

“ My life shall be a challenge, not a truce !  
This is my homage to mightier powers,  
To ask my boldest question, undisturbed  
By muttered threats that some hysteric sense  
Of wrong or insult will convulse the throne  
Where wisdom reigns supreme ; and if I err,  
They all must err who have to feel their way  
As bats that fly at noon ; for what are we  
But creatures of the night, dragged forth by day,  
Who needs must stumble, and with stammering steps  
Spell out their paths in syllables of pain ? ”

This, too, was the attitude of other pioneers of medicine, who have blazed a trail through the pathless forests of unexplained phenomena, who have swept aside the cobwebs of lethargy and indifference, and have brought the lamp of research to dispel the gloom of ignorance. The more intricate field of modern research has been made possible by the activity of the early investigators who have cleared the underbrush, and allowed subsequent students to overturn the soil of empiricism by the plow of rationalism tipped with the share of scientific accuracy and exactness.

The subject, “ Internal Secretion,” has been chosen not so much for the completeness in its consideration as for the possibilities in its problems; not so much for what it presents as for what it promises.

The subject, however, is an alluring one, and not the least so on account of the extreme difficulty attending the investigation of the character and quality of these secretions.

Cabot, in reviewing the analysis of urine at the Massachusetts General Hospital, and the post-mortem returns, finds that in acute glomerular nephritis there was some *discrepancy* between ante-mortem and post-mortem findings in 93 per cent., while in 75 per cent. the diagnosis of nephritis was not made at all during life. The kidney, moreover, is an organ which secretes abundant material, is the subject of constant study and investigation by thousands of laboratory workers, may be subjected to chemical, microscopical and bacteriological tests, and yet this degree of error is possible. How much greater difficulty surrounds the investigation of glands without a duct, whose secretions can be considered only in contemplation of symptoms produced by the pathology of the organ.

The glands, which are supposed to have an internal secretion, are the thymus, thyroid, pituitary, pancreas, suprarenal, ovary, testicle and less known carotid and coccygeal. Of these, the more important, thymus, thyroid, suprarenal and pituitary, are ductless.