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OPERATION FOR THE RADICAL CURE OF HERNIA.*

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It affords me unfeigned satisfaction to meet again with the members of the Ontario Medical Association, to enter into their discussions, and to contribute my little towards the success of this meeting, and the improvement of that branch of medical science, which, as a teacher of clinical surgery, more immediately concerns myself. Many years have elapsed since I first enrolled myself as a member of this society, and many whom I met here at the meetings of years gone by, have passed to the "great beyond," where meeting and parting are no more. But while the members come and go like the sunshine and the shade, the society moves on, like the cycles of the years, and each one of its birthdays finds it larger and stronger, and more fully developed than it was at any previous birthday.

But the profession has its "fads," as well as the dudes and the ladies have, and every one of these must triumph in its turn, for a short period. Sometimes it is one thing and sometimes another that comes to the top, and is carried to an extreme. Listerism stands out foremost; it filled the desire of men's minds until the great truths were evolved from it, that the most extreme cleanliness, and the proper application of germicidal substances are the foundation and superstructure of all antiseptic surgery. Vegetable, animal and chemical substances are brought forward and tested, and each one of them for a time secures an ephemeral reputation; and out of them all but a very few ever take their places as reliable remedial

agents. Operations upon the uterus have been almost a craze for several years past, and trachelorrhaphy, so much so, that the gentleman whose name it bears has had to rise up and assert that this operation is being practised to an injurious extent, and in many cases being needlessly performed. Abdominal surgery is just now in the ascendant, and to be able to report one case of successful enterectomy, elicits more applause than raising a score of sick persons from almost a dying bed, or bringing to perfection some method of operating for the relief of daily suffering, or the prolongation of life. In view of such facts one feels like saying as the Great Teacher did, "These ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone."

However, in looking over the subjects placed upon the programme for discussion, I was pleased with the exceedingly important and practical nature of the subjects announced. They are such that every physician and surgeon must say of them, "a little more scientific light upon them would be gladly welcomed"; and they are such that a more minute acquaintance with the mysteries of each, would redound to the credit of the practitioner and the benefit of the patients. Scientific investigation, practicality, and common sense, are as urgently needed in the vast domain of the healing art as in any other of the great and varied subjects that occupy the attention of mankind.

In fullest sympathy with the utilitarian character of this meeting and with the efforts being made to disseminate widely, amongst the many, a knowledge of every improvement or discovery which any one of its members may have made, permit me to notice for a brief period, my experience with "Operations for the Radical Cure of Hernia."

This is one of the operations which in some form or other has been practised for many years. Herniæ are very common and cause a great deal of suffering to their subjects; hence the desire of men in all ages, has been to be permanently cured of them. The most crude and dangerous methods have not infrequently been put forward as means of radical cure, because operations carefully performed, requiring much time and much cutting, could not be undertaken in the past. Of late years, however, since anæsthesia and antiseptics,

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