

## INTERNAL SECRETION.\*

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In presenting these pages which antecedence has dignified with the title of President's address, I wish to refer to some investigations regarding Internal Secretions.

Medical advancement has been accomplished by degrees known as progress and crisis. In the latter may be classed those pivotal moves upon which subsequent action is based. In the warfare of medical science against disease and ignorance, the advance of the scouts and pioneers, revealing newer and stronger positions, discovering fresh sources of strength, retreating from untenable situations, is characteristic of crisis; the following up and seizing these situations by the rank and file is characteristic of progress.

Ambrose Pare's use of the ligature, Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood, Laennec's revelations of mediate auscultation, Metchnikoff's theory of leucocytosis, Jenner's teaching of artificial immunity, Morton's and Simpson's discovery of general anesthetics, Holmes' and Semelweiss' recognition of the true character and cause of septicemia in parturition, Lord Lister's advocacy of asepsis are outstanding examples of advance by crisis. No less important, however, is the elaboration of these ideas, the improvement of methods and technique, and the diffusion of this knowledge through medical and lay minds. Nor have these advances been made without great struggle and opposition, often from quarters least expected. It may add to our appreciation of past discoveries and improve our charity towards future ones, to realize the bitterness of criticism, the hostility of attitude, the unreasonableness of scrutiny, to which medical advancement has been subjected.

Semelweiss marked an advance by crisis, but lacked the temperament and strength of character to improve the situation by progress. To the skillful pen and keen intellect of Oliver Wendell Holmes is due the credit of establishing for puerperal sepsis its rightful cause.

The violent opposition he received from those in high as well as those in low positions, drew from his pen this reply:

\* President's address, delivered before the Toronto Medical Society.