

cussion of your patient for twenty minutes, *you* may not be very tired. *He* is."

As you go on in practice you will get to be fond of certain drugs.

Be a little careful of this habit, which has its reasonable side. Even the best of us fall into this therapeutic trap. I once met in consultation the late Prof. Blank, a delightful and most able physician. As I came out of the house I fell upon his son, also a doctor. "Ah!" he said, "you have been meeting my father; I am sure he advised Plumer's pills"—an old mercurial preparation. It was true.

As I watch the better medical practice, I see a tendency to rely less upon mere drugs, and more and more sharply to question their value.

The true middle course is to be sceptical as to new drugs, and to test them over and over before being mentally satisfied. Nor is it well to run into the extreme, which in our civil war caused an order forbidding the use of calomel because of the folly and indiscretion with which a few men had used it. After all, one of the most difficult things in ours, the most inexact of sciences, is to be sure of the value of a drug. When studying the poison of serpents, I found the most positive printed evidence of the certain value of at least forty antidotes. Not one of them was worth the slightest consideration. Such a fact as this makes one careful of crediting the endless cures to be read in the journals.

When you come to read over the works of the great masters, dead or living, and to see how Sydenham or Rush, Cardan or Bright, did their work, you will be struck, as I have been, with the great stress laid upon habits of living—what shall be eaten, diets, exercise, clothing, hours of work and rest. Curiously enough, these dicta are more often found in their records of cases than as positive theses; a proof that, in his practical work, a man may be better and wiser than in his generalizations. When, therefore, you come to deal with chronic conditions, be sure to learn all there is to learn as to the ways of men, their diet, clothing, sleep, work, play, wine and tobacco. I like to make a man describe to me, with minute care, his average day. Then I consider, usually, how much of what is clearly wrong may be set right by a life on schedule. After that comes the considerate use of drugs.

The desire for drugs is a remainder from barbar-

ous times. It is much in the way of what I call natural medicine. *Do* this and do *not* do that might cover a large amount of useful treatment if men would but consider the doctor as a wise despot to be implicitly obeyed. But just here I wish to add that the very men who are most chary as to drugs are those who, at times, win splendid therapeutic victories by excessive diets, or heroic use of powerful medicines.

Much nonsense is talked about the injurious influence of drugs until, in the very word drug, there is a malignant sound. Men used to be over-bled or salivated. This does not occur now-a-days. And if I asked your whole faculty how many people they have seen permanently injured by mere medication, I fancy they might be puzzled to bring to mind illustrations of such mischief. The belief is another survival of conclusions founded on premises which perished long ago.

Men in our profession fail more often owing to want of care in investigating cases than for lack of mental power. One man looks at the urine carefully once and decides; another looks once at the night and morning water and concludes; a third asks that there be made no change in diet or habits for a week, and examines the urine over and over, both the night and morning secretion. Of course, this is the only right way. Troublesome? Yes, very! If you do not want to practise medicine as it ought to be practised, better far to get some business which will permit of indolent intellectualism.

A friend of mine had a consultation in the country as to a case of great importance. The attendant fell ill and could not meet him. My friend went over the case with care. It was one of persistent headache. He took home urine of the night and morning, and wrote word that the patient had uræmic intoxication. The attendant said "No"; that neither casts nor albumen were in the urine which he had thrice examined. At last, puzzled, my friend asked if he had studied the night urine. He said "No." And here was the mischief.

I saw to-day a woman of wealth and social importance who, for years, suffered cruelly from headache. Now, as it always began after an hour of very acid vomiting, a dozen of the ablest men in Europe and America, who were led off by the vomiting, failed to take in the whole possibilities,