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THE MEDICAL PROFESSION. THE MEDICAL SECTS. THE LAW.

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By H. C. WOOD, M.D., LL.D. (Yale),

Clinical Professor in the University of Pennsylvania of Diseases in the Nervous System.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, THE MEDICAL SECTS, AND THE LAW.

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ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I STAND here wondering, wondering that you have invited me to address you, and that I have had the audacity to accept your flattery. Had I known that so famous and really great an orator as Mr. Chauncey Depew was to follow me this afternoon my courage would have failed me; but perhaps it is fitting after all,—for I have noticed in the far-off Dakota Highlands, where the sun is most unrelenting in the intensity of his splendor, that the twilight which ushers in the master of the day is grayest, coldest, most colorless.

Many, perhaps all of you, have knowledge of Sir Joseph Fayrer,—great, as he is, among the great doctors of England. Led by circumstances in his early manhood to India, the stripling soon became famous, not merely for his medical skill, but for the imperturbability, the successful intelligence, with which he faced in the jungle the Bengal tiger, or in the trenches or street mêlée the merciless rage of the rebellious Sepoy. Thus it came to pass that when the Prince of Wales was about to visit India and some one was wanted who had the moral courage to give positive direction to his wanderings, and physical courage to thrust himself, if need be, between the Prince and the Mohammedan fanatic, striving to reach paradise through assassination,—that the future Sir Joseph was selected. At once in the eyes of the English nation his greatness became colossal;—had he not sat in the very presence, aye, for a season had he not ruled the coming king? Some years since I chanced to meet at a reception a dignitary of the church of England, who, speaking to me of Sir Joseph Fayrer and his rise to power, said with truly British

emphasis: "Indeed he had wonderful luck; you know he was nothing but a medical man." And so I come before you to-day, nothing but "a medical man," having neither wit, nor words, nor worth, action nor utterance, nor the power of speech to stir men's blood. If mayhap in any way I can interest or instruct you, it must be by selecting some topic in which we have a common interest, but concerning which I have special knowledge. I have, therefore, ventured to call your attention to the condition of the medical profession in the United States, and the pressing need there is for legislation concerning it. It is hardly necessary for me to waste the moments in enforcing the truism that medical science is now capable of accomplishing good by the relief of pain, by the shortening of the time of disability, and occasionally by the actual saving of life. I may, however, be pardoned mentioning one fact demonstrated by the last census. The country woman, by her superior physical strength and her isolation, is better prepared for maternity than is her sister in the city; and yet the census shows that the mortality of child-bearing in the country is 10 per cent. greater than in the city, a result whose explanation seems to be found in the fact that medical aid is reached more slowly in the country than in the city, and that there is a larger proportion of improperly educated physicians in the country than in the town.

The American medical profession has in it a multitude of rightly educated physicians, but it comprises also an enormous number who are but partially educated in their profession. Of all places in the universe,—in America there are doctors and doctors.

The American medical profession cannot be in any degree held responsible for its condition, not merely because it has no power over its own members after they have entered, but especially because it has no control over the gates through which men flock into it. In some States, the law allows any one to set up as a doctor who wishes; whilst where there is any law regulating the mode of entrance into the profession,—such law usually puts the power of granting the right to practice into the hands of the medical college. To be sure the medical college is nominally required to examine the candidates and to shut out the unfit. Almost any small group of physicians can,

however, constitute themselves a medical school, and conduct their examinations so privately that no outsiders can know whether these trials be substance or shadow. The national vice, the imperative desire to get on in the immediate present, fills the land with persons who wish to get the right to practice medicine at the lowest outlay in money, time, and labor. For these candidates, the schools bid one against the other; and so the standard falls lower and lower; medical education becomes a farce, and the doors of entrance to practice stand wide open to any one who can raise a few hundred dollars.

It is but a few years since, in the University of Michigan, a State institution supported by taxation, not subject, therefore, to the pressure of a struggling poverty,—only two years of study were required for graduation in medicine; though he who wished to become an apothecary was forced to apply himself for three full years; this time the servant was above his lord, the lesser more than the greater.

