

Again, careful and repeated experiments on the lower animals have afforded us such a knowledge of the functions of different parts of the brain that the surgeon has been enabled to diagnose and operate for the relief of many of its diseases. Abscesses, tumors, and traumatic epilepsy have all been treated with an encouraging degree of success.

And just here let us remark that the well established results of experiment and observation go to prove most conclusively the absurdity of the claims of the so-called phrenologists, who profess to make out all the various attributes of that organ.

Time would fail to tell of the many improvements in general surgery since the introduction of antiseptics. Suffice it to direct attention to a few. In my student days, and for some years afterwards, suppuration was the rule after all extensive wounds, whether accidental or made by the surgeon's knife. Amputations of the breast or limbs were thought to have done well if the parts were soundly healed in six weeks. If union by first intention was obtained, it was looked upon as little short of a miracle. And even then I have often heard non-professional men, persons of age and experience, remark that the wound must re-open and discharge before the patient would be thoroughly well. Too often their prognostication was indeed verified. Now all this is changed, and the surgeon is not satisfied with his work unless the wound heals with no suppuration, and the patient is fit to leave his care in half the time formerly required.

In the treatment of herniæ there has been great improvement. Instead of trying to avoid the opening of the peritonæum, that most dreaded cavity, we now treat ruptures altogether by that method, and the results we get both in operations for the radical cure, and in cases of strangulation, far surpass those of twenty or twenty-five years ago.

In fact all serious operations, such as excision of joints, wiring of ununited bones, ligature of large vessels for aneurysm, etc., are now undertaken with a certainty of prompt recovery that was unknown to us in former days.

The only other department of surgery to which we shall refer is that of diseases of women. Gynæcology, in fact, has been mainly a development of the last thirty years, and yet it has been the means of relieving many thousands of suffering women, who were required before that to endure as best they could a great deal of pain and discomfort. For various forms of displacement of the uterus the only relief afforded was the wearing of some form of pessary. But most cases are now