

this confidence in the healing virtues of drugs has been somewhat shaken, and we find to-day considerable scepticism in the minds of both the public and the profession as to the beneficial action of drugs in relieving and curing disease.

What has brought about this change in opinion? Is it that these drugs have not the powers formerly ascribed to them or is it that they have been expected to do more than they were capable of? Or on the other hand, have they been wrongfully used, that is, have they been used for the cure of conditions over which they had no curative influence? It seems to me that they have very largely been used, not only in conditions over which they could not have any curative influence, but also very frequently in conditions in which they did and were bound to do positive harm. This misuse of drugs has not been confined to the laity alone, but the profession has not been entirely free from blame. At the present time I think we may safely say that this misuse of drugs is not so common with the profession as formerly, and this simply because the profession to-day is more fully aware of the action of the drugs they use and of the cause and nature of the diseases they are called upon to treat. The physician of to-day is indebted to the physiologist, the pharmacologist and the pathologist for his more accurate knowledge of the drugs he uses and of the diseases he treats. To use a drug rationally the physician ought to fully understand the physiological functions of the diseased organ he is called upon to treat, the action upon that organ of the drug he proposes to administer and the cause and nature of the diseased condition existing therein. Our knowledge on these points to-day is far in advance of that of our predecessors of say even twenty-five years ago. This knowledge has been acquired for us by patient and laborious study in the physiological, the pharmacological, the bacteriological and the pathological laboratories of those who have devoted their lives to these researches.

In consequence of this increased and more accurate knowledge the physician of to-day is in a better position to use his remedies in a rational manner than was his predecessor, and yet as I have already said we find physicians to-day using