

# THE HEALERS

by  
B. LIBER

# THE HEALERS

By  
**B. LIBER**

Author of "The Child and the Home", "As a Doctor Sees It",  
"Sexual Life"; Editor of Rational Living

Published by  
**RATIONAL LIVING**  
Post Office Station M, Box 2  
New York City  
1928

Copyright, 1928, by  
B. Liber.



In spite of the privations he had undergone, partly with his mother and partly alone, William Straight was a tall, handsome lad when he began his medical studies. He had never known his father, who died many years before, leaving a meagre income on which the widow and her son lived very modestly.

As he was bright and talented, almost all the other disciplines appealed to him equally well. But his mother's opinion prevailed and he took up medicine.

Long before coming to America, even before his birth, her ideal was to make a doctor of him. She was so ignorant as to believe that there was great moral and material independence in the so-called liberal professions.

She always envied the neighbor's wife because her husband was a physician. They had a fine house and a garden and servants and were respected by everybody. They were well dressed and rode in their own hooded, two-wheeled carriage.

Every time a doctor came to see a patient in the house where she lived, she became excited beyond all expectation and called her little son, then in his childhood, to see the great man, whose visit was an event. He certainly interested her far more than the nationally famous statesman whom everybody ran to see when he visited the town before election



time and chatted with the women and patted and kissed the dirty children.

William remembered how, when he was yet a child of four or five, his mother opened quickly a window and showed him the doctor who, after leaving some orders with his coachman, walked majestically through the house door. He wore black clothes, a glistening stiff white shirt, a high collar and a black tie. But what was most imposing and awe-inspiring and the surest sign of dignity, was his shining stove-pipe hat. Second in value, but not to be despised, were his bushy, blond side-whiskers, separated by a smooth, clean-shaven, white-powdered, round chin. That was for the boy for a long time, unconsciously probably, until his adult age, the type of the real medical man. This impression, strengthened by his mother's influence, was deeply rooted in him. All through his childhood and for a long time after, he was convinced, although he would have been ashamed to confess it openly, that anyone claiming to be a doctor and whose appearance failed to correspond to that model must be an unfinished product or an impostor. That was the reason why he thought that no woman could be a doctor. Such an idea would have been preposterous.

How his mother's eyes gleamed at the sight of the learned man! How many stories she told him about doctors—and she was a splendid talker! Until he was thirteen or fourteen years old, that is, as long as he listened to her tales and believed them, she never missed an opportunity to show him how good it was to be a doctor. There were fables, parables, quotations from old scriptures which she knew from hearsay and which she arranged in her own way, newspaper news, gossip—all tending to the same purpose: to glorify the physician's work, his character, his life. Only good boys could become doctors. Only nice, honest, studious, serious, obedient, clean children may aspire. To be among

the select, a little boy must be entirely different from the others. He must be an exceptional being. He must be silent, polite and, what was most important, he must never play with other children, as all games were immoral and all those who indulged in them, that is, almost all children, were corrupt and not worthy to be spoken to by a future doctor. William was certainly the right kind of a child.

For hours at a time she would describe how prosperous and successful he would be when grown up, how happy he would make everybody and what a superb mission he would have in life; also how honored he would be. No details were omitted.

He never doubted for one moment that he was destined to be a superior person and, among the superior persons, a higher individual because of his chosen profession. He tried so much to live up to his future standard that, while he was regarded by many as an ideally good child, he lost countless opportunities to be a plain, jolly youngster. He suppressed most of his desires and did all he could not to imitate his carefree and disobedient little comrades in their playfulness. Only at very rare intervals his inner nature would rebel and force him to be free and boisterous. In such moments his mother was sad and monosyllabic and depressed beyond words. She saw all her dreams and expectations shattered.

And often, too, when yet a young child, he would take advantage of her ardent desire to see him become a doctor, and use it as a weapon to obtain anything he wanted.

"Mother, give me a penny!"

"I gave you one yesterday."

"Then, ma, I'll . . ."

"What?"

"I'll not be . . . I'll be a cobbler!"

After that she had to give him more than one penny to bring him back to his senses. And, in addition, she had to make him pancakes to have

him abandon entirely his devious intentions and stick to the chosen profession.

William knew that this was a joke and that he had absolutely no choice in the matter. He firmly believed that he was predestined to be a doctor. His mother desired it and she was irresistible. Who could withstand her exceptional talent to speak and convince? She put her dominant idea into the heads of the other members of the family—close and distant—and also of all her friends and acquaintances. Everybody whom William met addressed him as if there were no doubt whatever about his future career. One of his uncles would say: "Here comes the little doctor!" An aunt would tease and admonish: "Don't be so proud, you're no doctor yet!" A neighbor would jest: "Doctor, I have a headache. What shall I do?"

Even his old grandma nodded approval.

She had been a widow for many years and earned a living for her children by doing hard work, or rather, heavy labor. To be sure, even while her husband was alive, she did more than the usual woman's house duties; she was the main breadwinner. William's grandfather, while a charming man, and, in many respects, a scholar, was entirely unable to cope with the world's difficulties. He tried his best, but somehow there was always somebody else ahead of him. In the beginning, she quarreled with him. But once he came home on a very cold winter night without his overcoat.

"What is the matter? Where is your coat?" she began.

"Oh, yes, my coat? Let me see. Well, yes, I remember. But we'll speak about that later, after dinner."

After the meal she insisted. And he answered: "I gave it away."

"What do you mean—gave it away?"

"Yes, to an unfortunate fellow who did not have any. He was sick and cold."

"And you, yourself?"

"Well, you know that I have another one, the old one, and in the library it is heated anyway."

She muttered something, but she saw that she would have to deal with an incurable condition. Therefore, from then on she never remonstrated with him when he spent his days lost in his favorite books. She even kept silent, although she did not understand him, when he gave up some of his best

paid lessons and even the money received for them, for the sole reason that the pupils were too stupid to learn anything—as he said to their wealthy parents: “I don’t care to take your money for nothing.”

William remembered his grandma’s very wrinkled face. Her wrinkles interested him particularly. They were so immobile—they seemed to be engraved in hard wood. She was a brown faced, stocky, active little woman of whom he saw much when he came to visit her, as he usually stayed with her for many days and sometimes for several weeks. She was always gone in the morning—they said that she left the house with her enormous and heavy milk-cans before daybreak—and always brought home something good to eat when she came back in the late forenoon. With the exception of a short striped skirt, and a small red shawl around her head, her attire was masculine. She wore tall, heavy boots and a man’s jacket, and her hands were covered with thick woolen mittens that were hanging on a string from her neck. She was old, but vigorous. She returned without milk, as she had distributed it to her customers in all parts of the city, but her cans were not light. They were full of all sorts of foods and other stuff needed for the house, usually bargains bought in the market. Every day William ran out of the yard and up the muddy street to meet her and wanted to help her carry at least one of the cans, but it was impossible. Though she was shorter than he, she managed to bring home from a very far distance the heavy containers filled to the brim with fruit and other things and she had besides a number of packages tied around her person and under her arms. Her boots gathered the sleet of the road and were in conflict with the cans perpetually, which, reaching almost the ground, rubbed them continually.

She first went to the stable to take care of the

calves and of that cow which happened to be in. Then she cleaned her boots and appeared in the sitting room, where she gave to everyone what was intended for him or her. The woolen stockings went to one, the sweater to another, the crayons to a third one, the illustrated and secondhand story book with missing pages to still another and the cheap candy and the fruit to all. She gave these things without a smile, without a word and she never accepted a kiss or a caress in return. Nor did she ever pet any of her grandchildren. She was as rough as her boots and mittens, as cold as the raw, frosty mornings in which she did her work somewhere in the icy realms of her yard and barn, as silent as the night into which she disappeared when everybody was sleeping. But her outer unapproachable crust, like the rugged bark of the oak, contained an individuality as fine as its fluid sap. Her knotty fingers were as gnarled as the apple twigs from her own garden but also as generous, as unconsciously generous as the latter. She gave herself entirely to others. She simply had to work and to give away all that she earned as naturally as she had to breathe. She herself needed nothing or next to nothing.

She put away the fruit, which was intended to last a whole week, but which never lasted for more than a day or two, as she often called the passing neighbors without greeting them and gave them the fruit, saying only, "Here, take!" She made the fire in the stove, always using first the wood which she had found in the street and afterwards her own. Then she started to cook. But all the time she was disturbed by people who came to buy milk, wholesale or retail, or to sell a cow, or to exchange a calf for something else. William sat at a distance and watched her with respect, but did not understand her or her actions. She was for him an unusual being, above the common human needs and petty conventions.

Late in the afternoon she went to fetch the cows from the pasture place, which must have been far, as she never allowed William to accompany her. Then he saw her milk them and never anybody helping her. Here and there she would utter a word to a recalcitrant cow, otherwise not a sound. But it seemed that, like the people, the animals, too, were fond of her, as even those which resisted the pasture man or anyone else obeyed her willingly. Once a week or so she did not sleep at all. That was baking night. Then the bread was prepared for the whole week. William was not permitted to stay up, but in the morning he found near his bed warm cake, a by-product of the more important work. And there was fresh bread for the next two days, after which it became so stale that he would throw as much of it away as possible in order to hasten the next baking day.

William's grandma lived in her own house, a low-roofed construction with bulging walls, but always clean, and whitewashed twice a year by herself. She and her family and guests, some of whom were always there, occupied two rooms. The other two were rented to strangers, but the landlady rarely collected her due, as the tenants always found some excuse for not paying. The truth was that they were poor people and frequently unemployed. William often saw them both, husband and wife, come in and explain to the old lady why they could not pay "this time". His mother tried many times to incite the grandma to put them out, telling her that they were young and could work better than she, that they were taking advantage of her hospitality, nay, her foolishness, that they were deceiving her. But she did not answer.

It was around his grandma's house and in that exterior part of the town where it stood that William learned the little he knew of a semi-country life that gave him a pleasant foretaste of real rus-

ticity. He saw grass, field flowers, trees, blue hills at a distance, free-roaming hogs, all kinds of insects, turtles, lizards and bats. He played with them, hurt them and was hurt by them, observed them with the greatest attention and formed his thoughts about them.

Up in the garret, where it was warm near the brick chimney, many of the deceased grandpa's old, mouse-eaten books, turned brown by time, were still scattered and slumbering on the floor. There William liked to hide and idle away his hours. There he passed many a delightful day. There he took his own forbidden books and those which his grandma, who was illiterate, had bought for him only because they were second-hand, cheap and richly illustrated.

Once, exceptionally, among a lot of books which she had carried home, there was one without pictures. It was a method to study French. William plunged into it, but the missing pages were a great hindrance. The printing was also bad, in some places execrable and sometimes entirely unintelligible. For instance, the word "chat", cat, was spelled "cnat" because in place of the upper part of the letter "h" there was a hole. And little William seriously learned by heart that "cnat" was French for cat and so he believed for many years.

It was there, at a very early age, that he first examined at close range and tried a musical instrument. His grandmother bought him a broken fiddle with two strings and a bow. Quickly he ran up the step-ladder into the garret. His intention was to take it apart and see how it was made inside. He did not know its use. The old lady, at his question, answered: "A violin." But what was a violin? He looked it over and applied the bow. A sound came out. Of course, he did not suspect that the contrivance was incomplete. He scratched and played, played and scratched, until it was not disagreeable to hear. Then the grandma had a faint smile, which was the best she could do when gratified.



William had the violin for years, until he knew enough to learn on a real one.

The grandma, too, was so hypnotized by the idea of his becoming a doctor, that she, who never spoke, opened her mouth from time to time, when he wanted to be naughty like the other children, to tell him that this or that was not nice for a future doctor. And once, when he declared that he did not care at all about the profession chosen for him, she sent him home to his mother, fearing the responsibility and the possibility of spoiling his career.

His little comrades asked him in all seriousness to examine their dolls and their stuffed or real doggies. This led him in time to establish a hospital in his yard, to which he as well as his friends would bring all the sick and mangy dogs and cats found in the streets, wash them and feed them without the slightest disgust. They also collected lots of newborn kittens surreptitiously saved from drowning. The poor little things mostly had their eyes closed and were unable to eat the stolen food which the children, under William's orders, tried to put into the mouths of the tiny animals. Sometimes they would kill a few of these creatures while chastising them for disobedience. At other times these nurses would hug and choke them through an excess of love. There were always some furry things creeping around and making the most infernal and nerve-racking noise, in their incessant search for a belly with teats to suck. But each time William's mother, when she could stand it no longer, carried away an apronful of the little creatures, he cried and decided to become a shoemaker. And once he actually persisted in that decision for a whole week. That was when his uncle, who happened to stay with them for a short time and whose sleep was disturbed by the little devils, took one of them and with great fury threw it away far over the roofs. William howled and, with streaming tears, ran out and for hours looked for the animal unsuccessfully.

His playmates, who had graduated him already, often called him when they, in their play, had to be

ill. He always cured the boys quickly. But when the turn of the girls came, he took them with their approval to some dark place, behind the stairs or other hidden part of the house, where they undressed themselves for him or lifted their dresses above their heads and submitted to an examination which consisted in a long-lasting, slow petting and a stroking of the chest and stomach of the patient. It was first, astonishingly enough, one of the girls who taught him how to "examine". But William found such heavenly pleasure in it, although he failed to understand why, that he continued to do it, also to the great pleasure of his little female friends.

The neighbors in the immediate vicinity seemed to be informed about his weakness for pancakes and his frequently returning indecision between them and a professional career. Often, when they were gossiping together and they saw him pass, they liked to have fun with him, as adults usually do with children; they would call him in and tease him: "Say, Bill, if you promise to be a shoemaker, I'll give you a pancake every day." And whatever the answer, they would laugh with that loud, shrill, artificial laughter, so characteristic of many women and which William knew so well and hated intensely. When he saw their contortions, their arms up above their heads, their mouths wide open, their tongues stuck out in a fine tremor, he ran as fast as he could.

But he was surprised to find that even at more distant places his destiny was known. Once, when sent by his mother to a grocer, where he had never set foot before, the people waiting in the store began to talk about him and to joke. At first he did not understand them, but later one of them, who had his hand on the boy's shoulder and looked at him with an idiotic grin like that which William attributed to the rhinoceros ever since he had seen him in the zoo, said: "Sure you'll be a doctor, won't

you, Willie?" Then he saw that he was the subject of their conversation. They formed a circle around him. And as they bent down, the wet moustache of one, the yellow fingers of the other, the cheek of a third one swollen with tobacco, the stinking pipe of the fourth one, the black nails of the only woman in the group, all pointed directly at him with contempt. They looked at the frail, freckled child, with his patched clothes, and the contrast between that being and what they imagined a doctor to be was too funny for words. But although his ears were ringing; William heard the answer: "No, he won't. He can't. How can he leave his wife and children and go to study? Ain't it, Willie, you'll go back to them?" Now they were pinching and pushing each other and had a long laugh again. But they suddenly affected great seriousness when the last speaker added: "Didn't you know that Willie had a wife? . . . Why did you leave her, Willie? She is longing for you, the poor thing. That ain't right. Is it, Willie?"

But his mother, seeing that he was not returning, was coming and, as she was seen on the opposite sidewalk, they all became suddenly serious and stiff. William, who had been sobbing all the time, now seeing himself free, ran out crying: "It's a lie! It's a lie! I have no wife and no children and I'll be a doctor."

William was a good scholar and his teachers liked him. But he was a bad companion and his schoolmates did not always care for him. As a rule he refrained successfully from his desire to play like others, having before his mind his mother's eternal threatening glance. It was her theory that the boys who played together and noisily were "bums" or future criminals or, at best, good-for-nothings, as she said. And if they did not land in jail, they had no other hope than to be lowly laborers. From time to time, however, he would forget all her warnings and play as wildly as he could and give himself entirely and passionately to the boys and their games.

What he desired mostly and most ardently was a kite, a large, red one, with much string. He wanted full allowance of time and complete freedom to let it go up in the infinite blue, to stay the whole day with it in the sun, with all his friends around him, hopping and yelling and giving him advice. That had to remain a dream. The only time when he tried to accomplish it, he was caught by his mother and punished severely. It happened this way:

Under the influence of one of his friends, with whom he conspired, he stole a coin from his mother each time it was possible. Sometimes it was a penny, sometimes a nickel, sometimes even more. As soon as he had the necessary amount, he and his friend decided to act. And one morning, instead of going to school, they went to the main street to get all that was needed to make the much desired kite just as they had seen it fly in the hands

of an older boy. But as they passed the market it interested them so much that they tarried there and forgot the purpose of their escapade. There were the butchers and the fishmongers and the candy sellers and the vegetable women and the stands with the luscious fruit. The whole place was full of color and movement and noise and life. The most amusing were, of course, the fakers, who spoke beautifully and used all sorts of tricks to attract the people and then never showed their goods at first, but made believe that they had nothing to sell. William and his friend always guessed wrong; when they thought it would be a pocket-knife, it was a medicine; when they bet on a cake of soap, it was a pencil.

Nearby was the river, with its pebbles and sandy mud, in which it was a delight to wade barefooted and over the surface of which flat stones could be thrown so that they touched the surface several times.

But while they were absorbed in their game, a heavy hand pressed suddenly on William's shoulder and, as he turned around, he was face to face with his mother. She seemed quiet, but earnest, yea, stern. The child gazed at her intently like a night-walker. He could not speak. Her calmness bewildered him. It was almost uncanny. Why did she not scream, or cry, or slap him? Anything would have been better than this unbearable silence and immobility. He wondered whether she was alive at all or whether she was a ghost, a creature of his own mind or a dream in a deep sleep.

After a while she said: "What are you doing here?" and shook him vigorously. For some time he was speechless, but when he was able to answer his first words were: "I . . . I . . . wanted to . . . I . . . wanted . . ." and then rapidly: "I wanted to see what they were doing, how the things were during school time, I . . ." and then he again dropped into silence, exhausted, as if he had spent his re-

serve of energy. All he could do was to lift his eyes halfway to his mother's face and to meet her steely glance, with the infinite reproach which it contained. But he suddenly felt how badly he had wounded her, how frightfully he had smashed her hopes; he realized the extent of his sin. He promised himself then and there from that time on never again to deviate from the strict ethics and the road traced for him by his mother, who appeared to him so powerful, although she was physically little and weak.

Only once more before he reached adolescence did he forget his duty and mission. That was one of those heroic events which occurred once or twice every year and in which the whole school was challenged by another school, or rather by the strongest and bravest boys of the latter. Usually William was shy. He had been made timid by his upbringing and he regularly restrained himself from going out and fighting anyone. Therefore he was satisfied with the next best thing which could replace real bravery and foolhardiness. He constantly dreamed of great, yea, insanely impossible deeds of valor. A hundred times a day he would see himself the center of the hardest battle or he would save young and divine looking girls from the most perilous and intricate situations.

But this time he was attracted into a real fray which lacked none of the thrills of the stories of chivalry in his memory, originating partly from books and partly belonging to his own fancy. At the beginning he only accompanied "his school" to the large open place near the river bank and was but an interested onlooker. But, after a few minutes, he stood right in the middle of it. His mother had simply ceased to exist and he was the happiest person in the world. What he lacked in strength he supplied through sheer will power and intense energy. He threw his long and lean body to the right and to the left and swung the leather strap of his

school books with all his might, putting out of the fight a good many of the boys on the other side, although they were perhaps all stronger than he. He did not notice the numerous scratches and bumps on his face and arms and legs, nor did he feel the smarting and burning of the sores and welts now distributed all over his body, or see the blood streaming down from several gashes in his skin and drying and hardening further down. He was drunk with courage. He was a firebrand.

But when all was over and he came back to reality, he remembered. He remembered everything and his downheartedness was limitless. How was he going to go home? In this condition? With this face? With these clothes? And so late, and above all, without his books, which he could not find?

He went back to school, trying to locate his books there. But there he had been wanted for some time. The principal had learned about the war and had ordered all of the boys who had participated in it to appear immediately before him and had sent out a servant to look for them. William was immediately brought into the office and, after a summary interrogation, thrown into a dark room and detained there together with a few of his colleagues who had already been caught. They were kept until their parents were notified and came for them.



Almost all parents, but particularly the mothers, do all they can to possess their children, to keep them in their grip as long as possible and to shape their lives indirectly much beyond childhood. But William seemed to belong to his mother more than the average boy.

He owed her everything. For a long time all he learned he learned through her and she had managed to color the world for him in her own way for the rest of his life. Stories, fairy-tales, explanations of things, all came through her.

At the beginning of his school life she helped him at reading, writing and arithmetic. At that time he was convinced that she was full of knowledge and wisdom. And all through his life he could have sworn that he would have never mastered the intricate rules of addition and subtraction if it had not been for his mother.

He was about six years old when he first heard of counting. With great difficulty he reached the point where he was able to add plain, small numbers. But there he stopped and could go no further. What he could not understand was the procedure of "keeping" a part of a number and adding it to the next row of figures. The teacher's fast explanation made matters worse. Beating with the ruler over the fingers troubled his mind altogether. It is not known whether in those critical hours he thought of something or not. But if he did, it must have been that grown-up people were both bad and foolish, that the entire operation was unnecessary

and a big humbug invented for the purpose of torturing little children.

He came home with red and swollen eyes and cried: "What shall I keep? There is nothing to keep! What shall I carry? There is nothing to carry!" And he opened his empty little palms.

Then his mother took him gently on her knees, told him a story that made him laugh, wiped his face and nose and explained to him so clearly how to add that he was astonished not to have understood it before.

The same thing happened a few weeks later when the time for subtraction came. For the life of him he could not see how and why one had to borrow and what borrowing meant.

As far as his mother was concerned, William had not yet emerged from her body. He was still a part of her and she would not let him go.

But in spite of his sedateness and precociousness in point of conduct he could not resist the frequent return of an outburst of rebellion, in one form or another, against his fate. So, for instance, when his mother was away, he would often make the craziest meals, the funniest mixtures, by putting into one dish the most incompatible foods, at least such as were considered so by her. And, when caught in the act, the first exclamation he heard, would be: "You, the doctor!"

He enjoyed rough talk or slangy conversations about sport and fights and sometimes, when alone, he would stand before the mirror and gesticulate with hands, feet, face and eyes and speak endlessly, without any sense, in a slang that in America would correspond to: "Don't tell me nothin', I know what I know, I do. He's a bum, not a fighter, that's what he is. My eye! When you get that sock on your dirty jaw, oh baby, you're a goner! When I fought Jim yesterday, I did just a dance, that's all I done. He knocked me down? Like hell he did. I'll betcher

a dime he did not, you bum, you! A guy like you. . . . Hey, fellers, look at him!"

One day he was writing his lessons in his room—his usual occupation. His mother was absent, he was alone—one of those rare and happy moments when he was not watched.

On the floor above there was noise and gaiety. Some family festivity. Children's voices, song, dance. Something attracted him to the place of merriment. But he tried to ignore it. He closed his eyes; he stuffed his ears with his fingers. And so, he fell asleep over his books.

When he awoke, the noise continued. Each peal of laughter exasperated him. He again stopped his ears and tried to work. But the greater his effort, the less he understood what he was studying.

At last he threw away his books and began to walk to and fro between the table and his bed. He was angry. That cursed joy! Again and again! It is terrible. Such a racket should be forbidden.

He sat down and started to write.

A tear rolled down his cheek and its heat made him jump up. Now he was crying like a baby and each recrudescence of joy upstairs provoked more tears.

Suddenly he stood up, went into the kitchen, washed his face, fixed his tie, brushed his coat and went straight up to the neighbors. But in the middle of the staircase he stopped and asked himself what he was going to say. And he caught himself stretching out his hand and muttering: "Please, oh, please, have pity! A little joy! A little foolishness! Oh, just a little!"

He smiled. He was not going to say that. He was not going to make a fool of himself and declaim sentences that belong to the theatre! He knew. He was going to adopt a very natural and light tone of intimacy and say: "I am lonesome down there and heard you were so happy, so I thought I'd . . ."

But the door opened and flooded the stairs with

light. One of the merrymakers came out and brought William in, saying "Look who is here! Come in! Come on in, the water's fine!"

William, however, his face all flushed, replied quickly: "Excuse me, I made a mistake and went one floor too high." And he ran down the stairs.

For some time during his childhood William was weak and sickly and had to discontinue his school work. Those were glorious days. He enjoyed his illness; and the feeling that he was allowed to be careless and free and to forget all obligations and examinations, without incurring any reproach or blame, made him happy.

But his mother took too good care of him. Some of her medicines were particularly hateful—especially those that had the gift of combating his fever successfully, at least for a short time. They would clear up his head, take him back to cold reality and make him sit up in his bed and talk with his mother about his studies and the future.

The doctor, a queer man of the old school or of no school, came to see him and prescribed something. A few times William copied in all seriousness the long shot-gun prescriptions which were in vernacular, with the thought that he might use them later in his own practice. With his great

facility to remember things he was able to recite the funny words for a long time.

"Sarsaparilla root, elecampane root, buchu, yellow dock root, skullcap, princess pine, licorice root, wintergreen, senna, anise seeds, liverwort."

Another one called for:

"Spikenard root, skullcap, licorice root, buchu, sweet flag root, May apple, senna, wintergreen, elecampane root, dandelion root, anise seeds."

He paid no attention to the main thing, the dose of each ingredient, not being aware of its importance. Nor could he guess that such prescriptions had been long since discarded by the profession and that a physician who wrote them was an "irregular".

When his health returned, his mother sent him to the doctor for the bill. But the latter wanted no money. "From a future medical man, from a colleague," he said, "I cannot take a fee." William was surprised and at the same time flattered and strengthened in his belief that his mother was right and that he must be a physician. If a doctor—and an old doctor, too—says so, it is undoubtedly true. "The learned man has read my destiny in my face," he thought. And he had a sudden remorse. So much time, so many weeks wasted with sickness! At the same time he could not help observing the doctor's office, which was astonishingly poor and dirty—contrary to all his expectations.

Then he went to the druggist's to settle his account there. He was taken into the laboratory behind the counters, mirrors and carved and gilded shelves and the hundreds of bottles with awe-inspiring Latin inscriptions. As he entered, William felt that he was treading on holy ground. The curtain which separated the front from the back section was lifted and his heart beat fast as he set foot in the sanctuary. But after a while his eyes became accustomed to the darkness of the place and he was

amazed to find a dingy, disorderly, ill-smelling, dusty little room. However he had no time to think about it, as the druggist, who took him into his confidence—"Am I not going to dispense medicines prescribed by you within a few years?" he laughed—told him that his doctor was "no good" and that his prescriptions were ridiculous, old-fashioned and unscientific—and frequently harmful.

"Why do you make them, then?" inquired William's childish voice?

"Why, why? I have to. . . . Besides, it is not my business."

William did not understand. He left in confusion.

William believed to the letter almost everything he was told by his teachers or in his books. For instance, since one of his high school teachers, who had invited him to his house, had spoken to him about determinism, he kept on thinking of its details and effects and was unable to see the slightest trace of arbitrary and individual cause in any action. For months he was occupied with this idea. It was a nuisance. It established itself in his mind and would not leave it. Blind to everything else, he vainly fought it, even as we try to chase the spots of complementary lights that form and multiply themselves before our eyes after having looked intently at the sun.

At table he would ask himself why he put his hand on one lump of bread and not on the one next to it, and he answered that he could not help it. He touched a cherry and was certain that a fatality, a superior force, a combination of all the physical and chemical laws of the world since its inception, since eternity, of humanity, of pre-human life, of all the never-ending direct and lateral influences, had determined his movement and choice. He dropped that particular cherry and aimed at another one. Why? Was that a free-will action? No, he was forced to do so.

If so, where was he? And what was he? Did his own free will, itself a product, disappear entirely or did it become a determining cause? If so, to what extent? Was his share in the world's responsibility so infinitesimal that it practically did not count



or that it amounted to nothing? Then he did not exist. As a personality he did not exist. Why, then, continue a make-believe existence? He forgot the food until his mother shook him and forced him to eat.

Outdoors he would look at his feet and seek to verify whether he really had any power over his nervous system and his muscles, whether it was he who at a given moment commanded his right leg and not his left one to be lifted from the soil. He was unable to advance, stopped, wondered and blocked the traffic.

When he heard his mother gossip and enumerate the sins of this or that person he thought: "How can they help it? How can anyone help being so or otherwise? Everything is predestined. Our way is traced. We cannot deviate. We're prisoners. Heredity is determinism. I blame no one for his crimes more than for his red hair; for his commanding tone or selfishness more than for his funny gestures."

Such were William's thoughts at thirteen. He had not yet discovered environment.

It was at the opening of William's puberty that they came over from Europe.

Much as it displeased her, his mother had to leave the old country. The income inherited from her husband, which, with her great care and perfect sense of economy, she had stretched out as long as possible, was almost gone. Therefore, she accepted an invitation of a distant relative to come over to the States.

She feared that the boy would have to give up his—or rather her plans for the future. She had heard that there the poor had to work in a shop or factory and that studying for a profession was a great luxury for them, which they could attain only through the hardest privations, through the most trying sacrifices, to which many succumbed. She dreaded for her son the heroic but dangerous effort of working by day and studying by night. Besides, she was not at all sure that he would follow it for a long time and, if so, whether his health would stand it.

But her worries were unnecessary. Her relative, a man of wealth, provided at once both for her and for her son. He was an old but vigorous man, whose wife had died a few years before, and, seeing that the newcomer, although no more in her prime, was yet attractive, he formed projects which at first, when hinted at, she vaguely rejected. Meanwhile he did his best to please her. Seeing that her weak point was her love for her child, he kept him at school and gave him all he needed. This lasted a short time only, the first months of adaptation. As

soon as the boy became older and more familiar with the new country, he refused the help extended to him and entered his new career of student without means of support.

There was desperate struggle. But pride and the powerful will to succeed, deeply implanted in him through the hard and tenacious hammering by his mother almost since his birth, vanquished all difficulties.

When his mother, after a long resistance, married her protector, William saw her less often than before and he was not so much under her immediate influence. But it seemed that she had succeeded in continuing herself largely in him. She had spread a wide and invisible net around him from which he could not escape. His opposition was as feeble as that of the aquatic creature against the fisherman. Although still kept in a small particle of its own element, it has been deprived of the infinite, natural liquid atmosphere of true life by being surrounded with a net of transparent and thickly woven thread. This barrier, to which it becomes accustomed, appears to be invisible and leaves it indifferent most of the time, but excites it violently and painfully at intervals that are regulated by unknown vital pulsations.

So William from time to time had to see his mother and, if it happened to be after one of those crises of youthful rebellion when everything in him seemed to break loose, it was on such occasions that she again took full possession of him, of his mind, of his soul.

She would question him and he would confess and she would advise, admonish, cry, until he went away all melted and promising to stick to the ordained road and not to do a thing that might lead him astray.

However there were holes in the net through which he slipped out. There were things that he disclosed but in part. Under the influence of his

young friends he, for whom his mother had been a supernatural person, began to lose his respect for her.

For all the boys whom he met, mothers and fathers were either useless strangers or at best necessary evils. They could not understand their children, they had never been boys and girls. It was preferable to keep away from them.

But there was particularly one thing about which William did not speak at all—perhaps the most important event in all his life which he was just then going through.

At the age of fourteen or so, during his first vacation and on his first job he made the acquaintance of love, of a more or less platonic, but passionate, love that shook his entire being. And although he suffered intensely, his mother learned nothing about it.

She did not understand why he lost flesh and became more and more distracted, but she attributed it to his industriousness and to his ambition to put himself on an independent financial basis.

In the fall he found an evening job in another part of the city and was at last able to take a room for himself. Notwithstanding his mother's insistence that he live with her, he moved away. What she did not know was that the circumstances of his childish love forced him to put as much distance as he could between himself and the girl who had provoked it. It was an heroic act of self-preservation, of self-defense. He felt that, if he continued to stay in her vicinity, he could never resist the temptation to see her every day. And that would not only incapacitate him for his task, but threatened his very life, as his love was literally consuming him.

But he did not uproot this powerful new sentiment from his soul. He slowly and instinctively transformed it and left it in the background of his conscience, so that for the next twenty years, as will be seen later, it lived side by side with other,

more tangible and material love events. Still it did not interfere with new desires which awoke after the crisis had passed or was—at least superficially—overcome—desires of various kinds, but astonishingly enough—at least for him—none of them compatible with his future medical studies.

He began to notice that all the girls and women he saw were adorable and possessed a mysterious charm that made him often forget his work and dream indefinite dreams. Some women he met had something peculiarly irresistible, which he did not understand, but which paralyzed him for days. They were love-thirsty and all aglow and, when they opened their eyes widely, they did all they could to absorb him. On some days he was ten, twenty times enmeshed in these passionate rays of the feminine moonlight. Ten, twenty times daily he had his tides, high and low.

The few times he superficially became friendly with some girls, without any other conscious intention on his part than to see them, because it felt so good to be in their society and to inhale the aroma of their presence, his mother persuaded him to give them up. She was inexorable. She first insisted so much that he had to tell her about them. Then she would put logically one thing together with another and show him what usually happened when boys and girls met and became intimate and how it complicated life and often led to a disturbance of careers and so on.

When she began to be too concrete and pronounced such unholy words as "marriage" and "children", he felt nauseated and did not let her finish; he usually promised not to see his new girl friend.

Except the girls there were his boy friends who were doing more and more their best to open new vistas for him and to show him woman from an angle which was almost new to him.

There was his colleague Brighty, a boy three

years older than himself, with a large crop of crow-black hair and a small irregular beard—he saved with the greatest care every downy hair that grew and, disregarding the mockery of family and acquaintances, he thought himself very wise to be bearded. His hirsute appearance did not interfere in the least with his success among women, probably because of his handsome, athletic build and resolute, sometimes audacious manners. It was Brighty, more than anyone else, who brought William frequently into the company of girls. And undoubtedly Brighty, who appeared to be his bad conscience or at least at the other pole of the spirit shown by his mother, would have swayed him and won him over to the lighter and gayer side of life, if this new friend had been more lovable than he was. But William really did not like him, particularly when he began to discuss philosophy and literature and social ideas and find contradictions in every sentence pronounced in his presence. William hated to be scrutinized too closely and preferred to remain with his errors, weaknesses in judgment, imperfections in logic and mental mistakes. Sometimes a conversation with the infallible, always satirical Brighty left our hero quite exhausted, sad or even angry.

Then there was The Mouse, a boy also a little older than William—whose nickname had been given to him in his childhood, nobody knew why. He was far from being pleasant to look at, but it seemed rarely a girl turned him down on that account. He was cynical with the other sex and knew innumerable stories about it, all of a pornographic nature, which made him the center of attraction at the boys' meetings. At the question: "Where do you live now?" he invariably answered: "Near some new girls." There was nothing worth while in this world but girls. He often grouped around himself several young men and, after listening for a while to their experiences, began to speak about his own,

which were not only highly colored but also richly mixed with the accounts he had heard from others. His stories were about as true as those of the average amateur fisherman and hunter. Most of the boys lived in one of the boarding-houses where out-of-town students stayed while away from their families and attending the schools and colleges of the city. Close to that house was an empty lot with a high fence. An old and half broken carriage had been forgotten there by somebody. There they sometimes brought a street girl. They laughed as they spoke of the incidents of these adventures and how at last they ran when they thought that steps were approaching.

Some of the boys were mere children, undergrown at that, not yet out of high school. As they spoke of their exploits, it would have been evident to any well informed person, as it was to William in later years, when he thought of those days, that they had invented them. They were products of their imagination and ignorance, descriptions which were physiologically impossible. Once, as The Mouse told them about the fair-haired and blue-eyed servant-girl in his boarding-house and made some unpleasant remarks concerning her body, William turned to go. But The Mouse caught him by the sleeve, asking him what he would do if he had such a girl. William blushed and said: "You are all pigs!" But the boys insisted and he said almost in a whisper: "I would look into her eyes and . . . and leave her alone." He disappeared in the midst of their noisy laughter.

At such times William often swung to the other extreme and again took refuge in his mother. To be sure, he came there only to see her and spoke about indifferent things, but he needed a bath of her steely and sharp decision, which he could gain in contact with her alone. But after such a visit and a new painful resolution wrung from him by her, he always regretted that he had come.

He was lost. He went away like a blind man, not knowing whither he was going.

So he discovered one day a solitary place, an hour's walk from the last cross of the cemetery. On a knoll on the summit of a hill he could see the valley below and far away the distant and dim horizon and feel the larger world beyond.

There he went to weep openly and without shame. There he was happy to be unhappy. All his vague desires gathered and crept up on his thighs and back and gripped his body and brought visions to his mind. Then he revolted boldly at the thought of his mother and all she represented. She was behind him who tortured him, an octopus whose tentacles could not escape. He promised himself a golden girl again. And at once a round line of light came dancing in his tear, a fresh bosom, young cheeks. No, he could not. Mother said. . . . But Brighty has many more pages to study . . . and why is he not? why can he do what nobody else can?

Some verses came to his memory, very warm and soft and sentimental, about flowers and stars and love. Then snatches from modern books about the social problem, the struggle for existence, all mingled with a streak of pessimistic philosophy. . . . William now suffered for everybody and everything and embraced the woods and the sky above and humanity everywhere. But no one was as unfortunate as he. . . .

On some days he was almost crazy. An inner impulse gave him no peace. He felt like a satyr let loose. He walked in the streets and looked insolently straight into the eyes of all the women. He dangled his hands at a distance from his body so as to touch the women's clothes. Sometimes they would stop and call him vile names, but then he was far from them.

Or he would stand on a street corner and watch the women. In his imagination he undressed them



and followed their movements trying to get a mental picture of the lines and folds of their bodies. He failed, as he knew the female body but imperfectly.

"But," he asked himself, "Do girls also undress men, cerebrally speaking? Do they do it to me, do they also long for something unknown—for what?"

He did not know, his thoughts became confused. He was surprised. He had thought that he knew the answer. He dreamed away. He dreamed while walking. He dreamed while sleeping, he wondered? He sat down on a bench in the open park. . . . One of the passing girls came to him and asked him to go with her. . . . He approached. Some of the girls were grown at his eyes. . . . No, no one had come. . . . He spoke of it. He did, what would happen after he followed to any woman. He could not continue the romance later years. There was something about which he was certain. . . . He closed his eyes again, to see if he had imagined find out the continuation. But nothing happened and instead . . . he found a treasure. . . . He opened his eyes. Why not? Could there not be concealed somewhere a large mass of clumps of shining gold and precious stones? . . . He remembered stories. . . . And with lots of money he could. . . . The most beautiful girls would come to him. . . . Oh, no, how can he desire that? For money? Never. . . .

Here is one. . . . She is crossing the path. . . . He says: "I would kiss you. I kiss you. I have kissed you". . . . But no, he has not said anything. She proceeds as quietly as before. Now she is still further. She does not guess that a boy is sitting there and thinking of her. . . . But a man of sixty also looks at her. His pockets are bulging with newspapers. One of his shoulders is lower than the other. His neck is crooked. He has a stiff neck. . . . Yes, they call it that way. He shaves, but he has not shaved for some time and his stubbles are partly yellow and partly white. . . . Instinctively

William feels his own chin and cheeks. They are smooth. He does not yet grow a beard. . . . But see the old man there! He is unashamed. He looks so directly, so shamelessly at the girl! Just like a hungry dog who sees a man eating. Squarely, frankly. . . . How dare he?

William cannot stand it and goes away.

A friend, whose father was a farmer, took William out to the farm for the Easter vacation.

After lunch William sauntered off alone. Splendid spring day, first warm sunshine. Heavy leaf buds on the branches of every bush, fruit trees all blossoming, the thin red lace of the maples behind and, as a background, the blue hills with streaks of brown, bunches of insolent, defiant, very golden dandelions and the young grass all around, coming up fast and invading every available place.

There had been a freshet recently and the water had covered a large piece of the field. Many roots of the trees still stood in the midst of puddle. But the stream was gradually receding, returning into its bed and hastily gathering its belongings, its small tributaries from all the surrounding inclines. It rushed lustily down, tumbling over rocks and entanglements of dead logs and twigs and yellow leaves.

A woman stood ankle-deep in the water and rinsed some white clothes. Her skirts and petticoat were fastened at her girdle and showed her purple knees and a large part of her powerful, red thighs. Her arms were bare and, as she was bending down, two full balls showed above her low shirt. Her face was mostly covered with a wealth of dishevelled dark brown hair and could hardly be seen. She was singing and her voice was young and strong. William went on tip-toe as closely as he dared and, pressing his chest with both hands to quiet his fast-thumping heart which he felt way up to his temples, and holding his breath, he hid behind the trunk of an oak and peeped. He was sure he had fallen into an ad-

venture. At last something was going to happen to him. But the woman—she was really a young person—lifted her head, saw him and, paying no attention to him, went on with her work. Then William, too, felt bored. What was there to see?

On his way to the farm he remembered a scene from his childhood days. His uncle, about twenty-five, standing very close to a girl, at the housedoor, both dressed in their Sunday best—they had just returned from church—he holding his hands on her chest and removing them quickly as William came in carrying something from the store. Why? Only now, ten years later, he thought he could see the reason.

On that night William slept in his friend's room. Both boys talked and laughed from one bed to the other for a long time. At last the other boy went to sleep and William remained wide awake and resting calmly, with his eyes open in the darkness. Suddenly he was astonished to hear two voices from the room nearby. First it was a man's bass, then a woman's answer. As he became accustomed to the words, he began to understand. It was his friend's father who was talking with his wife. He spoke gently, kissed her and seemed to entreat her. That was all that William could make out.

In the morning, as he looked through the window at the opposite side of the yard, the farmer's wife was in the kitchen, undressed, while her sister threw water on her neck and they both laughed. He again thought this was an event in his life, but, as the woman seriously wiped her well-proportioned body and as nobody spoke about it, he felt ashamed. He surely was mistaken, he thought.

However, in the course of time, he succeeded in overcoming these tendencies and he calmed down more and more as something else came slowly up from his deepest consciousness. It was his strong inclination toward music.

At the age of sixteen he left the Middle-West for New York.

During the last year or so, he had refused all aid from his mother's husband, a stranger to him, a person for whom he felt no affection. Therefore, his life was not pleasant. He barely managed to live. But one of his friends, a boy from New York, who was returning there, spoke to him so much about the great metropolis and its opportunities that he decided to try his luck there. Another reason for his journey was his desire to get still farther away from the little girl whose enticement he feared. Under the greatest difficulties he saved the fare and departed surreptitiously, writing to his mother on the way.

In New York he found many young men living as he did, from hand to mouth, studying and working, running back and forth from classes to odd jobs, from examinations to physical labor.

He boarded in the poorest sections, with people who were so destitute of everything they did not guess that there was anything else than penury. He had his days of hunger and saw all around so much of it that, compared to it, Hamsun's description was pale. It was during one of those well-known devastating economic crises in the first years of the twentieth century.

A penny was a fortune. A piece of stale bread or only a hard rind was not to be trifled with—nay, a few crumbs could be of use. Left over and carefully gathered, together with unsweetened black coffee, they gave the illusion of a meal the next

day. A rag was not thrown away until it was in shreds. It served to keep some other rags in place.

The houses were old-type tenements. There were hundreds of them in the city and until their total disappearance at least eighty more years had to pass, as it was figured out by health statisticians. There were entire blocks notorious for their tuberculosis-breeding qualities. They were called "lung blocks", because so many lost their lungs there. They contained rooms not fit for men or beasts. These rooms either had no windows at all and consequently no natural light whatsoever or windows that opened into other dimly lit rooms and so were visited by second-hand air and a faint light. There was no water except in the stair-case and often not on all floors, frequently only in the yard between the front and the rear house. Hot water or steam heating was a comfort so far from the prevailing discomfort that to mention them was a mockery or an insult. As to baths, there were none for blocks and blocks and the only bathing facilities, the public baths, of which there were but a few in the entire city, were very inadequate.