At the recent examination for the Army Board, of thirty doctors who had been picked out from among the best graduates and had been especially prepared for the army examination,—only two reached the required standard. I believe myself that not 20 per cent. of the graduates of medicine in America could pass the State examination required in Germany for license to practice. Humiliating though it be, yet it is true that an American Medical Diploma has in itself no meaning, and that it will never be a true certificate of technical knowledge and education until it is supplemented by the law.

I shall not weary you at this time with any detailed discussion of the laws which would be suitable for the circumstances in which we find ourselves in this republic, but shall try simply to throw some light upon the chief difficulty in the way of practical legislation,—namely the existence of the so called sects of medicine. The practical legislator sees the American medical profession apparently made up of warring sects, each claiming to hold the truth, each jealous of the other; and he drops the whole subject, because it seems to him impossible to reconcile these differences, and to make a law which shall be at once satisfactory and just; or, as in Pennsylvania, by grasping at the shadow of justice he misses the substance; and he

places or attempts to place the interests of six thousand regular physicians under the control of seven hundred so-called irregular doctors. He gives or attempts to give legal acknowledgment to the existence of so-called schools of medicine; whereas the law ought never to recognize the existence of medical sects, because they are accidents of the day and cannot be permanent. Error or half truths may for a time be mistaken for realities, but must be only for a time. Indeed, at present, practitioners of medicine are divided simply into two great camps or bodies. On the one side are those physicians who are generally known as regulars, allopaths, or old-school doctors; on the other side are the various sects of medicine, homœopaths, eclectics, with a miscellaneous rabble beneath them of Christian scientists, faith cure, and oxygen quacks, electrical specialists, and so on, and so on. The regular profession of medicine is not a sect, it does not confess allegiance to any one dominant principle; it refuses to believe in any single definite therapeutic dogma; it strives simply in every possible way by the aid of science and experience to help the sick. The sects of medicine, however, are guided or claim to be guided by certain fixed principles which they worship as therapeutic laws. They are of necessity dogmatic and exclusive; they deserve and are proud to be known by titles which savor in themselves of exclusivism. Narrow and dogmatic in adherence to alleged principles, they must perish or become absolutely dominant according as these principles shall prove to be false or true.

The code of ethics, published by the American Medical Association is to the regular physician what the creed is to the churchman;—the only binding clause which it contains restricting the freedom of belief or practice says,—"But no one can be considered a regular practitioner, or a fit associate in consultation, whose practice is based upon exclusive dogma, the rejection of the accumulated experience of the profession, and of the aids actually furnished by anatomy, physiology, pathology, and organic chemistry."

The regular profession rejects homœopathy, eclecticism, allopathy, and all other "pathies," because they are narrow, and leaves absolutely to the judgment of the individual practitioner the method in which he shall treat the individual case of dis-

ease before him,—claiming only that the practitioner shall not bind himself within the narrow hoops of an exclusive dogma.

Of the various sects of medicine, the only one which by its numbers and influence challenges our attention is the homœopathic. The essential doctrines of Hahnemannism were originally three. The first of these taught that chronic disease is the result of a general poisoning of the system by a humor, which, when it finds its way to the surface causes the itch. Microscopic investigation, and the consequent discovery of the itch insect, long since gave to this theory its quietus.

The second doctrine of homœopathy, which still survives to some extent, inculcates, not merely that certain substances are indefinitely active in exceedingly small doses; but that a substance like chalk which is in large doses inert, becomes, under the influence of trituration and dilution possessed of intensely active properties, as though there were liberated from it a spirit of healing which had been imprisoned in its material grossness. More than this Hahnemann taught that it was possible by the mere violence of the trituration to potentise almost to infinity. In his Lesser Writings he says,—"If we wish, for example, to attenuate a drop of the juice of Sundew to the thirtieth degree, but shake each of the bottles with twenty or more succussions from a powerful arm, in the hand of which the bottle is held, in that case this medicine which I have discovered, the specific remedy for the frightful epidemic, whooping cough of children, will have become so powerful in the fifteenth attenuation (spiritualized), that a drop of it given in a teaspoonful of water would endanger the life of such child; whereas, if each dilution bottle were shaken but twice (with two strokes of the arm), and prepared in this manner up to the thirtieth attenuation, a sugar globule, the size of a poppy seed, moistened with the last attenuation, cures this terrible disease (whooping cough) with this single dose, without endangering the health of the child in the slightest degree." In other words Hahnemann taught that the activity of a medicine depended upon the number of times it had been shaken, and that medical inertness by excessive shaking may become converted into almightiness. Remembering the numbers of the followers of Hahnemann, surely the bitterness of Carlyle—

when he says "Where ten men are gathered together there are nine fools,"—seems justified.

