

arrived at, until it can no longer be considered good form to remain in town in Britain after the 12th of August when grouse shooting begins; and should the pecuniary circumstances render holidaying impossible, the fiction of brown paper in the drawing-room windows is gravely carried out, with the notice that letters and parcels be left at the warehouse down town. Underlying this fashionable excrescence upon a good custom is however the fact which, as physicians, we are forced to realize, viz., that the daily routine, even of prosperous employment, means nervous exhaustion. The same nerve cells and the same muscles are day after day called upon to perform their accustomed task, often to the neglect and exclusion of the use of other parts, the stomach gets no great change in the food or the manner of its cooking, the eye becomes an organ accustomed to seeing the same old things so frequently that one almost comes to fulfil the scriptural description of "having eyes but seeing not," and the same may be said with reference to the town sounds, which so constantly are impinging upon the ear that it ceases to hear. All of this wears, however, whether we are conscious of it or not, and becomes a monotony of nature which simulates the task of Sisyphus. Its end neurasthenia, or nervous exhaustion, we all know, but knowing decline, probably more than any other profession, to see that the moral which it points applies to us. The worn physician keeps toiling up a hill, whose top he never touches; he becomes fearful for this or that ordinary case, be-

lieves that it will die, if he leaves that he will be considered as neglecting his practice, that others may go but he must stay just till this one is better, and finally that he will lose his practice, and his historic enemy, *the other fellow*, will get the patients. The hard-worked country physician gets fresh air, but he fails in health; why is it? The results of infinite labors, night and day; he works, loses rest, has irregular meals, is anxious regarding the sick. Lauder Brunton, some years ago, well described in *Practitioner* the effects of this continued mental strain. He says in effect: One goes to the Welsh mountains or to the Scotch moors and undergoes daily and unusual fatigue. He stops thinking, his brain rests, his sleep is dreamless, his appetite is enormous; but his eye brightens, the step becomes full of vigor. He returns after his month of holidays a new creature, work sits lightly on him, unfinished tasks are taken up and performed with pleasure, and so he runs on through another year. We demand of our fellow practitioners that they apply to themselves somewhat of the same cordial and healing balm, which they recommend to their patients; and hope that year by year we shall hear of physicians applying for a *locum tenens* to take care of the interests of the patients while they stop work and go away, whether to breezy uplands or to the shores of the much resounding sea, and seek in change that recuperation which wearied nature often so urgently demands.

INDEX OF PROGRESS

SURGERY.

Address on General Surgery.

BY E. M. MOORE, M. D., ROCHESTER, N. Y. DELIVERED AT THE MEETING OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, MAY 9.

A general view of the relation of surgery and the surgeon to the community in which he lives might be of interest to the devotees of this broad field of inquiry. This must revive well-known stories and allude to present movements familiar to all; but they contain triumphs which always stir the heart of the true surgeon. Pope, in his couplet, has interpreted the thoughts of Homer of 3000 years ago, when he sang that

"A wise physician, skilled our wounds to heal,
Is more than armies to the public weal."

Notwithstanding Homer's complimentary opin-

ion, the surgeon has always found an influence that overshadowed him till very recent times. The progress of his knowledge for long ages was fearfully handicapped by the supernatural; indeed, this still holds firm in many minds. We have accounts of Egyptian medicine 1500 years before the time of Hippocrates, but the physician was always also a priest, and must ever administer his services with a prayer to Horus. A divided responsibility is always enervating. Restraint was upon him everywhere. He could not examine the dead, for they were to be preserved. The body was to be reclaimed by its owner in a period of time varying from 3000 to 10,000 years, according to the moral and intellectual status of the individual; therefore it was to be preserved with the least possible in-