

manifestations of disease which were harmful in themselves and in fact often the essence of disease. Consequently all our efforts had to be directed towards combating this condition. So universally accepted and so apparently well founded has been this dictum that few indeed were the men bold enough to question its standing or even to investigate its truth.

Prof. Bier, one of the boldest and most independent of thinkers in our profession, as is proven by his introduction of Lumbar anaesthesia and a host of other important innovations, was led to doubt the injurious effects of inflammation and congestion and in fact suspect a certain element of curative power in it. He was led to this belief by the comparative infrequency of Pulmonary Tuberculosis in cases of heart disease which cause a pulmonary stasis. The same observation was made in spinal curvature and even in tuberculous caries of spine causing much deformity and consequent interference with circulation. At first his work was ignored, then ridiculed, afterwards vigorously attacked and finally accepted by most of the best surgical thinkers. Now it is heralded as one of the most, if not the most important innovation in the medical world which this generation has seen.

This changed attitude of the profession towards this subject was largely brought about by the many supporters the new idea found at the International Medical Congress held at Lisbon. Many of the best surgeons corroborated the astounding results which treatment along these lines produced. Since then the flood of literature this subject has brought forth has been prodigious. The great bulk of it has been written by ardent supporters of the method. Few, indeed, have been the dissenting voices. The comparatively few failures have mostly been in cases where the methods of Bier were not adhered to.

With your permission I will mention a few theoretical facts and draw some conclusions from them. I think I am safe in asserting that all functions of an organism are performed in the interests of that organism or its species. None are prejudicial. In health these functions are acting under