William suffered even when he earned a little more and was for a short time somewhat farther from the edge of the hunger abyss. He was not indifferent to the distress and desperate struggle against indigence seen in many families. The conditions became particularly unbearable when the people were out of work.

There were always many babies. The poor procreated among bedbugs. And even the smallest children, as soon as they had a glimmer of sense, took an active part in the fight. While their usual cry was the classical "Mother, I'm hungry," it happened frequently that they would console their discouraged father, giving him hope or advising him what to do. William saw them biting their lips and not allowing themselves to ask for that which they wanted so badly—bread. They knew where some-

thing could yet be had on credit and where their credit had been exhausted. Sometimes they were the only breadwinners and were proud to bring home a few cents or their equivalent, some fruit or a herring, from the sale of newspapers or from independent shoe-shining. They were so ambitious to earn the much needed food that they forgot to play and lost their childlike ways. Resignation, renunciation were old friends of the children as well as of the grown-ups.

For a few weeks William shared the bed of a classmate, a boy of his age, the oldest son of his family. They knew dark days. The only brave person was the mother, a woman with a never-disappearing smile—at least in sight of the children, as William caught her many times crying when she thought herself unobserved. She sat up night toiling and when William, tired from doing lessons after work and night school, went to bed she was still busy with laundry when she had money for soap or mending and patching clothes for the little ones or changing the father's work jacket into a boy's pair of trousers. She knew so many songs and stories and would sing and tell them so spiritedly and with so much verve that they replaced the food. When she opened her mouth, she made the children happy and they forgot their gnawing hunger.

She was also of great help to other people. She was witty and made them laugh when they felt like crying. But for her, her husband would have committed suicide long before. She was the heroine, the sunshine of her little world.

She distributed the food—when there was any—with extreme care and equity, so that none should miss any or get more than his share. For herself she took the smallest portion or nothing at all and instead of eating sang a song or danced with the little ones.

There were thousands of people living like that, but nobody cared.

Oh, there was charity, with its offices situated in tall buildings. One could see there nice secretaries and fine rich ladies. But it was not for the poor. The poor were only a pretext. They were the mice with which the big, sleek cats amused themselves. It was sport.

William knew poor people whom somebody had taken to one of these offices. It bewildered them. Waiting in line among others who were coming for the same purpose as they and who were aware for what reason they had come—that was an ignominy made their blood redden their faces and tingle their ears. Then the employes' abrupt manner of

Later the investigators, who, by questioning their neighborhood to see whether one had not taken all the applicants were supposed to be liars—helped the measure. Many of the poor renounced such charity and rejected its help. Most of them never applied. Only an infinite minority, the brazen-faced and the professional mendicants, took full advantage of it.

But even if it had been perfectly sincere, how could charity succor all those who were in need of it? All of them? It was an impossibility—and that fact alone disqualified it. It was the same as with giving alms in the streets. One gave to the beggar who happened to stand at the church door. How about the other needy persons? Did one go to look for them? And how much did one give? How much could one give? Of course, no one gave all one had. . . . It was futile.

All the people around William had to pay rent. Rent was always the big question. So much money every month! And it seemed so unnecessary! There was another alternative—dispossession! Oh, the broken chair, the soiled pillow, the pot, all on the sidewalk and the child nearby watching! William saw these things many times.

The people understood but obscurely the mechanism of eviction. A tenement agent or a rent collector came every month and, if the latter was not satisfied, within a few days one had to appear in court and then some sort of police person was sent to see that one evacuated the rooms. What the landlord had to do with the judge and police was difficult to grasp.

Rows and rows of houses in which the poor were living often belonged to one man who also owned the factory in which the tenants worked when not unemployed and the same man contributed to charity. The idea that things must be owned by somebody was so settled in the people's minds, they never questioned it.

One day William's young friend confessed that he had drunk but little milk in his life, that he had hardly tasted butter and never cream, that he could count on his fingers the number of eggs he had eaten. He did not know the taste of rolls or fresh bread—the large, stale loaves being the cheapest. Some vegetables in general use were unknown to him. Chocolate, bed sheets, drawers were for millionaires only. He rarely took the street car; he walked instead. In his childhood a writing-book and a pencil were luxuries. He knew how a circus performance looked from the description of other boys, but he had never seen it. The seams of his shirt and clothes, as of those of the rest of the family, were infested and he could not believe that there were people who had no parasites at all in their garments. At the rare times when he purchased clothes and shoes, he always bought old ones, never new ones. And, oh, the shoes he wore! What holes! How they twisted and injured his feet and bathed them in mud! And what heels! Looking at the feet of the poor children of those blocks, one could truly say that the shoe was the thermometer of poverty! He did not permit himself a show. Lately he earned some money and he gave it all to his parents.



When the cheap merry-go-round on a wagon stopped in the crowded street, William often stood in a corner and watched the children surrounding it. Those who had the penny were happy. The others gazed enviously and hopelessly. And if William chanced to be rich enough, he took a dozen or more of them, put them up and paid the ride. They, of course, could not understand how one person could afford to spend so much money. But they did not investigate. They knew they had met the greatest benefactor on earth.

Life was hard for William. He returned to the Middle West, to the city of his first love and where his mother was living.

He stayed there two more years and then went to Chicago, where he remained and eventually entered the medical school.

It was about this time that William discovered in himself, together with the budding of his flesh and the exquisite spiritual expansion and flight of his mind, a new inclination until then dormant and latent.

Ever since his childhood he had been fond of melody. His ear was always alert for harmonious sounds and it was never difficult for him to repeat any tune that he had heard once. Old relatives said about him in a knowing, pretentious manner "He has a very musical ear."

With him, color and light changed into sound and he could appreciate everything of sounds.

Battles and revolutions in his lessons of history were crashes and marches; great men, powerful chiefs were dominant, swelling notes; his geography, with its descriptions and maps of high mountains, rushing cascades, eternal snows, burning winds, endless deserts, quiet lakes, busy cities, was full of music.

There was the imitative, the descriptive music. But there was another one, one that he could not name with words as its fineness would have been disturbed by the slightest comparison with terrestrial things. It was unearthly, ethereal, and he could hear it only once in a great while. Then he would hide and listen and let the sounds coming from the infinite spaces play upon the strings of his soul. He would cry or exult in the enjoyment of this high pleasure without being aware that . . . he was com-

posing. When his mother used to catch him in such a mood, she would begin to sermonize him, to show him how lazy he was—"a big boy like that, almost ten years old, and to stand here and do nothing." But he would push her aside and say: "Let me listen. . . ."

From the time his grandmother had given him his first broken, two-stringed violin, when he was almost a baby, William had musical instruments—a mandoline, a guitar, later a violin and a flute, and he always mastered them quickly and with but little help. But as he became too fond of them, his mother took them away from him. He had no piano, but never failed to try his luck on the pianos he sometimes found in the houses of his friends. But it was not until he was seventeen that he attended a classical concert. And for a long time after that he dreamed only of writing music, of studying composition, which, however, was his innermost secret, As he never disclosed even to his mother.

As the more wave came on and took more and more concrete forms, he was certain that it was incongruous with the study of medicine. But he did not treat it like his other temptations. It was not an enemy. It was a blessing. He did not fight it. He only postponed it. He repulsed it gently, tried it as deeply as he could, but promised himself to take it up later and to give himself up to it entirely—later, when he would be through with his medical education. Others among his friends, in similar circumstances, had the courage to cut their studies short, to leave them and devote themselves to painting or singing—to run away from school, as it were. But he was unable to do that. He had been tamed too much. His wings had been cut too short.

As his artistic proclivity became more apparent and insistent, sometimes even exacting, he argued with it, or rather with himself, or perhaps with his mother's spirit in him.

In the first three years William took his medical studies too seriously, so seriously indeed that he did not fail to be disappointed toward the end, when he went to the other extreme and found medicine unsatisfactory. Then disillusion replaced his former enthusiasm. In this respect most of his colleagues were better off than he, as they had never expected too much. For them medicine was an occupation like any other, with which one could make a living, or even make some money if one was smart. They had chosen it, because they were, or thought they were, unable to do anything else, or because they had been advised to do so by experienced people. Had they been in possession of sufficient capital they would have gone into business or would have invested it to good advantage in some other way. The boys among themselves never spoke about anything else than the best methods of making money. Brightly, William and one or two others were exceptions, although they belonged to the poorest.

At the threshold of his studies William imagined medicine as a very simple proposition. All one had to do was to memorize a certain number of things—a difficult work, but one that required no extraordinary ability. One must know anatomy, anatomy and physiology, very well, perfectly, then pathology and then all the symptoms of disease, then two lists that one must possess by heart: one containing the diseases and sicknesses and the other the corresponding remedies and treatments. A physician

was like a dictionary, a walking dictionary. He finds a patient with a given ailment and he at once thinks of the opposite page, and the problem is solved. The remedy is applied and the disease driven away.

But he wanted to become one of the great doctors, so that he might be respected and allowed to give some free time to his musical studies and compositions. Three hours daily to his art and the remainder to his practice. No, he would need four hours. But, he'd see about that later. How did one become prominent in medicine? It was plain. He had made up his mind about that, too. The man who invented new remedies was the genius. He expected to bend all his mental energy upon such work and he was sure to be successful.

As he advanced, he soon learned that things were not so simple, that medicine was not so exact and that there were many opinions about any of its phases. Even anatomy was not altogether known and the knowledge of it, however exact, helped much less than he thought in the curing of disease.

Then there was the human element. Both in the patient and in the doctor. And there was the unforeseen.

The physician's errors? There must be many. But it would be unfair to charge them to science. William was going to be the most perfect type of doctor.

However, as he later found that frequently straight, rigid science was either not always applicable or frequently quite harmful and must be mitigated by the human hand and mind, he became for a time confused and waited for more light.

So he fought a concealed, but nevertheless tempestuous, struggle that took on all sorts of forms during his student years. And as he went on, he constantly compared the doctor's work with that of the other professions and found it wanting. Of course, he dismissed the practice of law at once. Instinctively he felt that it did not help humanity at

all. But the science of agriculture, hygiene of the soil and its products, architecture—the people needed food, housing. . . . How about the hygiene of the human race? How about it for the physician, for the new physician? And he promised himself to look into it later. First he must finish, have his foundation, and then . . .

He was so curious to see for himself what medicine really looked like, that, long before he had the right to follow the higher courses, he stole into the forbidden lecture rooms and followed the older students into advanced laboratories, to the post-mortem room, to the venereal clinic, to the eye dispensary. He lingered in the hospital wards, where, seeing that he was rather a nuisance, he tried to make himself useful by performing some minor tasks that a nurse could have done better than he and to render services which made him ridiculous. More than once he attracted upon his head the ire of the chief, after which, an investigation being made, he would be forced to leave the place, followed by everybody's ironic smile. But in this respect he was incorrigible. Such events never deterred him, never interfered with his becoming a hanger-on the next day in another division of the hospital.

Usually he did not examine the patients. He did not know how and did not dare to do it.

He resented the fact that the entire procession of students, post-graduates, guests, assistants, internes, externes, who followed the majestic and prophetic head of the clinic, palpated, ausculted and percussed the sick. He was yet too much of a layman to forget and lay aside all sentimentality in the face of this diseased flesh which, here, was material for study mainly.

One day, however, after a demonstration of a particularly interesting cardiac case with, as the chief said, "nice" complications and an oedema of the lower extremities, as soon as the swarm of medical bees had left for another bed, William came

timidly over to the foot of the patient's blanket, lifted it and pressed his finger against the skin over the shinbone. A piercing cry terrified him. He did not understand, because he had seen that this palpation was painless. The patient, a woman of thirty, shivering from nervousness, was sitting up and fulminating him with her big eyes, the only really living organs in her poor, emaciated, half-dead body. Her indignation was boundless. She gathered all her strength and exclaimed: "You—Who do you think I am? I'm no street woman!" Now it suddenly dawned upon William that the miserable creature had entirely misunderstood his Christ-like smile and his apologetic gesture. Meanwhile the crowd had come back and the chief, taking in the situation at a glance, said: "Go ahead, young man, and examine this oedema. And you, my dear girl, don't you be afraid, the doctor won't hurt you."

What struck William mainly, was that the greatest interest of the whole clinic lay in the diagnosis and that the treatment seemed to be of no importance whatsoever. As he said to himself, they were curing the sick with diagnoses only.

The chief used to say: "When a patient has these symptoms, it's too easy to make a diagnosis. It's a cinch! It's too easy. It's a dead give-away." But most diagnoses were difficult to make because they had to be established through symptoms which must be found and because there were many sides to the meaning of each symptom. It was a puzzle and William was eager to know the solution. But he was told that it took a lifetime to learn all the diagnostic subtleties of one small branch of internal medicine and that the common physician was regarded as an ignoramus by the masters and specialists. How, then, he asked himself, would he go out and practice at the end of his studies, as a freshly baked young doctor?

Sometimes, however, even the teacher's scaffold-

ing leading to a diagnosis, notwithstanding the many scientific words piled up on top of one another, did not hold together. Or it looked a good deal like the reasoning of the plain women in the presence of a child's illness:

"He must have caught cold in the evening air, or maybe he spoiled his stomach with the green apples, or the egg he ate was not fresh. . . . No, he played too much in the sun. And why couldn't it be that the bath was not hot enough? I think he is simply tired. . . . Oh, I know, I remember he got excited yesterday."

William was so anxious to learn to diagnose disease, that he began very early to put into practice what he had heard from his instructors. He always diagnosed. Wherever he went, he observed carefully all that was visible of men, women and children:

The eyes, the pupils, the conjunctiva, the cornea, the iris, the eyelids, the play of the forehead wrinkles, the pulsations of the temporal artery, the hair, the ear-lobes, the features around the mouth, the neck, the thyroid glands, the color of the skin, the wrists, the hands and fingers, trying to imagine the occupation, the sitting or standing posture, the gait, the shape of the body. He probably made many mistakes, but he frequently guessed right some lung, heart and kidney troubles, paralyses, alcoholic states, cases of plain and exophthalmic goiter, and so on.

Already in his first year he managed to gain admission to the clinic for nervous diseases. And, long before he had finished his dissecting course, he visited and revisited the lectures on mental troubles at the insane asylum. There it happened once that the master called him out to describe a case to the class. As William did not move, the professor, who was a celebrity, thinking that the student was overawed by the nearness of the man of fame, encouraged him gently: "Oh, come on! Great man,



small man, what difference does it make?" But the class knew better. It understood that William had no idea about the subject and was totally unable to answer—and they roared.

William went to surgical operations. He sat so long and so many times on the highest bench of the amphitheatre, that the advanced students thought him more advanced than they and asked him to explain the cases.

He also ventured to take part in the meeting of the local medical society. But that was so devoid of interest for him that he did not return more than once or twice.

What exasperated him in the first years of his studies was the complete lack of enthusiasm for their professional work of most men in general practice. One whom he questioned about his cases answered with indifference: "My next visit? Another two dollars—that's all!" And, as he asked one of his new medical acquaintances for permission to see the cases in the dispensary where the latter was one of the many assistants, the reply was made in an annoyed tone: "What is there to see? Always the same thing, always knocking with the finger over the chest, always feeling the stomach! You'd better study the book."

William realized that people cannot remain enthusiastic their entire life and that any occupation must necessarily degenerate in time into tedious labor.

But he also found enthusiasts.

There were those who stayed up nights watching the results of new experiments; those who had to be taken from the laboratories almost by force; those who would return to the wards to observe a case after their hours of service were over. There were the charitable physicians, in small number, it is true, in smaller number than it was generally thought, who devoted themselves to their work regardless of pecuniary considerations.

Some were so zealous about their surgical art that in their ardor they immolated the sick in the search for new methods.

Others went so far as to change the facts, to modify the history of their patients, to add symptoms that did not exist, to remove from the charts signs that were not in conformity with their preconceived ideas, to transpose figures in order to strengthen or weaken statistical data—all for the purpose of making their beloved theories triumph.

He also met great devotion in the hard-working, nursing personnel. The most perfect type he saw was an old nurse in a psychopathic ward who cured quite a number of patients through her kindness and sweet behavior. She went as far as embracing and kissing futilely paralyzed idiots with unspeakable skin eruptions, hopelessly condemned to satisfy all their needs in bed through life. She was a real saint.

But William had seen as yet too little of all that and he waited to learn more.

The room in which William lived during most of his student years was so small that from his table he could touch the door on one side, the bed on the opposite side, the book-shelf to his right hand and his clothes that were hanging on the wall covered with a sheet, on his left hand. A small box, almost square. It was situated on the second floor of the rear of an old house with none of the modern comforts.

The hostess was an elderly Czech immigrant who lived there with her niece, an American-born girl, and rented three rooms to boarders. The service was excellent, considering the means at her disposal and the very modest rent. Perfect cleanliness, politeness and good-will were the characteristics of the old lady. Her face always illuminated with a smile, she did her work honestly and kindly. She was promptitude itself. She respected William's privacy and understood when to disappear. Not only did she not object to his bringing in friends, but on such occasions she often put at his disposal her own parlor and never failed to carry in, unsolicited, a tray with tea and cakes, which were gratefully accepted, unless someone had brought along a few bottles of beer. It is true that on the first of the month William rewarded such little attentions.

But the niece was not so discreet. Under all sorts of pretexts, she tried to engage in conversation with William. During the week she was busy working in a store. But on Sundays and sometimes on other

days she was home. When she brought in the pitcher of water, she never went out until William excused himself, saying that he had to prepare for a quiz, or until her aunt called her. When the latter sent her in with the mended coat, with the laundry done or with his shoes shined, she at once began to giggle and to talk. She was not a beauty, but a strong, virile girl, with a square face and passionate mouth. She disturbed him and more than once he forgot his work and thought of her broad hips and powerful, column-like thighs, whose size and shape could easily be guessed through her clothes. Perhaps he would have responded favorably to her very evident desires, as he was frequently very close to doing, although her painted lips repulsed him, if a little incident had not disgusted him with her. One day he caught her peeping through the keyhole. That was enough; it cured him. The next time she came in, he did not look up from his book and did not answer her. She tittered, but he, without lifting his head, said: "Please leave me alone and don't come back!" She laughed louder: "Auntie is not in, Mister Straight, we are all alone, look at me . . . just a minute!" He looked up. She was almost naked; but that, instead of awakening desire, infuriated him, and he yelled: "Leave the room at once, will you?" But she did not move. She could not believe that he meant it. She thought, with the majority of women, that no man could resist such temptations and that all men, without exception, were always ready. . . . She said: "Oh, ain't it exciting?" And when he got up to open the door she stood motionless and half smiled, half whined: "Come on! Be nice to me and I'll be nice to you!"

The next day William announced to the old woman that he intended to move out at once and when she demanded the reason and insisted, he said that, if she wanted him to stay, his terms were the removal of the girl from the apartment. The woman

replied that it was all right and that her niece would go back to her parents. She added: "I'm sorry, you are not the only one who complains." From then on the girl was no more to be seen.

But that event left William somewhat disillusioned about the entire female sex. If that were possible in an uneducated, unattractive girl, it must be due to a general deep feminine instinct, he thought.

William did all kinds of work for a living. The only thing he did not do was to take the places of workmen during strikes, although this was popular among his colleagues.

For a short time he was employed as secretary to a venerable old scientist who claimed to have been a university professor of mathematics and philosophy. A very gentle grandfather, correctly dressed, as if for his course, he would walk to and fro in his room, while he asked the new secretary with a smile to sit down at the desk, which was the size of a billiard table. All the walls, from the floor to the ceiling, were covered with bookcases, and closets, full, as William soon learned, of unpublished manuscripts written in English, but entirely incomprehensible to him. At the sight of that immense work the respect of the young student for the great man changed into awe and he timidly expressed to his new master the fear that he might need a more competent assistant. But the great man was already too absorbed in his own thoughts to listen. He just said: "Silence . . ." and took a few more steps around the table. Then, with a happy smile, his face all transfigured, his eyes lost in infinity, he dictated. The words were spoken with perfect clearness, scanned in rhythm and cadence, in a most agreeable tone, while all his features from the forehead to the chin continued to smile. At regular intervals he interrupted his dictation, bent over William and, with a particularly broad, beaming expression, he pointed with his outstretched finger

to the last sentence, evidently expecting a sudden great approbation or admiration. Then he continued in the same way, until he stopped again, asking his secretary to underline the last words with a red pencil which he handed him. Some places he himself decorated with red, blue, yellow and green lines, crosses and circles. Then he wanted William to look up in his manuscript collection 367, page 501 and to quote from there. The professor smacked his tongue and wagged his head, with an outburst: "Excellent, excellent, a stroke of genius!" Presently he began a long dissertation for the benefit of his secretary. The latter opened his eyes and mouth wide, wrinkled his forehead, but had to admit to himself that, in spite of his efforts, he was unable to make the least sense out of the whole maze of words. He concluded, of course, that he was too stupid. But at the same time he was astounded to see that there could be a science which, though written in plain English, was so incomprehensible to common mortals like him. Then the professor, the better to prove his contentions, traced on a sheet of paper some triangles and other geometrical figures and, entirely satisfied, said to William: "*Quod demonstrandum erat.*" But the embarrassment of the young man grew when the old teacher halted before him and asked him for his opinion about a certain hypothesis. William gasped for a breath of air, his brow was bathed in perspiration, he blushed, but did not reply. The professor, triumphant, said he had expected it, as nobody except himself was able to understand. And, unbuttoning his black, perfectly pressed frock coat, he laughed with glee. He went on dictating and explaining and at certain moments William caught or thought he caught a slight glimmer of light in this incessantly flowing verbosity, but it soon disappeared, leaving no trace. It seemed to him that the most supreme riddles of the universe were being solved before his very eyes and each time he thought he seized the meaning of

a paragraph, he feared that some great misfortune had befallen him and he let the thread fall again. Was he standing before the veil of Isis? Did the secret of secrets flap its black wings around him?

Everything in the room turned round and round. He felt an extreme lassitude and faintness in his bones and would have lost consciousness had he not heard a sudden deafening knock on the table and a roar of Mephistophelian laughter. As he looked up, he saw the old man hopping several times up from the floor, then on the chairs and down again and, as he calmed himself, he took out from a drawer a gold medal and a moiré silk ribbon and pinned them solemnly to the bottom of the last page written.

William gasped. For the first time he understood with whom he was dealing. A poor, harmlessly insane person, probably suffering, as he thought, from some hallucinatory psychosis. That conclusion calmed him.

He came the next day and then another day and then asked to be excused. Both the old man and his wife—who, by the way, was or appeared to be sane—begged him to remain. He came for another week and then discontinued his services, notwithstanding the insistent supplications of his employer. William regretted to be forced to leave him. It was the best paid job he had ever had.

William also acted as translator. So, for instance, he Englished a German treatise on military tactics and strategy.

Once, when he was about to finish the translation of a book on the commercial aspect of the dyeing industry, by a European writer, the author, a wealthy man, came from abroad to attend to its publication. He expected, of course, his American representative to be his pilot in this country that he had never visited before. William had made his plans as to what to show him.



Right from the station he walked with him and took him through the most unpleasant streets, thinking that the man would be thrilled to see the squalid quarters which gave a true picture of this great industrial center. There was drabness, dirt, ugliness at every step.

After some time, the stranger, losing patience, said:

"Are there no nicer places than these joints in your barracks?"

He hailed a passing taxi. The student was ashamed. He had not thought of that; he was not in the habit of riding.

William attempted to show him museums, art exhibits, the best architectural constructions, but the visitor had a smile of pity and refused to see them.

On the first day, as the author expressed the desire to eat in a "swell" place, the young man led him to a restaurant into which he himself had not dared to enter before but which was praised as high-priced by his friends. The stranger, however, as soon as he opened the door and glanced over the tables, went out quickly. He soon discovered, by instinct, the most luxurious eating place in the entire city, the existence of which William had not even heard of.

The waiters judged and condemned the young man the first minute he entered. They threw the most fulgurant glances at his clothes, which were not of the first freshness. One could almost follow the bee lines directed from their indignant eyes to his necktie, which was not of the latest style. William was so stiff with fear of committing some unpardonable breach of etiquette that he hardly ate.

The poor boy was even more comical in his failure to find an appropriate hotel. The one that seemed to him almost unapproachable was too common for the guest. The latter looked up one into which William could not follow him. He felt that his clothes were really too cheap and shabby in the

face of the gold and crystals of the chandelier, of the brown marble, the undreamed-of wealth of shining furniture and deep, soft, cozy armchairs and the impeccable suits and linen of the attendants.

At last, one evening, the visitor said:

"But you'll surely take me to a good, corking show. . . . As a young man you must know them well enough," he added with a twinkle of the eye that William did not understand.

William was glad of the occasion. He chose the most serious and, as he was convinced, the best theatre that offered real art and honest, conscientious work. But he failed there, too. The European left after the first act, mumbling:

"My dear boy, I am not here to solve tangled life problems and I hate this highbrow stuff. Tomorrow I'll find a more desirable and entertaining amusement and I'll get tickets for you, too."

The next day William was taken to a place the existence of which had been entirely unknown to him. There was no mention about it in the newspapers; it had no sign on the door. It was situated in the rear of an exclusive club and one could get there by recommendation only. There was, of course, music. But there were also girls dancing in the most alluring postures and captivating attitudes. The audience, composed of rich business men, collaborated a good deal with the actresses.

After that, the visitor said to William:

"Now I am more at home in your town than yourself. I have established connections."

William also gave private lessons. He bored his pupils and they bored him.

It was not so bad when he taught modern languages. But when it came to Latin or Greek he felt like a common swindler. He himself had never known more of the classical languages than enough to pass his exams and the little which he had learned he had almost entirely forgotten, in which respect he was certainly not an exception.

He taught algebra, which had given him much trouble in school.

The only subject in which he delighted was history. When a pupil was recalcitrant, he conquered him by telling him some anecdotic chapter from ancient, medieval, modern or contemporary history.

He could not help thinking of his own instructors.

The giant, broad-shouldered teacher of Greek, who was always at the mercy of his class and who created row after row through his stupidity which made the boys crow like roosters and throw wet paper pellets to the ceiling. He hindered, instead of helping, the study of his subject.

There was the one-eyed, shivering, cadaverous teacher who used to open the book and say:

"For to-morrow from here to there. And now So-and-So, recite!"

But William remembered with gratitude the carved young face of the consumptive professor of history, whose long black hair kept falling over his vividly burning eyes as he spoke. He was a born storyteller, a painter of word images. He captivated the class. His head moved forward over the desk; his long, bony fingers stuck out toward the students; he spoke, and spoke with such elegance and eloquence that no one heard the bell ring. He stopped only when a coughing spell seized him, shook his shoulders and made him streak his handkerchief with red.

William had learned enough from him to win the confidence of his own pupils.

The mother of one of the boys whom William coached in his home work detained the teacher several times after the lesson and went so far as to praise his "pretty eyes", to pet his hand and to offer him a room in her house. "So," she said, "you'll be able to supervise the boy's work more closely." William did not accept; her age was not inviting.

At the beginning of maturity William's intimate life was not as stormy as in his adolescence. Naturally, he was not insensitive to love, but as a rule he gave his heart to girls and women who never thought of him as a lover and he never spoke to them as such.

There were many. There were those whom he saw by chance, stray rays of light that happened to strike his eye and opened deep, untapped reservoirs of sentiments in his soul.

He lived with them, with the remembrance of them, for a day or two, he longed for them for another few days. Then they were replaced by others. They came on, numberless, suddenly throwing bouquets of joyous feelings into his existence, singing each time new songs in him.

Unknown beauties. Stern, serious faces, sweet, inviting eyes. In the street, in the car, in the shops. He had them all. He loved them all. They were his choice. They belonged to him. Did they not flaunt their beauty in public by the mere fact of their appearance? They could not protest. He did not think of attacking them brutally by a word and much less by a gesture or by an attempt to brush his hand against them as he used to do in his young puppy years. That would have meant to lose them. For nothing in the world would he have pricked the light, multicolored bubble.

Sometimes they disappeared in a crowd before he could enjoy the sight of them sufficiently, as the swift shining rift of lightning is lost before one can

prepare to see it. But he had caught the poem that emanated from them, the bit of life that they radiated. He absorbed it and continued to weave his own fanciful visions. Outlines, hues of delicate color, harmonious bodies were his daily mental food. He was always in love. But he did not dare to stretch out his arms. He feared they would clutch emptiness, nothingness. He avoided concretizing his desires. But the background of these profiles and silhouettes was permanently illumined by the quiet golden love that had awakened him with its magic wand at the age of fourteen.

And he again took refuge in a gentle pessimism, the only philosophy that consoled him, always his staff and mainstay. It did not paralyze him. It gave him strength and substance.

Life was useless, felicity was a chimera that could never be attained and the best one could do was not to attempt to possess what one wanted mostly, as it ceased to exist as soon as one had it. Nor to realize that which was one's fondest dream.

No, that was not renunciation.

He knew he had not invented anything. These thoughts were as old as the world. But the professional philosophers had spoiled them by changing them into systems, by drawing heavy conclusions from them and by closing themselves up within their barriers, by binding themselves and their disciples through contracts. He hated to be stamped a "pessimist" or anything else. He wanted to be free to enjoy, even for a minute, when the time should come. He did not bind himself.

He mixed other beliefs with his fundamental philosophy and modified it at will or according to circumstances or caprice. Scepticism was another chain of thoughts that helped him and in whose light, satirical vein he loved to bathe as in a soft, half cloudy sunshine. Nothing was certain—so what was the use? It was not true, he felt, that these were thoughts of old men. No, they were

## THE HEALERS

young if they did not take the form of religions, of restrictions, as old men, even those of genius, would have them do.

He did not submit to the frauds which were contained in these systems. But he held on to his own philosophy as to a reed, while in danger of drowning, of suffocating in his endless, unappeased appetites. He could do with his thoughts as he pleased. When he invited them, they came like faithful servants and the world was a useless, gray, formless, insignificant object. When he repulsed them, the great, infinite universe crashed in with bright, red light, loud laughter and a triumphal symphony that changed into fine prolonged, caressing notes.

From among his innumerable ephemeral loves, he singled out some that were to fill him so much as to last through life, although not alone, although intertwined with one another and transformed while passing and filtering through his feelings and taking on various ideal, supernatural shapes.

There was a long empty period in his adolescence, during which he had not loved, but made the acquaintance of his new inner, savage self, that surged out and demanded recognition. It was the sexual heat, the rut period, too tumultuous and torrential for delicate sentiments.

Only years later came the tall, beautiful embroiderer with her lines of a Venus of Milo and her perfect, long fingers. She was as graceful in her movements as the thin laces and ornaments which she handled. She was one of his private pupils; he saw her often, but never breathed a word to her about his sleepless nights and the burning of his inner fires due to her passage through his life. At some distance of time he could think of her as a sacred, respected temple only, from which a shrine was left in him for eternal adoration.

Then there was the black-eyed socialist, a daughter of some Slavic nation, whom he met at one of

prepare to see it. But he had caught the poem that emanated from them, the bit of life that they radiated. He absorbed it and continued to weave his own fanciful visions. Outlines, hues of delicate color, harmonious bodies were his daily mental food. He was always in love. But he did not dare to stretch out his arms. He feared they would clutch emptiness, nothingness. He avoided concretizing his desires. But the background of these profiles and silhouettes was permanently illumined by the quiet golden love that had awakened him with its magic wand at the age of fourteen.

And he again took refuge in a gentle pessimism, the only philosophy that consoled him, always his staff and mainstay. It did not paralyze him. It gave him strength and substance.

Life was useless, felicity was a chimera that could never be attained and the best one could do was not to attempt to possess what one wanted mostly, as it ceased to exist as soon as one had it. Nor to realize that which was one's fondest dream.

No, that was not renunciation.

He knew he had not invented anything. These thoughts were as old as the world. But the professional philosophers had spoiled them by changing them into systems, by drawing heavy conclusions from them and by closing themselves up within their barriers, by binding themselves and their disciples through contracts. He hated to be stamped a "pessimist" or anything else. He wanted to be free to enjoy, even for a minute, when the time should come. He did not bind himself.

He mixed other beliefs with his fundamental philosophy and modified it at will or according to circumstances or caprice. Scepticism was another chain of thoughts that helped him and in whose light, satirical vein he loved to bathe as in a soft, half cloudy sunshine. Nothing was certain—so what was the use? It was not true, he felt, that these were thoughts of old men. No, they were

## THE HEALERS

young if thy did not take the form of religions, of restrictions, as old men, even those of genius, would have them do.

He did not submit to the frauds which were contained in these systems. But he held on to his own philosophy as to a reed, while in danger of drowning, of suffocating in his endless, unappeased appetites. He could do with his thoughts as he pleased. When he invited them, they came like faithful servants and the world was a useless, gray, formless, insignificant object. When he repulsed them, the great, infinite universe crashed in with bright, red light, loud laughter and a triumphal symphony that changed into fine prolonged, caressing notes.

From among his innumerable ephemeral loves, he singled out some that were to fill him so much as to last through life, although not alone, although intertwined with one another and transformed while passing and filtering through his feelings and taking on various ideal, supernatural shapes.

There was a long empty period in his adolescence, during which he had not loved, but made the acquaintance of his new inner, savage self, that surged out and demanded recognition. It was the sexual heat, the rut period, too tumultuous and torrential for delicate sentiments.

Only years later came the tall, beautiful embroiderer with her lines of a Venus of Milo and her perfect, long fingers. She was as graceful in her movements as the thin laces and ornaments which she handled. She was one of his private pupils; he saw her often, but never breathed a word to her about his sleepless nights and the burning of his inner fires due to her passage through his life. At some distance of time he could think of her as a sacred, respected temple only, from which a shrine was left in him for eternal adoration.

Then there was the black-eyed socialist, a daughter of some Slavic nation, whom he met at one of



the radical meetings to which he often went. Her voice was deep and agreeable, but serious and authoritative, her accent sharp, her manners resolute. She was bright, sarcastic and well read. William feared her and, the more steps she made toward him, the more he avoided her and at last he stepped out of her horizon loving her more than ever.

Later came the little restaurant cashier, the only unpainted face in the whole establishment, always reading a book of the best there was in literature, something no one would expect in her situation. She had a languorous glance and cheeks the redness of which contrasted vividly with the diaphanous pallor of the rest of her skin. He learned later to diagnose from the appearance of the face, but even then he guessed that she was not in blooming health and perhaps therefore he found her beauty interesting and was so strongly drawn to her.

Still later he befriended the brown-haired student from another college, somewhat older than himself, with whom he walked for many a long afternoon through winding, dark paths in parks and woods. She loved him and was frank about it. She gave him the most splendid hours in all his life. But at last she married somebody else—he never understood why. She hoped to continue her relations with him afterward as before. However, he hated such situations and had a distinct feeling that she had irreparably destroyed some thinly spun web that had belonged to both of them. He dismissed her from his youth, keeping nevertheless the flavor the aroma, the perfume of her love to himself and using it in later life—mingling it with beautiful things and events when they happened to him.

He had also cultivated the friendship of a medical student, a very womanly, very coquettish, very happy, joyous and selfish creature, whose greatest fun it was to scatter victims around her, to let them drag themselves at her feet or after her triumphs

chariot, and to play with them as a feline with her prey. William was foolish enough to speak to her and he was, of course, rebuked. But he drank enough, even if not from direct contact, of the beauty of her rosy and milky, enticing flesh to continue to love her from any distance.

And so on and so forth.

And each time a new, amorous event, real or imaginary, came into his life he said:

"Who are you, cruel, beloved thing, that I fear and call? What will you do to me? Lacerate my mind and body with your sweet, painful claws? Leave me wounded by the roadside? Or are you at last the real object of my dreams, if such there is? Shall I approach you or turn away? On which side is my salvation? Where my perdition? And are they not one and the same?"

His great handicap was that he had been too carefully brought up, too much tamed, too thoroughly carved after some unknown image.

To be sure, at times he had exactly the same aspirations and the same lack of scruples as other young men of his age. At rare intervals he did almost the same things and shared the same vices or what was regarded as such. But while others enjoyed their pleasures intensely and completely, William always felt guilty, was always bitten by remorse, constantly repressed himself, acted under a veil. And all through his life he could not refrain from that restraining feeling that did not allow him to develop entirely, to give out all he had in himself, to take in all he could and drink openly from the fountain of life. Something had thrown an incurable blight, a witch's curse on him, poured an eternal, bitter, venomous drop into his cup, into all he did.

How often he hated himself as he caught himself acting according to that petty, wicked, vicious and harmful, though generally accepted, morality, a result of his severe upbringing!

And he was a nuisance not only to himself but often to others as well. He was angry at the thought that he, too, was going to have his share of influence on the future generation, and indirectly on many generations, in shaping their ideas of what was good and what was bad for them. He, too, would hold back millions of individuals from their natural desires. He, too, would quench beautiful fires, maim and kill noble aspirations, destroy and ruin lives, perhaps even arrest undreamed-of civilizations. He, too, was an assassin.

And he was doing that not only by dropping a word here and there, by emitting his opinion, but also by giving direct advice.

In two instances he was conscious of having done immediate and actual harm through his tendency to curb passions and strong desires.

In one case he dissuaded a friend who loved his married cousin, and was loved by her, from fleeing with her. That faded the lives of both and until their death they remained separated and unhappy, he alone, and she, still worse—tied to a man whom she hated.

In another case it was one of his own relatives, who was engaged to a boy to whom she was indifferent. She had come from a great distance and was on her way toward a childhood friend whom she loved and who loved her. She told her story to William and the latter, in an outburst of irony against romantic unions, advised her to return to her betrothed. As he learned later, she carried her hidden pain and regret to her grave.

At last, when his own destiny was on the point of being sealed, his decision was taken under the same repressive moods and continued under the same need to be criminally conscientious and faithful. His association with the woman who became his wife proved to be the worst possible choice and was an endless source of misery to him.

William was unusually sensitive and for a long time it was difficult for him to get accustomed to the sights of disease, to suffering and contorted faces, running pus sores, bleeding flesh, paleness and weakness, inesthetic pictures of commonly concealed portions of the body, to direct, indifferent, coarse and matter-of-fact handling of the sick tissue and even to touching healthy parts of somebody else's anatomy.

He had always felt that his body was his own domain, and that anyone should touch it or that he should touch anybody else's skin outside of a handshake was an offensive invasion.

A cripple was a horror to him. Once, when he was put out of his room for non-payment of his rent and had no money to go to a hotel, he preferred to pass the whole night on a bench in the park rather than accept the invitation of a hunchback fellow-student to share his bed.

For these reasons it was not easy for him to become initiated into medical life. He fought his revulsion with all his might, but it took him over a year to overcome it. He fainted the first day he entered the dissecting room and did so a few times during the first year even after he had been living with the human corpses several hours nearly every day for weeks and months.

The coldness of the bodies, their hands apparently colder than the stone on which they were lying, the cadaveric odor and the preservatives; the blue semi-circular lines under the eyes, which were sunken

into the sockets; the bony edges; the opened abdomens with viscera of all colors ballooning out between bundles of muscle and in other cases between heavy masses of yellow and white fat shining in the sun near the window; separate organs like brains or hearts on smaller marble tables; the students with dried blood on their gowns or aprons, with their elbows leaning on a lifeless limb and their heads bent into the books—all that gripped him and he collapsed.

Another time he lost consciousness when a colleague took him to the gynecological clinic, where the professor's assistant was explaining something to a small class in the presence of the patient. The latter happened to be a young woman of a fine German blond type. She was lying on the table, partly undressed. William had never seen a live mature woman's nude body at such close range. The grain and texture of her skin, so different from his own and from that of other male bodies, her magnificent breasts, her unexpectedly broad hips and proportionally colossal thighs, the contrast between her spotless abdomen and the bronze shadow further down impressed him wonderfully. A song of adoration filled his mind. He was permeated with beauty and with a feeling of welfare.

But the nurse, quiet and grave, and without saying a word, pulled the patient's body and bent her knees, quickly and deftly placing her feet on stirrups. Suddenly a new picture presented itself to him. Something dark, a dash of red, some incomprehensible lines, an unpleasant smell, that was all he remembered later. His life seemed to depart from him, he was no more the master of his movements, the room and the people were all mixed together into one dancing mass. He tottered and fell.

Still another time—it was much later, after more than a year in college. He had been out-of-town on a brief week-end vacation and had come home

fresh from the hills, bringing with him the scent of the grass. His soul was full of outdoors and sunshine. He went to see a friend who was working at the hospital.

Everything in the ward was calm and white; not a sound to be heard. Two rows of beds. Inscriptions on stone plates on the walls with gold letters: "Perpetual bed in memory of———, 1881, dedicated by his wife and his loving sons."

He sat down and waited. He was thinking with a sarcastic smile about the childishness contained in the word "perpetual" and about the cheapness of such advertisements when——

What happened and how, he did not know. But when he awoke a few faces were looking into his eyes. His friend was there, but also a young girl, dressed in white, who was holding his hand and stroking his cheek. He felt at once a great friendship for her and gratitude for the privilege of looking into her open face.

This was how he made the acquaintance of Mary, who was destined to play such a great role in his future life. Mary Vanish was a medical student a few years older than William and more advanced in her studies.

For the students any love affair between colleagues or any event that gave rise to amusing gossip was a great boon, a treasure.

The sight of William Straight and Mary Vanish walking together, whispering to one another, sitting close at some of the courses, using the same umbrella, was a constant motive for jokes, allusions and meaningful glances that might have polluted the relations between any other two young persons. But Mary ignored all that and her encouraging influence enabled William to withstand the chatter until it ceased of itself.

As Mary was ahead of William in her studies and as she, unlike him, wasted no time on courses that

were not officially required for examinations and were unnecessary for the diploma, she graduated long before him and went to New York, where she had some relatives. Without the least hesitation, she immediately opened an office and began hunting for a practice.

William, however, tarried, did some service in one specialty, some more service in another, filled the gaps of his knowledge, brushed up here, strengthened there. He feared the diploma, the plunge into general practice. He feared to face the public and the individual patient all alone, away from his teachers. He trembled before the responsibility that was soon, all too soon, to fall upon him.

At first William was happy to have found at last his life partner. His heart could cease wandering and searching for love. He had a friend who united all the qualities he had dreamed of. She was more intelligent than he, she was physically an ideal.

There was contentment on both sides, but the reasons were not the same.

William thought of the great work they would be able to do together. With such a companion at his side he would surely perform miracles.

She counted how much they could earn together. With such a serious physician under her control and direction she expected to work up the nicest and most lucrative practice of any town.

Down deep in his heart there was dissatisfaction. The choice of one woman meant the exclusion of all the others. He felt as if, by opening one door, he had closed all other doors.

Discontent arose also from the fact that he hated concretizing and realizing. The tangibility of the ideal destroyed the ideal. Plain, ordinary love did not satisfy him. He was quickly disillusioned and said to himself: "Is that all?" But he smothered these interior warnings by arguing that the same conditions would prevail no matter on whom his choice might have fallen; they were inherent to any permanent association with one woman.

Meanwhile Mary cultivated William's friendship so assiduously that she left him no time to think. Before he understood it fully, he was so enmeshed,



so captured, that there remained but one road for him.

