

mention a few of the more salient features of the theme as they happen to appear to the individual who, for the time being, has the floor.

To treat the subject exhaustively, or to any extent analytically, endeavoring to set forth in due form and in their proper order, chronologically or otherwise, the manifold steps and processes, and the parts played by different individuals, whereby the results in which we so much delight to glory have been attained, implies an effort transcendentally beyond the most latitudinarian estimate of the scope and aim of my present duty. The utmost that I can presume to attempt on the present occasion is the presentation of a few of the thoughts suggested to my own mind by the deliberate contemplation of some of the changes in surgical thought and practice which have taken place during the generation to which we happen to belong.

You and I have been interested spectators of, and more or less active participants in, a great contest with enemies of our common humanity of the most malevolent and uncompromising character. The battle commenced long before our day, and without doubt will continue to rage long after we have individually been forced to lay down our arms and pass over to that vast majority which has preceded us. In the meantime, however, we pause for a brief space in the thick of the fight for the purpose of permitting one of the rank and file the opportunity of recording a few of the impressions upon his own mind, respecting the progress of events in that part of the eternal struggle in which you and he have had the great honour of playing some part, each one according to his ability, whether that be greater or whether it be humbler.

In attempting to explain the rapid progress of surgery in recent times, and summing up the most powerful of the agencies by which this progress has been effected, large credit has been accorded to two or three data, which certainly have borne a sort of pivotal relation to the whole subject. These are, first, the discovery of anæsthetics, the influence of which is unquestionable and incalculable; the second is, in a word, bacteriology, of which it may be said, I think, that the influence for good has