It is the third doctrine of Hahnemann which has been and still is the rallying point of his followers, and which is claimed to be the fundamental truth of his teachings;—it is the so-called law of *similia similibus curantur;* in accordance with which a symptom produced by a disease is to be cured by a small dose of a remedy, which, when given freely to a healthy man, will cause the same symptom. Strange is it not that this alleged law which has made immortal the name of Hahnemann was not originally framed by him, but is plainly stated in the works of that really great man,—Hippocrates? For 2300 years this generalization has survived; it must possess some peculiar vitality, some measure of truth and I myself believe that as a rule of practice it will at times lead to a good result. As illustrating the subject let me suppose a case of vomiting. Ipecacuana when given in large doses will cause vomiting, but under certain circumstances when administered in minute quantity it will relieve vomiting. Witnessing such administration and such triumph, the bystander cries,—"Great is *similia similibus curantur*, and Hahnemann is its prophet." But a second case of vomiting appears which is increased by ipecacuana and is relieved by opium, which does not vomit when given to the normal man in large doses, but makes him insusceptible to the action of emetics. Now the upholder of the doctrine of *dissimilia dissimilibus curantur*, cries,—"Behold I have the truth,—the remedy which produces the opposite to the symptom is the remedy to relieve the symptom.

It is plain that neither in homœopathy or allopathy, in the doctrine of similars or in the doctrine of dissimilars, is there the whole truth. A law of nature has no exception, and if exceptions be found to an alleged law, it is plain that the law is only an allegation and not a reality. If we were to find that at times weight disappears, that objects, not under the influence of some opposing force or resistance, fail to fall to the earth,——then we would know that the Newtonian generalization of the attraction of gravity was not a law of nature. Neither allopathic or homœopathic doctrines are laws,—they are mere expressions of coincidences, each of them base coin gilded

with just sufficient of truth to pass current with the ignorant and unwary. Symptoms are the mere surface play of disease, marking only with great uncertainty the currents, whirlpools, and rocks that lie hidden far underneath. Symptoms apparently the same may be the outcome of entirely different bodily conditions.

Modern science as applied to the treatment of disease attempts not simply to deal with symptoms, but to interpret them so as to get beneath to the conditions which are their underlying causes. Take the cases of vomiting just spoken of: one man vomits because the stomach is in a condition of depression, and a stimulant like ipecacuana relieves the vomiting by removing the cause, i. e., the depression; another patient vomits from irritation of the stomach, and he is made worse by an irritant like ipecacuana, but is relieved by a substance like opium, which is soothing and numbing.

Time presses. I cannot undertake to-day to expose with any fullness the fallacies of homœopathy; merely would I give you a glimpse of their incompleteness, their falsity, their absurdity. When, however, we have demonstrated the lack of truth in these doctrines, we are invariably met by two arguments. The first of these is that which is expressed in the old proverb,—"Praise the bridge that carried you over." Undoubtedly thousands of sick have recovered when the angel of ministration has had its wings covered with homœopathic plumes. I have already stated, however, that sometimes the so-called law of similars is a successful theory for work. But far more potent than this is the fact that in most acute diseases the natural tendency is toward recovery, so that the most intelligent physician often finds himself at fault in attempting to decide upon impartial review of a case how much has been *post hoc* and how much has been *proctor hoc;* how far the recovery has been brought about through the action of the remedies which have been given, or whether perchance it may not have occurred in spite of these remedies.