He began to see the incompatibility between them as soon as she started to plan their future. She assigned both to him and to herself duties that would enable them to make the most profit. She spoke in terms of money, of dollars and cents, of investments—things that had never entered his mind and that he had never wanted to be mentioned in connection with the practice of medicine. Now he was no longer certain he was right. Perhaps of the two she was simply the franker, the more honest. Perhaps he had been lying to himself. He certainly must be wrong, he thought. Some concessions would have to be made to life. But to his incurable naiveté Mary's words sounded offensive.

His consolation was that he would eventually succeed in changing her point of view sufficiently to make it acceptable to him. But he soon saw that she was the stronger of the two.

She spoke and acted clearly and efficiently. With her there was no room for dubiousness. Medicine was a source of income. She was not troubled by scruples of any kind. She was here to live well and to enjoy all that was possible—never mind the methods.

Of course, she noted William's helplessness and softness of character, as she called it, but she too was certain that in her hands he would listen to reason, submit and change, becoming practical, as she put it. Her hope, however, proved to be futile.

But this opposition between William and Mary should not make us believe that they did not love each other. In the first two years they had many happy days, although their happiness was mingled with interfering thoughts and was never entirely free from discord.

Now that William had emancipated himself completely from his mother, he gave himself totally to Mary. They were together several hours daily and their intimacy grew from day to day. Their love-making continued under the very eyes of their friends and in public—on the streets, in concert halls, while visiting people, in restaurants. A stronger clasp when walking arm-in-arm, a firmer locking of hands and fingers, a warm, intent, eloquent glance from eye to eye was enough to fan and stir the flame of their internal ardor.

William did not realize at once that, in the midst of his life of love and studies in common, his partner was exerting a powerful, incessant pressure upon him. Slowly, unnoticeably in the initial months, Mary started her systematic, re-educational, mothering influence. Later it became more direct, more aggressive, more visible in small as well as large things.

He had a habit of making sweeping gestures while talking and of playing with his fingers. As long as they were not intimate, she refrained from criticizing him. She dared not tell him how this habit displeased her. Therefore she only looked steadily at his hands, following them so fixedly that he could not stand it and withdrew his arms under the table, discontinuing his movements. This was so often repeated that he finally lost the habit.

Such tactics not only had the effect of changing him, but also and at the same time of asserting Mary's power over him and of inculcating in him the conviction that he must depend on her.

After a while he dressed less neglectfully, more decently, "like everybody", as she said. His hours were more regular, he saw less of the people she disliked or who were inconvenient for her plans.

So far she succeeded, but as soon as she wanted to go deeper and tried to shape his real character she felt a resistance which she could not overcome. He did not seem to allow her to attack his beliefs and hopes. He clung to his social sentiments, to

his personal and general ideals. Finally he revolted at the slightest mention of the possibility of his giving up his musical aspirations. There she felt that she had touched on something hallowed and she postponed that part of her propaganda for a later date.

Although William himself did not resemble most of the friends whom he frequently met, he adored their society and one of the most painful things for him was to see them go one by one. Who can tell how much rancor against Mary this fact alone poured into his heart? But she was implacable. She either occasioned impossible situations, an unpleasant atmosphere, so that the undesirables had to depart, or she forced him to give them up, to sacrifice them by neglecting them. Naturally, when she put the question so that he had to choose between her and them, he had to submit.

These people, she explained, were good-for-nothings, failures, obstacles. Their failure was contagious and dangerous in the extreme.

It was then that he felt what the young Bohemian artists with whom he associated meant to him, how much he missed them, how he would have liked, but did not dare, to imitate them. Whether they were successful or not in the end, for William they were really heroes who were fighting an incessant and difficult battle against huge society with its prejudices, its established, tyrannical rules of the game, its reigning authorities and masters and so-called experts in the fields of art and science, its terrible watchdogs on all sides, at all doors.

There was the young sculptor who had so many times started to model his new "great work", as he called it, and each time had had to discontinue it in order to earn enough for a bare living to last him for a short time. He was employed as a "pirate" at the entrance of the "Pirate's Den", where he stood dressed in a soiled red cloak, his head covered with a helmet and his hand holding a rusty tin halberd,

a new Don Quixote admired and envied by the street urchins. He had had that job one week when he last came to see William on a rainy afternoon and, instead of meeting him, found Mary. She spoke to him sharply, offending him, hurting him, until he took his hat and went.

She also got rid of the painter who, every night, covered large canvasses with incomprehensible lines and geometrical figures in a cheap studio, in an old house that was to come down any day, while in the day time he was a clerk in an accounting house.

She hated the young poets and authors in search of publishers. They were too noisy, often drunk and mostly ignorant, too lazy to acquire any knowledge. She pointed out their mistakes to William.

"Here," she said, "look at the article of this one. It has been printed in your radical paper that has no money to pay, but elsewhere they would not accept it. He does not make the slightest effort to learn anything. He writes 'an identical strata', he quotes the Marseillaise ridiculously: '*Allons, les enfants, le jour de la gloire est arrivé.*' And this other one speaks in his story about Dante as a contemporary of Virgil. And your playwright who thinks that in his drama, with the insane he can put any words into the mouth of a crazy man and make him perform any gestures he pleases, not being aware that the various forms of insanity have their laws.... What do they care about exactitude? They are fakers. And they remain so even when they have achieved glory. Then even more. They fear nobody. They command their fees. The editors and publishers are at their feet.... And if you judge them from your own point of view, if you demand conscientiousness, honesty, consistency, respect for principles, you will soon be disappointed. They are the least reliable individuals on earth. For money they will write what they are ordered to, they will betray any idea, any movement. Their

eternal excuse is, of course, the fact that it is their profession. But they are mere prostitutes. . . .”

William did not like to object, because he was agreeably impressed to hear her speak of principles and to demand honesty. He thought she was sincere and that his influence had already begun to have an effect, not understanding that she used an argument with which she was sure to strike his weakest point. He only answered:

“There are exceptions. There have been artists and literary men who were heroes and made sacrifices. . . .”

“Of course, there are. But they are rare and far apart and you will probably not meet them.”

He wanted to show her the good sides of his friends, but preferred to remain silent.

At the same time he was ashamed to tell her that deep down in his heart it was precisely for their ignorance and childishness that he loved them all.

There was the never-vanquished radical, always engaged in active agitation. Arrested, released, beaten up, bespattered, re-arrested, libelled, he continued imperturbably to speak at the street corners. He did not doubt that his activity would help to change the order of things. William had accompanied him often, and secretly envied him for his freedom, which he preserved even in jail, for his audacity to do just what he wanted, to say just what he pleased, for his contempt of everything rotten, for his beautiful dream, for his physical martyrdom, for his distinctive life, so different from the common sameness.

But Mary considered him a compromising character, his contact perilous and did all she could to eliminate him.

One day, as they were all three out for a walk, two dogs belonging to other people were playing nearby. The puppy, although under nobody's orders, was occupied in picking up large and angular stones. As he carried them in his mouth, his gums

were bleeding and, running obliquely from one person to the other, he complained and whined. But no sooner had he deposited one stone than he opened his jaws as wide as he could and filled them with another big, hard rock that tore his flesh. The older dog looked at him indifferently and did not help him.

"You see," said Mary to the radical, "that is a good picture of your idealism. Useless, painful effort. The older one has become wise and he seems to mock, 'A year ago I did the same thing; next year you'll forget it too.' You are the puppy. But you are too old to improve. You are stubborn. When will you learn?"

"But Miss Vanish, how can you compare? . . . ."  
They never saw him again.

An evening in William's room in addition to his landlady's parlor was an interesting sight. Each of the Bohemians was occupied with himself and wit hhis pet idea.

The musician spoke about music only:

"I've just heard Brahm's First Symphony for the umptieth time and I hate it. It's the dullest thing on earth. It's a bore. It's like life—just one damn thing after another. It's only pretty part is the one that's borrowed from Beethoven's Ninth. They say he quoted Beethoven. He quoted him! And whom did he quote before? And after? And everywhere? And whom do the other composers quote? Oh, the thieves!"

"What can you expect from them?" said the anarchist. "They're all Bourgeois! It is bourgeois music! The music of the satiated people. Class music! Just as your medicine is class medicine, William. Is it not so, William?"

There was the sculptor who refused to model certain parts of the body.

"The navel is not an organ, it is but an unsightly spot. Am I right, William?" he would ask. "Why shall I reproduce it?"

He was accompanied by a young man nicknamed "the esthete", whose clothes were torn but whose demeanor was that of an aristocrat of old lineage. The esthete called himself a gentleman, but his only intellectual luggage was his disdain for the vile plebs. When he opened his mouth to speak, a few voices protested saying that the stench of his esthetics was unbearable.



But another took up the challenge.

"You are unjust to the humble, modest umbilicus. Silent, unobtrusive, except in porcine obesity, rarely ill or troublesome, it accompanies us from birth until death without demanding attention. It is a thermometer of our financial situation. Advancing with our prosperity, retreating when we're poorly fed, sometimes as far as to meet the spine. Its importance, its historical, nay, prehistorical importance is incalculable. It is the link that ties us to our farthest human ancestors and beyond them. It is as unassuming as the violet. Let's make an ode to it."

"Let's drink to it! Three cheers for the navel and the violet," all cried.

There was also the girl who painted lamp shades in a department store but had her own stores of theories and many great ambitions. She was in revolt against the anti-nude campaigns that broke out from time to time epidemically. She contended that no human body should ever be pictured with clothes. "Are we not all nude under our garments?" she argued. "Our coverings are our misfortune. They've made us lose the natural gift inborn in all animals to express ourselves with the body just as much as with the face."

"What has nudity to do with sex?" she continued. "Why should one suggest the other?" . . . . And how much beauty is wasted by hiding the body with clothes!"

"I don't know," said William. "If we're ugly when dressed, undressed we might be much uglier. If you knew the body as well as I do, you would not care to see much nakedness."

"But you know the abnormal body only."

"There are but few normal ones. . . . Moreover, I don't suppose that nudity would be very appropriate or comfortable in the subway during the rush hours."

"Down with the rush hours!" came from all sides. "And with all rush!" somebody added.

One young visitor used to write plays without the exact words for each part. It was his pet opinion that the playwright should but indicate the plot and the general acting, but that the actors should improvise. That would make the show interesting and it would change from day to day. But the theatres rejected his idea.

He would explain and act all the parts of his play before his audience that thronged the room sitting on the cot, on the table, on the floor, on the window sill and two on each chair. They were attentive, but their patience had a limit. When somebody was tired of him the subject was simply changed. Sometimes by introducing some old joke. Thus:

"Say, Freakie, I've just read your new book!"

"Well?"

"It's rottener than I expected. But now you know who bought the second copy."

The rooms were full of smoke. Everybody smoked except William. With him alcohol and tobacco were a childhood complex. His mother had impressed him so much with the horror of these things that he would never take a drop of wine or beer, or, in the pre-prohibition days, go near a saloon, as if it were an ill-famed place, or smoke a whiff. But he tried to explain his feeling about these things in a different way. "Smoking is an inesthetic and enslaving habit," he said, "drinking—even a trifle—benumbs the mind and makes you see what is not!" But his friends made fun of him and called him "baby". A newcomer, a young girl, just escaped from her parents' petty-bourgeois upbringing, poured beer into his pockets and put a lighted cigarette into his lapel. The entire audience applauded.

A giant with a perfectly square and wellcombed black beard came over and congratulated her. She

immediately took advantage of that to explain her objections to professionalism in literature:

"Let each one write what he or she knows. Let there be no literati. They are too facile, they take possession of the entire field...."

"My dear young lady," was the answer, "does not a little envy speak through you and will you not change your opinion when you cease to be a dilettante?"

They went to a corner of the room and continued their conversation.

She blushed and her emotion grew from minute to minute.

It was a splendid picture to see her short, slender body, vibrating so near this Assyrian king, with his impeccable Semitic features. Her hands behind her light gray coat, her stylishly pointed shoes crossing each other, her tiny porcelain nose in the midst of her dollish face, shining at the bottom of his whiskers—she was completely framed in and enveloped by him and his broad, radiating smile. It was difficult to drive away the thought of the small place she would occupy in his arms.

One visitor had the mania of constantly quoting from the Bible, which he knew by heart. Another was against all biblical citations. He would say: "How long will we be inspired by that book of our old savage ancestors? How long will we go on repeating like monkeys that it is divine and sublime?"

And there was a fierce adversary of love.

"To love is to hate," he said. "It means to take possession of somebody, to steal somebody's freedom. One loves for oneself. All love is selfish, none is altruistic."

And a late comer would hurry up the stairs, breathlessly:

"Say, Bill, here is something delightful I have come across today—you'll like it: *Homo homini lupus; mulier mulieri lupior; medicus medico lupissimus.*"

But the most interesting was Anchio.

He had another name, and even two, but William had never heard them. In artists' circles he was not called otherwise than Anchio. It seems that once, long ago, while reading the biographies of the great Renaissance masters he met a passage describing how one of them, looking at a picture, had made that famous exclamation:! "*Anch'io son' pittore!*"—"I, too, am a painter!" Ever since he repeated to himself and, among his more intimate friends: "*Anch'io, anch io!*" until that remained his name.

For years he tried to suppress his aspiration, but it was not possible. When he thought he had annihilated it, it suddenly appeared like a phantom.

It might be before a sunset, before a group of working men in blue overalls, before a canvass in an exhibition, or simply in his own bare room, when his imagination left him no peace and when his family happened to be away and he all alone. Then a small voice would call faintly, "*Anch'io!*" He would ignore it. But it would repeat louder, "*Anch'io!*" Then he would stamp noisily on the floor to drown the voice. However, instead of disappearing, it would grow still louder. He would answer, "No!" At last he would, in a rage, bite his fist or bang it on the table, admitting: "Yes, "*anch'io son!*" Or he would face his own resemblance in a small folding mirror, daring it to contradict him. He thundered, "*Anch'io, anch'io!*" Then he would sit down where he happened to be, or fall down on his cot, exhausted, adding in a whisper, "*Anch'io!*"

Every day he resolved to paint and draw. But there was always something in the way. He had done some worthwhile work, but his life was too adventurous to permit him to devote himself to art. Married young, he soon had a few mouths to feed with no other capital than his unhandy hands. He had been a street laborer, a miner, a worker in an iron factory, a farmhand, an itinerant photographer, a window cleaner, an insurance agent and what not. Finally he acquired a miniature candy store, or, rather, he was owned by it and was occupied day and night trying not only to make both ends meet, but also to make it repay its original cost, his debts contracted on account of it. His wife wanted sincerely to help him get on his feet and give him the means to become an artist. But she could not do it; there were too many pregnancies and childbirths.

Anchio was one of those individuals who want all or nothing. He was not satisfied with half measures. Just as some people cannot eat unless they have a plate, a knife, a fork, a table and a table cloth, so he could not draw here and there a sketch in unartistic surroundings or paint a little picture in his spare time. He waited for his spirit to move him. But the spirit was capricious and wanted a special environment. Anchio needed complete abandonment to his art. He was thirsty for long, slow walks with nothing to do but to dream and sketch. He was hungry for hours of idleness with no worry whatsoever. He was unable to take a pencil or brush in his hand before his mind was relaxed and free from rent bills, the thought of shoes for the children, of bad business and other cerebral garbage. And that was out of the question.

He never failed to carry his sketchbook in his pocket and, when he changed clothes, he never forgot to put it in the new coat. But only once in a great while did he draw something.

He was forty-five years old, but looked much

older. His face was wrinkled, his hair gray, his eyes haggard, his movements uncertain and nervous. He had a tic of the eyelids. He was lean and weak and coughed frequently. He did not paint nor had he accomplished anything else, having no skill whatever and being a failure at everything he undertook. So many people whispered that there was something the matter with him and shook their heads wisely, pointing to their foreheads, that his wife began to look at him askance and even his children permitted themselves to poke fun at his eternal hope of being a painter.

Sometimes they would use his brushes to paint a chair. That would have meant nothing for a real professional painter, but it signified the worst mockery for Anchio.

One of his few moments of happiness was when he had an evening with William Straight and the circle of other aspiring artists who believed in themselves. There no constraint was necessary. There was a tacit understanding that one listened to the other on condition that he, too, should have the right to speak about himself. To them he described the picture that he would paint, the revolution in painting he had in mind, the blunders of the great and successful men—"so-called", he added. He had his own definition of art in general and of painting in particular. He had his theory of color and light and form. Sometimes he would illustrate his words with some admirable little sketch. He was hot and his cheeks gained some redness as he spoke:

"Art must have a social meaning. Does it not spring from society? Is it not the concentrated will to expression that has its roots in the most distant human beginnings? Men had to express their souls to the outer world, to their tribe, to the woods, to the sun, to the stars, to the desert, long before they could talk. We see the most primitive people, the cave-dwellers. . . . That reminds me! The wise critics who are so learned that they know nothing,

learned morons, speak about primitive art. What does it mean? All art is primitive or it is no art. As soon as an artist becomes sophisticated, he is a skilful artisan or whatever you wish, but not an artist. The works of the Cro-Magnon artist, with no means at his disposal, are essentially the same as those of Phidias and the old German masters. The medium, the technique is indifferent. In fact, the more brilliant the technique, the greater the handicap. . . . The artist works for himself, insofar as it gives him fun, as it makes him happy. But he is a show-off. He must be. To express yourself presupposes somebody or, in lack of that, even something, before whom or which you do it. Expression is transitive. . . .

"Still. . . . Can we disdain the public? No, because we need it. We want to say to it, Here, see what I did. . . . We cannot afford to disregard the people around us. Otherwise, why exhibit? . . . We can't help being exhibitionists."

"Only lunatics and children produce for themselves," interrupted William.

"Of course," continued Anchio, "but that should never mean that your bread and butter must depend on the spectator. You want his approval, if possible. But his attention you *must* have or you perish. Artists should never be the slaves of art buyers, should cater to nobody. Art should not earn the artist's living, should not be his subsistence. It should be above that! Society should provide for it. . . . But that is an old story. . . . The artist does not express himself only, but his people as well, his time, its dreams, the joys and pains of the past as it lives in the present, the hopes for the future. . . ."

And then he would speak about blind imitators of nature and of other artists or craftsmen.

"What for?" he cried loudly, "we are not needed to imitate. Nature itself does the things much better. If we want to see a horse, a sunrise, flowers,

let us go out and admire them! The artist's work should be a piece of nature itself!

"But it is easy to scoff at imitators. Difficult not to imitate. Are we not all using the same language, the same *clichés*, the same treasure of thoughts that we knead into various shapes? Of course, we imitate! Yes, the most original do! Even those whom nobody understands! The newest, craziest stuff cannot get away from the world in which it is created. . . . Created? Created? What nonsense! How grandiloquently we speak and how little we are. . . . And why *not* use nature? Anyway, my tree on the canvas is not a tree, but an impression out of my brain! . . . Understood, understood! Why must painting be understood? Why do we not demand that of music? Why can we not paint moods only if we so desire? . . . All we must do is to enjoy art or to suffer through it, be moved by it. Emotion, emotivity, there must be! . . . And truth. . . . Not all truth is art, but all true art must be true, must contain truth, true fact, true feeling, true impression, true light, true color.

". . . If the color arrangement, the spots of light evoke something in you, why should I care whether you think that they represent a cow or the Chimborazo? . . . Of course, there are the swindlers who take advantage of turbid art periods to hide their incapacity under the tenebrous formulae of the most modern art. Just as in your own profession, William. They say to the public: 'You want bad drawing, you are tired of the good, honest, conscientious work? Here it is, galore! You want a meaningless *griffonnage*? Why not? Don't you pay for it?' We all do it, like sheep and we call it an *ism*, a style. . . . The rules? What is good, what is honest, what is true art? Nobody knows. It cannot be expressed in words. Theories do not help. Our problems can never be solved. The critics and scientists of art, the estheticians only jumble it up the more. . . .



“. . . However, in the midst of all that, we can recognize art where it is. We use nature as a basis for self-expression. . . . Or is it an excuse for our servility? Is it a necessity? Who knows. . . . Still, we must distinguish between that and so-called art, which does nothing but imitate. . . .

“Oh, I contradict myself? Oh, yes, I do. Who would not, speaking about art, where everything is true and false at the same time?

“Originality. . . . We all talk about originality. So much so that it is no longer original to be original. . . . Yes, don't laugh, originality has become a banality. What is originality? It means to be oneself. But how much of ourselves do we really possess? Perhaps it would be better to say, It simply means not to work like other artists, not to live like other men. Oh, just a little different. . . . It is all a matter of quantity. Less, a little less imitation, a little more originality, that is all we can demand. If we want a too great departure, an excess of originality, we land in the grotesque. What I don't understand is why the newer schools call themselves original and why they call their predecessors copyists. Until a few years ago there were no futurists, cubists, dadaists, pointillists, expressionists. Now—presto!—they all are, more or less. Is it not imitation?

“What did you say? Oh, to what school I would belong if I painted? Excuse me, but you are a greater idiot than I thought. About as much as any critic. What a silly question! Why shall any artist bother to what school he belongs? Schools are an invention anyway. Does the wood thrush care into what class or family, or whatever you call it, you put him? Does he not sing away all he can without knowing it?

“. . . There you are right, my boy. Many artists work methodically and do not wait for a chance inspiration. They do, of course, produce like other producers, but the real artists are permanently in-

spired. If they are not, if they go too far with their factory-efficiency, they cease to be artists, they are mere machines. That is one reason why there are but few real masterpieces."

As for himself, he intended to. . . . But he was no troglodyte. . . . He wanted . . . and dead tired, almost expiring, he would finish in a hardly audible hoarseness:

"You'll see, *anch'io!*"

No, Anchio had not given up hope. He was certain that at some unexpected turn of the road a new light would spring up from no one knew where and burst upon him. He was sure that some change in his situation would give him the means of being an artist. "It is never too late," he used to repeat. Secretly he promised himself to work under his existing miserable circumstances. And he said, "This Sunday." But on Sunday the youngest child had the measles. On the coming Sunday there was another trouble. When he had no excuse whatever, he was unable to paint. Art was not work. One could not exercise it at command. One had to be tuned for it like a musical instrument. All one's life, all one's days and nights one must be in a receptive mood. One could never tell when the wind of art might strike your chords. Around him there was the noise of the children, near him the store and the customers, things that pulled him in an entirely different direction. His room was small and dark and right close to the kitchen and everything was pervaded with squalid poverty and dirt. He could not. . . .

Sometimes his friends advised him to look for a job as a draftsman and earn a living by his art. This he rejected with all his energy.

"I—prostitute my art? I prefer my store. What is the difference between one commercial business and another? . . . My time will come!"

And he explained his reasons.

Some of those who, like himself, had felt the call

of art and tried to reach it through bypaths, had degenerated into well salaried but unhappy illustrators who did what they were ordered, with never the time or the mood to do just what they had set out to do, what they had burned to do. Others were contented with that destiny. So much the worse for them. Still others were occupied in big shops doing ladies' style work, drawing thousands of doll-like figures with dresses and blouses. Or they were in the advertisement business, or in some other commercial work. But that would not have mattered if real art had been required in those trades. Why not put art into everything? . . . The most enviable were perhaps those who had embraced the sign painter's trade. They had ceased to pretend that they were artists. Poverty was terrible. It was a shame. Everybody's shame! It was a crime! Everybody's crime. Especially for artists. Against artists. They thought they could beat it by turning around it. Their crooked paths, however, did not lead them into the broad road, but away from it into the morass of artless satisfaction. If you are an artist, never submit to the complacency of ordinary bourgeois life. Rather die! Croak! . . . Yes, they all hoped to come back—they never did. Either they had made too much money, or they had covered their original fire with ashes. Either way art was obliterated forever. "I, in my hopelessness, have greater chances than they. I can at least dream of it. They cannot."

One day Anchio came to Williams' house when the latter was absent, and Mary, who watched for such occasions, told him that his friend did not care to see him any longer and that he thought him crazy. The poor man believed it. He only said: "He, too?"

That was the hardest blow he had yet received.

A few weeks later, when William went to visit him, he found Anchio in the dark backroom of his

store, dying. His lungs had been in bad shape, but he did not listen to William's warnings and advice; he neglected himself. And now an unexpected complication arose.

William stayed. As he closed Anchio's eyes forever, he heard a faint sound: "Yes, *anch'io*." . . .

William was heartbroken.

Somehow poor Anchio had been for him a symbol, a model, which helped him to bear his cross and to hope that some day he would go back to his own art, for which he was sure he had been born. Now he felt discouraged. Did he not see all around people who carried corpses in their bodies, in their minds? Did he not see entire cemeteries of broken hopes, submerged aspirations, smothered ambitions, evaporated desires, suppressed inclinations? Ghosts, apparently alive, but for all practical purposes dead and buried?

How would it be with himself? Would he be able to economize sufficient time from his future practice—time and energy and leisure—to go deeper into that which was so dear to him? He wondered.

Why, oh why, had he not followed his inner calling? Why had he not run away from school, from self-prescribed duties? Why did he not do it now, right now? What kept him from doing it? Succeed or croak, as Anchio used to say!

But he did not.

Parallel to William's surrender to Mary's wishes as far as it went, another change came gradually over him. It was slight at first, but it grew little by little with Mary's upbringing attempts. It was a cloud that saddened him and enveloped their relations. From a transparent whitish and light, almost invisible cloudlet it condensed sufficiently to weigh like a gray mass over them and threatened to become darker and heavier.

Within a year he caught himself, once, as she failed to keep an appointment, thinking that she had met with a fatal accident. He was surprised to have remained indifferent. In the third year he had become used to her. To part from her would have meant the same thing as to sever one of his arms or legs. But that was not love. It was habit. He did not reason, but he was organically persuaded that he could not help it, that he was fatally and forever attached to her and that he had to live with a woman he did not love.

Since her arrival in New York, Mary had come a few times to see him. William's feelings toward her did not improve. But when his studies were at last officially concluded, he too went to New York.

As Mary saw that he had yielded but little, she felt that she could not practice together with him and she helped him to open a separate office.

Automatically, dutifully, as if nothing else could be done, they married.

One evening a middle-aged woman, in a central western town, read a short letter:

"Mother, dear ma, today I received my sheepskin. At last! . . . I hope you'll rejoice. Your dream has come true. As for myself, I don't know. I feel mushy. I'm afraid my troubles begin now. We'll see. Goodbye, I am leaving for New York today, but I shall come to see you from time to time. Take care of yourself."

So this was her dream!

That was all.

Was that all?

There was no holiday color in the air, no joy, no solemnity. An unimportant event. He bought a new suit of clothes—he got his diploma—the same thing. It was a gray week day, a plain working day like every day. How could it be? Had her son, her Willie, her little boy, her baby, really graduated? Was he truly a doctor now? A doctor as she had always pictured him? And nothing happened? Nobody said anything about it?

He himself. . . . Oh, for shame? He had not come to kiss her, to speak about the past, to plan his future with her, to let her put her arms around his neck. Just a line, that's all!

She bent down her head and looked into the darkest corner of the room.

When her husband entered, she did not hear him until he said:

"Why are you crying, dear?"

William's beginnings were not easy. Not being a pusher, his practice was not brilliant.

But that gave him no worry.

What puzzled him and pained him most were the moral disillusionments that he met, events which acquainted him with the patients' world, with his colleagues' characters and with the milieu in which he had to live henceforward.

In themselves unimportant and originally unconnected, these incidents, heaped up in his mind, together with his peculiar cerebral make-up, made him see many things in a new light and were his earliest steps toward drawing conclusions that decided his future.

Here are a few of these incidents, taken at random from his first year of medical practice.

William Straight opened an office and patients began to find their way to it.

But he was disappointed to learn his limitations from actual experience! He thought he knew more than he actually did and that he could be more useful. Left to himself he felt like the baby who is making his first steps unaided. A deep abyss was in front of him, nothing and nobody behind to help and protect him. Life was a terrific ocean and its throbbing waves were engulfing him.

What should he do in the face of the complicated problems which people brought to him? He was anxious to get patients, but he feared them and secretly desired that they might never come or that they might enter his neighbor's office by mistake. He reasoned: Had he not been a good, conscientious student? Of course, he had. But books and the words of teachers and so-called practical made-to-order experience in the hospitals—and cases arranged for ready teaching and from which disturbing truths and details were removed—were one thing, while life was another. In spite of all his learning, he was helpless, inexperienced, ignorant. Very often he had to let his patients teach him what he needed to know—the very people who were coming to him to seek help and advice. Many a mother knew more about measles than he and some supplied in their very questions enough information about the artificial feeding of an infant to enable him to give an intelligent answer. Many a layman was more qualified to speak about sexual troubles than he. He blundered and bungled many times, but he saw his superiors, the great and old physicians, do the same thing. And he felt the



great burden of his responsibility. He often asked himself: Was it worth while?

But slowly and gradually life taught him its lessons and made him more and more callous at the same time. He found excuses and exonerating circumstances and, although as a whole he remained sentimental, he let his cruel logic lead him as much as possible. He consoled himself with comparisons. How much did a lawyer know in his first year of practice? Were all tailors able to do correct repairing? And the smiths? And the watchmakers? How many really knew their trade or profession? And how about the other beginners in medicine? Did they take their practice as tragically as he?

---

William was in need of instruments. In his poverty he was dreaming of the time when he would be perfectly equipped. But meanwhile one of his most practical friends, an auctioneer, took him to a pawnshop where, for a few dollars, he bought some scissors, knives and syringes. He had a stethoscope from his student days and one evening he carried in a discarded examination table from his wife's office, as he was ashamed to do it in the daytime. But as soon as he earned some money, he studied the catalogues of the instrument dealers. They were tempting by their pictures, but their so-called "inducements" were repulsive to him.

"This will impress them." Impress whom? The patients, of course. "The appearance of your office proves to your patients that you are progressive and up-to-date." "Our popular cabinet is suggestive."

Agents of manufacturers, canvassers, came. In other offices they were usually told that the doctor was away or that he had no time; therefore they were glad to be received by Doctor Straight. They took their time, spread their wares, lectured at length and told him a mass of exaggerations a

lies. William listened quietly and patiently. But when he had bowed them out politely and remained alone, he was chagrined.

---

One of his first experiences was an interview with a pregnant young woman who had done something to induce an abortion. She wanted him to complete her attempt. He refused. She implored, she cried. It was in vain. Finally she asked merely to be examined, probably believing that that might have the desired effect. But she was bleeding and he declined again.

She left. But her last glance of despair, her unhappy face stirred him deeply and he could not forget them for years. He felt as if he had deliberately gone away from a drowning person, who had stretched out a hand—out of the waves. Those eyes, those accusing eyes!

---

The next day he saw an old maid who was suffering from some throat trouble. He was kind to her and gave her his best smile, as usual. But in her sex-hunger she misunderstood his behavior and a week later he learned from one of his friends that she was sure that Doctor Straight had made love to her. The poor thing!

However, that would have mattered little, if she had not persisted in her belief and annoyed him with her attentions for a long time afterwards. She came under all sorts of pretexts and so often, that he guessed what she intended to say before she opened her mouth. He knew when she was going to exclaim with a falsetto voice: "Oh, how young you look today! You are getting younger every day!" He read on her lips when her smile was artificial, when she whistled without the least desire of doing so, when her occasional cough meant something else. He saw that the drumming with the fingers on the table was nothing but a lie and that the scratching of the head and the covering of the eyes with

her hand were false and made for the purpose of concealing what she evidently wished to announce but never dared to utter.

She invented new symptoms each time. But as there was no response, she ceased her visits.

---

William discovered that in point of payment the worst patients were the rich and the well-to-do. They always delayed the settlement of their bills and tried to hold on to the money as long as possible. He soon found out that that conduct regularly belonged to the general character and make-up of all those who had the money-making spirit.

Some patients tried to deceive him as to their occupations and ability to pay in order to make him charge smaller fees for his services. When asked about their work, they would often say "salesman", which, as he learned, meant store-owner or even the owner of several large stores; or "shop manager", which was equivalent to manufacturer.

Therefore, when one of them, a fat, middle-aged man, once told him "Woolens", William insisted in asking exactly what he was doing. The answer was: "Nothing much, just in the store." To this the doctor immediately replied: "You have a wholesale store and you are not doing anything, but your clerks are doing the work," which was confirmed. From that time on he was better able to diagnose the patient's financial condition than his physical trouble.

Sometimes the people with means, who were always ready to steal his advice, would appeal to his sentiments. One wealthy lady, whose child William was treating, never paid. He sent her statements, but no answer came. For a long time he did not have the courage to refuse his services. But one day he became bold and asked politely for a settlement. She answered unblushingly:

"Why do you think of money, doctor? The important thing is to save my child."

The first time he went to a meeting of the local medical society a great teacher read a paper on "Some Surgical Misdemeanors", in which he "commented briefly on some of the evils of present-day abdominal surgery", he spoke about "ill considered and unnecessary operations", about "surgery by the incompetent", that is he described some revolting surgical crimes perpetrated by the profession. William took down one of the remarks:

"The inferior work is not all done in the small hospital in the smaller communities. Some of the larger hospitals in our large cities seem to be only boarding houses for the sick. Any person with an M. D. degree is at liberty to do any operation that he may see fit to undertake. In the smaller communities there is too frequently an effort made to secure the support of the local physicians by placing them all on the staff of the hospital, irrespective of ability or training. I know of one town in which every physician was on the staff of the hospital in a rotating service. Each man was the surgeon for six weeks once in two years, and also in charge of the medical service for another six weeks once in two years. The result could not help being an inferior output."

These words produced a strong impression on William. He was very excited. He was convinced that the speaker was wrong and that he insulted the medical profession. He wanted to interrupt him and call him a liar or throw something at him, but he did not dare. He looked around. His neighbors

were listening calmly. A few were overcome by the heat and lack of fresh air and nodded. Others were rubbing their eyes and fighting against sleep or pulling continuously at their narrow, uncomfortable, stiff collars or arranging their neckties. The very busts and framed pictures of old medical masters had an expression of respectful attention. The lecturer read so monotonously and seemed so little concerned with the tremendous accusation that he was bringing against an entire profession, that William asked himself: "Is that old man still awake? Has he not fallen asleep over his own paper? Is he not speaking from his dream?"

But then, as no one stirred, as no one showed the least emotion or animation, William understood that that must be the behavior of an audience of well bred physicians and he decided to conform to the rest, to keep his wrath for later and meanwhile settle down and calm himself. "Are we not used to witnessing much suffering? Can we not be martyrs for a short time and stand some libeling?" he argued with himself. But he foresaw that an uproar would surely break out at the end of the lecture. Undoubtedly the insolent and insulting speaker would be beaten up and removed from the hall. He imagined with a certain secret pleasure how that white shirt, that immaculate tie and that perfectly fitting tuxedo will look within an hour or so.

He could not follow any longer, occupied as he was with the inner struggle to keep his patience. It was difficult to remain motionless in his seat and put on an air of superior indifference on his face. But he caught the last two sentences: "It is far from my intention to give the impression that my criticisms apply to the profession as a whole. There is no finer class of men, or men more conscientious, devoted and skilful, than the medical profession of America." These words were not unknown to him. He had seen them often in the

medical magazines as well as in the lay press. They had become meaningless through repetition and he hated them as he hated pudding and all hackneyed phraseology.

The audience applauded. Yes, they applauded. One man got up and William watched him with anxiety. But he just told about a case in his clinic. Then—nothing! The chairman said something very rapidly and concluded with: "It has been moved and seconded. . . ." And although nobody made the least sign of approval or disapproval, he added: "The ayes have it, so ordered!" And finally: "Motion to adjourn. The meeting is adjourned."

William was dumbfounded. He was thinking hard and trying to explain the attitude of the audience, but he failed and gave up his attempt, concluding at last that the profession knew what it was doing, that there must be secrets and concealed reasons for their action or lack of action which he, the inexperienced graduate, was unable to see. He himself was so enthusiastic about surgery that he harbored the hope of specializing in it. And he found an excuse for surgery: If those accusations were true, they really had nothing to do with the science and practice of surgery as such. Perhaps some of the surgeons were insufficiently educated or were dishonest and lacked conscientiousness. But an inner deep voice asked: "What is surgery? Is it not the practice of surgeons, of men — and if men. . . ."

Just then somebody touched his shoulder. It was the attendant. The hall was dark and empty.

The doctors were all assembled in another room, where they were standing and smoking and talking all together joyously and partaking of the collation prepared on a large table in the center.

From the flattering words of his patients William gathered the impression that he had begun to be famous. Some of his patients spoke of him in high terms and regarded him as a rising celebrity. There-

fore he thought that at least some of the physicians here would recognize him and speak to him. But nobody knew him, and so he went from group to group unnoticed and listened to the conversations.

One gray-haired man said:

"We do so little for our patients. We *can* do so little."

Further a well known bacteriologist, who was at the head of the antirabic plant of the local health department, thundered:

"Great man! Yes, great man! It is easy to become renowned in the profession. So-and-so is great because he has discovered some little detail in a particle of a lobule of an insignificant gland. Another is a specialist in one organ, although he is dumb in everything else and deaf in his own specialty, which he regards as a monopoly, and shoos off anybody else who wants to investigate the same region, like a chicken who permits no other chicken to scratch on her heap."

He pointed to somebody at the other end of the room and then continued:

"Our profession? Wonderful! But give me engineering, where you have to do a definite work and it must be correct and exact!"

"Yes," interrupted a younger man, "but no one can do it without men and they must be under medical care. Besides, why compare the engineer's dead stuff with our human, living, uncertain material, which is subject to so many influences, which has its internal and external environment? . . ."

Still further a bearded man was evidently finishing a long talk and whistled asthmatically while speaking:

"Yes, you are praising the body and admiring mother nature! (He laughed aloud). Some taste! Reproduction inextricably wedded to elimination! Eros and Augeas!"

He threw a cynical smile and went out.

Some physicians spoke about their cars and others told jokes.

In one corner a group was talking about surgical "surprises". One woman physician said with a piping voice:

"Well, this is what makes medicine so interesting. If not for these errors, it would be too dull."

"Medicine—dull?" laughed her very fashionably dressed neighbor. And after a silence the latter added ironically:

"And besides, when these things occur in our own families, we'd prefer the dullness."

Nearby the chief of a large clinic, one of the brightest lights of the city, was standing quietly smoking a big, indecent cigar and spitting out bits of tobacco leaves. The dark object was sticking out obliquely from one corner of his mouth and appeared to William, who was a tobacco abstainer, like an inner organ that had happened to be projected, a second tongue as it were, or like a solid brown excretion. He spoke slowly:

"Well, I'm used to such things, but I tell ye (he affected a slight slangy admixture even in his scientific language), whenever I'm makin' a fool o' myself, I feel mighty bad. Oh, that case I toldje about where I took out the tumor on one side and left the ectopic on the other, kept me awake the whole night after the autopsy." He smothered a yawn.

One woman just said:

"Really?"



A naive patient wanted to know William's opinion about Miss Anthony's treatment. He had never heard about her, so he took her address and went to see her.

She was an absolutely illiterate old Negress who occupied a whole house which she had transformed into an institution for the treatment of what she and her patients called "rheumatism." No matter what the ailment and complications were, all comers were undressed, put to bed in a hermetically sealed room, wrapped in many blankets and quilts, covered with several layers of large and heavy pillows and steamed profusely with the vapor from a big kettle full of boiling water standing on a red-hot plain kitchen stove, heated with coal. They all received a sort of bad-tasting hot drink before, during and after their ordeal. She constantly had eight or ten people in each room, the women downstairs, the men upstairs. One black servant girl helped her. The clients paid two dollars for each treatment, which lasted as long as they could stand it, but at least two hours. She never said a word to them; she never answered their questions. She treated them.

There was no sign outside. Her name was not in the telephone directory; she printed no advertisements. Her place was popular and no one doubted her healing powers, although many knew about the death of several of her patients with heart trouble and other conditions. She was the witch with supernatural qualities. For many people the more un-

usual, the more unlearned the healers were and the queerer their methods, the better. Nobody had ever denounced her to the authorities and probably nobody ever would, as there was a tacit agreement between her public and herself that no one should meddle, no matter how bad the results. And perhaps she was within the law. She was rich. For some time after that visit William thought it might be a good thing to burn his diploma. One might be more successful without it.

A woman brought him some "Hartz Mountain Herb Tea" bought from a "drugless and naturopathic" concern. It promised to cure "catarrh"—without explaining what that signified—"malaria, headache, costiveness, female troubles"—again without any specification, so that all the poor suffering women with any disease might be caught in the net—"dizziness, indigestion, rheumatism, blood and skin diseases"—the vaguer the terms, the better—"liver and kidney troubles and gas in the stomach." It was "a great blood purifier," whatever that meant. The range of its curing virtues was well nigh universal.

A chiropractor advertised in a radical daily, saying: "Our methods are *drugless*, and therefore *safe*." Right above this announcement the paper itself declared: "The Daily Dull could double its advertising revenue and become financially independent in six months' time if more Dull readers would co-operate with our advertising department. How? Simply by giving preference to Dull advertisers. Will you do it from now on? *For the sake of socialism* we hope you will."

William had thought that socialism was the hope of the workers, that it was fighting for their liberation and that it was their friend. Was it possible that it was nothing more than a commercial scheme, that it had made partnership with those who deceived and exploited labor and that it endorsed the charlatans and ignoramuses? Or perhaps it had

investigated chiropractic and found it to be the proper method and the right solution for the workers' ailments? William wrote to both the editor and the manager of the Daily Dull for an appointment.

One of his patients asked him whether Christian Science might not help in a case of furunculosis and William bought all the Christian Science literature he could get.

Other patients attracted his attention to all sorts of divine healers. One of the latter said in his circulars: "A revelation from God! Death to rheumatism, neuralgia, sore feet, kidney troubles, cramps, indigestion, lost manhood, female weakness and kindred chronic ailments. Not a patent medicine! This liniment is made from a divine revelation given to this old veteran of the Cross by the God of his life's service. It has healed thousands. It will help you. Get a bottle and try it today! Dr. Jeltz and Sons' Liniment, Price one dollar per bottle, six dollars a dozen. Liberal terms to agents, Rev. Dr. C. E. Jeltz, retired A. M. E. Minister, age 77 years. God gave him the remedy for making this medicine. His son, Rev. N. H. Jeltz, the noted evangelist, general manager."

Later William received literature from the "Natural Health School". Its bulletin contained the following passages:

"Search the literature of the ages. Has a cohering interpretation of Numbers ever before appeared? In the Natural Health School Journal is being given weekly a harmonious and consistent interpretation of Numbers of an evident majesty and sublimity impossible of human devisement. And the perfect agreement of this interpretation with established Scriptural truths accepted in common by all Christendom is genuine evidence of the Divine Source of the marvelous Number Structure written herein. This in itself is a definite and valid testimonial to the certainty of the mission appointed to

us. We have not chosen it. We have been chosen for it. And that not of ourselves. The distinct evidence of God's leading and appointment is in it all. What are we, that we should say to God,—'Why have you chosen such poor instruments?' As he wills, so he can give the enabling. Let the evidence appearing in the Journal speak for the soundness and practical worth of the Divine healing truths set forth in it, and witness to the place we must fill or be rebels against the good will of God.

