

Woman was the earliest doctor, alcohol the first patent medicine, as also the last; hence, perhaps, the antipathy between the sex and the drug.

Nowadays we are inclined, not unnaturally, to associate drugs with the doctor; but as a matter of historic, or rather pre-historic, fact they are far older than he is. They were staples of household use administered by the Wise Woman long before he was invented.

Our *materia medica*, our stock of known remedies, has been built up and tested and weeded out by the slow, painful experimentation of the whole human race extending over thousands of years.

No better, more vivid illustration of the Darwinian method of progress, of the survival of the fittest, of wisdom slowly growing by bitter experience of repeatedly doing the wrong thing, could be found than our growth in the knowledge of therapeutics, of the Art of Healing. Indeed, only from an evolutionary point of view can we consider it tolerantly and justly, with sympathy for human error and pity for its mistakes, and little inclination to hold any individual or class solely, or even chiefly, responsible for them. Doctor and patient alike are to be pitied rather than blamed for their costly errors and terribly punished mistakes in the long fight against ignorance, disease, and superstition.

The mode of discovery of drugs was probably somewhat in this wise. In his eager, unceasing, omnivorous search for anything that would add attractiveness to his menu in times of plenty, or stay his hunger in famine, primitive man unquestionably bit off, chewed,