Some years since in the smoking cabin of a trans-Atlantic liner I was tormented by a homœopathic believer who wanted to know why this, and that, and the other case, was cured by homœopathy;—when a little wizen-faced Frenchman, who could

scarcely be seen through the denseness of the nicotine fumes, said,—"That reminds me of a story." And then he proceeded to say that in his native village when the shoemaker fell ill of a fever, the village school master said to the shoemaker's wife, —"Give your husband pork and cabbage to eat, and he will get well of the fever." The pork and cabbage were taken in mass and the fever passed away. In the course of a few months the ring of the blacksmith's sledge upon the anvil was quiet, and the sympathizing shoemaker soon found that the cause was a fever which had attacked the blacksmith. "Pork and cabbage," cried the shoemaker in the ears of the blacksmith's wife, "cures fever,—it cured me." And so the pork and cabbage were given to the blacksmith, who in a few hours yielded up the ghost. The shoemaker lifted up his hands in astonishment when he beheld the emblems of mourning hanging over the door. Taking out his note book he read.—"Yes, yes, here it is,—'pork and cabbage cures fever'—right, but the blacksmith died." Suddenly he cried, as the sunlight of assurance chased from his face the cloud of perplexity, "I have it now,—pork and cabbage cures shoemakers, but kills blacksmiths." The pork and cabbage system of practice of medicine has been world-wide, and still is but too often triumphant.

The second argument for the upholding of homœopathy is its alleged success. If this theory be false, why has it obtained power over the minds of so many men, and why do its followers multiply? It would be easy to answer such questions by calling attention to the wide domain of quackery, ignorance, and humbug in practical medicine; but other forms of irregular practice, other asserted therapeutic laws, although for awhile they may have held powerful sway, have been but short lived; and I confess to feeling that the apparent permanency of homœopathy is the one forcible argument which has been advanced in its favor, and requires to be answered by the opponents of the system.

The causes of the first success of homœopathy are not far to seek. The regular medical practice of the day by its violence not rarely aided in causing the fatal result. The homœopathic practitioner, administering medicines only in in-

finitesimal doses, left nature to itself, and claimed as his own triumph the superior result which was, in verity, simply the outcome of letting things alone. I have not time to illustrate this point in detail, or to quote from reports of cases showing how the sick room of the period often resembled a slaughter house.

Let me, however, make one or two illustrations. In the year 1792 the pulse of Europe stood still at the news that the Emperor, Leopold II. of Austria, the peacemaker of the century, was dead. The account of his illness published shortly afterward showed that he had suffered from a purulent pleurisy,—a disease always attended with feebleness and exhaustion,—and yet in the course of thirty-six hours he had been freely bled four times and had expired shortly after the last venesection. Hahnemann challenged the physicians to justify themselves,—and the verdict of to-day must be that he was right, and that Leopold's death was hastened, if not absolutely produced, by the excessive loss of blood.

Greatest of American physicians in the latter part of the last century, signer of the Declaration of Independence, foremost among patriots and wise men of his day, was Benjamin Rush; and he tells us that in the months of February and March, 1781, he cured a Methodist minister of consumption by taking from him eight pints of blood in the course of six weeks; that another case he cured by removing five pints in two weeks; but that a Mr. Tracy, of Connecticut, being an obstinate case of consumption, was only relieved by being bled eighty-five times in six months. If I could give you the history of bleeding, cupping, blistering, purgation, and other depleting remedies, you would wonder, not that the patients treated by the infinitesimalism of homœopathy got well, but that enough of our forefathers survived the physicians of their day to give origin to the nation of the present. The doctor of to-day is scarcely more like the doctor of a hundred years ago than was our Darwinian forefather blushing with shame at the sight of his first tailless offspring, like a Caucasian dandy. In an experience of many thousands cases of disease only three or four times have I seen blood-letting.

In its highest reach, modern medical science achieves far better results than can be obtained by simple nursing, or by the application of the rule of similars to practice. Why then has homœopathy not only rooted itself in the past, but why does it grow in the present? The answer to this is that the alleged prosperity of homœopathy is not a reality, and that where the law requires physicians to be educated the homœopathic system withers.

I have found it difficult to get reliable statistics in regard to the number of homœopathic practitioners in continental Europe, but the best that can be obtained are sufficient to prove conclusively that both in Great Britain and the European continent the system is wasting to its death. Germany was the birthplace of Hahnemannism, but the Homœopathic Medical Directory, published in London, shows that in Germany there are only 218 homœopathic physicians. Recent official statistics prove that in Austria there are 7,183 medical men, of whom only 118 claim any connection with homœopathy, and of these only 44 practice the system exclusively; there are none at all in the Italian districts, and but 19 in Vienna. The Homœopathic Directory already quoted shows that in 1875 there were in Great Britain and Ireland 269 homœopathic practitioners; in 1880 there were 275; in 1883, 260; and in 1889, 256;—an actual decrease in the face of the enormous increase, not only of the general population, but also of the numbers of the regular profession.

