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DISEASES DUE TO ORGANIC INSUFFICIENCY.*

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GENTLEMEN:—As one who still feels himself a student of the University of Toronto, I have been particularly pleased and honored by an invitation to speak before the Society of Toronto Pathologists. The renown of Toronto as a city possessing unsurpassed facilities for pathological research is spreading abroad and one hears daily of the new buildings which may serve as models for future institutions. It is on that account, therefore, that I come to you, not bringing any store of information but rather a store of problems, and asking for help in their solution. The subject which I have chosen—a broad one familiar to you, even in many of its details—is beset, however, with doubts and obscurities, to which I wish to recall your attention, for their elucidation will put in our power the cure of a great many widespread diseases and the rescue from death or from a life worse than death, of thousands of our fellow men.

It is difficult to outline precisely the group of affections which may be said to be due to organic insufficiency: for the destruction of any organ will surely produce disturbances of a mechanical or chemical nature in proportion to the extent of the injury. Still there are several apparently insignificant organs in the body whose loss occasions such a profound disturbance as seems entirely out of proportion with their dignity, and it is of such instances that I wish to speak. These organs have enjoyed, and some of them still enjoy, an idyllic repose in the midst of the ruthless cross questioning, which has been applied to the other tissues of the body, but their turn has come and from their long hiding they are fast being dragged out and exposed as organs, which, though unobtrusive, are of vital importance.

It is evident that every tissue takes materials from the blood and gives back from its cells the products of their metabolism. When the tissue is specialised, for example, into an organ of motility as a muscle, we cannot expect it to also produce some substance chemically useful to the body, and we are therefore satisfied to find that when after a great

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