

practitioners. How many of us have tried this mode of treatment? In general terms the deleterious effects of the toxine of the pneumococcus may be summed up in one word, depression, especially depression of the respiratory and circulatory systems. A rational treatment therefore would be to administer agents which have the power of stimulating and giving tone to these vital functions. Notwithstanding our accurate knowledge of the causation and nature of pneumonia and of the rational treatment to be adopted therefor how many of us still cling to the use of expectorants in the hope that the lung will thereby be cleared and the patient as a consequence get well. That the patient does then generally get well is a fact, but he gets well not because his lung has cleared, but his lung has cleared because he has got well. The administration of expectorants may not be wholly harmful in this disease but in my opinion their administration is often carried to excess, and their exhibition is of decided disadvantage to the patient, nauseating him and disturbing his digestive functions, thereby interfering with the assimilation of his nutriment upon which the maintenance of his strength so much depends. Let this example illustrate what I mean when I say practitioners often cling to the old method of treatment even when they know and are ready to acknowledge that the newer method is more rational and that the old is often harmful.

Again we frequently find physicians administering medicines where none are required and where their exhibition is positively harmful. This is no doubt often done out of deference to the patient's firmly fixed impression that he can get well only by taking medicine. In many such cases the administration of some harmless drug is not only not culpable, but justifiable. A patient comes to us complaining that he is troubled with headache, that he has a feeling of being tired, that he does not sleep well and that his bowels are sluggish. We give him advice as to exercise, food and regularity in his habits. If he is a sensible man that will be all he will require, but the vast majority of our patients are not sensible when it comes to the treatment of their bodily ailments. They believe