For the remainder of Europe the homœopathic statistics are Belgium, 41; France, 97; Denmark, 7; Russia, 71; Italy, 55; Portugal, 2; Spain, 131; Switzerland, 26. Therefore, according to the latest statistics, taken from homœopathic sources, there are on the continent of Europe 1022 practitioners of homœopathy,—this in a population of at least three hundred millions of people. Surely a system which has attained such small proportion as this, and which is distinctly decreasing in its proportionate numbers cannot be said to be on an ascending plane. It is very interesting to note that the largest proportion of homœopathic practitioners according to the population on the continent of Europe, is to be found in Spain,—the one country where the general level of education is the lowest.

In the United States, Hahnemannism is probably holding its own; the reasons for the difference in the two countries are probably multiple. In America, individualism runs wildest riot; irregularities of all kinds in religion, philanthropy, and medicine flourish. More potent in promoting Hahnemannism in America, however, than the peculiarities of the people are the deficiencies of the regular profession, and the fact that the American homœopath rarely if ever confines himself to the practice of homœopathy. He professes theories, but in his daily life he lives not according to them.

To sustain the statement that the American homœopath does not practice homœopathy I might well appeal to the knowledge of practitioners of medicine who come more or less in contact with their work during their own daily avocation. But evidence which can be less readily questioned is to be obtained directly from homœopathic sources.

In 1878, at the meeting of the New York Homœopathic Association the following resolution was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That in common with other existing associations which have for their object investigations and other labors which may contribute to the promotion of medical science, we hereby declare that, although firmly believing the principle *similia similibus curantur* to constitute the best general guide in the selection of remedies, and fully intending to carry out this principle to the best of our ability, this belief does not debar us from recognizing and making use of the results of any experience; and we shall exercise and defend the inviolable right of every educated physician to make use of any established principle in medical science, or any therapeutical fact founded on experiments and verified by experience, so far as in his individual judgment they shall tend to promote the welfare of those under his professional care."

It will be seen at once that the sentiments of the resolution which I have quoted are in concord with the American Medical Association, and any physician who will accept as his code of ethics this resolution can very well be a member of the American Medical Association, and of the regular profession.

No doubt the question has arisen in some of your minds,—"What proof is there that the medical profession is not as mis-

taken in its practice to-day as it was during the last century?" The answer to this question is,—We know that we have really gained power over disease because we have adopted the modern scientific method, and have subordinated to it empiricism and bed-side experience.

It seems to me but right to acknowledge that the revolution in medicine rests largely upon the results obtained by homœopathic practice. Modern medicine became possible not through any truth contained in the theories of the German dreamer; but because of the accidents that attended the working out of these theories. Hahnemann deserves to rank among the world's benefactors, not because his imagination made beautiful garments of truth, but because the web of falsehood which he wove proved to be the bridge over which the world's thought traveled to find a great new truth, which proved to be the very corner stone of the new medical science.

Hahnemann limited his followers to the use of doses so infinitesimal that the patient was practically left to nature, and when it was seen that both in epidemic and sporadic diseases the results obtained by doing nothing were better than those obtained by doing much, then it was realized that most acute diseases are self-limited and tend to recovery; then were the consciences of men so quieted that they could with easy minds leave their patients alone. Then arose the so-called Vienna School of Therapeutics,—the school of nihilism or "nothing-doing," which led to the study of the natural history of disease when left undisturbed by drugs or other perturbating forces. The modern method consists in studying a disease, its causes, its progress, its results, the methods in which it works out either for life or for death; how it gets well,—how it kills. In this way the doctor of to-day gets a clear idea of what he wants to do, learns whence the calamity is coming and what is to be averted. He next proceeds by experiments upon the lower animals, and upon men, to study the instruments which he has at his command; learns thoroughly what this drug does in the system, how it affects various functions, and how itself is acted upon.

Having thus studied the disease and learned what he wants to do, and having studied the means which he has at command,

he applies his means to the needs by inductive reasoning, by common sense, by the same mental process by which applied science builds bridges, crosses oceans, and alters the face of nature everywhere.

