

The boiling must have extracted most of the turpentine present and the substance thus applied acted as a protective.

And now in conclusion let me say that our profession is even yet bound down by the conjectures of the past and that we, like the Indian tribes, have a certain amount of fetich worship. We are gradually eliminating much that is conjectural and it will be a great step in advance when nothing that is not actually known is taught to the student of medicine. Theories should be proved and thus be made facts, or they are of little practical value. Theories may be used to pad book covers, where they serve a certain purpose, just as did the incantations and jugglery of the steam bath.

Charles Darwin is an object lesson to everyone who has matriculated in medicine. The accuracy of his observations founded his immortal greatness. He disposed of theories, not by substituting other theories for them, but by displacing them entirely, and this he accomplished by studying, by thinking out, by understanding the changes that took place in plant and animal life, so that he was able to demonstrate these changes to others who had been surfeited with the wisdom of their own theories, but who had not put into practice or else had not been endowed with sufficient powers of observation.

As a profession, we can alleviate suffering, we can assist nature, but we cannot prevent death. With our increased knowledge we can save many lives that a few years ago were lost. We can recognize disease more readily than we could a few years back, and we understand the nature of many diseases that were not understood and before many years we will understand the nature of some diseases that are not understood as yet. Physiological experiment and study of pathology are our two sheet anchors. They have already raised us far above the juggling medicine man, but we have much to rearrange. Our pharmacodynamics is almost as unscientific as that of the savage and we worry our students with a great deal that is valueless contained in our pharmaco-poeia. Their time would be spent to greater advantage in the practical study of physiology and physiological chemistry. The man who can estimate the immense benefits that will accrue to the human race from such continued progress must indeed be a great prophet.