

REPORT ON SURGERY.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—I do not propose in this report to give an account of *all* the advances and discoveries made in surgery during the last twelve months, because I know from experience how tiresome and uninteresting such a recital of facts is. My intention is to touch on some of the more important and interesting points, so that they may serve as texts which may be elaborated in the discussion I hope will be aroused. The subjects I shall glance at will be as follows:—(1) Treatment of Wounds; (2) Cause of Inflammation; (3) Sponge Grafting and Bone Transplantation; (4) Surgery of the Kidney; (5) Treatment of Club-foot; (6) Surgery of the Joints. The list looks a formidable one, but remember that I only intend to furnish the texts, the sermons belonging to which I hope you yourselves will preach.

The Treatment of Wounds.—Within the last few years this subject has more than ever occupied the attention of surgeons, and has caused many acrimonious discussions. Old methods of treatment have been wholly discarded and new methods introduced, of greater or less value. Some of these are being constantly improved and modified, others flourish for a time, but when the *sun* of experience is turned on them, like the seeds which fell on stony ground, they are scorched and wither away. At the present time, all methods, however much they differ in detail, aim at keeping wounds aseptic, and are in fact antiseptic

methods of treatment. Listerism is only a phase of antisepticism, and does not differ as much from other methods as one would at first sight imagine. The great difference consists in the more gorgeous ritual and its obscurity by the clouds of incense (in the form of carbolic spray) which ascend heavenward as a propitiatory sacrifice to the great *Æsculapius*. The fundamental principles are, however, the same, viz: cleanliness, asepticity, rest, support, and the accurate adjustment of cut surfaces; and to Mr. Lister principally we owe the universal recognition of the truth of these principles. He, in fact, by dwelling on their importance and evidencing their truth by the success of his own practice, has revolutionized the surgical treatment of wounds. He has shown that suppuration and the septic condition it leads to may be prevented. He has taught surgeons the necessity of thoroughly cleansing and disinfecting their instruments and hands before operation. At the International Congress held in London, the subject of the treatment of wounds was one of the most important that engaged the attention of the surgical section. From the papers read and the discussion which followed their reading, it was easily seen that the belief in the carbolic spray was on the wane, and that it was desirable that some form of dressing less complicated than Listerism should be employed. Mr. Lister himself spoke in qualified terms of the spray, and hoped at some future time to be