

I admit, even in the sphere of drug therapeutics, that our progress is contemptible.

When we regard the additions made to our hypnotics, the discovery of the value of the nitrites, of the bromides, of arsenic in pernicious anæmia, of the salicylates, of the antipyretic, hypnotic and analgesic group, of the antiseptic treatment of diseases of the skin, of the antitoxic treatment of diphtheria, of the thyroid treatment of myxedema, or when, again, we realize the greater precision of our use of the older empirical remedies, as of digitalis, in the preciser administration of remedies in syphilis, in the injection of alcohol and ether, of apomorphine, of ergotine, of strychnine, of hyoscyne, of cyanide of mercury; when, once again, we think how much more accurately we discriminate our means in the treatment of phthisis, of dyspepsia, of fevers, of palsies, central or peripheral, we may confidently take encouragement and meet those adversaries in the gate who say that therapeutics has made no considerable progress. At the same time we may well take to heart the lesson which such criticism may teach us. While we have learned that empirical knowledge, although a power against ignorance, is of less avail against the more ordered and living knowledge of a maturer science, on the other hand, for this very reason, we are now, perhaps, apt to despise unduly the traditional remedies which rest their claims to usefulness more on empirical than on reasonable grounds. For in the use and practice of all methods we must remember that medicine is an art; that it is something more than an applied science.

Our art has always been, and probably long must be, in advance of scientific direction and explanation. Moreover, as in all arts, more than knowledge is needed, namely, common sense, rapid and firm decision and resourcefulness—faculties by no means resting upon intellectual conceptions, but on a certain virility of character not to be got from books. It is no uncommon experience to see physicians of high intellectual subtlety, of great learning and of pretty wit, lose themselves in the practice and even in the exposition of their profession, because in them the critical faculty exceeds the practical. Indiscriminate doubt, however valuable an attitude of mind in the laboratory, is mischievous in the field of action where a keen determination to make the best of imperfect instruments, to use any accredited means rather than none, should be the dominating impulses—impulses which enlist also on the side of the physician the hope and animal spirits of the patient; for, after all, the practice of medicine contains no small element of "suggestion." Furthermore, the fastidious spirit, which I have endeavored to indicate, is, on the