The modern doctor is a man of science, a dynamic engineer whose field is not force in the inorganic world, but force as it manifests itself in the mysterious realm of the living;—he is a child of the nineteenth century. The homœopath is a mediæval survival, clinging to an empiricism which he dignifies as a law, but which at best is only an old and very faulty rule of thumb, of which Prof. Chas. Mohr, a far-famed homœopathist, says: "No rational explanation of the modus operandi of a cure under the so-called law had yet been made." It is a wonder that whilst the records of chemistry, physiology, natural history, electricity, nay, of the whole range of the sciences are filled with the names of doctors well forward in the front rank of the famous, that after long searching, I have not been able to find one homœopathic practitioner holding even a second rate place in science? When Hahnemann flourished the sciences upon which medicine is founded, chemistry, physiology, physics, pathology, etc., practically had no existence: and is it possible that out of such a night of ignorance should come a light so strong that, more potent than Chinese wall, it should for all time blind men to progress and to growth?

No wonder that a homœopathic writer (United States Medical and Surgical Journal, January, 1867) after deploring that there are no works on the medical sciences written by homœopaths, declares that homœopathy is a "humiliated beggar to allopathy," and exclaims "produce—produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it, in God's name!"

To illustrate the method of modern medicine, take typhoid fever; much study has taught us that this fever has a course which cannot be put aside; that in the majority of cases it tends toward recovery; but that it sometimes kills by the exhaustion which it produces, by the diarrhœa which it causes, or the burning fever that accompanies it, or by various accidents. The doctor, knowing that he can no more cure typhoid fever than the captain of an ocean steamer can cure the coming

storm, tries, not to put aside the storm, but makes tight and trim the barque whose freight is life, and strives to guide it safely through the tempest. The moment he sees the health barometer falling he puts the patient in a state of absolute rest so as to save the last grain of strength, for he knows that the time may come when a hand's breadth shall make the difference between being wrecked on the promontory or scraping by the cruel rocks into the safe harbor of convalescence; by the careful selection of food and the use of local remedies he lessens the intestinal irritation and keeps the diarrhœa in check; by cold he takes out the extreme heat of fever; and so, everywhere watching, he guides his patient safely through; perhaps during the whole course of the disease giving very little medicine, but fearing not in a crisis to support most boldly and vigorously some failing vital function. Above all things modern therapeutics teaches that medicine is to be given only with a clearly defined, definite object, and that very rarely are violent procedures, and excessive perturbations, of service.

Modern medical science, though it has a right to be proud of its achievements, is humble in the thought of its deficiencies; its votaries, living ever in the presence of failure and death, feel most keenly the limitations of their power, and in no other branch of human knowledge is there such strenuous activity, such feverish out-reachings. In the year 1888 about fifteen thousand doctors wrote medical articles, some of which were short, but not a few of which were long; moreover, of the fifteen thousand authors many wrote several papers; not ten per cent. of these memoirs brought direct pecuniary reward to their authors. Does the world know of another mass of technical literature comparable to this?

In its philanthropic deeds, in its large desire to do good, in its intellectual power, in its greatness and its enthusiasm, the medical profession is second to none. Self-interest too yokes itself with scientific and intellectual zeal to urge every member to make new discoveries, new applications, to try new processes, and in every way practically perfect himself. If any "ism" arise, if any new system of practice having aught of plausibility be brought forward, it is at once tested in a thousand sick-rooms. Jaborandi from the South American native; pink root from the

North American Indian; cotton root from the Southern negro; kooso from the Abyssinian barbarian; convallaria from the Russian peasant; cod liver oil from the fish wives of Holland; antipyrin from the German laboratories; veratrum viride from American country practitioners; hyoscine from the hospitals and vivesecting post of these United States; from all quarters, from the earth and from the waters under the earth, have we garnered what we possess. In truth the fault of the medical profession of the present day is its too great credulity; its too great readiness to try new things; its excessive willingness to follow any one who cries "Eureka!" Whatsoever of good there has been in Eclecticism, in Hahnemannism, or in bare-faced quackery,—whatsoever of knowledge could be obtained from popular beliefs,—all these have we appropriated. The assertion that the regular profession is hampered by prejudice and bigotry from properly weighing and testing all methods, is an untruth disproven by the whole history of modern medicine. Not a man among us but feels the personal conflict with disease, and snatches at any weapon wherewith to strike the foe. We compass heaven and earth that for one hour we may stay the steps of the ever on-coming conquering death. Hovel and palace, rich land and wilderness, rivers, oceans, continents we search, ignorance and knowledge we question with the anxious eagerness of men whose all is at stake.

