

tyrant, who may relax but never resigns his terrible hold? Yet the poor people who smile at prevention as foolish, think no expense or thought thrown away the object of which is that impossibility—a complete cure.

No. III.

The really able physician can follow with attentive eye every step a disease takes. But how often can he successfully interfere, how often rather are the resources of his uncertain art worse than useless?

Occasionally drugs are of service, but only when given to cut short some of the effects of exposure to the causes of disease; it is a *sine qua non* that these effects should be such that, left alone, they would speedily wear themselves out. In other words, drugs will accelerate recovery in those instances in which the restorative hand of nature would more slowly cure the sufferer. Medicine is practically powerless when the effects of disease would be, left to themselves, permanent. Medicine can do nothing when disease is slowly altering the structure of the body, and giving rise to pain and disorganization where normally should reign only health and strength.

Is surgery not more powerful some will ask, who, sceptical of the powers of the physician, think that at least the surgeon can do much? No, I reply, it is not. Surgery is not more powerful than her sister medicine. Surgery is successful when summoned to nature's assistance and working as nature works. Surgery may cure an aneurism, but only when that aneurism is in the best possible condition for undergoing a spontaneous cure. Surgery may remove, quickly and surely, a gangrenous limb, but, had the sufferer's strength lasted, nature would have cut off that limb. Surgery will take out dead pieces of bone; she will open abscesses, or remove tumors, and her triumphs are brilliant; but only when she does what nature tries to do, what nature more slowly, more painfully accomplishes.

Scientific surgery and medicine help nature; they are her handmaids, they enable her to triumph when, left alone, she