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On the Disuse of the Lancet in later times. A paper read before the Medical Section of the Canadian Institute at Toronto, March 4, 1870. By WM. HENRY CUMMING, M.D., late Surgeon of the Provisional Army of the Confederate States.

At a recent meeting of this section our attention was called to the great change that has taken place of late years in the practice of physicians with reference to blood-letting. As to the change itself, there is, there can be, no doubt. Several of the members of this section stated that, for ten or twelve years past, they had not resorted to venesection. The records of many European hospitals agree in showing that the blood of patients is much less freely drawn now than in former days.

This fact being admitted, it is my purpose in this paper to account for it. Many persons attribute the change to *fashion*, and explain the present custom of physicians in this matter, just as they would the length of a skirt or the number of flounces in a lady's dress. They know that we (like the ladies) follow the Paris and London fashions, and they seem to suppose that they are alike dictated by caprice.

Others are found boldly asserting that this great change is due to the influence of Hahnemann and of that great system which, like a Newton in pathology, he discovered and made known. They declare that, while reviling him as a charlatan, we have yielded to the force of his logic and have approximated to his rules of treatment.

The best way to silence all these accusers is to show the *true causes* of the great change we all admit to have taken place. Thus will it be made evident that science, not caprice, has been our guide, and that these changes are a proof that we are *advancing*, not that we are *vacillating*. We hope to show that to persist in our former conduct would have been to shut our eyes to the truths now clearly revealed and to sacrifice the