

of inferior grade, and the humble apothecary, who would not have ventured to sit down in the presence of these great beings. The century has been a period of transition of which the end is not yet. "The old order changeth yielding place to the new," but the old order has not completely passed away, nor the new arrived.

Medicine is ceasing to be empirical and becoming scientific. By empirical, I mean, as the dictionary has it, "practiced only by rote, without rational grounds." The reign of science has not yet been completely established but we can look forward to it as the time when the physician shall be as beneficent in act as he always was benevolent in intention. Up to very recent times the progress of medicine has been irrational and unscientific, not always contrary to reason and science but not often guided by them. The history of medicine begins with the accidental discovery that certain minerals and vegetables produce certain effects on the body. To this we owe many of the drugs we could least spare—opium, mercury, iodine, cinchona. This method has been at work since remote antiquity and it would be strange, if from it all, some things were not worth retaining. The debt which medicine owes to empirical therapeutics must be acknowledged as long as medicine is practiced. Surgery in the olden days, as compared with medicine, was a rude and simple art. "If an eye offend thee pluck it out; if there be tumor eradicate it; if there be a collection of pus, make a hole for its escape." All this is simple and at the same time scientific. Hence it is that with a few exceptions the most striking successes of the past have been in the department of surgery.

The advances of the century may be considered threefold.

1. We have learned that many of the processes of disease cannot be controlled by drugs; they run a definite course and can, by no method known, be brought to an end except it be an untimely one.
2. We have learned to use the influences of external nature, and
3. We have learned to trace many diseases and processes to minute organisms which were not only unknown to our forefathers, but impossible to be known by them because they did not have the instruments necessary for their discovery.