"There are known to be in the United States, several bodies of people, and some individual persons definitely opposed to the development and progress of the Natural Health School. We are free to say to all these opposing intelligences individually and collectively—whether exerting themselves against the N. H. S. and its elements singly or in organic body—that they are doing so against God and the work which he has determined to be done at this time on the earth, and in opposing his work represented in the N. H. S. and its constituency, they will certainly fail and if they persist, God will surely bring them to disaster. For the last five months, a definite attempt was continued to destroy the life of our leader by occult supremacy. But to him God gave perfect victory. And he is having other glorious experiences in casting out devils and in freeing afflicted persons from the afflictions imposed upon them by occult enemies and evil spirits. Some were made deathly sick and some fainted in the School Room. Night after night this occurred until the source was recognized and the spiritualistic and occult influences destroyed by God in answer to the prayer of those in charge of the N. H. S. For over two months, finances which had been regular, suddenly dropped from several hundred dollars per month, to less than \$25, until the cause was located in spiritualistic and occult opposing effort, and then in answer to prayer,

God destroyed the opposing power and at once restored the normal income of the sustaining elements of the N. H. S."

At the end was announced "The Pus and Pain Chart," "one of the biggest things in the world in the accomplishment of practical healing results, price only ten dollars. Visit also our food plant. The greatest study of mankind is God."

William considered this as the most humorous piece of literature he had ever seen, and, whenever he wanted his friends to laugh, he would read it to them. But the N. H. S. was serious and had been doing business for many years.

William was proud of his degree. He loved to be called "Doctor." But one day he received the following appeal from a colleague of the neighborhood:

"Across the street is an arch twister who runs a chiropractic mill and his sign, 'Dr. Culver', is in the front window. Next door to him is one of New York's orthodontists; 'Dr. Young' is on his sign. Five prominent medical men in New York have offices in the block; all have signs with 'Dr.' before their names. A mental healer and an osteopath live among us, and they have 'Dr.' on their signs. Three of my patients are doctors—a Presbyterian minister, a Catholic priest and a rabbi. Around the corner is a bird and dog store run by a 'Dr.' Dooley. On the other side from him is a shoemaker for abnormal feet called 'Dr.' Reed. The boxing instructor at our athletic club is 'Dr.' McGovern, an ex-prizefighter; 'Dr.' René teaches fencing, and 'Dr.' Smith is the chiropodist. At the Turkish bath, the chap who runs the cabinet baths is 'Dr.' Murray, who formerly kept a saloon. Now, with these various kinds of 'doctors' around us, and they keep multiplying in kinds, why designate ourselves as Dr. or Doctors on our cards, letter-heads and signs?"

William's enthusiasm for his Doctor title fell down very low.

William went to a ball organized by a medical society and retained a few crumbs of conversation which he added to his previous experiences of the same kind.

"Those aristocratic ladies you speak of have the same functions as the most despised ragpickers. Not only physiologically, but their minds produce essentially the same thinking material."

"The other day I made sixty an hour with my car and . . ."

"Tomorrow I'll show you a wonderful case of uterus perforation and a beautiful intestinal tuberculosis."

"I've cured by ultraviolet rays cases of anemia which resisted iron by mouth or hypodermically. If I should report that officially, they would brand me as a quack."

"I buy my clothes at . . ."

"Always women! There is always a woman question, never a man question."

"Down near my place real estate is high and my house . . ."

"My boy, you're young in the practice and allow me to tell you that when you're called by a patient don't postpone going. If you don't hurry he might evacuate himself and he won't need you!"

"He had his foot on the switch of the X-ray and burned the patient's hide off."

"My tenants are on strike and the landlords' association . . ."

"The way the physician talks to his patients is

extremely important for the cure. But how can we succeed with so few intelligent doctors? Some of us are just pluricellular beings, like the majority of *homo sapiens*."

"I cannot invest in that stuff. It may be all right, but I don't know, we have to be careful nowadays."

"How about your case of athrepsy?"

"We doctors are not models of health and our families are not among the healthiest. We're as sick as common patients. Don't we eat and drink like the rest? And smoke? And . . . . beat our wives," pointing at some one further away. General hilarity in the group.

"Hundreds of thousands of prostates are tortured daily unnecessarily just for the few dollars. . . ."

"I like a cigar that's . . . ."

"That is the continental way of doing things. Make a lot of noise out of nothing. That is German medicine . . . ."

A French physician, who was a transitory guest in New York, said:

"Is it from the Germans that you American doctors have learned to be so affirmative. Yes, you are very affirmative."

Then he explained the difference between the German school of medicine which dominated the British and American doctors and the French school followed by the Italian and Spanish professions.

His interlocutor over-approved by nodding his head as if his neck were of wood and moved on hinges.

A doctor who was a captain in the navy, said:

"Let's go below deck!"—meaning downstairs.

A surgeon who had the habit of saying "fine" after each sentence, listened to a physician whose wife had just died.

"The diagnosis was a cyst in the right ovary, but at the operation a stone was found in the appendix."

"Fine! . . . I mean too bad!"

"The doctor puts his nose and his finger everywhere. He should also put his soul into everything."

A great anatomist and famous wit, to a friend:

"You want me to introduce you to my wife. Introduce yourself. There she is, at the other end of the room. Where you see the brooch is the front."

And, continuing his interrupted conversation with a group of friends:

"We are all subject to insanity, to epilepsy, to syphilis—how nasty!"

A little further a man whispered to another, loud enough to be heard by William:

"I cannot see it in any other way and I do not care to embellish it. Our thought, our mind goes somewhere, perhaps to an entertainment like this, and must take along the body and the blood and the bones and the viscera and all the waste contained in them."

And, after many talks about cigars, women, horses, patients, fees, William heard somebody say:

"The study of medicine is essentially matter of fact. No imagination is needed. But the practice is an art and consists of imagination only. What matters it where this muscle is inserted and in which groove that nerve passes, when the patient complains about headache due to money worries? No, medicine is not a science, it is higher than a mere science!"



Although little acquainted with his colleagues, William responded with pleasure to the invitation of one of them to participate in a party in a country house. There William saw several physicians in their unofficial capacity, in their mental *négligé*, as it were.

One of them interested him particularly.

He was big, powerful, always satisfied and happy, never without an enormous cigar all but mangled between his teeth. When William asked him about his work, he said:

"I am specializing in gynecology. Nothing like women to advertise you. Much money in it. Especially the middle class. They have nothing to do, you know, and operations and disease are their favorite pastime, surgical gossip their most beloved subject of conversation. And so we reap."

He finished with a broad laugh.

William was tired. An hour of tennis and two hours of discussion with his colleagues had exhausted him and he lay down on the grass.

But a man who had been dubbed the "scientific" physician, rocking on a chair in front of him, warned him immediately:

"I wouldn't do that. It's damp."

William smiled and answered softly:

"Exactly like my grand'mother."

"Well . . ."

Later in the evening they were all sitting on the porch. A sweet and cool summer evening. The "scientific" doctor, as if stung by an insect, made

a sudden movement for his hat, explaining:

"Oh, I have to put on my hat—my bald head . . ."

All were astonished, being aware of his respect for the ladies, and from the deep shadow of the most distant corner a voice was heard:

"Say, doc, I am afraid you are losing something?"

"What?"

"Your civility."

But William thought: "I did not know that doctors, prominent doctors, were so far behind in hygiene, so prejudiced in health matters and as fearful as laymen." Aloud he commented with a sarcastic smile: "In an emergency one must disregard courtesy. It is a question of life and death."

They chatted lazily for a long time. One by one they went to bed. At midnight William, silent and dreamy and quietly drinking in the magic of the beautiful night, was surprised to find that he was not alone. One of the women, a Canadian writer, occupied the opposite end of a long and soft lounge.

"How is it, Doctor Straight, that physicians are so ill informed about everything save their own field? They know nothing about literature, or painting, or music, or philosophy, or social questions. A while ago, when I mentioned single-tax, they stared so at me. If I am not mistaken, they do not seem to be strong even in general science. Of course, there are exceptions—you, for instance."

"Oh, my dear lady, that is because I am a bad doctor. The conscientious professional man should always be busy—busy with his practice. Is he not here to render service? Day and night. He usually has no time even for his medical literature."

---

After a medical meeting William spoke to his colleagues about the relations between doctors and patients. He accused his profession of being among the worst exploiters of suffering humanity.

But a few hours later he regretted the stand he had taken and agreed with his older and more experienced colleagues. Why? What had happened? Simply this: When he came home he found an urgent call to a sick man living far away. It was late in the evening. It cost forty cents to go there and return by subway and street car. It was raining hard. Between the car and the patient's house he was drenched and his new umbrella was turned inside out and broken by the wind. He could not find the house and nobody knew where it was. When he arrived at last, the whole family reproved him for being so late. His consultation finished, they asked him to examine four children, two of whom had to be awakened, and then their mother wanted some advice about her own health. And all they paid him was one dollar. He was angry, but too timid to assert his rights. At last, when he was home, he thought of the generosity of the workers when they happen to be employers, and, while figuring how much his patient, although a workingman, was earning in the length of time which William had lost and while he was looking at his wet clothes which he would have to press the next day, he fell asleep.

---

William was dissatisfied with himself.

He had two theories for his last patient's furuncles. Usually he thought they were due either to infection or to wrong diet, but in this case he was sure of neither. Then he thought of his recent patient with frequent coryzas. Some of his teachers had spoken about infection and contagiousness, others about catching cold, others blamed the food and still others some mysterious lack of resistance. He did not know and his professors did not know. And what was he going to do with his case of paralysis? Was it right for him to tell the poor girl that he was unable to do anything for her? None of his treatments had the least effect. She

was one of those patients who passed through all hands. She had been operated upon, dieted, given the water treatment, massage, x-ray, electricity, a hundred kinds of drugs, organotherapy, a rubber belt and elastic stockings, subcutaneous and intravenous injections. She knew the offices of the most famous medical men and irregular healers. There was no result. And the trouble was she believed in doctor Straight implicitly, while he did not believe in himself. He dreaded her coming and wished that she might change her mind about his ability. While these thoughts were flickering through his head he heard her car stopping in front of his house.

---

One cloudy morning, while still in bed, with his eyes half closed, he had a vague sensation that there was a change in him. He was not as usual. He did not feel himself living. The objects in the room, the houses seen through the window were floating or dancing or falling one upon the other. A fine gray veil covered and penetrated everything. Nothing was real.

He was thinking—or rather indefinite thoughts were coming to him from somewhere.

Was he alive? Was this life? If not, what was it?

He felt of his chin. There was the jawbone behind. Hard, unyielding, dead. His eyes in bone sockets. He could easily imagine his face devoid of muscles and see the hollow places in his grinning skull. Muscles? What were they? And blood-vessels? And nerves? How much life did they possess? A prick, a deeper cut—and it is gone. And the mass of moist, slimy, slippery entrails and glands retained in a sack of skin and a skeleton frame? They were all closer to death than to life. Death and nothingness was lurking everywhere in his living body. Death was inside, waiting, just secreting a particle, a drop of life.

And on this dead foundation his mental life was

built up. The work of this heart, these vessels, these nerves, these bowels, themselves almost inanimate, almost lifeless, resulted in these thoughts, in this talk.

He took a small mirror and looked at his face.

Oh, teeth! How hideous! The only part of the skeleton that is peeping out and is not hidden under the skin. The real symbol of deadness of the body!

Again, how much alive was he?

The previous day he had watched an autopsy and now all its details were like a dream.

He asked himself: What was important in his body? Which part was *he*? The brain? It was but a tool in the service of the rest of the body. The mind? It was incidentally used for the so-called higher pleasures and pains, but there was no sense or meaning in these. Was digestion an aim in itself? No, it was destined to keep the body alive. The same thing about respiration, circulation, feeling, seeing. But what were all these functions for? To what end? Were they not all—means? Means to help the rest? But where and what was the human being? The sum of them. How could the sum of tools, in themselves aimless, be a valuable, interesting thing? Oh, yes, he had forgotten sex and reproduction! The pursuit of the conservation of the species, its perpetual continuation was something that.... But was it?

People talk about death as if it were something different from and foreign to life, as if it were an entity, a thing in itself.

Death is the point at the end of the line. Therefore it isn't. It is nothing in itself. We forget this so much, that we represent it under various forms and make a sort of divinity of it.

Cessation of life should not have even a name.

The question, What was the purpose of it all? seemed to him quite concrete. But he smiled faintly at the idea of a purpose. To look for an aim in anything was ridiculous.

And then, bluntly, he saw himself curing the sick. How could he—with no knowledge about life and death? No, he should not attempt it—at least not today. He dressed slowly, carelessly, incompletely and went out. A man was waiting at his door.

“Doctor, will you come to see my child?”

He did not answer and walked away. The man followed him. The doctor with his long legs quickened his pace.

The man was behind him. Then William ran, while the man, not understanding, stopped and looked at him from a distance.

William had been in practice for one year when a man with heart disease came to his office. After the examination William told the patient to give up his work for at least six months. A smile of pity for the doctor's ingenuousness was the answer.

"Maybe you can find some other work, something lighter," William suggested.

"Oh, doctor, it is so hard to get a job nowadays! I must stick to mine."

"Can you at least be excused from overtime work, so that you can have the evening for yourself?"

"That is impossible at present, during the rush."

"Impossible? Impossible? We'll see!"

William was determined to act. The next day he went to his patient's shop and asked to see the head of the firm. While waiting in the office he talked with one of the foremen. Through the thin board partition the deafening roar of the machines came in partly muffled. But each time the door toward the shop was opened, he was unable to hear his own voice, while the cloud of dust brought in by the draft made him cough. At last the employer arrived and his subaltern introduced the doctor. As William explained the object of his visit, he noticed on the lips of the employer, as well as on those of the foreman and the stenographers, who were also listening, the same smile of sarcastic pity that he had seen the previous day on the face of his patient. He felt embarrassed and stupid, although he did not understand why, knowing that his errand was justified and his demand reasonable.

"So you want me to exempt your patient from overtime?" said the boss at last. "All right. It will be all right. He will be excused."

William was happy.

A few days later the patient's wife came to William's office and began to abuse him.

"What is the matter?"

"Why, you went to my husband's shop and told on him. They don't want no sick people there and now he has lost his job. What'll I do with my children? Shame! But wait, I'll fix you! I'll tell everybody not to set foot in your office! You'll see!"

---

When William made the acquaintance of a Dr. G——, he thought he had at last discovered an intelligent physician, a real student and an all-around cultivated man. He had much respect for him since reading in the medical press his interesting articles, with descriptions of cases, statistics and original theories. But, after having visited Dr. G——'s clinic a few times, examined the patients' charts and talked with the house physician, William changed his mind. He saw that his friend's "facts" were modified in order to prove his theories and that his work was a fraud. This, however, was not so grave—he had heard of greater scientists who had done the same thing. There was the excuse of scientific fervor. The disappointment was much keener when William visited the specialist's home and saw his wife. There he discovered that the source of all this man's culture was in his wife and that he was really an ignoramus in everything, even in medicine, except in his own specialty. He did not read, but his wonderfully clever wife supplied him with sufficient knowledge to enable him to converse intelligently in society. She also gave him ideas which meant both glory and money to the doctor.

---

When William went out in society and happened



to meet his patients, he remembered them often more by their ailments or other medical signs than by their names. And so he would say, "Good evening, Mrs. . . .", and in his mind he would add, "The lady who is wearing a wig and a tampon." Or he would recognize the gentleman with the truss dancing with the pessary lady. One evening, as he was standing near the corner of a drawing room where the abdominal hernia was quietly conversing with the oophoritis, one of these two women asked for his opinion about the hygiene of cosmetics. She was particularly interested in the effect of red on the lips. But William happened to be in a quarrelsome mood and his answer turned out to be rougher than he intended it: "Lips? Lips? Why make so much fuss about lips? They are nothing but one end of a tube." The ladies walked away and he knew that he had lost two patients and all their friends.

---

One of William's patients had died and, besides the usual notes from undertakers, couched in elegant language, he received a number of new and more direct ones. One "licensed undertaker and embalmer", who was "endorsed by five local churches", had "lady attendants" and "homelike funeral parlors" and was using "modern methods and equipment", as well as "floral decoration and natural plants". He wrote: "When death occurs suddenly or from accident, the family doctor is called upon to recommend an undertaker. In suggesting me, the family, in their bereavement, acquire the personal services of one of high reputation and many years experience. . . . Physicians are also entitled to professional courtesy."

William was sufficiently acquainted with the inter-professional vocabulary to understand the obvious meaning of the last sentence—that physicians were entitled to a commission.

Another firm said: "At times you are asked to

recommend one of my profession. My office and Funeral Home is in a private residence, a real home from which to bury the dead. The bereaved is afforded every comfort."

Then an agent came, and talked and talked. However, as soon as William explained to him that there was a mistake, that the man who had just died was extremely poor and that his family did not have a penny to pay for the burial, he quickly said goodbye. But the doctor stopped him at the door, asking him to contribute something for the little orphans—"You will be the first one to give for my collection." The agent vanished.

---

William had always respected the Hippocratic Oath, although he did not know why. Anything connected with the father of medicine, who had lived 2300 years before, was sacred to him. He was not certain he had ever carefully read it. One day he saw it printed in a book on "professional conduct" published by his state medical society.

"I swear by Apollo the physician and Esculapius and Hygeia and Panacea and all the gods and goddesses that according to my ability and judgment I will keep this Oath and this stipulation—to reckon him who taught me this Art equally dear to me as my parents—to share my substances with him and relieve his necessities if required—to look upon his offspring on the same footing as my own brothers and to teach them this Art if they shall wish to learn it without fee or stipulation—and that by precept, lecture and every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons and those of my teachers and to disciples bound by a stipulation and oath, according to the Law of Medicine, *but to none others*. I will follow the system of regimen which according to my ability and judgment I consider for the benefit of my patients and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous. I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if

asked nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion. With purity and with holiness I will pass my life and practice my art. I will not cut persons laboring under the stone but will leave this to be done by men who are practitioners of this work. Into whatever houses I enter, I will go into them for the benefit of the sick and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief and corruption, and further from the seduction of females or males, of free-men and slaves. Whatever in connection with my professional practice or not in connection with it I see or hear in the life of men which ought not to be spoken of abroad I will not divulge, as recognizing that all such should be kept secret. While I continue to keep this Oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the Art respected by all men in all time. But should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot."

This helped him to see later the origin of the conspiracy of his profession against the sick public. Medical men were not supposed to "impart the knowledge of their art" to others than physician's sons. That is, they were to form a caste and to monopolize the secrets of their art and anyone who might come to the plain people to teach them how to remain or become healthy or how to heal disease was violating the old oath. So that was the original reason why until recently all doctors and, led by them, many laymen condemned the rare physicians who, logically enough, tried to fight illness by teaching the world at large. Although popularization of medicine was no longer a rare thing, many medical men still sneered at all such attempts.

That also explained the viciousness of some points in so-called medical ethics, the age-old division between surgery and medicine and its evils and the origin of surgical fee-splitting. Was he

going to abide by this hateful, inhuman, if hoary, oath, which his elders sought to force upon modern conditions, as the church leaders have imposed upon our present life a mixture of old fiction, old science, old superstition and old morality contained in a collection of old books? Would he, a man of the twentieth century, consent to be a priest and guardian of a foolish worship, as the clergy watched carefully lest the ancient beliefs be removed from the people's heads or transformed and adapted to present life? Should he not develop his own ethics? He wondered.

Nor was this exclusiveness confined to his own profession. Some time before, he had visited an osteopathic clinic in New York and, although he had called with the best intention to find out what osteopathy looked like, he met with hostility. The osteopaths were polite, but they did not venture to tell him more than that which was absolutely necessary and their demonstrations were a make-believe only.

William had a too high opinion of his mission to combine it with so much selfishness.

The parts which he disapproved in the oath of Hippocrates outweighed those which were praiseworthy.

---

William studied his colleagues and classified them according to certain definite types he had met.

Some of them, a minority, were just plain human beings, who wanted to live and let others live, who did the best they could by their fellowmen without ostentation, who were aware of their shortcomings and made no mystery of them. Others were interested in their practice as pure scientists. But most of them were full of affectation and were in the game for the purpose of fishing as much as possible. They had no scruples. But to get "trade" they had to put on masks, as fishermen use bait.

There was the silent doctor, who always put on

a grave, straight and imperturbable face before the patient and his family. He never smiled and never explained. To all questions he replied with the same words: "Take that, come tomorrow." Of course, in the circle of his friends he was a good, jovial chap. Some patients hated him, but others were attracted to him by his mysterious and superior airs.

The talker, the democratic and popular man remembered everybody by name and asked about the old grandpa and the youngest baby and the neighbors and how business was. He smiled to all and, instead of an answer to a question about the prognosis, would step away saying: "My regards to your wife!" Most people loved this sort of thing, but none noticed that, while he was talkative, he did not speak about the patient's condition and gave almost no advice.

Another successful physician was the one who sought to appear rough and to intimidate the patients. They did not like him and called him a bear, but they thought that roughness was an inherent quality of a real doctor and they submitted.

The ultra-polite man bowed deeply and made fishy eyes and suave remarks to all, including the ugliest aunt of the family, even before looking at them. "What a fine man!" was the comment of all those who consulted and recommended him to their friends.

Another doctor, who was always in a great hurry, whether he was really busy or not, answered the anxious mother who wanted to learn his opinion about her paralyzed child: "No time!" and slipped away. A few minutes later she said to a friend: "He is so busy! They don't let him eat. Everybody wants him."

William also knew a colleague who used to make several diagnoses at the same time in each case, so he was always sure to be right. The patient had a sore throat, but it might turn out to be diphtheria.

Perhaps it was a beginning of pneumonia, with some symptoms of typhoid. . . . He called the case hopeless and said the patient would undeniably recover. Whatever happened, the family would say: "How clever he is! He told us so." It was like the farmer's weather prediction: "Maybe it will rain, but it is pretty hard to tell. It may clear up. I guess we'll soon have nice weather, and then again it looks cloudy and kind of funny."

Another physician he knew always told the family that the case was extremely dangerous, even the slightest case, so that later, after recovery, he would be praised for saving the patient from a doubtless death.

Then there was the doctor who had a reputation for giving thorough examinations and taking great interest in each patient's case. His entire practice was built on that reputation. In reality his work was but a showing off to the ignorant laymen. He only went through the motions of examining deeply and carefully and then he said anything that came to his mind.

The patients' comments about doctors were very instructive:

"This doctor is very clean; his clothes are in perfect condition. You can see from that how careful he must be with his patients."

"The other doctor is very neglectful. His necktie on one side, his trousers not pressed, his hair dishevelled. That's because he is a good physician and thinks only of his patients."

All these things taught him lessons which he felt he needed more than the postgraduate courses that he hoped to take. But he was as yet unable to draw a complete picture of the situation in his mind. He felt that there was something wrong. What was it? What could it be?

Was not his elaborate knowledge, supported by great authorities, capable of curing illness? Could abstract science heal?

The professors he knew were but rarely successful in spite of their beautiful and prolific verbiage.

Was it the purpose of a pure science to treat disease? Did it not renounce its scientific claims the moment it came down to solid ground and faced reality, that is the patient and his family?

Why were there other healing schools? Why this hostility toward them?

Ignorance? But who was learned? Who knew? Dishonesty? Who was honest? And why was there so much dishonesty in the practice of medicine and the other healing cults?

His mind was full of questions.

He also felt that, no matter what knowledge and ability one might unfold, no matter with what earnestness and devotion one might come to the bedside, there was something beyond one's powers that interfered. Something within the sick body itself. A mystery which, he was certain, could never be penetrated. The complication of mind and body, physiological and mental functions that formed the individual and that the physician could but little

influence. Then there was the environment that built health or disease in each person. The family, the friends, the things with which each one of us comes in contact, the words we hear and let sink into our brains, the crowds we meet and, farther still but encircling us closely and carrying us in its bosom, human society and the world at large.

How did the threads go from the tiny human being to all these surrounding entities? How did they come back to him? How did they tie him to his endless past? What did he receive from the bodies in the vast celestial spaces? How was he related to the constant physical and chemical laws about him?

There was a wall which no physician, no erudition of the highest medical generation could pass. They were all too small.

Was it possible at least to change the immediate environment of the ill person? Could the physicians, each one of them alone or all together as a social group, heal society and, through it, the unhealthy mind, the injured organs of the patient? And how about preventing this eternal flow of sickness which pervaded humanity? Was it impossible? Really impossible? And would the doctors, would the other healers heal society if they could? Did anyone desire it? Were they not human beings like others who loved the reigning disorder and gloated over its filth and misery? Did they not fear, like other simpleminded people, that a change would disturb their accustomed life and curtail their gains and profits?

William was in a haze. He walked to and fro in his waiting room, which was as yet more a room where he waited for patients than one in which they waited for him.

All these thoughts came and unrolled themselves, never complete, never clear, covering each other like some dark gray clouds that arrive quickly and disappear into one another before their shapes



can be determined. They depressed him; they hurt him. He was uncertain. The ground under his feet was slipping. And a rapid, lightning-like, pleasant but stinging thought combined with the others. He chased it away, but it returned from time to time to disappear again in its vagueness. Why not give up his practice? Abandon all his life-long preparation, tune himself to a new work before he was too deeply engaged in his profession. What would it be? Perhaps music? Composing? Oh, no! He dismissed that laughable and impossible idea at once. But how would he continue all his life to cure, to make believe that he cured, to help a little here and there, to patch up, to smear something on the surface, with that big, black, unpassable wall behind? Would he fill up his life with a huge lie, with a scientific lie? Would he busy himself with scientific work in order not to see, not to find the great problems ahead of him? How ridiculous!

He raised his arms and let them drop again. He did not know.

While Doctor Mary Vanish, as she was called in her license and as she continued to call herself after her marriage, had settled down and begun to be prosperous, it was not so with Doctor William Straight.

Like all women physicians, she had her difficulties. Many people still clung to the belief that woman was inferior and doubted her aptitude to do what was called man's work. The women at large were even more hostile to their own sex than were men. They would not trust a person who was just like them and to whom the exercise of the professions had been denied until only a short time before.

But Mary, with her great ability and practicality, overcame these obstacles.

She was one of the assistants at a hospital dispensary and her smile made her popular among the patients there. On the other hand her punctuality and the quickness with which she expedited the work and got rid of the sick won her the great praise of the chief of the clinic. Although she kept at the proper distance from him, there was between them that symbiosis so often met with among famous specialists and ordinary doctors. She sent him her private patients and he sent them back to her after the operation for various unnecessary treatments, like tamponments or cauterisations of the uterus, and so on. She knew how to slip her card into the hands of the better-dressed patients. She soon became a member of a few sisterhoods, accepted all invitations to weddings, and got

acquainted with some well-to-do ladies whose friendship she skillfully cultivated. And so she was more and more recommended and her fees went up higher and higher. She was seriously thinking of moving her office uptown, to a "better" neighborhood, enlarging her quarters and getting some nurses into her service.

William, however, was still a beginner in every sense of the word. He had almost no connections. His private practice was poor in numbers, which does not mean that he was not busy. He was occupied in a hospital the larger part of the day, with no remuneration, of course. But he was slow and uncertain in his work. He still had the attitude of the unfinished student and if it were not for the necessity of earning a living, he would have never finished his studies and would have kept roaming in libraries and lecture halls all his life. How could he do anything to advertise himself, if he had no faith whatever in himself or in medicine? He was entirely unable to give positive instructions or advice to any of his patients, no matter how slight the trouble from which they suffered. Doubt, scepticism paralyzed him. He refused all calls to join societies in which he was not personally interested. He read, studied, went to medical scientific meetings, observed his cases conscientiously and minutely, spent hours in the library of the Academy of Medicine and in other libraries. Nor did he neglect the heterodox healing schools, with all of which he soon became familiar. But in spite of all that or perhaps because of all that, his knowledge, his mind did not cease to float in the gray clouds of the big question mark.

With him things were not so self-evident and clear and rounded out as with Mary. He felt that the further he advanced the less he knew, the less settled his questions were. He ran everywhere for an answer, but in vain. At least he found none that would satisfy him. From the smaller queries he

had gone on to ever deeper problems and he dared not give real advice before he himself was at least on the way to a solution.

Every day he began anew the same Sisyphean task by trying to figure out the diagnosis of a case and reaching the point where he asked himself, what is disease? None of his masters in school had been sufficiently clear in this respect. Indeed he could not remember that any of them had treated such questions otherwise than in an indirect manner, incidentally. There was no room for these questions in the curriculum. Perhaps a philosophy of medicine did not exist. Every one of his teachers was busy with his own specialty, as if the fundamentals were certain and taken for granted. None of the authors was clear enough, except for superficial minds.

And when it came to therapy, which was really the object of the whole maze and structure and super-structure of medical knowledge, all authorities were hopelessly entangled. William had to reject their confused remedies and treatments, not only because of the multitude of contradictions, but also and mainly because it was impossible to follow their advice, which would have meant, in many cases, to apply several conflicting remedies at the same time.

When Mary and William spoke about medical matters it was as if they used different languages.

He would begin:

"What do you think about the new theory of . . .?"

"Oh, hang the theories," she would interrupt him, "they make me sick. I have no time for nonsense. In half an hour I have a consultation with my chief in a swell West End case. I know exactly what he'll say and I am prepared to treat her for a long time, at least six months."

"What with?"

"Subcutaneous injections, don't you know?"

"And are you convinced . . .?"

"Nonsense, convinced! It is the latest treatment, or as you would say, the latest fad, that's all!"

Or she would come home beaming and would slap him on the shoulder:

"Say, Bill, my diagnosis is confirmed. Just coming from the autopsy. The pathologist congratulated me. A case of . . ."

"But what good will it do the dead patient?"

"Again, silly? Don't be an ass! You talk like a layman. Or are you jealous? What good? What good? It leads to success, isn't that enough?"

But in the midst of this unceasing questioning and investigating William discovered a man who, while also a doubter, had limited medicine to what it really could do, had passed the whole science through a fire of severe criticism and, unknown and unheralded, had formed or rather condensed a new medical science for his own use. This man opened William's eyes and helped him in his adversity—gave him a new basis and taught him opinions that were going to play a very important part in the young man's medical life.

It happened thus:

William was treating a few troublesome cases and, as usual, he was worrying about them. One of them in the patient's home. A child who was acutely and hopelessly ill and whose death he expected at any minute. While going to see it he could not help thinking of the others.

For instance, one patient with a bad heart arrhythmia. To tell him would scare him and aggravate the condition. Not to tell him meant to allow him to live as he was used to and neglect himself. What to do? Then the handsome young girl suffering from urine incontinence. An involuntary loss of a drop every few minutes. She had been treated in institutions and privately by all sorts of specialists and plain practitioners. Unsuccessfully. But now she thought that this young doctor, who seemed to be thorough and honest, would find at last a remedy for her.

Blonde, agreeable, tall, well-built, twenty-five, bright, she told him her miserable fate. She could have been happy but for her defect.

Always faintly malodorous, in spite of extreme care and cleanliness, she hated herself and wished to die. Under various excuses she refused all the opportunities of marriage. She could never give the true reason. Although nobody suspected her condition, anything that sounded like an allusion to it made her quit the best positions. She never went to the theatre or to other entertainments for fear that her trouble might be guessed through the odor

of her body. As a matter of fact, she was the only person who knew about that dreaded smell. She avoided people, even those of her own family, and no one of them, save her mother, was informed of her disease.

She sobbed:

"Doctor, is there a more unfortunate person in the world? Is this a life for a young girl? Can your science, your science that has so many great men in its ranks, can it do nothing for me? Everybody is helped but me. . . . You are the last one to whom I shall go. If you do not cure me, I'll end my miserable and tortured existence forever. . . ."

But William forgot her as his thoughts came back to the cerebromeningitis child to whom he was going. He walked through Central Park but saw nothing of the trees or the flowers or the children.

What shall he do with the little patient? How can he face the parents? What right has he to treat her if he cannot keep her alive?

And again the incontinence case presented itself to his mind. He had examined the girl, had made the necessary analyses, had read the whole night chapters in all possible authors and numberless descriptions of similar cases. What shall he do, what shall he say to her when she returns tomorrow?

But suddenly he stopped. He could not advance. He saw before him the hospital case which had terminated by death a few nights before. No mistake, the dead poet. Yes, it was he who waylaid William.

"Why, you hateful medicine-monger, oh, why did you inflict your foul little tricks on me and did not let me die in peace? You dirty. . . ."

William became pale.

"What is the matter with me? How stupid! He is dead."

He had had in his ward a suicide case. A young man—they said he was a poet—had taken a power-

ful dose of opium. He was brought to the hospital in a dying condition, but he still breathed a little. For three days everything was done to save him. Among other things artificial respiration was pursued with so much ardor that one of his ribs was fractured. Not one minute was he left alone. All the members of the staff had to collaborate. Each one had to stay for two hours in succession near his bed and then be relieved by the next colleague. But not all would or could do their share, and William, although extremely tired, took the turn of almost all the others.

For hours and hours the only sign of life was a difficult breathing that slowed down as soon as the passive movements, applied by William according to the rule, ceased a little. Once in a long while the patient sluggishly and painfully half-opened his eyes, seemed to look at the doctor with a hazy, indefinite, extinct gaze that said: "I am tired, so tired . . ." and then closed them lazily again.

Sometimes he would mumble a few unintelligible words that slipped through the foam that continually formed on his black, parched lips.

Once, in the middle of the night, when William was alone with him and all the other patients in the long, darkened ward were fast asleep beyond the screen that separated this patient from the others, the poet began to breathe more regularly and lifted his head a little. His eyes were partly open and directed their half-dead look into William's eyes.

William was horrified. He felt a drop of cold sweat running straight down his spine—from the neck all the way down. But at the same time he was happy. At last his work was crowned with success. The poor fellow was recovering.

And the patient spoke. Yes, he said something. What was it? Impossible to hear. But soon it became clearer:

"You . . . let me alone. . . . Oh, please, let me



alone. . . . I want to die . . . I want . . . I want . . . Oh, please, . . . I don't care to live . . . Oh . . ."

His head fell back on the pillow.

William dared not continue the artificial respiration, fearing to touch him. A few more minutes and the sweet and much desired death would come and deliver the poor fellow from this intolerable condition between life and death. There was just a spark of life. The faintest glimmer. The merest sign. A flicker. It depended on William. Shall he let it go? Shall he quench it?

He wanted advice. He took a few steps to call somebody. He was not certain as to his duties. But if he left the man alone for only a moment the tiny flame that was kept alive by William's constant fanning might be gone forever. Could he take the responsibility? Let him die deliberately, through neglect?

William returned to the patient and with shivering hands, with a feeling of the deepest abhorrence and fright, he resumed his work.

He expected that the victim might get up at any moment, stretch out his hands and strangle the doctor who for three days and three nights had made him suffer so keenly.

And indeed the man, the corpse, moved. The lips parted, closed, opened again. No sound. At last something audible:

"... You . . . You . . . dirty . . . You . . . !"

From then on William was less zealous, not so relentless in his attempts to save the man. Each time he touched the bluish skin of the thorax an inexpressible terror overcame him. When the patient at last ceased breathing altogether William had a feeling of relief. He was really happy, but so fatigued he could hardly move.

No sooner had he chased the vision of the suicide than another emerged. This time it was the old man with a disease about which it was difficult to decide whether it was a stomach ulcer or cancer,

probably because it was both. An operation could not save him. It was too late. Conservative treatment could not save him. But could William take the responsibility of applying it when all the medical men whom the patient had seen, including the old and famous internists and the surgeons, had urged an operation? Even those who were personally convinced that the knife in this case would be utter foolishness and cruelty, as two of them told him, agreed with the rest in order not to be in the minority. "What would the ignorant laymen think of me? And this patient is doomed anyway," they said. From the practical point of view, William, the young man with a practice to build up, should have adopted the same tactics. But he remembered what he had read in Billroth and other great masters.

"Before an important operation is decided upon I should think whether I would perform it on my wife or mother or son. . . . An operation must be done only when nothing else can be done. . . . *Primum non nocere.*" Or words to that effect.

William could see nothing further on his way than the pale, emaciated man who vomited his food, often with blood. What should he do?

in that mood he went to the house of the twelve-year-old girl, who for several days had been lying half unconscious in bed, in a somnolent condition. Her color changed frequently. Sometimes she was pale, sometimes flushed, sometimes yellowish. Her bare arms were thin and lay passive on the white sheet. Her respiration was normal, slow and easy. Only from time to time it became labored. That was when she was tortured with pain, which was shown on her face. She did not complain with words; she was unable to speak. Her indifferent features would become contorted as if some strong vinegar had been poured down her throat. She just whined a little in a hardly audible voice and then her face would return to its usual composure.

There had been three other physicians and a consultant on the case, but at last the family, urged by the doctors, who did not care to treat an undoubtedly fatal case, asked William to continue the treatment. He was too naive to get rid of it, regarding it as his duty to answer all calls.

He did nothing but what he had been told by the specialist. There was no improvement whatsoever. On the contrary, the child appeared to get worse. Vomiting was more frequent. It was no more possible, as it had been on previous days, to recall her to life, to real life, to make her open her eyes. She did not react to external irritations.

William looked at the child and he was seized by a boundless pity mixed with a deep sense of his im-

potence. Her beautiful head was disfigured with a rag and a large ice-bag. He read the chart handed to him by the nurse, who whispered something in his ear. Then he took off his coat and examined the patient. On the chest nothing but ribs, barely covered with a waxy skin. The abdomen was more hollow than flat. The legs were inert, and, as their normal shape was lost, only the knee-joints were sticking out in ridiculous disproportion to the hard shinbones and the soft thighs that seemed buried in the mattress.

He asked the nurse to call up his office. He would not return that night. He had to stay at the case the whole night. If there were patients waiting for him they should excuse him.

He took out his hypodermic needle and a tiny, white morphine tablet, dissolved it in sterile water and injected it under the child's skin.

Then he looked around. The bed was placed in the middle of the room. At the door leading to the next room the mother was standing quietly, incessantly nodding her head. Some other women were there, in the adjoining rooms, but nobody spoke. William felt that the family hated him and instinctively held him responsible for the disease and its consequences. He had already learned that the doctor was good and nice and lovely when successful, but woe to him if he failed! It was difficult to work in this unpleasant, hostile, glacial atmosphere, where every glance seemed to say: "If you do not know what to do, get to the devil out of here and tell us whom we shall call!" He had had enough foresight to tell them that, while there was hope, he feared that there was but little hope and that he did not think that anyone else could do better than himself, although he would not mind sharing the task with any other doctor or being replaced by anybody if they saw fit.

He read some pages from a book that he had in his bag. A few hours passed. He looked the patient

over again. There seemed to be a faint amelioration. He waited.

Everybody had gone to sleep. The night nurse cleaned the patient and took the temperature, which had gone up a little.

Toward the morning the patient showed again signs of intense pain. William gave her another needle, after having carefully dosed the amount of the medicine. An improvement followed. But it was only apparent. The limbs became flabbier. Suddenly William realized that the situation was alarming and at the last moment he did not want to bear the responsibility alone. Therefore he asked the nurse to wake the parents.

"Please, send at once for another physician."

"For whom?"

"Anyone in the neighborhood."

"Can we get Doctor . . . I forgot his name . . . an East Side man, much praised by my servant, a Jewish girl?"

"I don't know him, but it makes no difference. The condition is such that I cannot be alone. Let us telephone him."

The girl came in and, unsolicited, gave some absurdly extravagant details about the East Side doctor. She was astonished that Doctor Straight had not heard of him. He was world-famous. He had, to be sure, many enemies, because he was different and criticized the medical profession. But he was honest and true and he wrote health books in Yiddish for the people, for the workers. He could perform wonders. She had spoken about him to the parents before, but they did not care to listen to a hired person. She was sure that, had he come sooner, he might have saved the child. Still she believed that even now. . . . But she was pushed out of the room.

Within an hour the man was there.

A short, stocky, middle-aged man. A full, bushy, dark-brown beard and moustache and long hair.

Heavy eyebrows. Small, brown eyes that usually seemed indifferent, but at times became fiery. His whole appearance was rather unsympathetic, disagreeable, ungracious, somewhat ridiculous, a bit grotesque, until he opened his mouth to speak. Although his voice was squeaky and high-pitched and out of proportion to the broadness of his neck and chest, it was at once soothing and convincing.

"Yes, these are our most unfortunate, our most baffling cases," he said. "The doctor has done all he could to save the child. I see that nothing has been left undone. I am sorry, I can be of no use whatever."

A few minutes later the child was dead.

As the father asked what he owed him, the doctor seemed surprised.

"Why," he protested, "you owe me nothing, as I did nothing for you."

"But, doctor, your time! And to wake you up like that!"

"Oh, I am used to that . . . No, no . . . I accept no money when I have not earned it. But don't fail to pay this young man. He has been doing hard work."

"Of course."

"Generally people are ungrateful to the physician in a case of death."

Both doctors left together. They walked and talked the rest of the night.

"Now that we are alone, I want to tell you what you did. An overdose of morphine. . . . Do not excuse yourself. It is not your fault. Any dose is an overdose. You acted according to the school. I know the child was doomed. It cannot be otherwise under the common treatment. But your morphine was the last blow. I have emancipated myself from that ever since the beginning of my practice and I am going still further. . . . I give no morphine whatever, or very rarely and exceptionally. That is, I can imagine conditions when I might be forced to

administer it, but in reality I have not found it necessary in many years, in a large practice.

... This child could have been saved."

"How?"

William was dumfounded.

"Simply by giving her no food whatever and no drugs of any kind at all. But perfect rest, fresh air, sufficient warmth and hydrotherapeutic measures. Perhaps your ice-bag or plain cold applications and warm or lukewarm baths. Also keeping the bowels open."

"Pardon me, Doctor, may I ask you a question?"

"Whatever you wish."

"Are you a regular M. D.?"

"Of course, I am. But I ran away from school."

"Have you heard of Nothnagel?"

"He was my teacher in Vienna—and I know what you intend to allude to—his famous words, 'If there were no morphine, I would not be a physician.' But he also said that only a goodnatured man could be a good doctor. Of course, only those who love their work are good workers and the doctor's work is man. Well, I have been his pupil and admirer but I dare say that now the pupil could teach the teacher. However, what is the use? He is dead and, if he were alive, he would not listen to me."

"Do you oppose medicinal therapy in all cases?"

"No, I don't. In principle I don't. I can imagine rare conditions in which I might need drugs."

"And what objection do you have to them?"

"Simply this: they're harmful."

"But do you know that in a few words you have condemned the entire medical science? If you are right, we are wrong. Our treatment is based on false principles. Do you realize what that means? And all the illustrious men and the hundreds of thousands of physicians who form our wonderful profession. . . ."

"Bosh! A few are mistaken. The rest don't analyze, don't criticize. They just follow. They are

all inside the great error and everything in it is correct. But the error is too big to be seen and the more small facts and details are accumulated, the less these men can see their science from the outside. Some day, when I have time, I shall write a treatise on health and on the causes, prevention and treatment of disease. You'll be surprised how simple medicine really is."

"Inside the great error," William repeated.

"Yes," said the teacher, "it is the same as in all systems, the same as in human society at large, the same as in life itself. Inside a big lie there are relative truths, and many little truths put together make one great bluff. Inside society, which is based on untruth and injustice, there is honesty; inside commerce, which is nothing but theft, there is probity; there is ethics in war, which in itself is a tremendous crime."

"And you mean to say that in a bad case of meningitis you can do what none of us could do? Is that theory or have you really tried?"

"Oh, my dear man, I never said that I can do the impossible. I often fail. You all can do what I can do, if you, if they would only listen to me. But no established school would heed an isolated voice. I am unknown. I prefer not to speak to doctors. I speak to the people directly and I get from all of you what I deserve, contempt, that is, as far as the profession has heard of me."

