

There may be occasionally a physician, though I think he must be very rare, whose total activity is more harmful than beneficial to his fellows; it may even be said to be certain that the majority of men in practice who leave it temporarily to undertake post-graduate work, would be benefited more by instruction in the wealth of diagnostic aids recently put at our disposal, than by a course in therapeutics. That the skilled diagnostician, however, can be of greater service to his patients if he put the same keen, well directed intelligence into motion with regard to treatment that he uses in diagnosis instead of stopping short at the diagnosis and shrugging his shoulders when the therapeutic effort is mentioned, must be patent. As Leyden puts it: "The task of therapy is to help the patient as far as is possible with the means at its disposal at the time; it dare not postpone the treatment to future discoveries. Specific therapy, long looked upon as that alone which is safe and worth striving for, is deprived of its absolute dominion; "instead of curing diseases," our task is altered to "making patients well."

I cannot help but think that one of the causes of therapeutic pessimism among the better men in the profession lies in the fact that when therapeutics is spoken of most men call pharmacotherapy disproportionately into mind. It is because they are insufficiently known and appreciated that dietotherapy, climatotherapy, hydrotherapy, kinesiotherapy, electrotherapy and psychotherapy are not ranked with pharmacotherapy; and yet in the majority of cases with which physicians deal one or more of these is of far greater importance than treatment with drugs. Psychotherapy especially has a great future. Not until physicians become better psychologists and learn better how to apply psychic methods in the treatment of disease can we hope for the disappearance of such psychic epidemics as that represented by Christian science. Psychopathogenic mechanisms should be studied in order that psychoprophylaxis can have a wider field.

What the future of pharmacotherapy will be who will be rash enough to judge? That it will be great seems certain. That it cannot soon be great seems sure. Synthetic chemistry has supplied us with a host of new bodies for experimentation. Only a very small percentage of these have thus far been found to be of value. Antipyretics, analgesics and hypnotics especially are being multiplied. They have to be slowly tested on animals, then on healthy human beings, and last of all on human beings in diseased conditions before their actual value can be ascertained. The effects of drugs like acetone-chlorform and urethane astonishes us, however, and whet the appetite for further discovery.

No single system of therapy is likely soon again to hold