

ments during the last one, two, or three decades, in this age of books and journals, is the property of the whole profession, especially of those who take enough interest in its progress to attend this meeting. It was with a good deal of diffidence that I took as my theme my personal experience and observations in medicine, extending over upwards of half a century.

Over fifty-seven years ago, with my father, the late Dr. Harrison, I settled near the shore of Lake Erie. The country at that time was an unbroken forest, with merely a thin and scattering fringe of settlements on or near the lake. The soil was heavy clay, and the surface very gently undulating. The water supply was mainly derived from the rainfall. The watercourses were more or less obstructed by the débris of the forest, so that the swamps held their moisture all summer, or until dried by slow evaporation or percolation. At this time miasmatic diseases were so prevalent that very few passed a summer without an attack of ague, and bilious remittent fever was common, and sometimes fatal, especially among the unacclimated. It was no uncommon thing to find, during the hot weather of summer, cases of ague or remittent fever in every house in a settlement, and frequently every member of a family would be attacked at once. Unacclimated persons who were healthy and vigorous sometimes passed the first summer without being attacked, but the fact that they developed it early the next year showed that the poison, though dormant, was still present, and had preserved its virulence through the long period of winter, ready to show itself on the first occasion of the lowering of the powers of life. When the system became saturated with the miasmatic poison, the patient was generally attacked every summer, as soon as the weather became warm, and it stuck to him either continuously or with intervals of apparent convalescence until the approach of cold weather. This would go on for, perhaps, from three to five years, when the susceptibility to the disease seemed to be worn out, but it left the patient with a constitution so shattered that it took years to recuperate, and left him an easy prey to the first serious attack of disease.

The miasmatic poison was so omnipresent that it complicated almost every other disease. I remember my father saying that he had scarcely seen an uncomplicated case of pneumonia, and the man who ignored its presence had little success in treatment. Quinia would check it as certainly, and I think in much smaller quantities than we now require. From ten to twelve grains in two-grain doses rarely, if ever, failed to stop the ague for at least seven to fourteen days.

At the same time there was a peculiar and very fatal disease among cattle. It had the local name of murrain. The animal was seen to be ailing; the eyes became sunken, the extremities cold. In a short time a bloody diarrhœa and hæmaturia ensued, and the animal died in from