"You should have first become a great professor, recognized in the profession, and then come to us with your ideas. That would have been easy."

"Not at all! Why lose time and bow to all those in power in hospitals and schools? Why not go directly to the aim? Besides, if the profession wants to repudiate some one, it does it even if he is the greatest. Many names might be quoted to prove this.... You mentioned theory. Theory? No. I have applied my ideas many times in prac-



tice, and, when they were allowed to be worked out completely, I was successful. But I agree so little with you, that I refuse to accept even your name for this disease, because it is misleading and unnecessary."

"Oh, I see, you disagree with the diagnosis!"

"No, my dear boy. It is not that. Not that at all. Such disagreements are very frequent within the profession. I reject any exact diagnosis. There is no such thing. Your case, your condition is really a combination of many conditions and we cannot expect to know all that goes on in that poor body during the process of disease, during its fight to recover. We cannot penetrate the mystery. All that we can do is not to interfere with the healing process. And the usual treatment is an obstacle to recovery. If the patient does get well after all, it is not because of it, but in spite of it. There is no need of an exact diagnosis for the healing of disease. Correct the evils that are known. The rest will take care of itself, unless . . . unless it is too late."

"You have just attacked another important principle, which is dear even to laymen and for which nobody will pardon you, the easily-understood, self-evident idea that no therapy is possible without a correct understanding of the trouble."

"Seemingly self-evident, you ought to have said."

"Seemingly. . . . ? So you approve of the attacks of the irregulars. By the way, to which school do you belong now?"

"Oh, my dear friend, how little you understand me! I am much further from the irregulars than from my old school. How can I associate with a bunch of ill prepared, often illiterate, badly trained, intolerant ignoramuses, whose only merit—a questionable one—is to insult the profession? You must have a horrible idea about me if you confound me with them."

"Then I give it up. I cannot make you out."

"You will, by and by. At least I hope so."

The next day William went to see his new acquaintance. And the day after.

And gradually his eyes were opened to a new medical science, a series of eclectically selected, simple, almost unscientific—and therefore, perhaps more scientific—principles and methods of treatment. They were borrowed from all possible schools and sects. All conservative and at the same time iconoclastic in the extreme. But, oh, so plausible, especially when explained by this doctor. A sort of connecting link between the old medical and powerfully established school, and the opposing healers. It was neither one nor the other.

Little by little William changed, not only his methods, his manner of practicing, but also his own way of living.

Before meeting the East Side man he, like all his brethren, used to take laxatives and headache powders and “preventive” inoculations against typhoid fever, rabies and what not. Once he suffered for weeks from some complications resulting from an unnecessary injection of tetanus anti-toxin.

But now he saw the uselessness of all that and felt ashamed for his past ignorance.

And another thing that came into William's world through his new friend was an acquaintance with the East Side, with its complicated and multicolored shades and particularly its radical movement.

During all this time William neglected Mary more and more. From all points of view.

He was too much absorbed in his medical thoughts, in his incessant search for the proper treatment of his patients, whose number began to grow, to his own astonishment.

When he saw her their conversation turned upon professional subjects. They talked shop. She had many duties, but was so wonderfully efficient that she always managed to have plenty of spare time.

She was passionate—and the more he was lost in his reflections about his unpleasant discoveries and disappointments, the more she desired his handsome body.

"I cannot understand this fellow's contentions about the parenchymatous nephritides," he would say, coming in with a magazine under his arms. "He is crazy. Look here!"

She would listen for a while. Then, instead of replying, she would come close to him, put her arms around his neck, smile into his eyes and implant a loud kiss on his lips, continuing to press them with her own for a long time, while her hands caressed his hair, his ears, his cheeks. But after a few moments, seeing that he remained cold, she would repulse him indignantly.

"Oh, you don't deserve it! . . ."

And she would leave him in the room.

Their offices were separated, but their living rooms were together, in Mary's apartment. They

had one sleeping room with two beds, but lately William, keeping irregular hours, going often to sleep in the morning, or not at all, had put in a narrow folding cot in his consulting room, and many times remained there for the night so as not to disturb Mary. And sometimes, instead of taking his meals with her, seeing that he had gotten up too late for that, he would send out for food to the nearest restaurant or go there himself. In the course of time that became almost a habit with him. Once in a while Mary came to fetch him and wrench him away almost by force from his studies. Then, for a few days he would be a plain human being and young again. He would eat vast amounts of food, would enjoy it frankly, would neglect his practice and try to induce Mary to do the same thing. But that was impossible, as she knew how to master herself and never went to extremes. When the time of her work and her appointments came she tore herself out of his arms and left him there, with his exaggerated desires unsatisfied, unappeased.

While it lasted, their love ran high and gave them wonderful moments of inebriety. They would go out of town and walk in dark woods and love each other like the animals. They would come back, exhausted, on lonely roads, and while she was silent and allowed his hand to wander over her body, he would keep on speaking.

"No, dear, it is not nonsense, it is love. It is not more meaningless than the song of the birds above our heads. And I am so thankful to you that you have re-awakened me to it from my sterile, useless, prosaic, mildewing studies that lead to nothing. You are everything to me, my sweetheart, my sister, my mother, my teacher, my leader. I love both your body and your brain, your flesh and your thoughts. Here and here and here. All of you. All over."

And he would repeat in ecstasy:

"All over, everywhere."

And when he observed that somebody was coming and feared that his words had been heard, he would resume his normal walk, with his hands in his pockets, and add aloud:

"Yes, everywhere—here, at home, in the mountains . . ."

But he was unable to continue. His voice was flat and staggering.

Mary took advantage of such days to urge William to change his conduct, to start a new life, to imitate her and transform his practice into the lucrative instrument which her own represented. She would flatter him, praise his ability, his hidden qualities, paint their future life in the most vivid colors.

That would render him thoughtful at once, and in the next days he would grow colder. Then he visited her less and less often, until she did not see him for weeks.

Mary was too much of a positive character to submit to such a life. She could not endure it. She had to know. Was he going to yield to her in every respect, live her life—the life chosen by her—the only one worth while, and also to obey her completely, and not throw the best in him to his dreams? Or would he refuse? A decision was necessary. She hated unclear situations. She attempted again and again to speak to him. But he shunned her. These things were too fine for words. Besides, he himself did not know. He did not know where he was. He was still searching. How could he express his feelings? The best thing was not to speak about such matters and leave them unsolved, uncertain. He loved unclear situations.

She tried another method—leaving him alone, ignoring him. Two or three times it worked. He awoke from his work and irregular life and felt a great emptiness. He needed Mary, he needed her badly and he went to her. She received him coldly. He could not open his mouth. His

words of love froze before he pronounced them.

To punish him more severely she allowed him to stay overnight. But she was strong-headed. She went to bed early and fell asleep immediately. He, of course, could not close his eyes. He looked into the darkness while his body was like a live ember, a red hot brand, waiting for a breath of air, for a bit of breeze, however slight, to be transformed into a high flame. He waited in vain. She slept and breathed quietly and did not guess his agony. At last his love and desire changed into hatred, he calmed himself, went to sleep. And when she woke and saw him so peaceful and undisturbed, she concluded that there was no hope and that she would better discontinue all relations with him for good and for a really long time—that is, until he should come to his senses.

So it went on until their relations cooled down entirely. And one day he suddenly realized that Miss Mary Vanish—Doctor Mary Vanish—was a stranger to whom he owed respect and consideration and that he had no right to visit her unexpectedly. On the rare occasions when he went to see her, he first called her up on the telephone and made sure that he was welcome. She, on the other hand, was ashamed to show herself otherwise than completely dressed in his presence. Their conversation was polite and confined to the strictly necessary topics.

William was always in love and all his loves made him suffer. When it was not his wife, it was his medical science and practice. When it was not medicine, it was his passion for music, his hope to create that he had not yet given up. He went from one to the other in abrupt fits. None of them blended with the others. They rather interfered with each other. No harmony, no peace reigned between them. William's devotion to each of them was jerky. A jump, and he was a physician, absorbed, steeped in science to the detriment of everything else. Another jump, and he forgot science, to give himself to art, although he never went as far in the latter as he went in medicine. A quick turn, another leap, and he left both of them to thrust himself headlong into his love, previously for Mary, now for no one in particular, but for theoretical love itself.

In his musical days he hardly knew where he was. He wrote music while listening to his patients' histories. He examined them without being able to tell what he had heard through the stethoscope. He was dangerous. His prescriptions were unsafe. He composed in the street, in the hospital, day and night.

Although he lived and acted by outbursts, and so did often one thing well and none of the others, William never neglected his music altogether. He did not always write down the musical pictures that he painted in his mind, but he kept on composing and playing on his piano. And he did not fail to hear the best music that came to the city.

And in this respect New York, which so far had

produced but little, was more fortunate than many a European city. It is true that abroad they had the celebrated conservatories, led by the cream of professors, the ancient churches with their traditions and memories of old composers, the musical circles; and in the streets new songs were created every day and crossed their melodies with popular airs and ballads and children's games of the previous centuries. But New York offered an abundance of classic, modern and ultra-modern music, executed by the best masters and the most perfectly organized bodies, all attracted from Europe by the sweet sound of the dollar. And the number of music lovers, which was tremendous, grew from day to day. The most select voices, the most exquisite *virtuosi*, the finest chamber music given by trios, quartettes, quintettes, the greatest orchestras under the ablest *batons*.

There was music somewhere almost every day in the week, on weekdays, Sundays, holidays, often several concerts a day, several at the same time, at the same hour. There were morning, afternoon and evening concerts. Concerts for children, for adolescents. Concerts for all pockets. One could hear the highest creations, marvelously executed, for a few nickels.

William often came late to the concert hall because he had been busy with his last patient longer than expected. At other times he sent away all the patients who were anxiously waiting for him in his office and ran to the magic call of music.

Or he began a childbirth case in a distant street. And, staying there a night and a day, and judging that there was yet time, he left it. After a ride of an hour and a half he sat down in the balcony and closed his eyes, avoiding to follow the music on his sheet in order not to see the woman in the front row who showed to her neighbor her newest photo. Extremely tired, not seldom he fell asleep, and when awakened by the applause he



cursed himself for having lost, for instance, César Franck's "*Symphonie en ré mineur.*" He looked at his watch and, suddenly alarmed at the idea that the woman in Brooklyn might deliver just then and scream and call him in despair, he left in a hurry. But on his way there he was prudent enough to telephone his office and, as he had suspected, the husband had called up several times, the last time saying that the doctor's services were no more needed, and he was asked not to disturb himself.

That meant the loss of his fee, of twenty-four hours of work, of the office patients, whom he could not see for a whole day, of the favor of an entire family with its ramifications and friends, replaced instead by their permanent active and passive enmity. In a small city a mistake of this kind would have wrecked a practice forever. But in New York one group of people hardly ever learned what another group thought.

Such events saddened William very much. Full of remorse he would continue his practice more conscientiously than ever.

During some of his musical attacks he took a course of composition, continued to study by himself, snatched some special lessons in counterpoint. He also wrote music. Once he thought he had put his hand on something really worth while. He found the principal theme while walking home from a consultation. Crossing a busy street, his mental ear full of divine sounds—he was deaf to the horns of the autos, the drivers' oaths, the yells of the passers-by—he was hurt by a wheel, happily not badly. When he was picked up and a hundred anxious faces asked him: "Well, how is it?" he was pale and astonished and answered as he always did when raptured by his world of sounds:

"Ssst . . ."

He wanted to be left alone so as not to forget one of the variations to the theme that was just then unfolding itself to him. He limped away, while the

crowd shrugged their shoulders, concluding that he was mentally abnormal.

One day Mary came to see him. He did not notice her. She stepped back and watched him from a corner of the room.

He was alone, but was leading an orchestra. A catheter in his right hand, he was commanding with vehemence the imaginary multitude of executants. From his gestures one could see that there were many musicians. He bent down far to the left, extended his arms and almost his entire body to the center, to the right, worked with his elbows, danced with his knees, as if on springs. Now his eyes were quiet, his gestures correspondingly serene, indicating a texture of sweet happy sounds, his face brightened with a fine smile; the next moment his eyes, serious, attentive, then wide open, furious—the short rapid movements of the arms, of the nervous fingers, of the body, showing that he was in the midst of a terrific battle. Then regular, cadenced, energetic, majestic motions as of a triumphal march. From time to time a brief, vigorous negation, a shaking of his head, a protest, signifying a dissatisfaction with some unexpected, uncalled-for dissonance or discord, a mistake of someone in the group of wind instruments, later among the strings—in reality caused by a screeching, uncoiled carriage in the street.

Suddenly an interruption. An explosion of loud laughter. It was Mary, who could stand it no longer.

"What's the matter with you?"

He, surprised, but unable to stop, made a wry face:

"Please! . . ."

And continued for another minute. Then ashamed, he added:

"I am only making believe, just to fool you."

But when she left, he cried like a child and tore his hair.

William met a beautiful type in one of the earlier

popularizers of music, a conductor of a good orchestra who seemed happy to create around himself an atmosphere of music, to spread the cult, the adoration of music. He was the first to awaken among the workers of the big city a strong need of the best music. He came down to Cooper Union, to Washington Irving High, islands, oases of culture intimately related to the innumerable shops and tenements which swallowed every day the dense population swarming all around. He lectured, illustrated, executed. His German accent disturbed nobody, as none of the thousands of his followers spoke better than he. For many, on the contrary, his English was too deep, too correct, and they failed to understand him. At first his audiences were a mixture of Germans, Italians, Poles, Swedes. Later a few proletarian Jews, then more of them, until they occupied the entire hall and spoke among themselves about music technically like old musicians or critics. A few years later, when the audiences became too large and the master took them uptown, for the same low admission, the Jews followed him *en masse* into this aristocratic neighborhood, at first mounting the stairs timidly. After a short time they took the large hall by assault, became familiar with it and behaved there as irreverently as in a synagogue or at a downtown union meeting. So much so that the official language of these concert audiences seemed to be Yiddish. There they discovered the other symphony orchestras and invaded them also. They formed new and numerous audiences, replacing a large part of the previous select, soft-spoken, respectable patrons, to the great astonishment of the rich Mæcenates and other old maids of both sexes, who were disappointed at such a degrading success. The pioneer was admired and loved by his many friends because, at a time when music was yet the delight and monopoly of those with full pockets, he was for a long period the only one who dared to give it to them for

a few pennies. He tapped new reservoirs in their souls, brought light and happiness and beauty into their miserable existence composed of sweat, dust and labor, into their life almost entirely spent near the deafening machines in the shops and in the dark rooms of the tenements.

His concerts were now in a decline, as the other organizations, seeing the trend toward music, lowered the admission fees too.

William was taken to one of these East Side concerts by one of his patients.

The latter was an abnormal individual, a mythomaniac who liked to fabulize and lie for no visible purpose whatever. Like all the young men with temporary schizophrenic tendencies, in those days, he evinced an excessive interest in Nietzsche and Stirner, whom he quoted continually. As he could not attain what he desired, he imagined himself extremely important, creating a more agreeable truth than the true one and so embellishing his life through lies. He posed not only before others, but before himself as well.

He always spoke about music, although he knew little about it.

The conductor was explaining the development of music and giving comparative glimpses of its various periods. Something from Carmen was played to illustrate the last sentences of the lecture. The young man, taking on important airs of a connoisseur, sank down deep in his seat, worked his eyelids and within a few seconds tears rolled down his cheeks. He turned his face ostentatiously toward William and was careful not to wipe off the precious drops.

But the lecturer continued.

"This is a perfect example of the kind of music about which I spoke to you a while ago. . . . It is true that at present many modern musicians turn up their noses at Carmen, but. . . ."

The mythomaniac dried his face with his hand-

kerchief and put on a superior, contemptuous smile. And when another portion of the same opera began, he said to William:

"I am going, doctor. I cannot stand it any longer. It's awfully boring!"

William stayed. All these explanations were naturally too elementary for him, but he liked the speaker. When the concert was finished, he went to see him behind the platform and introduced himself. He told him in plain words that he would like to show him some work that he had done. He was invited to the master's studio.

The next day he went there. The master, kind and smiling behind his long, black, now slightly grayish moustache, received him well, looked the manuscript over, corrected some phrases, gave his reasons for so doing, asked William to play his own work on the piano. But the composition, although marked *Opus I*, was unfinished and the master, while praising it, said that he must see it again when completed.

Nobody was happier than William. On his way home he decided thenceforth to devote at least half of his time to music—study and composition. But the next few weeks were heavy with hard medical work that suffered no delay and filled him with new worries. He had no time to touch his piano or his music sheets. He never finished his composition and was ashamed to go to see the master again.

One day he received a patient who was a real professional musician. As an orphan he had been brought up in the barracks of a regiment in Petersburg, under the Tsar, where they fed him abundantly with blows, but also taught him thoroughly to play on wind instruments, especially the flute, which he mastered long before he could read and write. He took up the violin himself and with the help of a kindhearted military teacher he learned much theory and became proficient on almost all

the other instruments. For years he served in the Tzar's musical companies. Then he traveled all over the world, playing everywhere. At last he came to New York, where he had all kinds of adventures. Just then he was playing the viola in one of the great orchestras and taught a class in the best reputed musical college of the city.

As William was one evening in the artist's house and was listening to him play marvelously on the violin, he conceived the idea of writing something especially for him. He had in mind something that would express his own tormented and stormy soul, his vain hopes, his bitter disappointments, his strong will to be, to live and to succeed, all mingled with the simple joys met in life, with the beauties seen and guessed everywhere in nature, but made ugly by man. He wanted to deplore man's stupidity, which changed a paradise into an inferno. He would end with an elegy on his own weakness, his huge desires and small abilities.

It was going to be a magnificent work, original and deep, stirring and thought-provoking. But it would be devoid of the senseless acrobatics, the meaningless and exaggerated virtuosity, that he hated so much and which some composers put in in order to attract the brilliant and popular soloists and the shallow public. In William's work the artist would have plenty of opportunities to shine, to show his brightest qualities, his splendid talent at its best.

He also wanted it to appear irregular, like the plaintive sounds of the wind, like the sobs of a heart in distress, to give the impression of an improvisation made by the executant.

He wrote in the silence and solitude of the night and played and corrected for several hours in the daytime. It took him the whole winter. At the end he hurried with it to his friend. There were yet a few things to improve, but he was too impatient and wanted to hear the opinion of the musician.

The latter considered it a good piece and put aside one passage which he promised to give to his best pupil to be studied and then played in public, in a small hall, at the end of the school term.

William was disillusioned. Could a young boy with little practice play such an intricate composition? But to his great dismay the violinist showed him politely that the movements were much simpler than their author had thought and that they were not difficult enough for himself.

William saw clearly that he had not produced a *chef d'oeuvre*, and wanted to withdraw it. But his friend assured him that it was most encouraging and really very good for a beginner. He kept the score, congratulated William and assured him again that it will be played.

In spite of his partial failure and his feeling of defeat, William was happy, and, the more he thought of the great opportunity offered to him, the more he rejoiced. "Just think of it," he said to himself, "something written by me will be played in public! Just think of it!" At that thought he was overwhelmed with joy.

He flew home as if his legs had wings. He hummed in the subway, which was too slow for him, all the songs he remembered. He tightened his lips so as not to burst out with loud mirth. In the street he sang parts of *Petrushka* with bizarre words pronounced with his mouth twisted. It might have been Chinese or African. He pushed the passers-by with his elbows and stepped on their feet.

He had a feeling recalled from his childhood dreams, when all solid ground and all obstacles disappeared and he used to slide down or up in the infinite space without moving his limbs and without the need of wings. Flying was so easy—he was astonished that so much fuss was made over flying machines.

He went to Mary's room, forgetting that the pre-

vious day they had quarrelled. He kissed her on both cheeks and embraced her vehemently. Then he made the funniest grimaces with his face and called her "my dear Trukasheedoolah, my tiny Gaurisan-kar, my little Marydranath-Tagore!"

For a whole week William was the happiest person under the sun. He made the most audacious projects. But at the end of the week came the frightful comedown. The violinist told him that it was impossible to put his piece on the programme and that it would have to wait for another opportunity.



William's office was small, but not uncomfortable. He had three rooms, one of which was the waiting room, while two were used for his work. His examining couch, his operating table on which he also did his rectal and gynecological examinations and treatments, a plain oak closet with instruments and another small metal table for minor surgery occupied the second room. In the third he had his desk, his piano, a sleeping cot and his bookcases and book shelves.

Now that his practice was increasing he would have gladly introduced some new apparatus, some necessary modern machines, the use of which he had learned in the hospital. But for that purpose he needed more room and he did not dare to venture into permanent heavy expenses—high rent—before being certain about a permanent clientele. Therefore he thought the best thing would be to take his spacious waiting room, with its windows to the front and plenty of light, as his principal consulting room and let the patients wait in the third or rear room, which had a separate entrance from the hall and communicated with the other two. One morning he began to move the furniture about for that purpose and he was almost through with the work when Mary arrived.

“What are you doing?”

He explained.

“Why didn't you ask me?” she said. “Now, what you're doing here is a big mistake. As long as you are poor and cannot afford to have all your rooms

as you desire them, you yourself must be cramped and . . .”

“But the consulting room is really the only one that matters. That’s where the work for the patients is done.”

“True. But they don’t think of that. Reality is nothing. Appearance is everything. Patients are like fish. They must be caught with bait. First outside your office with whatever you can, but decently, nicely, ethically, so that your methods are invisible. Then here they must not have at once the abominable feeling that this is a poor place where. . . .”

“Oh, you’ve told me that so many times! I don’t care. If they’re fools, let them go away. I don’t want such patients. I can do nothing with them anyway.”

“Dear boy, if you’d only let me fix you up. . . .”

“No, not that! Never!”

“All right, you’ll always be starving.”

“Am I starving? I have all I want and lately even a surplus.”

“Yes, and you give it away to what you call poor patients. They’re fooling you. You’re an easy mark! Just let me manage your business for one month and you’ll see! You’d change your living altogether, you. . . .”

“You make me sick, Mary. How often will you repeat that? Didn’t I tell you that I’ll always be inflexible in that respect. Our budgets must remain separate and I’ll take nothing from you. . . . Besides, what do you know about to-morrow? To-day. . . .”

“What?”

“Well, to-day we’re friends, but last week. . . .”

“Stop, you naughty boy!”

“And to-morrow?”

She put her hand over his mouth and said:

“It all depends on you. We’d both be the happiest creatures under the sun if you wanted it. Oh, Bill!”

They did not kiss. She waited for him to begin, but he only looked at her without the slightest emotion.

"Yes, she continued, "you must give the best and most attractive room to the patients. They are to wait there. Let their waiting be pleasant. Let the impression be good. The first room that they step into should also be suggestive. For instance, you have no books here."

"I keep them in my own room, in my study, as they are for myself only."

"I know, but that is not the way. Large, heavy volumes with medical titles are an asset. Even if they're discarded and worthless, they will impress the people with the idea that the doctor is serious and learned. Nearby a lot of literary classics will show them that you are thoroughly well educated and will inspire their confidence."

"But the fact that the books are here can be no proof that they have been read."

"Exactly. In most cases nobody has ever opened them and they are disturbed once in a great while by the chambermaid's duster only. In my new place further uptown—by the way, do you know, I am moving there to-morrow? That's what I came to tell you. They've just called me up; the decorations are finished and dry."

"You'll be all right up there."

"Yes, now I have a good address and that'll mark a new step in my life. You'll be surprised when you see my new office with the nurses and secretaries, with the Negro at the door and the shining white stuff."

"Well, all our things are made to be white and clean."

"Of course, but I'll have a wealth of it. Ten times as much as I'll ever use."

Suddenly William jumped up.

"That reminds me. . . . Did you see that?"

He showed her *The Saturday Evening Post* and quoted a passage from it aloud:

"The real pest among reputable physicians is the young man who expects his patients to pay for his needlessly high overhead expenses. He may be known by his spacious and elaborate offices and waiting rooms, buttoned door boys, sleek secretaries, fluttering office nurses and powder monkeys of both sexes and an all-pervading shimmer of white enamel, mechanical novelties and glittering metal work. Not infrequently the young practitioner who indulges in all these fripperies is trying to put over a poor piece by means of costly stage effects. He sometimes forgets, and his patients still oftener fail to realize, that what he really has for sale resides in his own cranium, and that mere style, atmosphere and scenery are poor substitutes for knowledge, experience and technical proficiency."

"That was written by a layman," William added.

"Well," Mary replied, "What does it prove? That all this tinsel and show-off is a necessity. It is used because it has to be used. That writer does not know that it is necessary for those with brains and knowledge and experience as well. And what he further ignores is the fact that many of the old and so-called reputable physicians use these methods also."

"That's true. Why then should they not be classified with the swindlers?"

"Because, if you want to be such a severe judge, you'll find almost no honest person in the profession."

"I don't care, I . . ."

"You're not the right judge anyway, you're almost not a doctor. What are you? You claim to be an artist and you are not. As a physician you are making rapid steps toward failure and if you go on. . . ."

"I *am* a failure, but what you call a success is not at all alluring. Surely more than half of the

ethical doctors hide their quackery under a regular diploma. It is ethical quackery. And as to our great men in medicine, the real teachers and authors, they are more dangerous than the rest. Many of them are quacks in their relations both with their clientele and with the small, common, general practitioner. The more celebrated they are, the more they take advantage of the respect in which they are held and the faith with which they are approached in order to. . . ."

"Where did you learn that? It is just your impression and it is all wrong. You certainly cannot prove it. Besides, what are you driving at? Do you mean to say that humanity could get along without doctors?"

"Who knows? It surely cannot, because it thinks it cannot and it has made a mess of life—all of it, not excluding the doctors themselves, their lives.

. . ."

"Then it is all right again. And moreover, the patients, the public want to be deceived. They want suggestion in all its forms. It is not only harmless, but good for them and it is the beginning of their cure."

"That's bosh! With that theory you can disguise anything you desire. The suggestion stuff has been greatly overdone and it is time to stop it."

"There . . . there, you inscribe yourself among the most conservative."

"May be. I use suggestion too, even unconsciously; we cannot help doing it. Often intentionally. But not of the kind that's pure bluff. I don't want to cure sickness that way. I'd prefer a thousand times to give up the practice and go to hell than do that."

"You speak so often about giving up that I fear some day you'll do it."

"Perhaps. But this is how I feel about it—if I can do anything, it must be through solid, honest work."

"Much do the patients care about that and much do they appreciate it! On the contrary. . . ."

"All they know is through us, through the profession. We've shown them the way. It is we who are educating them, in many respects splendidly, especially in the last years and in regard to preventive hygiene, personal and general. But we're also creating unnecessary necessities, complicating the people's lives, bringing about new styles in treatment, in our relations with the lay public. Yes, styles, styles in ordinary therapy, in surgery. Also new beliefs, new prejudices and superstitions for the old ones that have become untenable in the light of general science. We give them a modern, scientific form. We make true progress, but that does not interfere with superstition; it is growing side by side with science. The layman is following us faithfully, but from a distance, usually remaining one generation behind. The public to-day clings to the teachings of the doctors of thirty years ago, to their scientific ignorance—for instance, their exaggerated and misunderstood fear of catching cold, their exaggerated and misunderstood dread of germs. It takes them time to unlearn. Our science changes too fast for them. But such fake as a show of books and furniture. . . ."

"Necessary fake."

"Made necessary by us, just as the press gives dirt to the people and then turns around and says that the people demand it. Our charlatanism—whether open and vulgar or delicate and concealed—is all made by ourselves, or, as that East Side doctor says, by the '*médicaille*' for the '*canaille*'."

"Oh, you mean that horrid man with the big whiskers who lectures to the Jewish shopgirls and workmen on medicine in their own language? A faker! He is the laughingstock of the doctors down there. What unbelievable things they tell me about him in the hospital!"

"Yes, because he is telling the truth about them,

has dared to free himself from our prejudices and acts like a real human being. I am not his disciple. I don't think I have the courage to be. Nor do I entirely agree with him. But he has his opinions and, whether right or wrong, they are his own and he lives up to them. You call him a faker because the faker often adopts the same methods superficially—only superficially—but, of course, never the principles and the conduct of the honest and convinced man, not even of the honest fanatic. . . . He is a thinker, if there ever was any. Perfectly honest. A philanthropist—although he would be the first one to deny that. Giving his work, his life, himself to the people. And, mind you, he does not even blame the doctors for their mistakes or the charlatans of any healing cult for their swindles, because he explains it all through social reasons. He says that all professions and all trades are to a certain extent dishonest and that all have their hands on each other's throat."

"Then it's all right. If everybody is dishonest, everybody is honest. And why should you or I be an exception?"

"I would say, if so, we might as well quit. Let us all stop deceiving one another!"

"But we cannot. There are universal laws. . . . And what's the use? It would be utopia! We have to go on and nobody should complain."

"Nobody but the worker, as my down-town friend says. They all sit tight on him while he strangles no one."

"He doesn't because he can't. He'd like to."

"But the fact is he does not."

"Doctors should not be counted among the anti-social persons. They are useful."

"Everybody is anti-social. . . ."

"Our average income in this country is seven hundred dollars yearly—that's all. That is a statistical fact!"

"Do you believe that yarn too? And the average,

too? That's a lie! You've read it in the medical press, and now it is making the rounds of the lay press. Doctors abroad may be starving, but not in the United States. It is true that the average doctor of the honest minority . . ."

"Minority?"

"What is there astonishing? It is the same in all professions . . . I repeat—minority . . . and I specify—those who have no other means of living than their practice. The average honest and real doctor is in principle a workman. He is taken advantage of by many. He is selling his work and a good deal of it is given away—although not so much as we want the lay public to believe. And, really, as a whole, the doctors, with their qualities and defects, even including the dishonest majority—yes, majority—are not a worse group than any other class of people taken at random, and many are a lot better, which is a bad recommendation for humanity. But the seven-hundred-dollar average is ridiculous!"

"You must have gotten that from your East Side friend, too. I see you're in love with him. Too bad! With your negative and pessimistic thoughts, on your road all paved with doubts, you're in need of just the opposite influence. Poor boy!"

"I protest! I'm not a pessimist."

"But now I must go. Bye!"



Although he knew human nature and the old adage that men to men are wolves, William did expect some kindness from his colleagues at the beginning of his practice, when he opened his office. But he was totally disappointed.

He did not go so far as to believe that the older practitioners of the community, as a well known—retired—surgeon once said, should send the new doctor some patients, “to encourage him and give him a chance to live.” But he thought that the physicians established in the neighborhood or some of his fellow members of the medical society would come over and give him their blessing in the form of a friendly smile. None of them came.

On the contrary, they did all they could to harm and discredit him. In the first few months he learned from his rare patients, from the druggist on his block and from others the opinions some doctors expressed about him.

Of course, he very soon understood that most patients, like most people in all circumstances, lied and that they were unable to relate a simple fact just as it happened. They lied as to their symptoms and the doctor had to pick out what and how much of their complaints was true or at least half true. Besides, they often lied unwittingly, unconsciously, being unable to observe what they saw and felt and forgetting the succession of events. But they frequently lied intentionally, trying to flatter the physician by telling him untruths about his colleagues.

However, when several of them, independently, told him stories that were alike, William had to believe. Perhaps the report that his nearest neighbor, an old physician in a nearby street, had said that William knew nothing about medicine, was an exaggeration or altogether invented. But it was probably true that a few colleagues in the neighborhood nodded their heads significantly and had a contemptuous smile on different occasions, or simply said "Hm!" in a certain way at the mention of William's name, as he had been told.

There were other stories. Doctors who were called in on cases after him looked at the bottles or pills prescribed by him, puckered up their eyebrows, shook their heads and said "Terrible!"—all in front of the frightened patient and his family. Or they asked quickly, "How many of these pills have you taken?" as if they were afraid of the possible effects. Or they tore away William's plaster from the patient's skin, asking, "Who applied this rubbish?"

The druggist confirmed these stories and it appeared that many physicians, when speaking about any of their colleagues, had their superior smile all made up, crystallized, ready for use. It was their invariable practice to comment in a deprecating way about all other doctors without exception.

The drugstore was a sort of rallying place, where all kinds of people from the block came to telephone, sip their sodas, take a light lunch, purchase their soaps, face powders, perfumes, toothbrushes, books, consult the clerk about small ailments, buy ready-made, self-prescribed, much advertised ointments, ointments and internal medicines, and also to have the doctor's prescriptions filled. Some old-fashioned, priggish, pedantic theoreticians have written treatises about the decadence of the American drugstore as compared with the highbrow, elegant, strictly medicinal, respectable European

pharmacy. But the fact is that its American counterpart, where, among all its goods, the medicaments occupy a comparatively small place, is in principle conducted on a sounder basis, as it is evident that nail files, hairbrushes and candies are more useful—or less harmful—than drugs.

Customers tarried there, cigars between their teeth, gossiping about business, doctors and sickness, among themselves and with the pharmacist.

There the doctors also met, entering like the wind. "No time, I'm busy. Say, Joe, give me . . .!" And then they would chat for an hour with other doctors or with the druggist behind the counter or in the disorderly place misnamed the laboratory.

Naturally, both the pharmacist and his clerks lied when speaking about the doctors. But in all three stores situated near his office William was told about his colleagues' remarks concerning him. And in one of them the apprentice, who was yet a student, concluded laughing:

"The funny part is that, after he had the patient discard your medicine, he prescribed the same thing under another form. Here is his prescription. . . . I just dispensed it. Yours was a potion, he gave it in capsules."

He repeated what the doctors said about William in the store.

"How could they speak about me—I am a complete stranger to them?" William asked naively.

Under such circumstances it was not easy to acquire a clientele. But the way of all the beginners in medicine is difficult. Excepting those who have much money and can wait any length of time; and, if they are studious, work in a hospital for years, and those with many friends and relatives who transform themselves into active agents and canvassers for the young man, the novice always has a hard time. Armed with his sheepskin and his meagre bundle of theoretical college knowledge, he is thrown on his own resources, on his own respon-

sibility, into a cold, friendless world. He must do as best he may.

If he has to earn a living immediately he is unable to absent himself for a minute from his office for fear of losing a patient who might run to another doctor. In the first years he can go nowhere except when called out professionally. He has to sit still, watch and wait for a chance.

He cannot afford to do supplementary work in the hospitals or dispensaries, because, curiously enough, in this country such service is unremunerated or almost so.

The conscienceless, cunning, shameless pushers succeed rapidly. They would succeed easily in anything. They smile, bow, creep, lie, knock their way through. They take their practice by assault. Any method is good enough for them.

Some have their paid agents who go among the people and, as if in a casual and uninterested manner, recommend the young newcomer, extolling his medical skill and distributing his cards.

"Let me see, have I one of his cards? Yes, here's one. You can say that I sent you, and he'll take good care of you."

This agent may also sit in the waiting room and converse with the patients, telling them about the wonders of the new doctor.

"You'd be surprised what they think of him in the profession. He stands high already. He'll soon be teaching in college. The big men cannot do a thing without him. You can safely call him professor. I tell you that confidentially, because the doctor hates to be praised."

Among the ignorant foreigners it is customary to call "professor" any physician who is assisting somebody in an institution, and to pay him a correspondingly larger fee.

In the large American cities many groups have the system of brotherhood and sisterhood doctors. The mutual aid societies, the benevolent societies,

the lodges consist of members originating from one country or one city in Europe and are composed of Germans, Irishmen, Scandinavians, Italians, Poles, Jews and so on. Nationalities hardly mix. No melting pot there. These societies are usually led by individuals who, under the mask of altruism, seek their personal interests only. Young lawyers in search of cases and connections, old lawyers looking for shady businesses, real estate and insurance men, grocers, restaurant keepers, undertakers, all those who have something to sell, worm their way in and become "brothers". They participate in the very frequent soirées, balls and excursions arranged by the society—that is—by themselves. The plain members go all over the city selling tickets to their friends, many of them outsiders. That enlarges still more the circle of activity of the business hunter. Nor does he miss a meeting, and he always endeavors to take the floor. He manages to be elected president, treasurer, secretary or member of an important committee. The election is as hot and full of plots, calumnies, open accusations and fist fights as that of any mayoralty election. There are parties and intrigues. These scenes also occur in many class-conscious workmen's organizations, as they too admit and are swamped with people whose devotion, with few honorable exceptions, is directed to their own pockets.

The doctor in quest of patients in such a society has to be introduced by an old member, solemnly presented at a meeting and elected as a "brother." If it happens to be a secret lodge with foolish symbols and stupid mysteries—a more inane game than any child would invent—he has to pass through a number of humiliating and ridiculous ceremonies and oftentimes through a good deal of hazing.

Then he has to wait for the time of the election of "officers."

Meanwhile he starts his fishing work. The members look him over at the meeting, smell him,

study his face, tie, coat, shoes, his behavior, his handshake, the general impression he makes. They listen to the praise unofficially bestowed upon him and spread by the friends who had brought him in. They invite him to their little home parties, to the betrothals of their daughters, to their wives' birthdays. If he comes, if he is "nice" to them, they decide that he is "a good doctor." If not, he is "a bad doctor."

But as William tried to find out more about this practice, he learned that it was not always easy to be elected as the fraternal doctor. Often there were two or more candidates. Each one had his friends and avertisers. The old doctor was beloved by those who were simply used to him and hated a change, or by those who had seen him do good work in their own families, or again by the tailor, plumber or electrician who was working for him, or by the real estate agent who was selling him land. He was, of course, opposed by those with whom he had had a moment of sincerity or impatience which was interpreted as roughness—and naturally by those in whose cases he had failed. Others were simply tired of one doctor and wanted another. As in all elections, bribery was often the deciding factor and the only way to be elected.

The doctor's salary was nominal. Everybody knew that what the doctor was really looking for was a clientele. He, on the other hand, took his revenge for all his humiliations and for the ridiculously small yearly payment by giving the most superficial attention to the members' cases, except when they personally paid him an additional fee, which they sometimes did. Then there were certain treatments, such as venereal,—“immoral” they were called in the society's not very moral constitution—surgical, gynecological and others—“special work”—that were not included in the physician's obligations and for which the members had to pay separately and the full fee. The doctor always got

his share of the "split fee" when a consultant had to be called—and he saw to it that one had to be called frequently.

William despised this contract practice. It disgusted him. He refused all invitations of this kind. He preferred to starve or to look for another occupation rather than to resort to any base and mortifying compromise.

But in spite of that his practice improved steadily. There was something about him that inspired confidence. Besides, in a large city it is almost impossible that a physician should lack a clientele if he has the means to wait. There is enough real sickness and still more imaginary sickness and fear of disease to feed all existing and coming doctors. There are sufficient fools who are uninformed as to the plainest elements of health and others who are informed, but do not dare to take care of themselves. No doctor needs to pray that there should be more disease. All he needs is to wish that more of the sick should come his way instead of going to his colleagues.

William had no money. But he had something that was just as valuable—very few and very modest needs. It was not so with Mary. She had a small but tolerable income to begin with. Her dispensary work was a foundation for her practice, while William's hospital visits meant delay in building up a clientele. By going there he did what he could ill afford to do.

But he had some successes that attracted patients. Of course, like all the other doctors, he "cured" the "colds in the head," because they cured themselves. A few of the innumerable constipation cases that continually come to all practitioners and besiege their offices—did not a teacher once say to his medical students, "Gentlemen, constipation will be your daily bread"?—were temporarily helped by him. Of course, they soon fell back into their old

ailment, being unable or unwilling to change their mode of living and so to remove the cause of their trouble. Meanwhile they praised his virtues to their friends. Others who suffered from nothing but the idea that they were suffering from something felt better—or thought they did, which is the same thing.

There were some spectacular cases that became known in wider circles and brought him patients from other boroughs and a few from out-of-town. Then there were the mistakes and failures of other physicians that he corrected and for which he was commended, just as his competitors made all they could of his errors. A woman of forty-two with painful and irregular menstruation was told by a specialist that her condition was due to her approaching menopause and that she might be sure not to conceive any more. William, who saw her later, diagnosed pregnancy, which proved to be true. Another time a physician imprudently prophesied the end of a case by death within two weeks, while William, more careful, did not pronounce himself with precision, waiting for the events, but intimating that there was hope of improvement if . . . . The patient did not die and the tattlers said that Doctor Straight was sure of that, but he had hesitated out of charity for the other doctor. A young girl with a heart disease had an attack of blindness of the left eye. Nobody knew the reason. The oculist could not explain it. He said it was very serious and, if cured at all, it would take at least one year. William did not know what to do with the poor child. He just put her to bed, enjoined absolute rest, changed her diet. Within three days her sight returned. He could not find the cause of the trouble or of the cure. He told the family that it was an obscure case, perhaps some temporary circulatory disturbance in the vision center of the brain or in the nerve roads leading to or from the center and that it had cured itself. But they did not believe him.



They were convinced that he was modest and misrepresented his own merits.

Cranky patients harmed him, but many others also helped him.

In short, he had the usual success of the common doctor.

So his practice grew without any special effort on his part, except doing the work that came along. He did not advertise, he used no indirect methods to make himself known. Of course, his clientele would have been far from satisfactory for other doctors with large families, heavy expenses or all kinds of appetites. But for William it sufficed.

After some time, however, a few events happened that had an unexpectedly bad effect on his clientele. One day he saw a patient in his home and, deciding that proper treatment and care were impossible in the dark, unventilated, windowless room where the patient was lying all alone and without the possibility of a nurse or other help, he sent him to the hospital. He did not see the patient again and had completely forgotten him, when he was notified by a lawyer that, if he was not willing to settle the case of Mr. So-and-So amicably—that is, by paying a certain amount of money, half of which, as he learned later, would go to the rapacious law shark who had concocted the outrage—an action would be brought against him.

In the juridical jargon it was:

“An action brought by a father to recover damages alleged to have been sustained in the loss of services of his son. It is claimed that the defendant was called in to treat the plaintiff’s son, and that the defendant carelessly and negligently diagnosed the illness from which the plaintiff’s son was suffering. It is claimed that the defendant advised that the plaintiff’s son was suffering from a contagious disease and advised his removal to the hospital, where within a few days the plaintiff’s son died and the father now seeks to recover damages for the loss of services of his son.”

William was amazed. How could that be? Why should anybody be so fiendish as to weave this lie round him, as to set such a trap for him? He was desperate. He was unable to eat or sleep or work. He did not know what to do. Most physicians were insured against just such cases, as well as against real malpractice trials. He was not.

They were convinced that he was modest and misrepresented his own merits.

Cranky patients harmed him, but many others also helped him.

In short, he had the usual success of the common doctor.

So his practice grew without any special effort on his part, except doing the work that came along. He did not advertise, he used no indirect methods to make himself known. Of course, his clientele would have been far from satisfactory for other doctors with large families, heavy expenses or all kinds of appetites. But for William it sufficed.

After some time, however, a few events happened that had an unexpectedly bad effect on his clientele. One day he saw a patient in his home and, deciding that proper treatment and care were impossible in the dark, unventilated, windowless room where the patient was lying all alone and without the possibility of a nurse or other help, he sent him to the hospital. He did not see the patient again and had completely forgotten him, when he was notified by a lawyer that, if he was not willing to settle the case of Mr. So-and-So amicably—that is, by paying a certain amount of money, half of which, as he learned later, would go to the rapacious law shark who had concocted the outrage—an action would be brought against him.

In the juridical jargon it was:

“An action brought by a father to recover damages alleged to have been sustained in the loss of services of his son. It is claimed that the defendant was called in to treat the plaintiff’s son, and that the defendant carelessly and negligently diagnosed the illness from which the plaintiff’s son was suffering. It is claimed that the defendant advised that the plaintiff’s son was suffering from a contagious disease and advised his removal to the hospital, where within a few days the plaintiff’s son died and the father now seeks to recover damages for the loss of services of his son.”

