

THE ADDRESS IN MEDICINE.

BY

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*The Address in Medicine before the Canadian Medical Association,
September 13, 1900.*

SPECIALISM IN MEDICINE.

When, under the influence of faulty metabolism or other cause pessimism gets the better of us, we sometimes quote with approval the remark of Solomon the Wise, that there is nothing new under the sun, without reflecting that Solomon himself was probably not feeling his best at the moment. Something in his internal or large domestic economy had gone wrong, I suspect. Possibly he had to write an address! However this may be, let us suppose him suddenly brought for a visit to one of our large cities. He would certainly find that advance in knowledge has brought about great change in our relation to things, be the things themselves never so ancient or immutable. Solomon was at the *fin* of his *siècle*, but the old sun looks down on a different world at the *fin* of this *siècle*. He could not fail to be impressed by the subdivision of labour of the present day in every branch of industry. Were the great king to be seized with sudden abdominal pain he would surely have the benefit of a surgical and a medical opinion. Another doctor would make a blood count, another a urinary examination, another, perhaps, would examine his vomitus or stools; another, use the X-rays. If his abdomen were opened the pathologist would report on cultures from the cavity, or on the structure and nature of any suspicious tissue. It would, in a word, be demonstrated to him that specialization has taken place in the science and art of medicine, as in other sciences and arts. And Specialism in Medicine is the theme which I have selected for brief and, I fear, inadequate consideration during the time your President has done me the great honour of delivering you into my hands.

A line of cleavage appeared first perhaps between medicine and surgery, and it is curious to note that nowhere has the line, at least in name, in the past been so closely drawn as in England, where more minute specialization has met with considerable opposition. Toward this result the anomalous fact that the degree of Doctor of Medicine has in England been only a University title, must, it seems to me, have contributed. Practically everywhere else in the civilized world the practitioner is a