

Bleeding was resorted to on the slightest provocation, and there was scarcely a neighbourhood that did not boast of a man who could open a vein with a dexterity that would shame the majority of the graduates of to-day ; and the enormous bowls of the various infusions and decoctions that were poured down the patient would go far to convince the observer that, as in the case of New York's historian, they intended to drive out the enemy by inundating the seat of war. Some of their medicines were nauseous enough to have been derived from the pharmacopœia of the Dark Ages, the Chinese or the homœopathists. An infusion of the excrement of the sheep was commonly prescribed for the measles, and that of the cat—no bad substitute for assafoetida—was considered “ the sovereign'st thing on earth for fits.”

My father was the first in the neighbourhood to treat diseases *secundum artem* ; but in those days the principles of medicine as taught by Sydenham and Cullen had not become obsolete, and he never hesitated to use contra-stimulants or the lancet in inflammation, in what was called inflammatory fever, or sthenic cases of disease with hyperaction, where he considered that the patient's constitution would endure the treatment.

It was in this school that I learned the first rudiments of medicine, and in the first years of my practice I used the lancet with more or less freedom. And though the doctrine of John Hughes Bennett and his followers has largely affected my practice, I am by no means convinced that the disuse of the lancet has been an unmitigated blessing. As there were brave men before Agamenon, so there were skilful and *successful* physicians before we were thought of, or a bacterium discovered. It was certainly a dangerous mode of treatment for the mere routinist, who bled, blistered and salivated each patient, as a matter of course ; but was a powerful weapon for good in the hands of the careful, observing physician, who understood the course and effect of disease, and carefully and intelligently studied and watched those of his remedies. And while our modern treatment saves patients who would have died under the old regime, I am convinced that the vigorous treatment of