

almost entirely depletion by bleeding, and the consequent unpleasant and dangerous results which do frequently follow this practice. In those cases of local inflammation, in which the general state of debility will not admit of blood-letting, we are able to cope with the disease in a prompt and efficient manner by means of remedies, which, while they act directly upon the diseased part, do not increase the already existing debility.

Ap[ro]pos, "in the report of a certain post-mortem examination, it was said that traces of an internal inflammation had been discovered, which could not be controlled in consequence of the feeble condition of the patient preventing a sufficient abstraction of blood. The doctors ought rather to have stated the case thus:—We who do not understand the better method of curing inflammatory diseases without the lancet, have been unable to save this patient's life."

By the specific method we avoid the creating of artificial diseases in healthy parts, diseases which in their turn frequently require remedial treatment, and which at least retard the process of recovery.

When a disease is cured by this method health is at once restored, and the patient does not have a host of medicinal affections to recover from by the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, or to be subjected to further treatment, as is the case many times in practice.

There is another great advantage in the use of specific methods. It is this— a comparatively very small quantity of any medicine is sufficient to produce a curative effect when administered with reference to its specific relations. Thus very minute doses of tart. antimony are efficacious in pneumonia, and I have seen the fractional part of a drop of tinct. of secale arrest promptly a profuse menorrhagia.

An article like this is necessarily too limited for the consideration of all the comparative advantages of the specific healing art, or for mentioning even the names of medicines in connection with those diseases for which they have a specific applicability, and if the author

only succeeds in directing the attention of a few of his professional brethren to this important subject the object of this communication will be fully attained.

On the Administration of Mixed Medicines, and of two or more in alternation.

As this subject has excited some interest of late, we shall make a few remarks, limited by the small space allowed us in these pages.

I. HISTORICAL VIEW.

When there were but few provers and few provings, it often happened that a remedy corresponding to the totality of the symptoms could not be found; but it would then happen, that, of two known medicines, one would correspond with one part or group of the symptoms, while the other would correspond with another group of symptoms; and these two medicines were then given in alternation. With the increase of provings, that necessity ceased to exist; and only such physicians as did not keep themselves posted up in the progressive knowledge of the *Materia Medica* found it necessary to give two medicines in alternation. Still they met with many disappointments, and were less successful in curing the sick than the progressive physicians, who, knowing the effects of medicines, were able to select the *one* curative remedy; and, instead of increasing their small stock of knowledge, they increased the dose, and resorted even to the prescription of the crude tinctures. Backwards still they went; and now began to compound their medicines. Their defective knowledge generated a false logic. They gave all the medicines ever given for the disease in question mixed together, in the vain hope that the *vis medicatrix* would select the suitable remedy out of the many. And here we part with them— first styling themselves rational physicians; afterwards specificists; and still later proclaiming themselves in advance of the times; when, in fact, they were more like the pup or kitten that whirls in a circle with its tail in its mouth.