

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN approaching a case of illness the observer is confronted with certain signs and symptoms, the significance of which he must be familiar with before he is able to form any intelligent conception of the morbid processes at work. It is, therefore, necessary to study carefully the language of signs as presented in the bodies of our patients.

Among the most fruitful methods of clinical teaching is that of considering fully the nature and origin of individual symptoms, observing in what respect the processes to which the symptom is attributed differ from those occurring in the healthy body. It is possible, by reviewing in this manner the subjective and objective symptoms, severally and collectively, presented by the patient, to indicate the nature and situation of the diseased condition; and it is precisely this comprehension of the nature of the process or condition, and not the mere labelling it with a name, which constitutes a rational diagnosis.

The study of individual signs and symptoms of disease deserves more attention than has been devoted to the subject by authors. For some years I have been in the habit of noting, for my own use and for teaching purposes, the significance of the various morbid phenomena, considered strictly from the observer's point of view. In the following pages I have embodied and extended these notes, and have endeavoured to lay before the practitioner and student a concise, but I hope a sufficiently explicit, description of the symptoms commonly encountered in medical affections. Where it seemed advisable I have referred to the physiology and pathology involved, indicating at the same time the affections in