

earlier, that is, if she had been in labor only five or six days. The two extremes of practice contrasted the helplessness of the seventeenth century and our own resourcefulness at the end of the nineteenth century, yet it might be alleged, not without reason, that there is to be seen in the contrast only one more illustration of how "knowledge comes but wisdom lingers." The results of our modern practice, as given in the illustrations, did not make it so perfectly obvious that in obstetrics we are much wiser than our sires.

Dr. D. J. Leech, as president of the section of pharmacology, and therapeutics, selected as a subject for his opening address: "Past and present views as to the actions of medicines." In his review of the subject he confined himself to the period of Queen Victoria's reign. The progress of pharmacology was discussed step by step from the time when Pereira in 1836 first set forth his general views with regard to the action of medicines, views which for the most part are accepted now. The influence of recent discoveries in pharmacology, owing to the investigations of pathologists and physiologists, had been very great. The discoveries made concerning the curative influences of certain animal substances, such as thyroid gland, and concerning toxins and antitoxins, made a new departure in therapeutics.

On the close of this admirable address Dr. C. K. Clarke, of Kingston, opened the discussion on Insomnia, a subject of very great interest to every practising physician. He deprecated the persistent use of drugs, and in cases where sleeplessness arose from neurasthenia, favored the promotion of sleep by massage and frictions, with hot milk or a glass of beer as adjuncts. Dr. R. W. Wilcox was exceedingly interesting in his remarks on the treatment of insomnia by drugs. After relating his experience with the large number of drugs in use, he closed his paper with a comparison of paraldehyde, chloralamide, sulphonal, pellotine and trional as regards potency, rapidity, duration of action, habituation and safety. The discussion following indicated a consensus of opinion that hypnotics should only be used as a last resource. Chloral was deprecated by the majority and sulphonal also received some strictures.

The section of pathology and bacteriology was under the presidency of one well known on this side of the Atlantic, W.