

The antistreptococcic serum of Marmoreck, while still in the experimental stage, has proved of benefit in many cases, and the ravages of hydrophobia have been lessened owing to the genius of Pasteur.