

TWO RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS OF SERIOUS IMPORT.*

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Ontario Medical Association, My old professor of medicine, Dr. H. H. Wright, to whose memory as a man and physician I am pleased to be able to pay a tribute of respect, was wont to impress upon his students the inherent tendency towards recovery which exists in most attacks of illness. This tendency forms the common foundation for success in all systems of therapeutics, and it is a foundation so broad and deep, and yet with such indefinite outlines, it is no wonder that, however intelligent and well educated in other respects he may be, the layman who has to judge only by results in a few isolated cases, is frequently carried away by enthusiastic admiration for some new therapeutic system.

Probably no great progress will be made towards the elimination of quackery, both within and without the profession, until this simple idea of the natural tendency towards recovery in many cases of illness becomes the common property of mankind.

While, however, we recognize this tendency, we also have forced upon us the fact that, inextricably interwoven with the forces working for the recovery of the patient, are forces tending towards his destruction. To estimate so far as he can the relative strength of these antagonistic forces, and to what extent they can be influenced by the resources of his art in any case of illness, and thus form a prognosis, is one of the duties of the physician.

In many instances, however, we are forced by our own personal limitations and by the limited knowledge of the profession at large, to be very cautious about expressing our opinion concerning the outcome of any given case. We have to take into consideration not only the particular disease as it affects mankind in the average, but the general condition of the patient and the particular circumstances in him and his surroundings which give the case a hopeful aspect or the reverse.

Leaving aside the exact name of the disease from which the patient may be supposed to be suffering, the state of the pulse, the condition of consciousness and the character of the respiration are probably the principal guides by which most of us form

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