

simply healthy structure disturbed in its normal functions as the surgeon finds in a sprain or an aneurism. There is no more an isolated and distinct dental pathology than there is an independent ocular or aural pathology. The same natural forces move, and the same physiological laws govern the processes of disease in the teeth as in the heart or lungs. How then can we expect the problems of our pathology to be solved except by deputy? The limitations of dental education may make eminently successful practical men; but as we cannot know any fact scientifically by mere intuition, it is difficult to surmise how we can pretend either to accuracy in diagnosis.

Why do we err in diagnosis? Because we do not *know*. Do not know what? Do not know the scientific basis and detail of diagnosis; do not know what we see, smell, hear, taste, touch. Our very senses are apt to be deceived, and nothing is truer than that we cannot accept as infallible what we call the evidence of our senses. We cannot always believe what we see with the naked eye, nor yet with the microscope. Those who are familiar with the exploded inflammatory theory of caries can recall the microscopical errors even of Heintzman and Abbott. I remember the late Dr. I. H. McQuillen referring to this fact in looking at a large micro-photograph, one of a diatome, the pleuro-sigma angulatum. When held within focal distance of the eye, the sigma or spaces appeared hexagonal, but if carried beyond that they assumed a circular form, giving a good illustration of the fact that we cannot always believe what we see. The results of varying microscopical adjustment, and the revelations made by the use of increased power, are familiar to us all. Indeed we are met in our investigations by numberless obstacles to the establishment of fact, and are often tempted to hasty generalization and preconceived conclusions. Illustrations of this are older than the amalgam controversy of 1845, when it was stated, even by chemists, that the sulphuret of silver on the surface was a sulphuret of mercury. Jumping to conclusions, based upon imperfect observation of phenomena, has been one of the common mental gymnastics of the profession, and our memories, as well as our laboratories, are lumbered with the "cock-sure" infallibilities of ingenious inventors. Fact does not leap into existence out of mere fancy, as Minerva bounded at once out of the head of Jupiter. The history of errors in the dental creeds, every one of which had their dogmatic defenders, would make an interesting addition to the literature of dentistry. We have had many fads presented to us in our own lifetime, and it should make us modest in our assertions to reflect, that for every established fact we have the history of a hundred demolished fables. Simon Pure has so often turned out to be a Will-o'-the-Wisp in disguise that experi-