

WARBURG'S TINCTURE IN CANADIAN PRACTICE.*

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MR. PRESIDENT.—In an address lately delivered by Dr. Henry Howard, of Montreal, the following words occur: "True physical science when applied to the treatment of disease, consists in recognizing the fact, that for a physical effect there must be a physical cause, and in our treatment of disease our duty is when we see effect to look for a cause; treating disease from any other standpoint, no matter how successful such treatment may be, is empiricism, it is not science; and until this truth is recognized and acted upon by the medical profession generally, none of us can claim to belong to a purely scientific profession." These words truly present to us as a profession a grand ideal, but alas, under existing circumstances, only an ideal. No man aware of the position of medicine to-day, will for one moment dare to claim that it now does, or soon can occupy the position of a truly scientific profession. We meet with morbid physical conditions on every side; for some, for many, nay, for most of these, we do not know the physical cause in its entirety. We cannot wait to know, men are suffering and calling to us for help. In many cases if we do not know the cause, we do know the therapeutic agent that will give relief, a knowledge drawn not from science but from professional accumulations of experience. It is our duty to use these means at hand, and through the mists of empiricism to watch and carefully follow the golden threads of science that seem to blend together the web of medical truth, leading, as they do, upward and onward to perfect knowledge, and systematised fact. In coming before you to-day advocating the use of Warburg's tincture, I confess to the advocacy of apparently a most unscientific remedy, an egregious piece of poly-pharmacy, a remedy at which science must stand aghast, or turn away in disgust, for the multitude of its ingredients renders a scientific knowledge of its *modus operandi* utterly out of the question.

Warburg's tincture was introduced to the notice of the profession about thirty-five years ago, as a new and most efficacious remedy in the treatment

of the more malignant types of malarial disease. It was then highly recommended by Dr. Babington as an antimalarial and general tonic. Among the surgeons of the Indian Army it was held in highest esteem, in so much that it was soon by many held to be an indispensable in operations, either civil or military, in any of the tropical malarious regions. Excepting where special conditions rendered it almost a necessity, the tincture has not been generally received or tried by the profession, and that cannot be wondered at, seeing its composition was for long a secret. Now, since its composition has been made known through Professor Maclean, of Netley, its unscientific poly-pharmacy makes the profession stand aloof with a superior scientific smile.

Warburg's tincture contains thirteen ingredients:—To each ounce we have quinine gr. ix. ss, three purgative ingredients, viz.: aloes, ten or eleven grains, rhubarb about five grains, and one grain of agaric of larch; we have then aromatics to the amount of twenty-five grains, myrrh, cubebs, zedoary, saffron, fennel, elecampane, angelica, and all wound up with that relic of barbaric medication, Confection of Democrates, which is composed of something like fifty gums and aromatics. It would be an easy matter to fill pages with quotations extolling the virtues of the tincture, it will be sufficient to make a short quotation from Professor Maclean, of Netley Hospital:—"It will be seen that quinine is the most important ingredient in the formula, each ounce bottle containing nine grains of the alkaloid; its presence has been detected by every chemist who has attempted its analysis, and never doubted by any medical man who has used the tincture; many will say, after all this vaunted remedy is only quinine concealed in a farrago of inert substances for the purposes of mystification. To this objection my answer is: I have treated remittent fevers of every degree of severity, contracted in the jungles of the Deccan and Mysore, at the base of mountain ranges in India, on the Coromandel coast, in the pestilential highlands of the northern division of Madras Presidency, on the malarial rivers of China, and in men brought to Netley Hospital from the Gold Coast, and I affirm that I have never seen quinine, when given alone, act in the manner characteristic of this tincture, and although I yield to no one in my high opinion of the inestimable value of qui-

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