William was amazed. How could that be? Why should anybody be so fiendish as to weave this lie around him, as to set such a trap for him? He was desperate. He was unable to eat or sleep or work. He did not know what to do. Most physicians were insured against just such cases, as well as against real malpractice trials. He was not.

At first he studied the "principles of professional conduct" of his medical society. On that occasion he found a few splendid articles, but also some very reprehensible ones.

"Physicians should not only be ever ready to respond to the calls of the sick and the injured, but should be mindful of the high character of their mission and of the responsibilities they incur in the discharge of their professional duties." He liked that.

He also liked: "No insincerity, rivalry or envy should be indulged in."

"Physicians should enlighten the public with respect to the practice of charlatans and the injuries done by them."

"Splendid," he said to himself.

But he recalled the martyrdom that his East Side friend had suffered from his colleagues (and the Yiddish press inspired by them) for doing this very same thing. This doctor was accused of being himself a charlatan, following the comfortable tactics of those who want to distract the public attention from the true issue. And when he dared to enlarge his campaign so as to include many respectable doctors whose practice was rank quackery, although he did not name them, the campaign against him increased. But the real storm broke loose when he successfully taught the laymen how to live in order to avoid disease as much as possible. The doctors were probably sincere, although wrong when they believed that his only purpose was self-advertising. They were unable to imagine other

reasons in this world for doing good than one's own profit. Was it their fault? Did they not live in a system in which profit was the motive power, the alpha and omega of everything? And could they judge other people's action otherwise than by themselves? Were they prepared to understand exceptional, original individuals? Thus, at least, the victim himself, the accused doctor, excused them. That they did not implicate him in some trial that would have ruined him and sent him to jail for years, eliminating him from competition with them and from too much truth-telling, was due to the fact that the doctor was meticulously honest and extremely careful. They did all in their power to destroy him. They insulted him openly, mocked him. They sent detectives as patients to his office to complain of imaginary troubles. He treated them as they deserved, sending them home with the advice never to call again. Women with long black veils came to him, who refused to be examined, because they did not want him to find that they were lying. Some of them were men in disguise. His thronged lectures were interrupted by suspicious-looking individuals who shouted, "Swindler! quack! faker!" but disappeared quickly when the angry crowd wanted to administer a well deserved punishment. A few times thugs waited for him outside the halls and his friends, upon learning that, had to bundle him into a taxi and get him away before he could be noticed. He was also attacked by professional sluggers in side-streets, where he had to defend himself all alone, his only weapon consisting of a walking stick.

The radical doctors, who, in spite of their idealism, practiced in exactly the same manner as their conservative brethren, incited their lay friends in the press and themselves wrote articles against him. His inner sufferings were known to himself only. Outwardly he preserved a quiet, dignified demeanor. Calm, proud, self-confident, superior, he continued his work, never yielding one step, never making the

slightest concession. He doubted not that he was right.

Erect in the midst of the mud thrown at him, the flow of dirt spat from grinning mouths, gloating faces, from all these narrow brains filled with dense webs of lucre, he had only one refuge—his wife, a true friend and comrade, the only person who really believed him, helped him. Although she did not follow him in his vegetarianism and extreme social convictions, she was certain that he was true and she suffered with him. They knew dark days.

The pack running and howling after him would have been happy to see the trials and intimate difficulties which their victim endured as the result of their libellous, scurrilous actions. The pupils, readers, followers were sufficiently instructed to need the doctor rarely, which was just what this teacher desired. New patients feared to venture to his office as that of a monster against whom the press and the physicians warned them.

But all that failed to discourage this tenacious, unswerving worker. He persevered in the face of his enemies who, eager and hungry for their prey, did not even take the trouble to examine for themselves exactly what their adversary had preached. Unbelievable as it may seem, they condemned on hearsay.

Just one of the hundreds of pursuers had read something—oh, very little!—of what their heinously hated opponent had written. None of them attended personally his meetings. They did not know him and no one ever came openly to his office to make his acquaintance. To do that would have required courage. It was easier to hide anonymously in the crowd or to attack in a paper where no reply was permitted.

As a matter of fact, this man whom the East Side medical profession regarded as dangerous helped them indirectly more than he intended, more than they deserved. By attracting the attention of the

public to the avowed charlatans, he chased thousands of patients back to the offices of the regular physicians. His sin, however, consisted in at the same time exposing the quackery of the respectable practitioner and sowing the plainest health principles broadcast. They saw at once that only the very honest among them could benefit from that. Most of them preferred that nothing should be said against quackery rather than to say it in that disastrous way, reflecting upon the character of so many of them, and spreading descriptions in which a large number could recognize themselves. He, of course, distinguished between the advertising swindler, who filled the Jewish press with the most glaring and impossible promises made to the ignorant and poor immigrant reader, and the one who simply followed his teachers, followed the old medical tradition of deception of the public and aloofness from it. He called the first ones "medical bandits," and the others, all united into one type, "Dr. Suckman." He never attacked anybody personally, believing that no one was wholly responsible for the crimes provoked by the social system in which one lived. But he wanted the public, and particularly the working public, to be warned. The press could not digest it. He was too peculiar. The papers which did not attack him directly published vague insinuations. They were angry because it was due to him and to the enlightened readers of his Yiddish magazine, to the atmosphere of health, cleanliness and honesty that began to develop, that most of the Jewish papers had to discard the well paid advertisements of the medical bandits. That was the case with the socialist and anarchist, as well as with some conservative papers.

He himself was no mean radical. But his radicalism included the most integral effort not only for the future, but for the present as well. Besides, his ethics embraced much more than the human race. He was a vegetarian from the ethical, not medical



viewpoint, and very many of his disciples imitated him in that respect too. And now his innocent vegetarianism was misinterpreted, misconstrued, twisted and ridiculed by his enemies and by those who had never tried it and knew nothing about it! The radical as well as the labor leaders of the East Side dared not espouse his cause; it was too radical for them. Vegetarianism, birth control, health today, a revolution in one's individual life today, mental independence, anti-vaccinationism, social and economic causes of disease, but individual responsibility too, the loss of respect for doctors with college diplomas, clear thinking about all charlatanism. It was too much. Those who might have been inclined to understand him were too busy with strikes and the immediate class struggle. Or they were lost in the ideal of to-morrow and too blind to see what was possible today.

For a short time the irregular schools rejoiced. Here was one of the profession who criticized the profession. They could make use of him. They upheld him until they saw that he did not spare them either and that he sincerely fought all that was rotten in the healing trade, under whatever name it went.

In the course of years his teachings produced a great change in the East Side and its corresponding Jewish quarters in other American cities. The effect was marvelous. A quiet, intimate revolution. In thousands of homes the windows were opened day and night, fresh air was let in in many shops, tens of thousands of young men and women learned to eat rationally, the use of water, found the road to the country, the sunshine, the green, discovered the meaning of a decent life.

The younger generation of the East Side went more and more often to the New York and New Jersey hills near the big city, walking, camping, swimming, rowing, organizing colonies and co-operative summer places. To their fathers nature

was unknown, but they themselves were so much in love with it that many of them soon went further than the teacher himself, becoming fanatics and spelling nature with a capital "N." Within a short time the connection between the work of the health teacher and his movement for a Jewish health rebirth was forgotten. Many ignored the man who had given them the first impulse and whose spirit was alive in their youthful frolics.

Thousands and thousands needed the doctors less often or not at all for years. In fact the latter were often given lessons in hygiene by their patients. One could meet parents who prided themselves that their six-, eight-, ten-year-old children had never needed a physician. In addition to that a large public knew the tricks of the swindlers and avoided the lure of the medicine advertisement.

For a long time this struggle had remained almost unknown outside the confines of the New York Jewry. For, in spite of its numerous population, its language barrier shut the East Side out from the rest of the world. It was a stormy sea surrounded by mountains. Therefore, the New York Board of Health, uninformed as to the attitude of an important section of the profession and agreeably surprised to meet so many people educated in health subjects just in that part of the city in which it was least expected, published in its bulletin a note of thanks for the work of the Jewish popularizer. Later the official organ of the medical society complained: "He is doing single-handed what all of us ought to do together." The federal government invited him to do health educational work. His collaboration was sought more and more by all sorts of important bodies.

Young physicians of the regular school came to implore him to help them transform their practice, to put it on a sound basis. He showed them the way. But he never consented, as some friends suggested, to form a separate medical school. Many laymen

who wanted to study naturopathy or other irregular systems came to him for advice. He sent them to an official medical college and told them that later, after a thorough preparation, they might use so-called "nature cure" methods or whatever they wished, in their treatments, if still convinced that a change was necessary.

The East Side doctors were bewildered. They did not understand. But gradually they discontinued their campaign of defamation.

Meanwhile conditions changed. Even medical ethics evolve. It began to be outspokenly ethical to enlighten the people in health matters. The decree came from the American Medical Association itself.

Of course, all that calmed the persecutors of the East Side health teacher entirely. But no one apologized. How could such small individuals be magnanimous enough, brave enough to avow frankly, to recognize openly their own mistake?

But two outstanding events from the persecution period were peculiarly characteristic of the spirit of the East Side. One was a debate, the other a trial.

Organized by one of those self-educational, fluid, enthusiastically founded and rapidly disappearing societies called "groups" with which the radical East Side teemed, the debate was successful beyond all expectations. A large hall, packed to overflowing with intelligent, half-intellectual working people of both sexes, as eager to hear the dispute as others would be interested in a baseball game, a bullfight or an athletic prize-fight, or perhaps as their own ancestors would have been to listen to a public discussion between the leaders of two Talmudical schools. One of the debaters, representing the medical profession, arrived with an array of colleagues, at least twenty, and a number of others dispersed in the hall—his *claque*. They all hated each other, but they made common cause in the common danger. They were the most famous

names of the East Side. A few of them writers, poets, versed in Hebrew and Yiddish literature, but with little profane and scant non-Jewish knowledge and armed with just enough medical education to permit them to hold their diplomas. The lay public, of course, imagined that they were the greatest lights in the profession, when, as a matter of fact, they were all medically insignificant. A few of them were particularly respected because they had been for a long time active in the anarchist movement or in the socialist party and candidates on its ticket. But now, as old-timers, grown rich, they permitted themselves to be cynical and supercilious about all radical propaganda. The health teacher came alone. With the exception of Dr. Straight, he was the only physician in that hall who possessed no land or other property or any income outside of his work. As he passed his opponent, who was sitting on the platform in the middle of his medical friends and partisans, he extended his hand to him. But the latter refused to take it, amid the hilarity of his friends. The oldest, a short, white-haired man, a professional abortionist who pitilessly exploited the misery of poor working-women in his surgically unclean operating room, earning hundreds of dollars daily from those whom he called "comrades", laughed louder than the rest. The health teacher's adversary, with his interesting and handsome head and shrewd eyes, spoke much better than the teacher. But the latter, although a bad speaker, was so plain and convincing, that he carried the hall. Not only were his arguments more powerful, more striking, but his sincerity was penetrating, and where the heads remained uncertain, the hearts were instinctively conquered by him.

William could not understand a word, because the proceedings were conducted in Yiddish. But one of his patients, who had accompanied him there, explained to him in a whisper as much and as rapidly as possible.

The second event was a trial provoked by the health teacher between himself and a layman, the editor of an anarchist weekly, before a so-called court of honor, another East Side institution to which prominent Jews often recurred. The editor, the most persistent and most vicious of the doctor's slanderers, although entirely uninformed in health matters, despising health teachings, swallowing drugs and living in the unhealthiest way, was the mouthpiece of his old medical friends. There was no issue of his paper in which, under the convenient form of answering a reader's questions, he did not attack and besmirch the doctor. And this was one of the world's greatest leaders of anarchism, of a philosophy that was itself libelled and persecuted and was supposed to investigate and support the newest, most radical and most independent ideas!

The court was composed of three persons, none of whom had an idea of the new, extensive health movement going on all over the country. The member selected by the health teacher was a well-known anarchist who had spent fourteen years in the penitentiary for his opinions and an unsuccessful violent attempt. On the side of the journalist there was a doctor, also an anarchist, a very talented and witty writer, who, after many successful real estate speculations, had managed to round up a nice pile, to possess a number of buildings and invest his capital in several industrial enterprises, all of which squeezed out rents and profits from those whom he pretended to free from the bourgeois slavery. He insulted the teacher and showed his bias openly, but nobody objected to that. The third, at the same time the chairman, was another anarchist, a Yiddish literary critic and a distinguished civil engineer, a builder of bridges. He was also biased in favor of the journalist. Then there were the lawyers, one on each side. The teacher's representative, a pink socialist and an otherwise soft

nature, devoid of energy, did not oppose the choice of a biased doctor as judge by the defendant, as he might have done in the case of a member of a jury. The journalist's defender, a big jovial, tall and broad man, a famous Yiddish and English author, statistician and specialist in international law, making a living from trade union law work, was an indefinite, all-around revolutionist. He respected the whole procedure sufficiently to fall asleep right from the beginning with a happy smile on his face, and to wake up at the end.

The judgment was a farce. On the whole there was much less justice than in a bourgeois court. It could convince nobody either way. The teacher thought witnesses would be called, there would be several meetings and he would be able to present his case properly. But that was the only and the last chance. After much insistence on his part, the verdict was given—months later. Under the circumstances, the adversary having two of the three judges on his side, the result, which both the plaintiff and the defendant had to publish in their organs, was not bad for the former, was a condemnation of the journalist, although his acts were excused.

As William thought of the troubles of his East Side friend he felt that the attack now directed against himself for the extortion of money was a mere innocent play and he smiled contemptuously.

He read further.

"Physicians shall not give, offer or promise to any person who may have recommended, referred or procured for them patients for medical or surgical treatment, any gift, gratuity, commission or bonus nor shall any physician request, solicit, accept or receive any such gift, gratuity, commission or bonus."

Very well. But why, when he, William, returned the thirty per cent of the fee received by the surgeon to whom he sent a patient for an operation, did the specialist, irritated, call him up and try to convince him that to split the fee behind the patient's back—that is, to pay a commission for a patient and force the latter to pay a larger fee than necessary—was perfectly honest? And this was done by a man who had voted for these "principles of conduct". Why, when William, another time, received a similar unearned check and indorsed it and gave it to the patient, to whom it really belonged did the surgeon think it was outrageous and on all occasions did he tell the sick not to consult Doctor Straight any more, as he was not conforming to medical ethics? Why, further, did almost all the great men in the profession split fees with their lesser colleagues?

"Physicians should not hold, nor receive remuneration from patients, for any drug, apparatus, instruments or appliance used in medicine or surgery. They should not receive rebates or commissions from the prescribing of any agent used

therapeutically, or for the sending of specimens to any laboratory."

But most physicians did those very same things under various forms. They had shares in medicine factories, got commissions from drugstores, laboratories, makers of surgical apparatus and bandages, as well as from X-ray specialists.

"Every physician should guard and protect the medical profession against the admission of those who are, either in moral character or education, unfit as professional associates."—That depended upon the point of view. The East Side health teacher thought he fulfilled this very command by his exposures. His opponents might have thought that he was an unfit associate.

"Hurried work by a physician, whether in a dispensary or with patients treated free or for compensation, does not excuse the lack of ordinary care."

Excellent, William thought. Theoretically the profession is really honest. If these ethics were strictly applied, how splendid the practice would be!

But William realized that, with very few exceptions in this country physicians gave no free advice in their offices. And as to the dispensary work, there was no doubt that it lacked the ordinary care in most cases and that the dispensary patients were made to feel that they were treated free of charge or nearly so. The doctors often boasted that the very rich and the very poor had the same care. That was untrue. They also claimed that they gave much of their service gratuitously. That was true only in a relative sense. The poor patient paid the doctor indirectly a very high fee, as without the practice on the poor no surgeon, no specialist, no general practitioner could treat the rich or those who paid him his living. To how many unnecessary, painful, unpleasant examinations and experiments, a worker, out of work and forced to apply to a dispensary, had to submit,



thinking all the time that all these physicians were earnestly trying to cure him! How many atrocious intravesical and intraurethral examinations, for instance, did the man suffering from a plain sexual irritation, thought by him to be an important venereal disease, stand, since the advent of the urethroscope! Classes upon classes of postgraduate students and specializing physicians inserted the instrument or looked through it, while the patient writhed in agony. Expensive operations were truly performed gratis upon people unable to pay. But many surgical interventions were uncalled for. Just as many nose operations and appendectomies were needlessly done on the poor as on the rich. To the first ones for the purpose of more learning, of getting the right skill or not getting out of practice. To the others for a high fee. The result was the same. Medical science was a class science, medical practice a class practice and the medical profession a class profession.

William tried to answer his own question as to how the problem of study and practice for the medical profession was to be solved. But he could not. He did not know.

At last he found the article—a medico-legal principle it was called—that interested him and seemed to apply to his case.

“A physician is liable for an injury to his patient resulting from want of the requisite knowledge and skill or the omission to exercise reasonable care or failure to use his best judgment. He is bound to keep abreast of the times, and a departure from approved methods in general use, if it injures the patient, will render him (evidently meaning the physician, but what grammar!) liable, however good his intentions may have been. To render a physician liable there must be a want of ordinary and reasonable care leading to a bad result. This includes not only diagnosis and treatment, but also the giving of proper instructions to his patient in relation to conduct and

exercise. Mere error of judgment does not make him liable provided he does what he thinks is best after careful examination."

It seemed to William that the last sentence nullified the one in which it was said that "a departure from the approved methods in general use, if it injures the patient, will render the doctor liable." Whether something injures or not the patient was subject to dispute and difficult, sometimes impossible, to decide. The first person to introduce a new idea always departed from approved methods in general use and necessarily injured at least a few patients. "However good his intentions may have been" and "provided he does what he thinks is best after careful examination" did not at all go together.

William also remembered that the great clinician, Trousseau, in the middle of the last century, being opposed to iodine in Basedowian cases, was so absorbed by the thought of this opposition that in one of those cases he prescribed just what he considered as very harmful—nay, criminal—tincture of iodine, instead of his favorite tincture of digitalis. The results of his error were unexpectedly good and he did not change the medication. It certainly was a case of "omission to exercise reasonable care," and it could have turned out disastrously. It was not the doctor's merit if his error had not injured the patient.

At last William, disheartened, saw that he would be unable to defend himself and had to hire a lawyer to get him out of the trouble.

Many of his patients heard of his case, but the story, as it reached them, began: "Do you know Doctor Straight has killed a patient? He'll soon go to jail!" That, together with the bitter antagonism of the influential surgeon and his hostile propaganda, began to bear fruit. His office was less filled. Then, it also happened that patients who came to see him were disappointed with the disagreeable, unattractive appearance of the waiting room and left before the doctor called them to his consulting room. The outside calls, too, became rarer.

He should have given up his hospital work to devote himself entirely to his practice, so as to build it back out of what was left. But he continued his service unchanged and it made him neglect and lose his patients, as before.

At the same time he ceased examining his patients as painstakingly as in the past. He had learned from experience that many tests, Roentgen pictures and pathological examinations could be dispensed with and were a most expensive luxury, destined to feign deep preoccupation with the case, to pretend to be awfully scientific and up-to-date, and frequently they were merely an occasion for commissions. He disagreed with the younger set of doctors, just out of school, who, educated to respect the laboratory signs of disease more than those gathered from the patient directly, neglected the latter. Their practice became more mechanical than human and was naturally full of errors. If William simplified his work, it was for the good of the pa-

tients and their pocketbooks. But they did not understand it that way. They interpreted his change as neglect or ignorance. They had heard so much about modern methods that they were sure that through them a diagnosis must be absolutely certain and that the ensuing treatment had to be correct. Advertisements in the press, articles in magazines, assertions of interested physicians, the daily growth of the number of laboratories, made them believe that blood examinations and roentgenograms were indispensable. They knew the technical names and often suggested these examinations to their physicians. Almost all steps toward progress in medicine, almost all the newer works of precision, carried, together with a small amount of good, so much harm that, on the whole, they were really injurious. Besides, medicine, being nothing but practical science and art, was in the hands of men, and most men will be unscrupulous if they can, if uncontrolled.

William did not intend to neglect the newly acquired methods, but he did not resort to them at the patients' demands. He had the courage, which few physicians had, to refuse them when he regarded them as useless. He also tried to utilize more the signs of the previous generation of doctors, even those that were almost forgotten. The exact condition of the pulse, the color of the skin, the general and facial appearance, thorough palpation, perfect auscultation and percussion he considered at least as important as laboratory results. But this concern for the patients' interests caused him to lose more patients.

And still another fact, a seemingly small incident, contributed to the loss of many of his clients.

A woman came to ask him for a paper certifying that at a certain time she had been ill. She wanted to produce it in court in a trial with her husband. She would pay the doctor a good fee, she said.

William had never seen her. It was not true that she had had an illness. He refused her request.

But she claimed that he himself had treated her. He looked up his "rogues' gallery," as he sometimes called his record book. Her name was not there. It was a lie.

She insisted. She cried. The certificates would help her to obtain a large sum of money at once or twenty-five dollars a week from her husband.

"All right," he said. And he wrote:

"This is to certify that Mrs. . . . desires badly the sum of . . . to be removed from Mr. . . . and be given to her."

She was angry. Heavy invectives followed. An avalanche of words ending with, "You men stick together."

He questioned her further. No, she had no children. Her husband did not love her, lived with another woman. She hated him too. He had plenty of money. Did she contribute to its making? Working or stealing? No, what did he think she was? She stayed at home and saw to it that the colored girl did her work.

"That is, you only spent your husband's money. What right have you to it now? He left you. No love, no children. You have nothing in common. All is finished. You are healthy, you can go to work for a living and get yourself another man."

"But we're married, legally married," she sobbed.

"So that's marriage with you. It is a profession! It's worse than prostitution. You want to be paid for something that the customer does not want. . . . Yes, do not protest, it's just as I say, the goods are not wanted."

"How dare you?" But she checked herself, still hoping to convince him, and continued: "It's the same for millions of women."

"So it is. And if they don't work—house, kitchen, child care—they're all. . . ."

"But the law is on my side."

He lost his temper.

"I don't care for your laws—you're a . . . No! I'm wrong, they're better than you. They're honest, they earn their money. They're despised, you're respected. You want the law to help you hold up your husband!"

"Oh, you men!" She slapped him in the face, slammed the door and shouted, "Wait and you'll see how many patients you'll lose!"

She kept her promise.

William's office was more and more deserted. He earned scarcely enough to cover his barest expenses. He could not buy books or go to the theatre. He had to discharge his help and clean his rooms himself, which meant that they were unclean. His clothes were worn and shabby, on account of which more patients fell off—the public measured internal value by external signs and never pardoned an incorrect appearance in a doctor.

Although he had much free time, he could not compose. He was too agitated.

He had a thousand plans. Leave the practice. Find another occupation. Join the staff of a ship as a doctor and travel. Go to Java or South Africa, where physicians were just then wanted, to take care of the natives working in mines and other enterprises. Renew and increase his activity as a practitioner and, imitating Mary, form a "good" clientele.

He could be a prison doctor. But to belong to the jail staff, to be a jailer? Helping to keep men locked up between walls? Verifying the death of the electrocuted? Was his science so abject? Should it study death instead of preparing a happy living? No, never!

There was a war of a big European state against some African tribes. Doctors were wanted. Oh, no! War was a slap in the face of medicine. How could a science claiming to try to diminish sickness and hold back death be engaged in aiding that which leaves in its wake more violent diseases and death than any other cause?

Every night he made a resolution. All the steps, the smallest details, were figured out, written down on a sheet of paper and laid on the table under his watch. He went to bed with the firm decision to start a new life in the morning. But as he got up he changed his mind, tore up the paper and did nothing new.

He just drifted.

He saw a patient once in a great while, went to the hospital, but accomplished little there. His previous keen interest in his work was gradually disappearing.

He needed someone, some very close friend.

Mary?

No, no! They were getting further apart than ever before. They did not see each other for weeks, and when they met they were cold. He could not tell her. It was out of the question. She would look at him so . . . And speak—oh, speak, moralize, preach, nag. And the trouble was—she was right. Was she? He could not decide.

He went to the doctors' club. But he found no enjoyment there. He was unable to stand the air heavy with cigar smoke and the uninteresting, boring conversations around the card games.

He discovered the Bowery with its unclassified *Lumpenproletarier*. He did not go slumming like the idle rich who made believe they were doing something for humanity. He was almost one of the inmates of the institutions of the famous street. He certainly had their attitude of cynicism, indifference toward life and contempt for themselves and others. Like them he vaguely desired a change in his position in society, but was paralyzed and unable to master enough will-power to accomplish anything.

He met many types of people who had failed in life, who had degenerated. Some had wonderful talents, but lacked all ambition to put them to any use or to get any profit out of them. They were tired. That mental fatigue which comes at intervals in everybody's life and makes it temporarily nebulous and useless had settled permanently on their souls. Its weight did not permit them to rise and stand on their feet. They were vanquished forever. They, too, had once been carried high by hope and its light wings. But it was gone long ago, and they had even forgotten its resplendent blue with the gilded edge.



One of them learned that William was a doctor and came to his office for some unimportant ailment. Somehow he was attracted to this young scientist and told him a few fragments of his life.

He had been in jail. Why, he would not tell. But at William's insistence he did speak about his comrades there. They were just like everybody. What distinguished them and brought them behind prison bars was due to their environment. They were either too stupid or too bright for their fellowmen, and were pushed out of society. There is an average which the crowd enjoys and permits. Nothing beyond that, in either direction, is tolerated. Some of the so-called criminals were kindhearted, undoubtedly more so than the jailers.

He remembered one, a dark Gipsy, who had a wife and children outside.

"He is still in prison, I left him there, poor fellow. His career as a jailbird began in Europe in his youth, while he was serving in the army. The younger generations of Gipsies differed a good deal from their elders. Many of them tried to domesticate themselves and settle down in cities and villages. His father had separated from the rest of the tribe and acquired some land that he cultivated like the other peasants and, like them, he hired himself out for a few weeks every year to the powerful landlord of the county. He was partly an independent small peasant and partly an agricultural laborer. At his death the son went on in the same way. He was then the head of the family.

"But at twenty-one he was called to military service. The barracks, situated in the outskirts of a provincial town, were not far from his little farm—about five or six hours' walk. The first week was hard. Both the elegant, feminine, corseted officers with their snugly fitting, brilliant uniforms and the rough, many times re-engaged non-commissioned officers, aged and hardened in the service and devoid of feeling, did their best to teach, to brand discipline into the recruits. And that was done with innumerable blows, black eyes, kicks in the buttocks, whip lashings, slaps on the cheeks, blows in the jaws, insults and oaths.

"The Gipsy's blood boiled. He was more bemaused than the rest. Gipsies were always the object of

derision of their associates and had learned to be submissive and even to flatter the masters, whom they, in their own haughty souls, disdained heartily. They were supposed to endure anything without any complaint. They were the pariahs, the hilotes, who had to amuse the people at their own expense. It was not so long ago that they had been real serfs in some countries, where they were bought and sold with the land on which they lived and which they were not allowed to leave.

"Our Gipsy had made up his mind to be good, to obey under all circumstances, to be an example.

"But he had to think of his field that he had just started to plow, of his little brothers and sisters, too young to do any worthwhile work, of his sickly mother. And on Saturday evening, at the end of the week, he just left and went home. He walked almost the whole night. On Sunday he worked, finished plowing, fixed the fences, attended to the oxen and returned to the barracks late on Sunday night, arriving there early Monday morning.

"During Sunday he was missed, of course. He was absent at the roll call.

"On Sunday afternoon the peasant-soldiers organized a dance, as they did every week. It was interesting to hear the Gipsy describe that.

"These seemingly heavy peasants, who were so awkward at the military exercises, were really skilful, light, graceful, charming when placed in their own medium and doing the things for which they were born. They jumped, crouched, bent in all directions, made slow, wavy, rythmic movements and then again moved like the wind, like the whirlwind, their limbs becoming almost invisible. Their spines, bellies, necks, elbows were materialized music, now rapid, now slow, always enchanting and impossible to follow. Their vivacity was enrapturing, bewitching, there, in that sterile, masculine place. What must it have been in their own village,

in front of the tavern and with their girls exciting them to frenzy?

"From time to time they called the Gipsy, the ablest of them all, but he was nowhere.

"On Monday morning he was subjected to the third degree by the corporal, then by the sergeant, then by the second lieutenant, then by the captain. His face was like a pulp, his nose bled, his gums were lacerated. But he gave no answer. He was a giant and could have squeezed with one hand all of his torturers, who actually had to stretch in order to reach his jaw with their fists. His size was so out of the ordinary that he was still wearing his home sandals, because no boots had yet been found to fit him; his uniform split on all sides and at night his feet stuck out from the army cot.

"He was locked up for two days.

"The second week passed. On the second Saturday the Gipsy went home in the same way as on the first one, did his work and was back on Monday morning. After a renewal and increase of mistreatment he was confined for ten days and called out from there for the hardest labor. He did not mind that; he was like an elephant and what was impossible to others was the easiest thing for him to perform. But on Saturday evening, as he was carrying an immense load of logs of wood and was not watched, he threw down his burden and went home. Upon his return, he was immediately placed under arrest.

"At the court martial, when asked the reason of his repeated desertion, he explained at last. He spoke about oxen, house, field, crops, mother, but in a monosyllabic, helpless way. The chairman did not let him finish: 'All right, blacky, we know.' He was condemned to three months and sent away to the city military prison.

"As soon as he was out of jail, he ran home. His mother had died and most of the house work was being done by a neighbor's girl, while the field, barn,

stable, orchard were neglected. He worked hard to put things back into shape. And all the time with the neighbor's girl at his side.

"What had to happen did happen. The girl became pregnant. And shortly before the child's birth two soldiers with bayonets on their guns came to fetch him to the regiment. A new trial gave him six months.

"When he was through, instead of going to the army, he went home again. And so it continued until he had altogether three years in jail and three children,

"Then, during his last temporary stay in his company, he who had stood so much mockery and violence and who never cared when he was considered and treated as an inferior animal or an idiot, once rebelled at a minor scoffing and flew at his sergeant. His fist came down heavily. But before he could be arrested he fled and wandered, working and sending home from wherever he was all that he earned.

"At last he worked in a port and there he heard about America. Following the advice of a friend and with the help of the latter he came to the States and deserted the ship, breaking his agreement. For three years he did all sorts of odd jobs and succeeded at last in bringing his wife and three children over.

"Here too he was docile and patient, until one day he knocked down his foreman. Of course, he was tried and jailed. I knew him in prison. We were the best friends. Helpful, kindly, quiet, he got me out of many a trouble—and there are many troubles in prison life. There too you must know how to behave. Just as outside, flattering is a safe weapon, a useful coin. I did not possess it, or did not know how to use it. Nor did the Gipsy, for that matter. But he was liked by the warden for his ability to do many things and for his physical strength, which enabled him to do the work of three. He had gained, so to

say, a good position when I arrived and he helped me, just as he had helped others.

"But the beautiful thing was that from within the prison walls he managed to feed his family. I don't exactly mean to feed, but to contribute to their feeding. Yes, a good deal. As you are probably aware, many inmates have money, some even much. Well, in some cases the Gipsy was paid for doing somebody else's work in addition to his own or for rendering personal services. And he sent the cash home, or rather, he gave it to his wife, who came to see him often. He even succeeded, deceiving the vigilance of the guards, in bringing her out some food to the visiting room. Food of his own and scraps from others. 'Here's for the kids,' he would say to himself. . . ."

The Bowery man remained absorbed in thought for a minute, and then:

"What do you think of that?"

Then he told facts and anecdotes about other prisoners.

"As for myself," he continued, "my misfortune arose out of my miserable sex life. I can't tell you the act that I committed: it would give you a hint as to who I am. It was in the papers at the time."

William was well informed, sometimes he thought too well informed, about sex life, the normal and the abnormal, the regular and the irregular, the straight, the perverted, the inverted, the diseased, the imaginary sex diseases, the fears occasioned by the swindlers' writings, the terrors "ethically" spread by his own profession. Half of his practice was composed of patients who were not patients, of many who were sexually impotent because they thought they were, others who were alarmed over venereal troubles that were really unknown to them, that they had never had, or of which they had been cured long ago. Only seldom did he succeed in persuading them that they were healthy if they wished to be. Most of the time such an attempt would offend them and make them try other physicians. Or they would come back and do their best to convince the doctor that he was wrong.

He knew all these things, but he wanted to hear what a layman had to say about them, especially a man with some experience in life, even though living more or less on the outer edge of humanity.

"If I am to be well understood I ought to start from the beginning. But how can I? There are so many things which I haven't the courage to confess, not even to myself! Still, the cleaner my life has become, the less I have been ashamed. . . . Have

you not noticed, doctor, that the people who are inwardly the most corrupt, prurient and polluted, are outwardly the most chaste, most bashful and most 'moral' persons, as they call themselves, and often preach the sternest morality?"

"That is true. . . . But has your sex life really been so bad that you consider it unusual?"

"No, not at all, except its last phase. There was a time when I believed that I was the worst man on earth. But at present I know that what I have done, except for one thing, is not very different from what almost everybody is doing in one form or another—both men and women."

"If so, I am particularly interested in your story. I do not care for the exceptional. It is rarely instructive. . . . You may begin."

"All right, when I was fifteen years old. . . ."

"Why not before?"

"Before? From what age, doctor?"

"From the first things you remember."

"That is not easy. . . . Let me see. . . . At the age of four, as far as I can recall. . . . No, it is harder than I thought. You know that even Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who bravely set out to write the most sweeping and truest confession—and at the same time made an otherwise beautiful book—failed miserably when it came to describe his sexual experiences, of which he gave but a few episodes.

"My mother did the thing that all ignorant mothers do—caressing parts that should be left alone or just cleaned without emphasis. Allowed me to sleep with her, with my sister, with my brothers, with my uncles. Ignoble, disgusting contacts. . . . How little the parents know about such things! How little they are aware of the harm they themselves are doing! . . . But something that had an immense influence upon my child life and later life happened when I was a boy of nine. It was a stroll into the world of sexual venality and depravity, together with two other children of the same age.



As my parents never took me out for a walk and as they were not my friends but my masters, I was happy with my little friends only, with whom I enjoyed the freedom that I never had in my parents' company.

"One of my companions was the son of a saloon keeper, and the saloon was in a block of public women, as I knew later. In spite of calls and gestures of the girls at the doors and behind the red curtains to the passing men, I did not understand what it was all about. Perhaps I was more naive, perhaps more foolish, than my comrades. They laughed at me. But for all I know, they may have been just as ignorant as I, but tried to appear 'wise guys,' as we used to say. I only felt that something agreeable, joyous, frolicsome, extravagant, wild and great, sinful and unruly was going on, and that, although it was concealed, everybody desired it, just because it was forbidden. We played in that block, wine was brought out surreptitiously, we heard and saw things the import of which I did not grasp, but which made me feel sick and tired and steeped in ugliness, but proud to be a little nearer to the grown-ups and especially to be free—free from unfriendly parents.

"One big fellow stopped and spoke to us. He pinched my cheek and joked, whispering in my ear. I muttered something in reply. He insisted: What? What was it? I said louder something about it not being right to sleep with a girl and that I never did it. He was very amused, laughed loudly. Then he called over a friend of his: 'Say, did you hear what this kid said? It's corking!' . . . The other at first smiled, then slapped me on the shoulder: 'Well, he is right too. What does he need the skirts for? He knows what's good for one. Don't you, sonny? He'll be my little friend. Come with me, hey?' But I pushed him away and ran. . . . Later I saw women too inducing little girls . . .

These were not the only beasts that I met at that age."

"Yes, but they were low, uneducated creatures and strangers. What do such persons care about the welfare and upbringing of children, especially not their own?"

"I am not certain about their being uneducated. Besides, I met with such proposals in the most incredible places, among the highly educated and rich. . . . Strangers, you say, doctor? And my own people! . . . I had three uncles. One of them once had a fight with a friend of his. So he asked me to draw a picture with the most indecent and nauseating subject and he mailed it to his enemy."

"And the other two?"

"Oh, I cannot think of them without a feeling of profound revulsion. One . . . Well . . . When I asked my mother to let me sleep alone, she said I couldn't, I might catch cold. How little the parents know! One uncle taught me a vice which I couldn't get rid of until I was twenty or so, and then only to fall into a worse one, the one that caused my real misfortune. Two of my teachers quarreled in school, when the class was over. Just then my youngest uncle came to fetch me. . . . My mother did not want me to go home alone. She thought that was the best way to take care of me. But my uncle told me that the teachers, who were men, fought because of a woman and explained me many things that I had not known before. That may not have been bad, although perhaps too prematurely done. But instead of taking me home, he took me to his room and. . . . Pardon me, but. . . ."

"All right. . . . What did your father think of you?"

"I had no father to speak of. . . . He had his business and paid little attention to me, like most fathers. When he did, it was hell for me."

"And your mother?"

"Why, she loved me, or she claimed she did. I was

a good child, quiet, obedient. She always praised me because I did not play like the horrid bums and loafers, as she called them. She had no idea, of course, that fighting and playing are the best preventives of vicious habits. . . . Later my father's business improved sufficiently to permit him to have servants and a governess who was supposed to teach me languages. What she taught me instead is difficult to relate. . . . But what is the use? I was no exception, as I told you. . . . The intimate life of all, or almost all, men and women is unclean, and worse in their childhood. No one can speak about it without blushing."

"You exaggerate, you sceptic!"

"No, I assure you, doctor. How many have told me! . . ."

"The actions that are not harmful, are not unclean. At most they're silly tricks, trivial follies, youthful. . . ."

"That is the doctor's morality. . . . But why youthful? They have nothing to do with youth, which symbolizes health and sincerity."

"What difference does it make in what way one loves?"

"Love, love! You too call all the deviations of sex 'love'! Don't you know that a declaration of love often amounts to a declaration of enmity? And it does make all the difference in the world in what manner one . . . loves. Your felicity, your career, your life depend on it. . . . And how about prostitution? Is it love too?"

"It is not different from many a legal marriage. I object to it only because it adds to illness. . . . But let us not deviate from the subject. Have you not met any good people at all? People with good intentions and who have had a good influence on you?"

"Never in sexual matters. The good ones simply live their sex life, are happy or unhappy and make no fuss about it. All those whom I met felt guilty

and wanted to make me guilty as well, to have me share their guilt. My parents were entirely unconcerned as to my thoughts and feelings. They ordered me about, that was all they did. My childhood was full of duties. Don't go there, don't do that! Don't eat that way, eat this way! Oh, those meals! My mother wanted to make me eat, but she really did not let me. . . . And the grandparents, and all at the same time. I tell you, doctor, parents exist for one purpose only—to bother their children. The more I was protected and pampered and raised—in the wrong way—the more I was exposed as a prey to all comers.”

“But you must not blame your parents for everything you did. What hapened to you happens as well to others with a more sensible upbringing.”

“Correct! I am speaking only about myself. But there are a good many others with mushy characters, easily swayed. . . .”

“And later?”

“Doctor, let me skip some events. My whole being rebels at the thought of allowing them to pass my lips. . . . What ruined me was my ‘*homo*’ tendency. . . . No, that's wrong. Tendency is not the right word. . . . There may be those who are born with such desires. You doctors say so. I know many of you go so far as to allege that the inclination for regular or irregular sex life is inborn and that nothing can change it. Well, sometimes it is true, but mostly it is wrong. Many acquired, artificial, superficial habits are taken for hereditary troubles. Something gets ingrained into you through imitation and suggestion. The air is full of it, everybody talks about it. There are allusions, lectures, books, articles, discussions — and often simply the lack of normal intercourse. I have not the slightest doubt that in my own case it was filtered into me, it came from all sides, I ate it with my food, I breathed it in. I was modern, nay, over-modern, way ahead of the common people whose

living I scorned as too slow, ordinary, commonplace. But, doctor, while it is good and necessary to be abreast of the latest ideas, we cannot go unpunished beyond certain limits. There are essential things without which we're lost. There is a minimum . . . You know it better than I . . . I read about a few great men who suffered—would they accept this word?—from inversion and, who knows? perhaps they too had been miseducated and influenced. . . . And the great men! The educators always point to them as models . . . As if everything they do is right or is right for others. They're great in spite of, not because of, their vices. And not all of them! . . . But the majority of the 'homos' are far from being great; they are low beings, low in everything, they are the dregs of society . . . It matters not to what social clan or rank their fate has tied them. They're morbid. And . . . I don't know, was not everything topsyturvy in art, music, literature? Things had to shine without moving you. We were given brilliancy without emotion . . . Cold light . . . The auto also contributed to change our viewpoint. Where was the love of country life, of woods and fields? Too old-fashioned. We forgot the pleasure of coming right close to them, of nestling in them, of embracing them—which is real, plain love. We ran madly over long roads and swallowed the dancing, shaking landscapes, seeing but an abstract of them, a dark spot here, a light one there, a bunch of houses further, as on a surveyor's map. We claimed to have travelled, but it left our souls empty. Mustn't that be reflected in one's personal living? Then the disdain for the normal, the abnormal honored and elevated to lofty heights. How could one remain a bourgeois, a shopkeeper, a philistine, a foggy with old notions, as the plain people were called? . . ."

"And now" asked William, "you have gone to the other extreme and you disdain progress?"

"Oh, doctor, don't misunderstand me! I regard

these things as tools, useful tools. But if the tools become the aim, if they encroach on life itself, they're injurious. . . . And progress? How can you call that progress? Progress implies greater happiness. What have our technical inventions to do with that? . . . Will the next generations be happier because they travel in airships and leave the auto to their grandfathers?"

"You're right, you're right. But please continue."

"Well, sex books appeared. At first no sex literature was tolerated. It was taboo . . . Then we went to the other limit. We were swamped. Everybody wrote about it, whether he knew or did not know the subject . . . There was money in it, see? Money for the publisher, money for the bookseller, money for the author. Sex writings, sex vomitings all over. Booklets, books, large, enormous tracts. People who had no idea how their lungs functioned, read them, devoured them and were informed in sex matters more than doctors . . . Of course, sex is important, but it is not the only thing we have. It was overdrawn, a caricature was made of it and sold for the truth. A distorted, disproportioned picture . . . Then came Freud."

"Wonderful philosopher. One of the greatest thinkers and observers of all times."

The Bowery man, who all that time had done his best to keep from scratching himself, evidently could not stand it any longer. He put his hand and his torn sleeve way deep into his bosom.

"Yes, doctor", he continued, "undeniably so. But as all discoveries do to human beings, Freud's did untold harm. We seem to be made of such material, doctor, that nothing is good for us. As soon as we get a hold of a new idea, a plausible explanation, a helpful invention, we turn it and twist it until it becomes pernicious. We do not rest until it ruins us. We cannot take it simply as it is. We must transform it into poison . . . Do I need to tell you what the charlatans have done with Freudism? I mean

the doctors and professors and the laymen who have practiced and exploited it like a gold mine, those who have written popular books about it. Money, again money streamed in through it from all sides. . . . Our greatest calamity, doctor, is that we're so organized that we can make money from anything. And what is usually meant by that? Theft, doctor, yes, and murder . . . Who says that gain, money is an incentive for doing good work? It is mainly an impulse toward bad actions. It incites to the worst things. And if our civilization—no, yours, I am out of it—is based on it, I pity it . . . Oh, how much disaster they have spread, the psychoanalysts: Yes, I may say all of them. If some have done a little good, they are so few in number in comparison to the others . . . At least, so it was in this country. They have millions of mental wrecks on their conscience. It was a devastation. Oh, worse than war! There was no killing, but infinitely more maiming than in war. An orgy of decay, desolation, swindling, quackery . . . It would have been better had Freud never lived."