Such then, ladies and gentlemen, is modern medicine on the one hand, theories and "ism" on the other; modern medicine always absorbing, always progressing, always and everywhere following out any clue which may offer itself. So sure as knowledge must triumph over ignorance, and science over false beliefs,—so surely will medicine continue onward,—squeezing out of every "ism" whatever of good is in it, assimilating all that is helpful and climbing over failure and success alike to higher and better things. Under such circumstances, for the law to recognize medical theories or medical sects would be monstrous; they are things of to-day, to-morrow to be left far behind. Law is for all time. Rome enthroned upon the hills above the tawny Tiber, ruled the known earth by the physical power of her disciplined phalanxes and their short swords; but progress left these far behind, and to-day a Roman legion would

be driven from the earth by a mere company of soldiers. Though her physical power has long since decayed, Rome still rules the world, because in the greatness of her intellect she recognized that the principles of law are eternal and laid fast hold upon them. Among the nations she first filled herself with the fullness of the thought that law should be an expression of justice, and not a patchwork of expediency for the present.

As plainly to be seen and as fixed as the two great mountain chains which give form and climate to the American continent, are the principles which should underlie medical legislation. These principles are: first, to control the entrance to the profession, so that no man can begin to practice medicine until he is thoroughly acquainted with the fundamental sciences, anatomy, chemistry, pathology, physiology, the natural history of disease, etc., which underlie the art of medicine; second, to allow the man whose education in these sciences has been complete, and who has in consequence received a license to practice medicine, to apply his knowledge to the treatment of disease according to his own best judgment, untrammeled by the law.

Let the medical practitioner be homœopath, allopath, or no path at all—only see to it that he is an educated man.

Ladies and gentlemen, have I wearied you? Has my subject seemed inappropriate? Let this be my apology:—nearly a quarter of a century since, a dying man, brutally murdered by the ignorance and recklessness of a regular practitioner of medicine, said to me, "Doctor, here are my wife and six little children,—with me their livelihood goes out,—in God's name can't you save me?" Then and there I registered a mental vow never to rest in this matter until the reform was accomplished, or my voice was silent in the grave. May I mention one further illustration—one out of many? I have seen a man who enjoyed a very large practice in a flourishing country district of Pennsylvania, who had the esteem, not only of the leading citizens of his county, but also of his brother practitioners, and who was strongly endorsed by the president of his county medical society, and yet who could not on examination tell on which side of the body the liver lies, or where the diaphragm is, or what it is used for. The

country bumpkin learns from the pigs he kills in the autumn more anatomy than this man knew.

These things may seem trifling to some of you, but I tell you they are death—death lurking often where least expected. Yesterday the valley of the Conemaugh resounded with the roar of furnace, the clang of iron on iron, and was filled with the prattle of women and children in the homes of twenty thousand busy workers. A moment of terror, a roar of water, a wild wail, fire and flood, and the valley grew still as the valley of death. Then America, stirred to its center, poured out its millions of money with a generosity the history of the world does not parallel. But what of the 8,000 corpses cold and stiff in their mud graves? Dead, because the government had not done its duty—dead, because the government which should have protected its citizens allowed a few rich men with a dam of hay and boughs and earth to hold up 700 millions of tons of water 300 feet above the doomed city—a governmental crime just as peculiarly American as was the sympathetic popular outburst which followed the catastrophe. In the presence of the dead of Conemaugh the nation bows in sorrow; but before God I tell you that it is my belief, founded on the largest experience, that if the dead, who in the last fifty years have been sacrificed in these United States upon the altar of professional ignorance could this day rise before us, the thousands of Conemaugh would be lost in the multitude; silently, heralded by no roar of flood, mourned by no outburst of national remorse or sorrow, one by one they have passed over; a never-ending holocaust to governmental imbecility.

Is it not possible to awaken the people of the United States to the fact that the medical profession holds the lives of men, women, and children in the hollow of its hands; and as is done in every other civilized country, so also in this should the law require that the man at least should be technically educated before such power is committed to his keeping?