

at the confluence of such logical cross-roads, Lord Bacon set up his crucial instances, or finger-posts, or crosses to direct inquirers. That case which occurred to us this week is a case in point. I said I thought it softening of the brain, to be treated by generous diet and stimulants, but it turns out, on the post-mortem table, a case of sthenic inflammation. I told you at the time of the autopsy I should make some observations on stimulants and their value in cases of debility. I will make a few observations on this term "debility," as I know it quite falls in with your wishes, as expressed in the wards. Does this debility really and positively exist, or is it a cloak for our ignorance? We hear it said every day, "What did he die of?" "Oh, general debility!" I believe the term is a lazy one; it is an indefinite term, it is a negative term, and so it is a dangerous term for us to use. Do we find in the dead-house any disease that Dr. Wilks could term, pathologically, "general debility?" Certainly not! Now, a negative thing is one of the most difficult things possible to establish, or to argue about. I find diseases of the circulating system especially connected with what is called general debility; then, again, I meet patients sent to me dying of this general debility,—but I find albumen in their urine; this directly weakens them. I find in another that he has decided urea in his blood; some change going on in his system, for which I advise change of air, and he gets well. A lady called on me yesterday, suffering from "general debility," but I detected that she had been suffering from a "miasm;" in two other cases I found the general debility to arise from slow poisoning by lead. Dr. Addison was so struck by this asthenia, or debility, that he was led to examine all the organs very closely, and only then found the supra-renal capsules diseased—this disease probably interfering with the ganglionic nerves and function of healthy blood! You will not be long in practice, depend on it, when you will be consulted about general debility—the cause of which you must find out for yourselves, if you intend to remedy it. It may have its seat in local pleurisy or consolidated lung, and your patient becomes weaker on any extra exercise having been taken. The existence of such a disease leads to errors of circulation, or sanguification, with which, no doubt, you are all familiar. But in whatever mode the disease is caused, I wish especially to fix your attention on the fact that the disease will be presented to your notice as what the French call *malaise*, but patients term general debility. "Only cure them," they will say, "of this general debility and sense of sinking, and they are sure they will get well." This is why sea air is so useful in August or September.

What is strength, or life? A child is comparatively weak, or not strong, as compared with an adult, but we do not call that debility; the