"In just what way did the Freudian doctrine and the psychoanalysts harm?" asked William. He had seen enough cases treated by those who had suddenly become sub-conscious readers and who deformed the minds of their patients just as horribly as when an incompetent surgeon disfigured their faces. And often just as permanently. But again, he liked to hear what this man had to say.

"In a thousand ways," came the answer. "First, its generalization and penetration into so many other branches of human research work. Then—while it contained truths, it was not true in the sense in which its disciples or even its discoverer presented it. The greatest teachers in your profession were averse to it and the few who endorsed it were not in complete accord with it. The Freudian philosophy changed every day. Its more honest and intelligent adepts modified it soon after its ap-

pearance and formed new schools, as you know. The wish-fulfillment was ingenious and in many cases correct, but could not qualify as a universal explanation. Fear-fulfillment, dreams as untrammelled poetry and those plays of association of ideas from which no general conclusion could be drawn were not sufficiently emphasized. . . . I know, according to Freudians there was no such thing. But there they were not scientists. They invented and arranged to suit their theories. They tried to fix things just to be right. They argued out instead of finding out. Yes, they argued like casuists and sophists or like a lot of hair-splitting Talmudists, their elders. Why didn't they say, This we don't know, it does not fit? . . . But the greatest harm they did was, on the one hand, to suggest—directly or indirectly, it matters little—that it was dangerous to suppress desires, and, on the other hand, to reveal or pretend to reveal that which was supposed to remain in obscurity. Only here and there it proved beneficial. On the whole they meddled too much with nature. What was concealed and under the threshold of our conscious self should have remained there. As an explanation for technicians, scientists, psychologists—no objection. But to popularize, to sensationalize—it was a scandal! Just as you told me the other day how much the exaggerated fear of cold catching, of venereal diseases, how much microphobia injured most people, so Freudism, too. . . . Why don't you doctors wait until your discoveries are perfectly ripe and applicable—at least half a century for each? Any cook knows that better than you. He waits till his dish is ready before he serves it. Why do you rush out to the public with treatments about which you're not sure and which within a few years prove worthless? Because you're in a hurry to make money with them! . . . Freud ought to have foreseen what would be done with his system and should have kept it where it belonged. Was he not a physi-



cian? Was it not his duty to avoid causing sickness? Did he do it through vanity? Or did his impatient colleagues tear it out of his hands? I don't know."

"His ideas were misinterpreted. In the main they were true."

"Perhaps, doctor, but what he said about sex might have been said about any other function of the body. Don't smile . . . Take eating. With some effort and ingenuity you can make it the center of our being and the dominant thing in our subconsciousness, the promoter of our actions, and with it you can explain anything you wish. Why could not suction be of nutritional instead of sexual origin? . . . By the way, what the Freudians say about the anal region is surely false. . . . I don't know whether these objections have been brought up in your literature, although in my time I used to read a good deal. . . ."

Since the beginning of this conversation, which was almost a monologue, William had been wondering who the man was. He was better informed than would have been expected. Suddenly William recalled a sensational trial in court, the hero of which this man seemed to resemble, and he could not help saying aloud:

"Oh, I think I know who you are."

"Please, doctor, do not scrutinize. . . . Drop it or this is the last time you'll see me. . . . I don't care whether Freud was right or wrong. He was probably both right and wrong. But that he and many of his adherents and many who practise his teachings have been harmful, there is no doubt in my mind. How often did they take a young individual who just needed a broad, genial, friendly smile from a good-natured doctor, make him completely dependent upon them, tie him with invisible chains so that without them he felt lost and,

vampire-like, suck his blood as long as they could! The money part would not have mattered so much. Losing money does not damage one's health. But they instilled a deadly intoxicant! What difference did it make if the poison was drawn out of the patient himself? . . . Then there was the Freudian literature provoking unceasing, excessive self-analysis and self-observation to such an extent that it became a vice, a solitary vice, a sort of mental masturbation! Yes, through over-indulgence. . . . And as to the healing value of psychoanalysis—and that is what interested us patients mainly, did it not?—I don't know. It had its value somewhere, in tenacious obsessions. Sometimes a great value. But it was so frequently worthless! . . . Then . . . The dissociation of the morbid personality was not harmless—on the contrary! . . . In many psychoneurotics it worked havoc. . . . Then take the mistake of seeing complexes in each case of psychoneurosis! . . . And encouraging those who voluptuously pampered their pet disease and enjoyed the analysis, those who were pleased with their illness, which was, so to say, their own creation, a pleasure that was not different from a sort of narcissism. . . . There was money in that. . . .”

“But our professional press is full of the successes of psychoanalysis, which often ends with a beneficent psychosynthesis.”

“I won't dispute that, doctor. But if you check them against the failures . . . and if you remember that not all of those who practiced it were angels, but not seldom unscrupulous manipulators, jugglers, money-lovers . . . Oh, I see clear now. But then . . . when I was young . . .”

He looked at the ground, sadly.

William dared not disturb him. But after a while he reminded him:

“. . . And how was the passage from one . . . kind of life to the other?”

"I prefer to leave that for another time. It's enough for today. I'm tired and so are you."

He never showed up again and William saw him no more on the Bowery. What may have happened to him?

What attracted William more than anything else was the Jewish East Side.

At first he did not understand it, because he did not know its language, although he spoke German fluently.

His friends were divided as to the value of Yiddish. Some said it was an unorganized jargon in which no intelligent idea could be expressed. It was spoken by the lowest and least cultivated laborers. It had no future; the growing generations were abandoning it.

Others claimed that it was rich, pithy, robust, marrowy, flexible and adaptable and that, in the mouths and hands of skilful writers and scientists, it lent itself to literature, poetry, science, art, mathematics. The more it was cultivated and the more genius was put into it, the more it would develop, in which respect it was in about the same phase as English, French and German at the beginning of modern history. After all, it was a branch of German and it resembled the literary German of five hundred years ago. In fact, it contained elements of that language found in ancient authors and in dialects of the Central European peasantry, although they had disappeared from contemporary literary or journalistic German. True, many Hebrew vocables and expressions, Slavic and, now, English words had been gathered by it on its long voyage through the world. But what language is pure? The essential thing was that its main trunk was powerful and resisted all attacks. It had

already a splendid literature which was profoundly beloved by the Jewish masses. At least ten million people were using it at work, in song, fairy tales, commerce. That the wealthy highbrows cared little for it did not matter. In all nations they were always the cowards and flatterers of the powers that be. In all countries it had been the plain people who had carried with them the true nobility, the traditions, the real national culture, the language, through many centuries and had kept them aloof through all the vicissitudes of their history.

But the Jews, being an exceptional people with an extraordinary destiny, had lost their original language and adopted a new one, had nursed it, developed it, adjusted it to their needs, had breathed into it their life, their spirit, and had transformed it. It is not less beautiful and noble than other twigs springing from the common German stock—Dutch, for instance. But they were more fortunate, had an international position that made them be respected, whereas poor Yiddish was downtrodden like the Jewish people itself.

On the East Side a fight was going on about the language, as about everything else. There were the Hebraists who wanted to do violence to the Jew and force upon him an old tongue that almost nobody understood. And the Yiddishists who insisted that Yiddish was the language of the race. Nor was it a theoretical fight only. Like everything else there, it was passionate, violent.

When the mockers of Yiddish contended that it had no grammar, the Yiddishists answered by throwing them out of a meeting hall and asking a lecturer to explain that there was no language without a grammar whether written or not, and later one of their friends published a Yiddish grammar. When the Yiddishists pointed at the multitude of new Yiddish periodicals and publications, dailies, weeklies, monthlies, trade organs, original books, translations, theatrical shows, their adversaries, both the

Hebraists and the Englishists, replied in articles full of personal insults that that was but a temporary revival due to immigration from Europe and that it could only delay, for a short time, the death of the Yiddish tongue, which was doomed. And of course, the opponents were always "corrupt persons, thieves and murderers."

Yiddish religious and non-religious schools for children were founded. The Hebraists opened similar schools in their favorite language.

The more William learned about East Side life, the more he became interested in it. It was a huge, noisy, boiling, seething caldron. There was life there that no Anglo-Saxon, no Gentile could understand or explain.

Everything there was in the superlative. The Jewish employer, who but yesterday had been a shop laborer, was a rapacious brute. Corruption reigned in many institutions and organizations. But nearby there was sacrifice, devotion to whatever cause had been espoused, such complete self-forgetfulness as it was hardly observed anywhere. Socialism, communism, anarchism had their advocates, parties, movements, demonstrations. All gave themselves entirely to their ideas and to the most destructive struggle against their internal and theoretical adversaries, although they all had so much in common and so many enemies in common.

The splendid Zionist movement, one of the greatest modern mass-romances, filled the unassimilated, landless wanderers with the highest hope. But it fell off just at the time when its realization seemed to be nearest. William was told that the Zionists did not care to go to Palestine because that would have been the end of Zionism. They would not let go of their movement—it was too dear to them, just as a child will cling to its toy. And life in America seemed much easier than rough pioneering in a sub-tropical country. Then there were the Arabs. To fight them was both difficult and unjust. And so

the East Side continued to sigh for Palestine—on the East Side. And so even the greatest Zionist chiefs remained here agitating for Zionism.

It is really difficult for the more intelligent Jew to be attached to one country, to one corner of the globe. He has the tendency to be an enthusiast of a given epoch or of a given idea. He is, as it were, the patriot of something residing in time rather than in space, in spirt rather than in matter.

On the East Side there was no middle ground. One could be either on one side or on the other. Everything was taken seriously. The East Side had no sense of humor. It was also full of contradictions.

A product of all European countries, it was here because of persecution, of intolerance, and now it was more impatient, more intolerant toward those with whom it disagreed than others had been with its members in their original countries. Extremes could be met at every step. Here those characterized by a morbid timorousness, timidity, inrooted for centuries; there an unbearable arrogance.

They began by following the Biblical command of fecundity to the letter, but as soon as they heard of birth control they were its greatest adepts. The mothers considered it a sin to check in the least the number of their progeny. For the daughters it was sinful to prolong the servitude of the proletariat by adding to its numbers.

As they arrived from the other side, hungry and ignorant, they were the most difficult to organize, to unionize. But as soon as they saw the advantage of solidarity, they became the most faithful trade-union men. At the tail of the labor movement at the start, they were at its head within less than twenty years.

William witnessed their struggle and took an active part in some of their battles by giving free medical advice to their strikers and free surgical treatment to those wounded—by the police or by professional thugs. He saw the organized work-

men and their families starve, but never yield, never go back one step or permit their leaders to compromise with the masters.

Together with many non-Jews he had shared the idea that almost all the Jews were rich or on the way to wealth and opulence. But as he saw them at close range he changed his mind and wondered how he could have had such an erroneous opinion for so long a time.

The majority of the East Side population was composed of workers. Compact masses of workers. At noon the streets where their shops were situated were black, full of them. The large clothing factories, the fur, hat, cigar industries employed men and women of all ages. And there were the silk weaving works on the other side of the Hudson. Mostly Jewish workers. They were poor, with their hands only to make a living for their numerous children and always within a few days of starvation. As long as they worked they could satisfy their modest needs. Any slack that lasted rather long disorganized their existence. The advantages, the improvements they had gained, were won through bitter fighting, through sheer physical endurance. And many of those who had a surplus used it for self-instruction and for the education of their children.

Culture, education, study was the nobility, the divinity of the East Side.

The East Side had the largest number of autodidacts, of student-workers, of adults studying elementary things in public and private night schools and at home. But many of them were impatient and could not wait until they were ready for higher studies. They skipped the steps. It was pathetic and ludicrous at the same time to see men reading and discussing Kant, but without the knowledge of a little geography—or asking: "Say, what is a horizontal line?"

The East Side was paved with splendid types and



some were geniuses. But there were also many fools, suffering from the greatness mania. Boasters, braggarts. Half-baked intellectuals. Unhatched professionals who had stopped half-way and who were sure that society owed them recognition for what they might have been. Also plenty of outright quacks and frauds. Frequently they petted and praised one another in order to be praised and petted in turn—they interscratched each other, as Rabelais would say. They also devoured one another.

Here was fertile ground for the "*arriviste*". It was easy to fish; the waters were turbid. The many insufficiently bred persons who respected learning thought that anyone knowing more than his letters was a scholar. They often overstated values extravagantly and acclaimed quickly the emptiest and loudest nullities as great, eminent, illustrious men. And, using this situation skilfully, swindlers considered the East Side as their footstool, their stepping-stone for furthering their aims, which were far from being lilywhite.

For some the East Side was the only means of getting to the West Side—that is, of attracting the attention of the non-Jewish world.

Everybody who wanted to could find his crowd.

There was the man to whom his admirers listened with open mouths when he told them whom among the exiled princes he met daily and with what celebrities he used to dine in Europe.

There was the music teacher, who claimed to have been the pupil of the greatest in the music world abroad, but who could hardly make out the notes and who, when invited to play, always "improvised"—he was too great to cheapen himself with simple reading. Who could check his assertions? He shrewdly availed himself of the musical awakening of the East Side and the general desire of Jewish mothers to make precocious musical geniuses out of their children. It was during the

avalanche of wonder-and-fake-wonder children from Russia. He opened schools that were called Academies. Later, after having learned the tricks of the trade in detail, he changed his name from Yankel Goldenberg to Giacomo Goldo, went uptown and had a studio in Carnegie Hall.

Plastic arts were the last to be discovered by the East Side.

With the exception of a roughly designed puerile lion or so, the East Side Jews had seen no painting or sculpture in their puritanical synagogues, which had to steer clear of anything that may have reminded them of idolatry and distracted them from their God. The Jewish artists were either brought up in a Gentile atmosphere or were leaving the East Side to find better opportunities, a larger public and more understanding. Only lately, since the Jewish nationalist rebirth, some artists stayed in the midst of their brethren, lectured on art, led them to museums and arranged art exhibitions. Of course, they were poor, as few East Side Jews bought pictures.

William knew a writer who specialized in Montenegrins whom he had never seen and whom he described in the most fantastic manner. But he found no echo. The Jewish critics were too smart. What they did not know, they guessed. They did not believe in these Montenegrins. So he left the East Side for the real American scenery. There he succeeded in deceiving the literary circles. As his work was nice and pleasant and offended nobody, it was immediately taken up, admired, sold, filmed.

Curiously enough, Americans might be clever in business, but in many respects they are of a childish naïveté. All kinds of *Hochstapplers*, in the social sphere as well as in literature and art, were able to impose on them. The atmosphere was propitious. The conspiracy of critics, publishers and producers did the rest. The author of imaginary Montenegrin customs made a fortune.

The East Side radicals were busy, agitated, hurrying to and fro, thinking that they were carrying along the entire world and that the social revolution was at hand. They were too occupied slandering one another to see that the little strength they had was weakened by their dissensions.

As one of William's new friends put it: "Bourgeois society is in no danger and our masters are aware of it. One set of radicals will not permit another set to bring salvation from the common enemy and together they'll never do it. They'll prefer to let capital rule." "Why," said another, "they're inviting it. They're criticizing one another more bitterly than they do the capitalist system. Radicals must fight somebody. The easiest thing to do is to fight one another. And they must debate. If they have to get a drink of water to their dying mother, they must discuss some principle about it first."

Nor did these radicals see that their feeble work, all confined to the East Side, disappeared in the infinite conservative American world like the proverbial drop in a bucket.

But their illusion, their beautiful and ardent faith which was their mental food, kept them alive. It was their new religion, the sincerest belief of these godless people. It was just as holy to them as the commandments from the sacred mountain given through the lips of Moses had been to their ancestors.

William saw a young man who kept intact every scrap of paper published by his movement. There was every number of his party's daily, with all its scandals and libels and betrayals of their cause and quackish advertisements. It filled a whole room. Just as their fathers used to keep the Holy Scripture without destroying the smallest shred that was covered with sacred Hebrew words.

William met an artist in the service of his radical ideas who planned to change his radicalism into

real religion. The only thing he was waiting for was to perfect his art. But, as his time was wasted in committees and he could not study, perfection never came. His idea was to copy Catholicism. His saints would be freethinkers, heroes of the class-struggle, fighters for freedom. Instead of a stained-glass window with Saint Peter and Saint Paul and the Passion, his cathedral would represent Giordano Bruno, Marx, Spartacus, Spinoza, Hillel, Tolstoy, Berkman, Makhno, Lenin, Most, Louise-Michel, Bakunin, Jesus-Man.

And in the wake of all the radical movements, besides the clear heads, the great thinkers, the devoted souls, many paranoiacs were following—all stages of abnormal and insane minds. Just as in the great ancient and medieval religious movements, they were attracted by the irregularity of the extreme ideas. But instead of identifying themselves with one of the movements and helping it as the religious insane of the middleages did, the modern disequibrated were an obstacle to radicalism. They were the heavy mud that hindered the turning of the wheels, the advance of the chariot.

William owed his first acquaintance with the East Side to the Jewish health teacher. But at present he was so engrossed in it that he hardly saw the teacher himself.

Only now did he begin to understand the position of this man in the great feverish Jewish province of New York.

A radical, yes. On the other side, in Europe, he had been in jail for his ideas. But a fierce egotist, making no concessions, inhumanly consistent with himself, broadminded and jealous of his personal independence to such an extent as not to allow even his own opinions to enslave him. He could not share the mistakes of others and therefore could belong to no party. He preached solidarity for the working men, but he worked alone. Only rarely did he associate with some movement and when he did,

he soon ran off as if burned. He was regarded with suspicion even by his friends. It is true that he helped those groups or organizations who invited him, as long as they went his way and permitted him to do what he liked. But he so often and so unexpectedly quit them that his collaboration was uncertain and no one trusted him.

"Oh, he is the East Side window-opener, he taught us the meaning of fresh air, that is his only merit. Otherwise he is a bore," said Willam's guide. "His ideas on children are crazy."

"Do you mean his birth control propaganda?"

"That too. Now there are plenty of birth control speakers on the East Side, but for a long time he was the only one to preach it. And that distracted the attention of the proletariat from its revolutionary duties. He thinks that even under ideal social conditions birth control will be indispensable. Marx never said that. He goes too far. . . . But I meant his ideas on the raising of children. He wants the children to be freer than their parents. . . . He almost wants that we should obey our kids."

"Does he lecture about that too?"

"Yes, doctor, and writes in his Jewish magazine."

"And is he successful on the East Side?"

"For a man who is working alone, yes. He believes in speaking and writing to the people plainly, in their own language. He hates the short health sentences of the health authorities that resemble orders and give no reasons. He explains and repeats incessantly. He is never discouraged. . . . On, he is queer! As we say in our language—fresh, healthy and crazy!"

And he added quickly, taking out a newspaper from his pocket: "See here, doctor, what 'The Globe' prints about him."

William read:— "Many people kindly try to help me with my articles—and many do help me with suggestions and ideas. Rarely, however, do I re-

ceive an article all done. The following letter contains a complete sketch of a New York type. Although an eccentric type, it yet touches upon the movement of the time: 'As a faithful reader of The Globe, I see that you are interested in types of men. I attract your attention, therefore, to a type who is very original, although very much known on the East Side. Do not use his name, in order not to advertise him for nothing. He is a physician of the old school, but fights terribly against it—and publicly, too. He is poor as a church mouse. Many say that he is a big faker; many say that he is the most honest man. Can you find out the truth? He is an anarchist, but also a nationalist Jew. He is an anarchist, but some of the official anarchists hate him. Although a nationalist, he is far from the nationalist movement. He is a vegetarian and a painter, being even now a pupil in a school of one of our best-known artists. He has travelled much, and knows languages. He lives exactly according to his principles. (A detail: Very often we see him go out in the cold without a hat; never wears an overcoat.) He treats hundreds of people medically for nothing. He is a sharp writer, and they say he was once in prison in the old country for his violent attacks on the military authorities, in the press, while a soldier himself. He has been brought up in France, but has studied medicine in Germany. He gives his children, it is said, an awful bad education, leaving them savagely free and often barely dressed in the coldest winter days. Some say he is a real old-time witch. Of course, I don't believe it. One thing probably is true—that he lives with his wife under free love, but that she, a talented person, is very fond of him.'

"Yes," concluded William's informer, "a funny chap. He has treated me free of charge too, when I was out of work. He has been called many times in the night without getting a cent for his troubles, he has cured gratis many diarrhoeas of babies and

constipations of adults. He must have some interest in doing it. Who knows?"

Although William had come in close contact with the Jews, he was not sure that he liked them. On the contrary, he had to contend with a hereditary aversion to them. Of course, many of his prejudices had disappeared. Most of the accusations coming from their century-old foes, when examined attentively, fell to pieces.

As far as he knew William had no religious scruples or reservations. He had had no religious education and knew religion from a distance only. What struck him more in the Jews was the smaller external and less important distinctive characteristics rather than the essential ones. Naturally, he did not mind that they were descendants of those who were accused of having crucified the Son of God. The East Side gave birth every day to plenty of Jesuses. Nor did he mind their eternal assertion that everything worth while had been done by a Jew and that all the people who amounted to anything were Jews or of Jewish parentage or ancestry. After all, they shared this conceit with other nationalities and it could be explained by an exaggerated desire of self-preservation. Nor did he have an objection to their inquisitiveness and their intrusive behavior. He rather enjoyed their lack of manners.

But such habits as talking with the hands made the Jew unpleasant and repulsive to him. He himself used his hands a good deal in conversation and many Gentiles did so. But not so much and not in the same way.

William made comparative studies in this respect.

He had had, for instance, many Italian patients and knew how abundant their speech was in gestures of the face, arms, the entire body. As a novice he used to think that they were murdering each other when they only said "good morning". Their gesticulation was broad and free. The Jewish was that of the whipped dog, as it were.

Of course, without the hands how could the Jew persuade? Gesticulation was a part of language, nay, an improvement on speech—the hand, the extended tongue. But at the same time how can one dare to spread out one's arms like an Italian? Only a Gentile could afford that. Instinctively the unemancipated Jew—the other kind tried to avoid using his hands entirely but with no success—made the gestures with his hands and fingers mainly, leaving his elbows near his body, so as not to occupy too much space and become too visible in the eyes of the non-Jew. This contradictory mixture of a desire for restriction and the need of expansion summed up perhaps, William thought, Jewish history of the last two thousand years and was to be explained through the old persecution of the Jew and his limited Ghetto life. As William understood that, much of the ridicule there was in hand-talking disappeared.

William was used to hear the Jews speaking low and shyly. But on the East Side, among themselves, they spoke loudly and were so fretful and eager to express themselves that they did not finish their words or sentences and precipitated their talk so that he could not very well catch even their English.



William had hard times.

But during all those times none of the patients who had so often said that he had saved their lives and that they were forever devoted to him, none came to see him. They followed the crowd and the gossip. Nobody asked him whether he had his rent or money for food. He struggled on passively, waiting for better days.

His situation improved when a few Jewish patients found their way to his office. But they were difficult to deal with. They were not as quiet and resigned and submissive as his previous non-Jewish clientele. They were nervous, often on the verge of insanity, questioning every one of his orders and wanting to know the reason for everything.

How often did he have to treat those who had just come over from Europe and were suffering from the terrors of the Great War and from the shocks of the anti-Semitic pogroms! Their frightened eyes were wide open and they gazed about them with a constant fear of some impending danger. There were the women who had seen horrors, base, cowardly rapes for the perpetration of the act that the people called love. They still felt on their feeble bodies the creeping fingers of strong men, drunk with rut and vodka, the caresses of the bloody tyrants, the "knights" and "heroes" of the war. And some were yet pallid and exhausted from the recent operation by which they had gotten rid of the fruit of this rape, which was made to grow by imperturbable, brutal, amoral nature.

Like every doctor's office, whether he is aware of it or not, William's was full of sounds from outside. It reverberated with the suffering and pain from the street, the houses, the working places. It received the wrecks, the flotsam and jetsam of life. Its walls heard the cries, the sobbing, the sighs of the wounded world—a repercussion of its endless misery.

He had to repair human organs and minds, to put them in shape for further use—and abuse.

Now that his practice was changing, he was dealing more and more with working people. And alas! that was the most thankless work for the physician. No sooner had he improved the body of a workman and sent him back to labor than the latter returned broken in spirit and with disturbed functions. There was a continuous flow between the factory and the consulting room.

Often William said to himself: "What is the use?"

When one of his friends once greeted him with "How is the mender of bodies?" he replied sadly: "Sorry, I am not even that. At best, a patching-up cobbler—and a cobbler is more efficient than a doctor."

Modern industry with its deadly means and disregard of human lives causes disease at every step, destroys health with the utmost certainty.

No wonder then that lung tuberculosis, if it does not kill the patient in babyhood, thrives between home environment and acquired injurious habits, acute and chronic. It maims and kills.

It takes the young human animal, sometimes under ten, in the most favorable case the undeveloped youngster of fifteen or so, when he still needs play and much leisure and in the adolescent years, during his greatest crisis, and subjects him to work and worry, the fire of which it is impossible to withstand without damage. It surrounds him with all sorts of poisons which, added to his abominable

home environment and acquired injurious habits, destroy his health with the utmost certainty.

No wonder then that lung tuberculosis, if it does not kill the patient in babyhood, thrives between sixteen and twenty-six. It is an industrial disease mainly. And no wonder that those who escape it develop constitutional troubles at an age when their resistance has reached the limit, so that they die between forty-five and fifty-five.

William sighed:

"That is called living! What am I doing here, what are we doctors all doing?"

Dusts—of wool, feathers, flour, stone, wood, ivory, paper—cut, stung, irritated the fine lung tissue. Chemical poisons as solids, liquids, gases deteriorated the heart, blood, nerves, digestive tract. Inhuman postures for hours at a time bent, distorted, deformed, misshaped, marred the limbs, the spine, produced aches and pains, accelerated or slowed up the disturbed internal plumbing. Prolonged exposure to an excess of cold and heat, light and darkness attacked the senses and indirectly the essential organs. Fatigue without sufficient compensating rest, monotony at machine work, combined with worry and wrong living at home wrecked the muscles and nerves. And at the same time the industrial accidents blinded eyes, injured and amputated hands and legs. Indeed there were few workers in possession of all their fingers and perfect limbs or who were not mutilated in some way.

If the workers' health had improved in the last years and tuberculosis had declined, it was due not to medical care, but to the amelioration in their living conquered with difficulty through organization, solidarity, strikes.

But how few in number were the physicians who understood that!

Most of them treated a backache, a knee-pain due to work, with their usual remedies that did not remedy. As if the patient had fallen down from the

moon and had no connection with surrounding outside life, with his environment.

William felt like calling to his colleagues: "Brothers, we're all badly mistaken. Let us give it up! Let us resign! It is not *we* who are needed, not *we* who can be the doctors. A greater physician than all of us put together is needed. Mankind itself must right its wrongs if it wishes to be healthy. Let us all unite, go to mankind and at least try to pull it out into the sunshine, teach it how to live under present conditions and close the factories in time to give itself rest. . . ."

Then he thought: "How can we do it? We ourselves are unprepared. How indeed? Health is not even our trade. What do we know about health and prevention of sickness? . . . So let's be honest and quit! . . . And as to healing disease, can we really do it under present circumstances? . . . No, we cannot, we cannot so long as the people do not reform their living socially and individually. And if they do, they'll need us but little. . . . I for one. . . ."

But he asked himself: "How about the middle class and the rich?"

No, they were not healthier. They had the physical illnesses and mental shortcomings of their castes. There were diseases due to idleness and excesses and what was called the good things of life, as there were diseases of poverty and labor.

Worry and fear are general causes of sickness that do not distinguish between classes. The only difference is the kind of worry, the reason for fear. But the fear of disease is a universal obsession that brings on and aggravates sickness in all ranks of society.

Nobody has seen a rich man living two hundred years because of his wealth. Wealth is not synonymous with health. Nor does it engender more beauty. The most beautiful specimens of human beings are not to be found among the well-to-do.

As a whole the idle rich lack beauty about as much as the overworked majority. Ugliness has become a common human trait, but there is an ugliness of the rich and one of the poor.

William learned that:

The great knaves, the thieves of human felicity, were punished by their own rapacity. They acquired power and momentary pleasure, but that did not make them happy and healthy. It was a civilized cannibalism, where the victims' blood was drained and sucked indirectly, but, as it was sick and unclean, it was converted in the body of the cannibals into new venoms and diseases.

Almost everything that William needed to know in order better to treat his patients and most of the preventive instructions he wished to give them he had to dig out himself. The medical school fits the young physician badly for his contact with the world. He studies anatomy and physiology and then plunges directly into various forms of pathological anatomy and clinical pathology. But he is not informed about health knowledge as such. Nobody demands it; there is nobody to give it.

Medicine is the continuation of a very old discipline and has always been regarded as the science of sickness. Doctors are supposed to be masters to cure disease. That point of view has been inherited from the past and does not change. In fact, the entire medical art is still nearer to the middle ages than to modern times. Its research work uses the most advanced methods, but its essential character and therapy are, in principle, the same as in the past.

Medicine, the so-called "allopathic" healing school, carries along all that it could inherit from previous centuries. Mountains of old superstitions, a frightful mixture of mysterious things and some worthwhile experiences from the ancient past, originating with witch-like old women; solitary monks; savages; scientifically smeared, ignorant alchemists and astrologers. There are moldy juices of plants and animals, accepted for no known reason as drugs and spread by their sheer antiquity. On top of that, and unfortunately based upon such rotten

foundations, have been built the recent great discoveries and practical results of real research work.

Official medicine contains, as if in a veritable museum, side by side, the oldest remedies, half-dead, although sometimes partly renewed through a modern scientific laboratory sheen, as well as the fresh, brilliant technique of young, skilful hands and minds and the newest machines invented by the ablest physicists and mechanics. It is a chaos of all sorts of methods which often contradict one another. . . . And, curiously enough, the more the medical scientists investigate and search, and the more details and great truths are accumulated, the farther medicine goes from its real and only possible aim, the curing of disease.

His patients had forced William to look up and learn a few things about food, air, sunshine and motion. They asked him a hundred questions which he had to answer.

And he was astonished to find that the real causes of disease—first, excess, and second, neglect of the warnings of the body until it is too dulled to react—were overlooked or lightly treated by the profession. They considered them as of secondary importance only. The same with overwork, oversex, overdressing and all the other excesses. They were blind to the excess of food—overeating in all its forms—as one of the principal and universal causes of the majority of our illnesses. It was so simple and so little recognized that, in comparison to the clever and complicated scientific teachings of etiology, it seemed ridiculous. One evening, at the meeting of the Uptown Medical Society, he was surrounded by a few doctors who wanted to tease him: “How about the poor, who, you claim, don’t have enough food—do they overeat too ”

“Yes,” William replied, “even they. They are often overfed and undernourished at the same time. Happily not always.”

The doctors laughed.

His patients desired to know how much it was safe to eat, how the meals should be combined, just what was good for each individual occupation, for each system, for children of various ages, whether they should eat between meals or not. And they were not to be put aside with vague, general answers that meant nothing. They remained uncertain when he said: "Don't eat much, eat light food." The more intelligent and daring inquired at once: "What do you mean by light? What amount? And is not the lightest food, when taken in large amounts, heavy food?"

The medical school had not prepared him for that.

On the contrary, the little he had learned about food physiology was now undergoing a great change. All the experiments of the German school that until then had dominated the world were wrong and their results untrue. The fight about the amount of protein and carbohydrates, the value of minerals was raging. A revolution was approaching. All the values had to be transvaluated. Man normally needed a much smaller quantity of protein than he thought he did. The previous generations of scientists had unwillingly misled humanity and been the cause of hundreds of millions of cases of disease.

Vegetables? Meat? Fruit? Greens? Bread? Potatoes? William did not know.

Then came the vitamin theory, which suddenly enthroned foods that contained but little nourishment but were essential in other ways. And most of the plain, "ignorant" peasants, people who ate without studying the food question, proved to be nearer to the truth than the careful scientists.

It was the same about fresh air and sunshine.

Was it right to sleep with open windows? How open? How many windows? How far from the bed? How should the bed be placed? How on rainy days? On cloudy days? What about dampness? Was it harmful? If so, how? By the way, doctor,



can the child run and tumble in the grass? And how much can he be exposed to the sun? And could he be kept nude outdoors?

For whom was exercise good? What kind?

Or they wanted instructions about their sex life. A couple soon to be married would come. The bridegroom was perplexed. He feared the first contact. How must he behave so as not to be a source of annoyance to his wife?

None of William's colleagues knew any more in that respect than what they had learned from their own patients and from themselves. In the first ten years—and often during their entire practice—they were not more informed than the layman.

When William began to speak to his patients about prevention, their questions were even more embarrassing, as they reflected upon the honesty of his brethren. How could he tell them what he thought of his colleagues? When his clients criticized them, how could he confess that he agreed with the critics? He felt that certain things should be said inside the profession only.

He sent his patients to the dentist for the preventive examination of their teeth and advised them to go there every six months or so. But some of them objected.

"In principle you're right, doctor. But who can guarantee that he is not going to find trouble where there is none? Or create some? You know, just to make work for himself?

Or he would ask one of them to see an eye specialist, to make sure that his vision was correct and to prevent possible trouble.

"Yes, but I hate glasses."

"He may find that you need none."

"They never do, doctor. Hardly. How can they? They either sell glasses themselves or get a commission from the optician."

In his student days, William had taken an interest in the eye and especially in refraction. He thought

he had found at least one chapter of medicine that was an exact science and worked with almost mathematical precision. But when he read the arguments of the very small minority of those specialists who had found out that the cause for the maladaptation of the eyeball to light and distance was not the one accepted as final by the profession, he renounced his idea of specializing in ophthalmology. The plea that spectacles were entirely unnecessary and harmful was quite plausible. But it spelled the destruction of an entire industry. The opposition of the great eye authorities was explicable.

Experts were anyway an obstacle to learning new things and to progress in general, William thought. They knew and feared too much. They had lost their initiative and boldness. And they respected the doctrines too much. It was the same in all branches of medicine.

Then there was human inertia, mental laziness, annoyance at the idea of a change. Yes, even among scientists.

William hesitated, undecided as to what was right.

And the problem was complicated by the eternal profit question, the profit accruing from quackery which made it unsafe to send a patient to anyone. . . . Oh, what was he to do? Should he be a dentist and an oculist also? Perhaps. And how would that solve the problem for the countless patients whom he would never see, whom he could not hope to see?

He was forced to collaborate with the nose and ear specialist, with the proctologist. What did he know about them? They were interesting in their postgraduate courses. But how did they treat the patients in their offices? Could he take the responsibility of sending his cases to them?

How could he apologize to the patient whom he had sent for a hemorrhoidal operation and whom the proctologist asked to come for regular treat-

ment for a long time after the part was all healed, so long, indeed, that even the patient understood the bluff and remonstrated to William?

It also happened that some of his rhinitides which needed but two or three treatments had to make twenty or more visits each. William was supposed to tolerate that tacitly. It was taken for granted.

Many chronic otitis cases were incurable and no amount of treatment could help them. But the ear doctor, instead of telling them the truth, had them come for a regular but useless treatment for months or even years.

One man told William:

"I went to an ear specialist. He frightened me, made me call several times and robbed me of my overcoat."

"Your overcoat? How is that?"

"Well, it was just at the beginning of the winter and I needed a coat. But I had to give to the doctor the money that was intended for the coat and I had to go without it. But later I was freezing and, due to the cold, my throat became sick, then my nose and later again my ears and I had to go back to the same doctor. Just as I had decided again to buy a coat and had scratched together some money for it, I had to give it to this specialist."

"So he took away two coats from you."

"He did."

Of course, there were also the real quacks who claimed to be specialists. William remembered one of them who treated a patient for several weeks, twice a week, with electricity, hot vapor, medicines, with the Pollitzer apparatus—and all that it was necessary to do was one thorough cleaning out of the hardened over-secreted ear wax, the work of five minutes.

The sincere specialists were often worse. They were in a rage to heal an organ, distinguishing it from the rest of the body as if it had a separate existence, nay, forgetting even the rest of the body.

That there were conditions where it was best to leave well enough alone was rarely recognized.

Indeed, few physicians in the profession at large realized that it was frequently better to leave something unhealed than to overtreat and have the disease scientifically healed but the patient dead.

Other specialists overemphasized the importance of their organ of predilection because they were too engrossed in its study. Specialism was often a monomania.

It was a good prophylactic measure to get a thorough and complete examination even when one had no complaints or symptoms. And in recent years the profession had succeeded in persuading the people to let their doctors "overhaul" them. Institutions for that purpose were formed and their number grew like mushrooms. They were supposed to be associations of specialists and to do their work seriously. But it was difficult to have faith in them.

While under ordinary circumstances one examination in five years or so was sufficient, they obliged their clients to come twice yearly. And—what was worse—their voluminous reports, instead of resulting in more health, were so edited as to scare the patient and make him ill. Some contained no instructions and, in order not to lose the friendship of the profession, sent the health-seeker back to doctors for advice and treatment—and more money-spending. Often, too, the misleading and unreliable blood examinations put into the patient's mind a poisonous and lasting suspicion and fear of a—non-existing—syphilis or other disease.

"Oh, why is medical practice dependent upon money?" William exclaimed to himself. "And why must we live on our patients' abscesses, dyspepsias, gonorrhoeas and imaginary troubles? Why are things so arranged that it is to our interest to have these conditions last as long as possible?"

When he was busy, William was almost daily in need of the advice of the skilled and experienced

consultants. Some were illustrious men, wonderful teachers, known as high characters, much honored in the community and some of them were rewarded with statues after their death. And yet—and yet—although there were a few kind souls, honorable, modest men, he found many who were petty, mean and dishonest in their relations with the patients he sent to them.

One of them was particularly greedy for the cash that he could not use any more, that he did not need, as he was wealthy and very old. His prescription blanks still recommended one particular pharmacy from which he received a regular commission. And, although he was unable to work and should have retired long ago, he had a young, ignorant assistant, almost a boy, in his office. And William's more intelligent patients said:

"If I wanted to consult that young doctor, I did not need to go to the office of the celebrity and pay a high fee. I call that a fake!"

"And did not the old man see you at all?" asked William.

"Not at all. I don't know how he looks except from his picture in the magazines."

A great orthopedist, coming over from Europe, was not ashamed to advertise himself so indecently as to make the poor patients wait in line and bring him all their earnings and the rich pay him fabulous fees.

Other celebrities relied on their fame to be excused for hurried, superficial work, but did not fail to demand their full honorarium.

William was in a quandary. Who, who was worthy of confidence? And would anyone believe him if he spoke against those giants of learning? He, the insignificant practitioner!

Sometimes he revolted and did not follow the new styles, the newest teachings. He preferred to be called oldfashioned and not to be "abreast of the times."

One of his patients was told that her ailment would be cured if all her teeth were extracted. They were the cause; they concealed infectious foci. She submitted. It was done. That was the period of mad tooth extractions. It was a craze. Millions of healthy teeth were criminally removed. One of those virulent epidemics which spread every year in the profession and work havoc among the public. Some subside within a few months. Others last for years, only to give way to newer caprices.

The tonsils, accused of all the evils, had to go whenever enlarged or seemingly diseased. The people, hypnotized, their hands and feet bound by suggestion, by the spirit of panic, submitting, submitting and the holocaust of tonsillectomies mounting ever higher.

"This fretting, running, jumping from one theory to the other was due to ignorance," William thought. "We do not know, but we make believe we know. Why not limit ourselves to that which we can do?"

The poor toothless woman waited a year and then returned to William with her former complaints.

Since that time he gave up this sort of treatment. He wanted nothing sacrificed about the harmfulness of which he was not absolutely certain. That would reduce surgery to about one-tenth of what it was.

At the beginning of his practice William dared not treat the cases of gonorrhoea. He thought the specialists knew more. But he saw with astonishment that they all bungled. The honest overtreated with the best intentions, the dishonest for their own purposes. But the fact was that most bad sequels were due to overtreatment.

When he took care of the cases, he discovered something that was so heterodox, so unbelievable, that at first he dared not avow it to himself. To come out with it in a medical society would have covered him with opprobrium and ridicule. Most gonorrhoea cases, if left alone from their inception, with the proper diet and rest, needed no treatment at all or very little of it, indeed. Their self-cure did not take longer than if the best recognized therapy was used. Yea, often a much shorter time. But that was something that the profession really did not know. It had never tried it—at least not intentionally.

The profession had the courage to experiment with any new medical idea within its scope, but rarely with that of doing nothing and leaving things alone.

As to the appendectomies, he knew already from his student days how many were done unnecessarily. In fact the majority of them. Now, in his own practice, he found that in almost all those cases in which his colleagues—great and small—had advised an operation, often an immediate one “to save life”, he succeeded in healing the condition by rest, fasting and evacuation. The profession hated conservative, expectant methods. It always had to be doing something. It feared the clientele. But it did not know that the latter would follow its advice, whatever it might recommend.

The marvelous success of surgery, its splendid technique, the immense good it was doing, was darkened by the much greater harm, misfortune, crippling and death it left in its wake. It saved lives at

every step. It worked miracles. But its very success contained its failure. The fact that asepsis, antisepsis and anesthesia permitted to attain undreamed-of heights and made it possible to do the impossible, gave the surgeons an audacity which carried them too far. It also opened new channels, new fields for the unscrupulous—and skill and learning immunized nobody against dishonesty. Operations were performed because they were feasible and relatively easy—and often in cases where they could better be dispensed with. Perhaps the greatest sin of surgery was its symptomatic instead of causal treatment, the treatment of effects only, while it gave the illusion of going to the roots of the evil.

One man, just one, a surgeon himself, an American, once dared to write a book about the crimes of surgery and he was pecked out of the profession and his volume had to be withdrawn from circulation.

The critics belonging to competitive schools of healing were ignored and rightly so. Their own quackery and ignorance were patent. But the public read their writings; their influence was large and, because they blamed the profession, they were believed by the crowd to be angel-saints from heaven and to know it all.

The book of the Russian medical doctor and writer Veressaieff had made a sensation some years before. But in spite of that it proved to be a cry in the wilderness with no practical results. The profession itself had not read it. For the public it came too early.

One great layman who was perfectly well informed on surgical and medical matters could have enlightened the world—a famous Irish-British playwright. But he wrote in such a manner as not to be taken seriously by anyone. He was called a wit, allowed to say anything he liked, but did not have the slightest influence on the events and



thoughts of his time. Just as among his dramatic works only the sensational subjects were popular, while his really worthwhile plays were ignored, so his opinion on doctors, medicine and surgery, as far as they were known at all, were regarded as a joke. Who ever cared for the jester's serious thoughts?

For some time William was interested in public health work. He followed it closely and even considered a proposition made by a board of health inspector to join the service.

Public health was the best in medicine. Its youngest branch and full of hope. Little by little it seemed to detach itself from the tree, to which it was unconsciously but relentlessly opposed. One could foresee that some day the break must come. Meanwhile it benefited medicine also. Its warming rays fell upon the age-old healing trade and halted its knives and drugs a little. There was hygiene, prevention, health. A new language was spoken.

Regeneration might come from there. But public health could not rid itself at once of medieval medical ideas, even though translated into modern and scientific forms. Side by side with education about light, air and food, there was an abuse of vaccines and sera, obscuring that which might have brought salvation.

