

the original illustration, gurgling has been heard; in the eyes of the examiner the patient's doom is sealed; he is believed to be in a hopeless stage of consumption, withheld from active treatment, and his descent into the grave facilitated in every way that cunning can devise. But such a fearful accident would not have occurred had the principle we stated been known, that auscultatory phenomena are only certain indices of structural conditions that pertain to many diseases. For then physical signs would not, as they never should be, trusted to alone; the attention would not have been taken up with one class of these signs, further ones, as inspection, palpation, percussion, and so on, would have been conjoined, and with all these the rational symptoms would have been carefully elicited, and after a due consideration of the whole, a judgment pronounced, or perhaps cautiously postponed, till the original supposition had been strengthened by a subsequent observation. This is the only method by which certainty in diagnosis can be attained. Had the foregoing case of gurgling occurred to one practising with such acuteness, he would have revolved in his mind the various causes of the cavity in the lung which the stethoscope had revealed. He would have understood that it might be from bronchiectasis; gangrene; cancer; circumscribed empyema, with bronchial communication; pneumonic suppuration; phlebitic abscess; or pulmonary apoplexy, as well as from phthisis; and not before a diagnosis had been founded upon the *voix d'exclusion* would he have committed himself in expression, or fixed the fate of the sufferer.

Between Lænnec and Skoda there exist many controversial matters. The latter unhesitatingly avows himself in direct opposition to the former, not only upon questions of opinion, but also in objects of description, as examples may be particularly adduced the account of the variations of the thoracic voice, and the divisions of auscultatory signs. Skoda observes, page 73, "I have come to the conclusion that variations in the strength and clearness of the thoracic voice cannot be explained by differences in the sound conducting power of normal and abnormal lung parenchyma;" so that the old opinion is rejected which referred bronchial respiration and its alliances to the improved conducting power of a portion of lung that had become solidified or densified, while in its stead there is proposed a new one, which explains these circumstances by the laws of consonance. He considers consonance to be so well known that no definition is given; however, he illustrates it thus:—"The sound of a Jew's harp is scarcely heard in the open air, but becomes distinctly audible when made to vibrate within the mouth; its sound is strengthened in consequence of the air in the mouth consonating with its vibrations." He then proceeds to say, that whenever the voice is