

mentation and putrefaction, were as yet not discovered. Then all the laity and the majority of medical men considered that an individual was born with the seeds (used in a very indefinite and unscientific sense) in him, that only needed time to develop. Why some children of tuberculous parents, and not all of them succumbed to the disease, was a question never answered. I say the majority of medical men believed so, but others in my recollection, before the tubercle bacillus had ever been heard of, believed that one person "caught" the disease from another. To this belief they came from long observation and clinical experience. They knew not in what the infection consisted, but neither did they in measles, or scarlet fever, or any other of the infectious or contagious diseases. If then it is clear that the disease is always from without, what is the point in heredity? In my opinion, this question is a very, very serious one for life companies.

Doctors claim that medicine is a science. It is, and yet it is not. Certainly it is not an exact science, and speaking to men who are in the habit of dealing with mathematical truths, we must admit much looseness of reasoning, many fashions and fads in medicine. There can be no fashion or no fad about, say, the law of similar triangles—that is a truth forever fixed. Indeed, there can be no fashion or fad about pure mathematics. I will not say so much about statistics. You have probably all heard the definition of statistics, given by one who is supposed to know of what he spoke. He said, "There are three kinds of lies—first lies; second, d—d lies; and third, statistics." Joking apart, statistics are, I believe, notoriously misleading. I said just now that there are fashions and fads in medicine and surgery. There always have been, and I expect always will be. Only a few years ago a woman who had, say, an ingrowing toe-nail was in danger of losing one or both ovaries for the correction of that ingrowing toe-nail. Young men, anxious to be in the front rank, were ready to open abdomens and remove ovaries on the shortest notice. The fad ran its course. Common sense and experience stepped in, and now the number of ovaries that find their way to the waste basket, so to speak, are comparatively few, and I believe that nearly all that go there, go for good and sufficient reasons. Then another fad—the appendicitis fad, with which you are all more or less familiar, came to the front. Young and enterprising surgeons were alert for opportunities to show their skill in diagnosing disease of and in removing appendixes. Many were sacrificed to the new scientific fashion. Fortunately the appendix is only an appendix, and not necessary, so far as is known, to the preservation of the race, so it did not by its removal make so great a hiatus in the subject, so to speak, as did the removal of ovaries. I mention these two among many