Besides, the health authorities had no authority. They were feeble. Unable to give orders to the masters of industrial production, they could not introduce health into the factory, they were unable to suppress the unhealthy tenement and the congested block. The most essential improvements had to wait for more favorable days.

But it was certain that public health work would take a great impetus, that it would soar high when its time came, when base profits were an impossibility, when people would want to know the real causes of sickness, the causes of the causes.

However, the conflict between the public hygiene

service with its prophylactic principles and the medical profession had already begun. True, in the first skirmishes health had vanquished, but only by making concessions to the common doctor and cajoling him. Did the authorities not need him for collaboration, for the reporting of contagious cases and for statistical purposes? William saw protests printed in the professional press against what was called an intrusion of the health administration into the practitioner's province. The profession did not like such ideas as sending public health nurses for follow-up work. It also resented the too intensive care of the school children by the city physicians. The city yielded there, asking the parents to go to their own doctors for the examination and treatment of troubles of their progeny.

The profession at large was also much opposed to birth control, one of the most important health measures and disease preventives. A hundred reasons why it was harmful were given, the real ground for opposition being, of course, that it meant less income. The more children, the more sickness for both children and mothers. The birth control advocates succeeded in gaining some doctors to their side by promising them to demand legislation which would give the preventive methods into the hands of the profession exclusively instead of to the public at large. But even so their opponents outnumbered them so much that there was no hope of enrolling in the near future a majority of the physicians for birth limitation.

As to going a step further and legalize abortion under proper supervision, as had been done abroad with success, giving to woman the right over her own body—that was not in the domain of hope. The profession continued to prate about the terrific perils of abortion, although fully aware of its innocuousness if scientifically done. At the same time fifty per cent of the doctors were abortionists clandestinely, some limiting their practice to that work

entirely. That was a hypocritical concession to current morality for the purpose of saving appearances.

Leaving out a few wonderful exceptions—William singled out one particularly, a well-known surgeon who was at the head of the co-operative movement—American physicians as a whole were but little guided by the public spirit. Just as broad general and preventive measures were unpopular with them, so they were foreign to political and social activities. They were not interested in them and were a negligible factor in politics. In that respect they differed entirely from their European brethren, many of whom were the mayors of their towns, members of their parliaments and local and central governments, others busy in the labor movements and in the radical parties.

In his indecision William turned his attention again to music. There there was no charlatanism, he thought, except, of course, among ignoramuses. The leader of an orchestra, the violinist, the harpist, the flutist had to know his business, had to be a master and to play strictly according to the rules. He could not give to a public of connoisseurs a piece by Satie for one by Beethoven.

But William did not want his other tendencies to interfere with his medical occupation. Nor would he be the only doctor who was interested both in medicine and art simultaneously. The greatest surgeon of all times had been an accomplished violinist and thorough musician. One of the best Russian composers had been an amateur. A few excellent orchestras in Germany were composed of amateurs, many of whom were physicians. There had been poets, novelists, painters, sculptors, who were also physicians. Hundreds of practicing doctors organized every year in Paris an exhibition of their canvasses and marble blocks, something that American doctors had only recently begun to imitate.

That consoled him and gave him hope. He resumed his studies.

Among other places he went to the free lessons on the history of music given at the city college by a well-known professor who illustrated his talks beautifully on the organ, of which he was a master. But although this course was for advanced students it soon proved to be too elementary for William.

There he met a young, studious schoolteacher who not only adored music, but had a superb, flamboyant soprano with which, alas!, she could never appear in public on account of her physical form.

She was a product of severe rickets. She was of dwarfish stature and her hump was the first thing that attracted attention. Her skull, inordinately large above, a small face and pointed chin, looked like an inverted pyramid. William, the doctor, guessed her entire shape under her clothes, the deformity of her thorax, its crowding into the hips and internally the misshapen form of her liver and other entrails.

She spoke splendidly about her favorite composers.

"Ah, his exalted music prays, weeps. Its suavity and nobility are unsurpassed. It is pure, but powerful and needs no explanation, no interpretation."

And she talked for hours about tonal unity, chromatism, harmonious structure, the use of accords. At the end she said:

"If you can compose like that, well and good. If not, by God, perish! Mediocrities are worse than useless."

How could he write as she said?

So it was evident that he must perish.

She introduced him to a distinguished musician in whose house she often sang for small gatherings consisting of the cream of the musical profession. But they had to submit to her terms, namely, that she should be heard only, without being seen. She was separated from the audience of ten or twelve persons by a heavy curtain. Her voluminous voice, subdued to suit the capacity of the room, rose and fell and brought to the surface the profoundest *nuances* of feeling. A tremor passed through the listeners. An unseen genius fluttered and awoke the flesh and the mind, penetrating the soul of everyone's soul. At the end no one dared to applaud. It would have been a desecration. All were in love

with—the voice—until the curtain was lifted and the hideous bundle of humanity appeared. Then the hands began to clap instinctively. The homage was in honor of this shrunken, diminutive being—her voice was forgotten. Over-sensitive, she had her nostrils, ears and eyes wide open and scrutinized everybody lest she might discover the merest trace of a jeer. Satisfied, she sat down and sobbed.

But somebody, to break the ice, said to William: "Doctor, what do you think about that suicide case reported in today's papers?"

Then the conversation became general and took a medical turn.

"I believe he was right to kill himself. An incurable patient, whose support falls on other people's shoulders and who is a nuisance should do away with himself."

This had always been William's opinion in such matters.

But everybody disagreed with him. Examples of sick people were given who, although dependent, were morally useful and some were cited who had distinguished themselves as musicians.

The subject changed gradually to death in general. "It is stupid to get old and die when we're ripe and have begun to acquire the few crumbs of knowledge that would enable us to live," said one. "Therefore, it is best to regard our span as eternity itself. Our life—that's all there is. Nothing before, nothing after."

"How foolish it would be to do that!" answered another. "We should be very poor if we did so. We're making use of the inventions and discoveries of the most primitive people behind us and of the still earlier experience of the time of our animal life, and on the other hand of the most wonderful human productions, say the Brandenburger Concerto of the great Johann-Sebastian. Where are the beings who have given us that? The existence of each of them has been so brief—we may ask

whether they have existed at all. . . . We're but a link in th chain."

One of the music lovers he met there was a young man who wrote faulty pieces that contained much beauty. He used to say to William: "I have no time for such a trifle as studying music. I must write it. My brain, my entire person is full of it. You're the same, are you not?"

William's work was specially praised by two men who came regularly, but did not belong to the musical world. He had no faith in them.

One was his old patient, the liar, who always lied, who had to lie—that being for him a mental *tic*.

The other was a man who thought himself infallible. He used to emit sharp final opinions and suffered no contradiction: "This is pretty. This is good. This is bad. This is ugly. You're sick. You're well." He never wrote a word, he knew no music and had not drawn the least thing, but said: "I can write better than Tolstoi, I can compose better than Debussy, I can paint better than Velasquez." He knew so little that he believed this sincerely.

He did not read—he did not need to, he claimed. He could guess at literature. He was unable to distinguish a cheap chromo from a work of art. All he knew was by hearsay. But he was used to being respected because of his large income and of the money he gave to encourage art.

He said to William: "That is a magnificent composition. Go on with it!"

But the real great master just nodded his head: "There is something in it. You need to study more."

But later he added:

"By the way, can you send me another doctor? I don't think I care for a physician who dabbles in music." Everybody laughed. William, too.

Curiously enough, the crippled singer called forth in William feelings that he believed long since buried. Her voice suggested to him another physique, tall, erect, handsome. And his thought passed beyond her to the girl who twenty years before had kindled his childish mind and whom he imagined now as a full-grown, ideally beautiful woman. As he had never seen her again, his roaming fancy was free to give her the shape it wanted.

Since his separation from Mary this self-created picture of his first love appeared in his mind frequently. Otherwise he was sensually perfectly calm. He felt superior, distant from petty human sensations.

Only rarely did the women of his clientele disturb him or force to the surface his old repressed cravings.

Usually such women were undesirable from every standpoint and more so for a doctor who—saw too much of them—than for other men.

But from time to time there were some with physically attractive qualities whose complaints had nothing to do with corporal ills. Unhappy—for one reason or another—in their pre-married or married life, they suffered vaguely. They did not know exactly what to answer to William's questions. As his soft manners were pleasing, sometimes one of them would fasten her eyes on his, kindling for a second a spark in the ashes. Under the same circumstances another would grip his hand with more warmth and gratitude than his services called for. Or, before leaving, she would lay her tear-stained



face on the doctor's shoulder and almost in a swoon she would sigh: "Oh, doctor!" Instinctively his eyes would answer, his grasp would be stronger, his hand would stroke her hair lightly.

Most of the time these things had no meaning and remained isolated gestures. But once in a while there was a woman who waited for such moments and invited or created such situations. She kissed him as if by chance and demanded from him the love she was unable to get elsewhere. He knew that in such cases he had to be cautious. While almost all the women on these occasions were grateful, sometimes the results were bad. There were hysterical creatures proud to proclaim and parade their conquests; others, although they had received nothing but a light touch on the cheek or, as they cried, their hand had been fondled for a second, went home, brooded and brooded, and weeks later, when the doctor had all but forgotten their existence, imagined that what they had desired had really happened and, suddenly alarmed, denounced the physician. All experienced medical men feared such patients.

Once or twice, aroused by these contacts, William went to Mary's house under some excuse.

But her appearance usually cooled him off. She had lost almost all her charm and femininity. Her dress, her expression, her coiffure, her movements, the curt answers that she had adopted for her patients and that she now used with everybody, her *embon-point* made her look like a prosperous business man in his office. When she attempted to coax him, to use her gentle voice of long ago or to touch his arm, the effect was quite other than she intended. It was an unpleasant wheedling or a quick, rough slap instead. The words spoken in a mixture of high and hoarse tones made a disagreeable impression. She was now so used to finish quickly and efficiently whatever she had to do, that she was unable to suggest, to hint at something, to pass delicately

from one idea to another, to use the necessary artifices that all men and women need in love-making. She was a perfect modern machine, working like one and inanimate like it. Her directness made her brutal. She would say something that she would regret a moment later although knowing that she was not able to speak otherwise. For instance:

"Why don't you make an effort to love?"

And she added:

"To love me?"

And, after a few seconds:

"Or make believe?"

And then quickly, to repair the impression, to improve the situation:

"No, I . . ."

But he could not stand it and said:

"Don't. Oh, please don't!"

And he left.

Two-three months later, when he came to see her again, it was the same thing.

But now he understood from her behavior that she had at last replaced him and later, when he saw her several times in the street, at a distance, accompanied by the same man, there was no doubt about it. Then he felt that something was settled forever, that an important problem was solved. He was satisfied.

From that time on he hoped that neither he nor she would allude to love or any mutual relations whatever. They would be freer to speak about other subjects and he might gain in her a new colleague, perhaps a friend. Therefore, he thought that from then on he should visit her more often.

He did. But she was so full of her successes, so blind to everything that was not her immediate world, that he spoke little, their conversation languished, then was dropped. She took out her account books, he lost himself in a medical volume.

He discontinued his visits altogether.

He had not seen Mary for a long time when the deformed singer made him think of his old boyish love, the memory of which had been left behind and was buried under countless events and feelings and other memories.

How old was he at the time?

Fifteen? No, fourteen. It was soon after his arrival in this country. And she? Eleven! And it was she who aroused his deeper nature.

That was not a rare thing. Any observer could notice that the girls between nine and fourteen in large cities were occupied with love-making and talking about boys among themselves. They were more stimulating than they would be at a more mature age. Mostly it was a mere play, trying to imitate their older sisters, without knowing how. There was a blending of the child and the woman.

It was during vacation, his first year in America in a middle-western city. William was living with his mother in the house of the relative who had brought them over from Europe. But William wished to leave them and earn his own living or to depend on them as little as possible. He saw somewhere a sign: "Boy Wanted." And the next day he was employed in a small "ten and twenty-five cents" store, a farcical imitation of the large chain stores of that nature. His duty was to stay outdoors and watch the display and the customers.

A few boards with partitions covered with red cloth. Small objects, purses, pocketbooks, penknives, toys. Every morning William arranged his goods carefully, according to orders, and during the day he wiped, rubbed and polished them ten times, twenty times. He treated them with all his esthetic sentiment, with the best taste he commanded. The earnestness and naiveté that characterized him made him take everything seriously. Therefore, he hated to see his supply handled, disturbed, diminished. He feared the barbarian costumers. When they bought something the absence of which made

his stock imperfect and spoiled the entire arrangement, he was sincerely indignant. The shop was so small that he was unable to replenish his stock for a day or two. Each sale hurt him. It amounted to a plunder.

William's thoughts were composed of worries about his future, a keen desire to get away from his mother's hands and still to continue his work in school after vacation and, in addition to that, the sorrows called forth by the fate of the hero of the novel he had been reading the previous night. He stayed near his goods, his eyes lost in an indefinite distance.

Suddenly a white bit of paper fell among his pocketbooks.

It was a letter, a faultlessly written letter on ruled paper, addressed to "William" and signed "Louise."

Following a polite introduction "demanding pardon for having permitted herself" . . . came sweet, touching words which asked him for permission to make his acquaintance in the hope that later, if she deserved it, he might give her his friendship. At the end, in a postscript, he read: "I love you very much."

William looked around. Louise was not to be seen.

He was astonished. Until then he had believed that such things happened in printed stories only. He was disturbed. He re-read the note to make sure that it was really addressed to him.

But when he met her, a flame, until then unknown to him, flared up in his soul and he loved her with every particle of his being. She was the daughter of a storekeeper on the opposite sidewalk. Every evening, as soon as he was free, he lay in wait before her father's store. He made believe that he was examining the shining watches, the bronze and marble clocks in the well-lit show-window, and, as he had to wait for a long time, he learned all the

minute details of that window by heart. Hours passed before Louise appeared. But one glance from her, one touch of her hand, was a perfect reward for his patience. In his confusion he saw not the crowds passing near him and felt not their elbows. It was a Gavroche into whom his friend Cupid had shot for fun one of his poisoned darts. He was laughable and looked insane, but what did he care? His mind was in another world than his body. He had but one purpose: to see her, to see her every day and, if possible, to speak to her.

There she was coming. She had at last succeeded in tearing herself loose from her mother's vigilance. William left the too brightly lighted spot and awaited her in the shadow. He bit his lips. His soul was filled with bliss, with an inexpressible joy. No street, houses, or people existed for him. They were far away. A complete void around him. Louise alone was there, she was moving, she was approaching. And the flash of her deep, black eyes was a radiant light that covered the world.

It was not mere love. In her were concentrated all his fancies and dreams. His soul went out to meet her; his eyes embraced her from a distance.

She bewitched him, hypnotized him. He did not move.

Then, his hand trembling in hers, they walked up the hilly street.

His heart beat violently. He felt it up in his temples. He looked straight at her. But it seemed to him that she did not understand him. He did not read in her face the storm that raged within him.

Silent, apparently calm, she looked down at the pavement, as if she were counting the cobblestones.

Their meeting lasted for an hour or so. But they never said anything to one another. Not even "Good evening." Not because they were badly brought up. No. Elsewhere both were courteous. But somehow they felt that it would have been a

profanation to permit the banal conventionalities to enter into the sanctity of their superhuman love.

Such was the picture, the setting. But what was going on?

For a few moments William's lips quivered. A flame covered his face. Luckily the street was dark at that point and she could not see him. He wished to speak to her. But how? He could hardly stand on his feet. His blushing changed into a deadly pallor.

At last he succeeded in stammering:

"Louise, will you let me . . . let me kiss you?"

Quickly she raised her eyes and looked at him with surprise. Now it was his turn to let his glance wander off and finally fall to the ground. That was all he was able to say. The extraordinary effort he had had to make, the incredible courage he had employed, had exhausted him.

His hand, now cold and clammy, shook like that of a sick person. Awful things were going to happen. The sky, the clouds, the world would crumble about him. A sharp, painful, uninterrupted sound filled his ears. He was not fully conscious and stood motionless.

What had perplexed him so much was his shame at his own awkwardness, his clumsy directness, his helplessness.

"I believe that cannot be," she answered at last, quietly but theatrically, as if she were reading from a book.

Oh, the nightmare that oppressed his heart was suddenly gone! And he was brave enough to lift his eyes and to smile.

Her reply made him happy. It was a relief, a salvation. He would not have had the courage to kiss her.

How had he dared to ask her? Was she not a saint to be adored from afar and only on his knees?

During the following weeks poor young William was probably not normal. Too naive for such an

adventure, he was in a continual ecstasy. He was overwhelmed. There was not a moment in which he did not think of Louise. She appeared in the midst of his other thoughts. She was woven into all his plans for the future. She was the subject of his dreams at night. He saw her in his endless day-dreams. She was everywhere and in everything. Her image was carved into his entire being. She was so much a part of him, whether he met her or not! He saw her covering the stars and darkening the pale light of the moon. He saw her in the air as a fine veil of transparent light, joining the blue above with the green below. The crowns of the trees were her hair. She made the leaves grow and the flowers to open. On each spot where her contact kissed the soil blossoms sprang up. And they hurried to get a glimpse of their creator and touch her hands with their velvety lips.

Or she was the center of a divine worship. The fragrancy of the rose was the incense. The song of the birds—nature's gratitude and praise for its queen.

He often sat in a solitary corner of the park which he regarded as her temple, blind to everything, paralyzed, his eyes steadily riveted on one point in infinite space. Passersby stopped, children interrupted their play to look at him.

For a time this terrible crisis at the close of his childhood not only unbalanced William mentally, not only put him at the brink of a serious brain disturbance, but broke down his physical health as well.

His mother did not know what to do with the boy. He had ceased to speak, he was listless, ate and slept little and only when given food or forced to go to bed. His debility grew from day to day. His tallness added to his gauntness. His condition was frightful. The physician to whom she took him did not understand his case.

As for Louise, she could not guess what confli-

gration she had kindled. She could not imagine what results her innocent gesture had had for William. He saw her rarely and now, since her parents had discovered their secret, he could not see her at all. He had real fits of sombre melancholy that actually imperilled his life. He retired to his favorite place in the park and wept, while his nervous fingers automatically tore one leaf of the tree after another and the twilight cold chilled his poor, thin body. There he would sit for many hours daily until the end of the summer, and the fall found him often there.

Of course, he lost his job.

His happiness and exaltation changed into depression. Sadness settled in his heart and everything was now wrapped in mourning.

The traces left by that period were so deep that at any time during William's entire life he was able to weep when he evoked Louise or when he recalled the favorite tune that she used to hum.

But he managed to emerge from his trance and regain control of himself.

In the fall he purposely moved away from her and her enchanted circle and put between him and her as many obstacles as he could. He plunged into a maelstrom of work and study. . . .

The danger was overcome. William's life and future were saved. But Louise did not cease to occupy a place in his mind all through his life. Years later she often appeared in his dreams. And although he never met her again, he kept her little love-letter and kissed it once in a while.

In the course of time he forgot her appearance or rather, carrying it in his mind, he gave it the form he desired, he sublimized it. A luminous phantom of a quiet, steady sheen, woven with the finest rays, out of the best there was in him and the highest that he gathered from the world. She now was the ideal of love, bred and cultivated by him.

Just once, before he definitely decided to unite



his fate with that of Mary, he wanted to see Louise. Perhaps, he thought, that might change the course of his life.

He found her parent's store.

He was all a-tremble. As soon as he passed the threshold he regretted having come. Happily no one recognized him. He bought something and was served by Louise's mother and sister. She for whom he had come was not there. He did not ask for her.

He went out and walked away as fast as he could, fearing to meet her. Who knows? He might have found her too prosaic. Her physical presence, her direct reality might have demolished his ideal imagination about her, might have crushed the dream formed around her and dashed it into nothingness.

He passed near the catastrophe and escaped it. His dream was safe. His ideal remained intact for the next ten years.

But lately, since his gradual separation from Mary, he thought more and more of Louise. It is true that he recapitulated all his loves, at least the more tangible ones, those that had left a strong impression. But Louise predominated. In his struggle to get a hold on something real, he made an effort to humanize her, to make her less ideal, but he was unsuccessful.

Was she alive? Where and how? Some time, he hoped, he would find out.

One morning he was asked by telephone to call upon a patient named Louise D.....

His heart bounded. That was her name. Her very name. He swallowed before answering. He did not hear the next words. His heart gave another jolt and came up in his throat. Then, while inspecting his bag:

"No, it cannot be. At this age she must be married and have another name. I'm crazy!"

He was unable to tie his cravat. Instead of his overcoat he slipped on his morning gown.

"What the devil! . . ." he exclaimed, and tossed it aside.

He went to the mirror, looked himself over.

Usually he walked or took the subway. This time he hailed a taxicab. By the time he arrived, he had pulled out a good many hairs of his moustache and bitten one nail to the blood.

As he touched the bell button he changed his composure, breathed deeply, coughed and straightened his coat.

It was an old lady, an author of children's books.

"I should have thought of that. Of course, I have heard the name and it never occurred to me . . . I'm nothing but a moron. . . . Mo-o-o-ron!"

And aloud and with perfect calm:

"Yes, and for how long have you had these pains "

She had a large tumor and he sent her to a private room in a hospital, where a renowned surgeon performed the operation. Two days later she was dead.

William said to himself: "Nobody's fault. The operation was indicated. Nothing else could be done. Surgery is not to be blamed. Sometimes it fails."

He went to see the removed specimen. The pathologist showed it to him and, while dissecting a cadaver, he spoke with his cigarette in his mouth:

"He may have been full of booze. You can never tell with . . ."

"Who?"

"Don't you know the old man is drinking like a sponge?"

Outside William buttonholed a young interne.

"Of course, he is soaking and guzzling! . . . Made you lose a patient, hey?"

"Had I known that! . . . And I thought . . ."

"Oh, he is the best of 'em all when sober. But lately that is rare."

On his way home William bit his knuckles and said to himself aloud: "Surgery, surgery! There is no surgery! There are surgeons."

The passing people turned around to look at him.

And to think that only a short time before this drunkard had criticized his colleagues at a professional meeting.

What was the subject? "The abuse of the forceps and of the Caesarean section." He spoke from his own experience and quoted other surgeons.

The forceps, that indispensable instrument that worked wonders, was often applied because the doctor had no time to wait and let nature work. It was the same with a few hand manoeuvres during childbirth. The gynecologist who usually saw the obstetric cases later, was horrified at the sight of the sequels. Generally a reparation *ad integrum* was impossible. The poor women had to submit to plastic and other operations, which rarely put the parts in shape. Some were tormented with pains, were life-long invalids and underwent useless treatment until death delivered them from their agony.

The thrilling Caesarean operation, at the thought of which the layman rightly marvelled, was a necessity in some, but very few cases.

The surgeon was reading now passages from somebody else's paper to prove that he was not the only one with these contentions:

"There is a type of case that one frequently hears Caesarean sections are done on. A patient starts up with poor indifferent contractions, lasting possibly for twelve hours more or less. No progress is made in dilation. The head remains high, only settling into the brim. The attending obstetrician loses his perspective, becomes apprehensive, puts the patient down as having a first stage inertia, goes to the

family with a long face and says that he doesn't see how she can be delivered with a live baby, puts the condition to the family in such a way that of course they agree to a Caesarean. A Caesarean is done, when in not a few such cases the patient is not in true labor at all.

"Again, we see the type of case which has a high head, and according to her dates should start up in labor. If the attending physician in these cases does not carefully look to the pelvis and the size of the baby, he will jump to the conclusion that he has a high head to deal with, will claim that the risk of letting her go through a delivery from below is great, and urge the family to have a Caesarean section. It was only a short while ago that this occurred in a case that I know about. The patient was told that she must have a Caesarean at once, but she flatly refused because she said she did not think that she was due. She went for a week or more after this obstetrician had recommended a Caesarean as an operation of necessity, and then delivered herself.

"Unquestionably there are a few women who stand labor poorly, who make a poor convalescence following a hard, long labor. This indication for a Caesarean section has been used in not a few cases to do what seems to me unnecessary Caesareans. I see such women constantly, who during their pregnancy make one think they are poor risks for a delivery from below. Gradually, as pregnancy goes on, they improve; in some, improvement does not take place, but not a few of these women, when they come to labor, will surprise us in the way they stand it and how they can be carried through a delivery from below without any risk whatsoever. Unquestionably, there are women who do go to pieces under labor, but they are relatively few, and since this indication has been put forward it has been used quite injudiciously by not a few men.

'The careless indiscriminate way that surgeons

with no obstetric judgment do Caesarean sections, makes one shudder. They recognize few of the contra-indications, they go ahead blindly, and I am free to admit that in some cases they appear to get fair results, but we do not know how many of their cases go wrong that are not reported.

"The family physician makes up his mind, not always wisely, that a Caesarean should be done, and not wishing to have his judgment questioned, he sends the case to a surgeon who he knows will do what he is asked to do without question.

"I appreciate, as well as any of you, the large series of cases with excellent results, the low mortality on selected cases running between two and three per cent. But the moment that the careful indications are omitted when a Caesarean is done on neglected cases, the mortality runs up very high.

"A prominent obstetrician said in my hearing some time ago that he thought if we allowed all women to go into labor we would do few Caesarean sections. However, he does not let women go into labor and he continues to do Caesarean sections.

"Does it carry little risk to the mother? Before any operator says it carries little or no risk, he, I believe, should state his own mortality rate. Personally I believe it carries a considerable risk, for if there is any slip—if the patient goes wrong at all—it usually means a uterine infection and death from general peritonitis."

It was true that the quotations were taken from a famous obstetrician who finished by indirectly praising his own good judgment and favorable results and in that way advertised himself before the plain practitioners, as all the specialists, when reading papers, do. But it was by comparing this reciprocal fault-finding that one could make up one's mind.

The frankness of this speaker was the reason for William's choice.

He did not care to have the operation done by

his usual surgeon. A great man, writer of the best surgical books, eminent teacher. But a money-lover. William's patients complained that he had them call weekly for months after an operation—just to get his fee.

"He has nothing to do, absolutely nothing, and does nothing," they said.

To whom should he trust his patients in the future? With whom should he collaborate? And, if he could not collaborate, how could he practice?

Other surgical cases came out from the depths of his conscience. Who knows? They might have lived.

Some deaths were due to general anesthesia and not to the operation itself.

Mankind had not received a greater gift than general anesthesia. But it was in human hands and depended on an infinite number of extraneous factors. First of all, the frequency of the operations. If these were reduced to their absolute minimum, the anesthetic risk would be reduced also.

Said one physician who was a partisan of local anesthesia and needed publicity for his own method:

"Why should we use local anesthesia at all? First and foremost to avoid the dangers to life of a general anesthetic. How great these dangers are in any given case we do not know. Some apparently good risks take anesthesia very badly; other patients who seem bad risks, take it well. But that there is a risk to life in every general anesthetic used there can be no doubt. Statistics of anesthesia mean very little. It has been said, statistics are lies in the shape of numbers. And we must not forget that the mere fact that a patient does not succumb during the first days after operation does not always mean that the danger from the anesthetic is over. Who of us has not seen an aspiration pneumonia—I mean a real *Schluck-Pneumonie*, as the Germans called it—prove fatal five or more days after operation? How often does a nephritis date from an

operation! Did the operation cause the nephritis? Certainly not, but the ether did. How often have we seen so-called paralytic ileus following abdominal operations! Did the operation cause the ileus, or was it the ether? How often have we seen patients after abdominal operations vomit for days and then die exhausted! Did the operations cause the vomiting, or was it the ether? I have operated on several peritonitis cases under local anesthetics and it is surprising how little the patients vomit, how little the abdomen is distended, and how quickly they recuperate.

"Increasing experience but serves to strengthen the conviction that I expressed in one of my earlier papers, that much of the danger from most major operations is the danger of the anesthetic. Much of the post-operative morbidity, many of the complications and not a few of the deaths should be called not post-operative but post-anesthetic. Much of the post-operative distention, gastric as well as intestinal, much of the pain, the inability to move the bowels, the cardiac weakness, and many other of these so-called post-operative complications, are in reality post-anesthetic.

"How often are we confronted by patients who, we say, are bad operative risks, when we mean they are bad anesthetic risks! Take some of these patients and give them ether for forty-five minutes or longer, and do no operation on them at all, and they will have a stormy time for several days, and some of them might even die as a result of the anesthetic. It is a well-known fact that patients are much less uncomfortable and have less post-operative complications after a short than after a long operation. This means they have had less ether and therefore are less sick."

Of course, this man's opponents found arguments against local anesthesia. But both sides were right when they claimed that their methods killed many patients.



Just then William had to handle a bad case of varicocele which he had seen a few days before and about which he was at a loss what to do. In most cases no therapy except rest seemed to be the best therapy. Lately he had tried all sorts of conservative means and he seemed to get fine results. But this was a case of a man who, on account of his occupation, was unable to follow instructions and surgery seemed to be the best indication.

However, as William sat down at his desk and opened the current issue of his medical journal, he read:

"The operative treatment of varicocele is frequently followed by hydrocele. Of a total of 303 operations, seventy-six patients were examined, thirty of whom, or 39 per cent., had a hydrocele; forty reported by letter or telephone, and of these, seven, 17 per cent., stated that hydrocele had developed. Of the total of 106 patients examined or reporting by letter, thirty-seven, or 35 per cent., had hydrocele. Four, or about 4 per cent., had atrophy of the testicle, and there were two recurrences of the varicocele. Modern textbooks on urology and on general surgery fail with one exception to recognize the frequency of this complication."

William decided to explain that to the patient, although he was certain that the latter would go to another physician who would have an operation performed.

Yes, there were countless cases of "the operation was successful but the patient succumbed." Or the operation as such was successful, but its later consequences were worse than the conditions which it was intended to remedy.

William recalled hundreds of cases of diseases that were only sequels of a surgical intervention.

He was forced to treat them. But usually with no success at all. The operator knew nothing of that—he had published the case as a success. And in some cases the connection between the present illness and the operation performed long before was difficult to see, except by one with a completely unbiased mind.

The first patient to whom William opened the door on that day was a man with an appendectomy done three months previously. He really complained of obstipation and of the pre-operative abdominal pains on account of which the operation had been performed. But six months before the removal of his appendix his case had been diagnosed as a duodenal ulcer and a laparotomy was done then. Following that operation he was "fed up," that is overfed—advised to eat large amounts of nourishing foods, many eggs, much milk, butter, cream and gruel and later so-called "light meat" and fish.

"You have to counteract the acid," said the surgical jackass.

Naturally his symptoms had grown worse. He was intoxicated with food—good food but too much of it—and his bowels could not evacuate, which was nothing else than the original condition that had led to the "ulcer operation."

And a year before that he had had a gallbladder operation.

A vicious circle.

William knew very well that at present he could do but little for his patient. But he was convinced that no one of the three operations had been necessary. Had the diet been changed, the amount of food reduced, the food correctly combined, and had other proper advice concerning living as a whole been given in time, the patient would have been cured long before.

The physicians and surgeons who had seen this

case were not aware of the fact that they were pouring all the time more oil on the fire. They had begun by prescribing drugs for the prevention of constipation and so, by the abominable action of the medicines on the intestines and on the body as a whole, they had produced that which they wanted to avoid—constipation, more of it. This became an established condition. The food made matters worse. The pharmacy for dyspeptics was exhausted. Then they thought something ought to be removed. The roentgenograms, which are but rarely absolutely clear and certain, were read in such a manner as to confirm the clinical diagnosis and the patient had to bear the consequences.

This was not a money case. There was not even that excuse. The patient was unable to pay a fee. It was worse: ignorance—ignorance that would be unbelievable to a layman—not of a single physician, but ignorance that condemned the entire profession, as that was the way in which such cases were generally handled. Nor was it an exceptional case. It was one of the typical cases met by William in his practice.

Then he saw an old man with no teeth at all.

"That's nothing, doctor. I am not coming for that. It was done when I was young. I had an abscess and the doctors washed it so much and so often with bichloride of mercury that I was all but poisoned. My gums were inflamed and I lost my teeth. Oh, they made me suffer! Had I known at that time what I know now! . . . When you think that all they had to do was to lance it and press it out thoroughly and it would have healed by itself! But the doctors did not know any more than I. And the abscess, too, was a result of a physician's mistreatment. It came from one of the many furuncles I had and which, in turn, were due to the bromides my doctor gave me for my nervousness and insomnia."

William had read about that period of furious anti-

sepsis during the development period of surgery. In those days antiseptics were used everywhere and in great abundance, as liquids, gases, in fumigations, externally and internally. Humanity was being cleaned and sterilized—a large part of it out of existence.

He also recalled what his white-haired teacher, who had been a young man in Semmelweiss' time, used to tell the class:

"I was not better informed as to the cause of puerperal fever than my colleagues. One-third of the women died in the hospital, under scientific care, after such a plain, normal function as childbirth. The midwife cases and those of the miserable women who confined under the bridges were better off. Well, I had no fever in my obstetrical clinic and almost no mortality. Why? Simply because I was a clean man. I used ordinary, elementary cleanliness. I wore a white gown even then. I cut and cleansed my nails, scrubbed my hands with brush, soap and water before and after the examination. The problem that seemed so difficult and obscure to the profession was solved for me."

The consultation was finished and William's patient opened the door to leave. But he stopped:

"I see you too are sending me for X-rays. It's all right; I've been there before. But I hate to go to the hospital for that."

"Why, with my letter they won't charge you a cent."

"That's just it. That's why I don't like it."

"But you can't pay."

"Just so, I'm sorry to say. But they make fun of us."

"Who?"

"The X-ray doctors—everybody there."

"For instance?"

"In many ways. When I last went for an abdominal examination, a year ago, he says to me, says he, we're going to take your picture, just smile.

I just felt like . . . It seems nothing, but I can't stand it . . . We're poor, but we're not fools . . ."

"Oho, it's an innocent joke!"

'But he wouldn't try it with his private patients in his office."

William went to the dispensary and, before reaching the X-ray department, he passed the waiting rooms, some of which were windowless. Hundreds of patients sat there for hours on hard benches and many had to do that a few times a week for several months. Their time was not considered. When their turn came at last the consultation was hurried except in the cases where there was something to be demonstrated. A medicine and a superficial explanation was given and they were shoved out by the nurse.

William related to the roentgenologist what his patient had told him. There was general laughter. But a clinician from the hospital wards upstairs was there to see the radiosopic appearance of the chest of one of his patients. And he agreed with William's remark.

"We should have more consideration for these poor devils," he said.

Lingering a little while longer, William heard the following conversation:

"I'll tell you what you ought to do. Inject some air into that thorax, so that we can see what this shadow is," said the roentgenologist.

"I don't know, I wouldn't do it," replied the clinician. "I wouldn't gamble on that. You can't tell. The patient is old and shaky. He is a street cleaner and the street cleaning department wants reports about him and so on and so forth. Such patients can't stand this sort of thing. It's dangerous."

"True, but just the same it'd be good for the sake of the diagnosis."

"I prefer not to know the exact diagnosis."

William's practice increased again, but it was not at its previous point. It was changeable. There were good times and there were times when it was miserable. For days he would see nobody, then a sudden rush. The work was difficult because there were many new cases. Most of them just came for the sake of curiosity and did not continue until discharged. All sorts of things were rumored about this doctor, things about which he himself learned very little. He was good for some people, bad for others—nobody knew exactly why. The fact was, he was different.

The indigents, treated free of charge, were about the only portion of his clientele that had remained faithful to him, although even they rarely followed his advice. They learned of his gratuitous services from one another and kept on coming, each sending the next. But just because they had the consultations for nothing they did not appreciate them. They spoke among themselves with respect about the high fees of this or that physician—the higher the fee, the more he was honored. In fact, this was for them and for the public in general the only criterium by which high learning and good service were judged. William did not have the scientific advantage of using these patients fully as objects of experimentation for his own theories and for the purpose of learning how to simplify his treatments. They did not obey him or rather they obeyed him only if his advice happened to coincide with that of

the dispensary to which they always went afterwards—and that coincidence seldom occurred. The plainer the remedy and the cheaper the drug, the more they disdained it. An expensive medicine, a dangerous operation, a high-priced surgeon impressed them and implied a cure. They envied those who were able to afford such luxury.

If William had had but a few colleagues close by with his tendencies and philosophy, the patients—paying and free—would soon have believed and agreed. But he was alone in his vicinity.

Even in the cases in which his treatment was evidently successful, it was misinterpreted.

At the hospital he saw a woman who was suffering from attacks of epigastric pains after meals, a hypertrophic liver, a palpable gallbladder, loss of appetite and weight and, of course, constipation. She was considered a case of cholecystitis and sent to the surgical department for an exploratory operation, which the patient refused. William hated exploratory operations and asked her to call at his office. As a fee was out of the question, it was not a breach of ethics to invite her.

She had been variously treated and at each of the severer attacks she received morphine hypodermically.

William made a complete change in the therapy. After questioning her minutely as to just how she ate and what she did from morning till evening, he gave her a written prescription how to use her time and how and what and how much to eat in the future.

The patient improved and within three months was cured. But her superstitious relatives persuaded her that this was an unscientific treatment, the object of which was just to hide the disease and transform it into a much worse condition. Therefore, she submitted to the operation—to an operation which was certainly unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the hospital surgeon, seeing how well



she felt, now refused to perform it. But she, thinking that he only wanted to punish her for her desertion, insisted until it was done, operations often being performed merely at the behest of a patient.

There were patients who went from one hand to the other for years, from doctor to doctor, from healer to healer. Some because they were bewildered by the many things they heard about and against medicine. Others because they had the healing mania. Still others because they found no relief.

To take but one out of a hundred similar cases treated by William: A man had a pain in the leg. He visited a medical practitioner. A Wassermann test was made. It was negative. He was sent to the dentist, to the nose man. Both found something to treat. The pain continued. Another physician gave intravenous injections of some kind. No effect. Internal medication prescribed by another doctor did not help. A surgeon suggested an orthopedic operation of the feet, which the patient fortunately rejected. The next medical man ordered arches which aggravated the trouble. Then special shoes were advised by another doctor. Then the patient was treated by a chiropodist, an osteopath, a chiropractor. The latter manipulated him for months. The result was nil. The patient used drugs and ointments advertised in the papers and those dispensed by the pharmacist over the counter. A physical culturist had the poor fellow fast until he was almost dead. A naturopath gave him special baths and herbs and electricity.

No healer found that this patient's occupation had been forcing him to stand on his feet the whole day for twenty years and therefore their remedies, not touching the cause, were useless or harmful. Both the regular and irregular schools had shot wide of the mark.

The paying patients were always more capricious

and pretended to teach William, or at least to give him other doctors as examples.

He lacked energy and did not know how to command respect for his opinions. He mistrusted himself and was eager to listen to the humblest, in which he generally went too far.

But he had occasional outbursts that bordered on violence.

Once he saw a woman who was as rich in worldly goods as in fat. She had undergone a hundred obesity cures that had obstinately made her gain weight. William was nauseated by the sight of her swinish body and grayish skin. As she breathed, her flesh moved up and down like the thick waves of mud in the marshes. Her perfumes could not cover her odors. She quickly tired of standing and sat down to be examined. Armed with a napkin he deftly raised her heavy, pendulous breast, which reached almost to the knee, to auscult her heart. She resented his movement which concealed his aversion only imperfectly. But she said nothing. She merely blushed and chewed more noisily her "slends," a fake fat-reducing chewing-gum. There was hostility in the air and on both sides.

As William asked her about her previous life and history, she began to talk with great volubility. He was used to that. Patients rarely spoke to the point or replied to questions as they were put. They generally answered too much. To interrupt them was worse—they would start again from the beginning. The best thing was to let them talk until their subject was exhausted. But this time he was prejudiced and impatient. He stopped and launched into a tirade against the so-called anti-fat remedies. And, when she tried to protest, he offended her:

"Considering what you are doing in the world, you're nothing but a walking digestive tube!"

There was a real brawl and finally he was slapped in the face. This was the second time this had occurred since he had been in practice.

Although he had evolved as a physician, although his medical knowledge had matured, he was still uncertain as to what sickness was and where it parted from health. He did not go beyond the definition that life and health were in a constantly unstable equilibrium and that disease was a loss of balance. He had learned a wealth of positive facts that represented practical knowledge and also permitted him to *guess* right where he did not *know*, as all true and experienced artisans do. For him the science of healing was now the science of health. The principles of a healthy living were the same as for healing disease. Prevention, cure, healing could not be separated. Disease was not a chance event. Nor was health, nor healing. They were the absolute and certain effects of certain causes. No cure was possible until living conditions were favorably changed. Of course, he disagreed with many as to what was "favorable."

But the profession, as a rule, cherished the old catastrophic theory of disease and worked by it. It was as backward and untrue as Cuvier's ideas in geology. Disease for them was an entirely different entity than health. In fact, health was unknown to them. Or rather, with them it seemed to be something negative. There was illness everywhere. None could escape it. It came like destiny. It had to come. It was a deplorable misfortune like rain, storms, earthquakes. The physician had to intervene as soon as possible after the inception of illness and administer salves, pills, incantations—

now called suggestions—or cut and eliminate the damaged part from the body. Healing had to be applied from outside and involved some trick or *hocus pocus* known to the initiated only. Therefore self-healing was regarded as a rare occurrence and the advice of a layman, even if reasonable, was nothing but impertinent meddling. The modern doctor was still very much the ancient sacerdotal healer, the medicine man.

Such a baffling disease as cancer, the cause of which was being searched by the ablest investigators in all the corners of the world and for which special research institutes were founded everywhere, seemed clear to William. So clear, indeed, that he would not have had the courage to publish his opinion about it, for fear he might be compared to an asylum inmate who is convinced that he can fly to Mars. If all this systematic cancer work was a failure, if all the theories about it born every day, if the numberless discussions around it, were but an endless turning around in the same spot, a marking of time without advancing, it was due to the fact that the inquiry was made in the wrong place. It was the story of the fire and the smoke. A thousand learned heads were examining each particle of the smoke, which was but an effect, and never looked into the fire, the real cause. Why? Because the fire, while bright enough, or too bright for them, was too diffuse. And also because of their education, of their peculiar mental make-up. They had buried their plain commonsense, their judgment, the simple facts beneath a heap of science. They were glutted, drunk, intoxicated with science. This was a paradoxical case where ignorance and blindness were due to too much science and where science was divorced from knowledge. Again and again the cancer cells were studied. Again and again cancer germs were found, only to be denied by the next savant. (One can always find germs when and where desired.) But the entire living of the patient was not consid-

ered. That the cause—the chief cause—may lie in the errors of living in general and of eating in particular, which slowly prepared this individual to one constitutional trouble, the other to a condition of receptivity for new growths, that was not seen. Why was it so difficult to understand, William asked himself, that in that state of the body some specially irritated cells, in conformity with a general tendency of life prevailing in all animals and plants, would overcorrect, grow, increase, run amuck and become frenzied to the point of degeneration? That there were also secondary, occasional, subordinate causes, that was true, but how could that overthrow the larger and principal one?

William was happy to find some of his own ideas expressed in a book of an octogenarian physician who had coined the word "carcinosis", meaning the general abnormal, morbid disposition—already ill health, in itself a malady—which makes us ready for a cancer. But how astonished was he to see the profession persecute meanly and torment wickedly this old medical revolutionist whom they had regarded as one of their ornaments until he thwarted a few of their false dogmas!

Illness was also a habit.

Where it was not due to social forces, to forces under the control of the individual, it was a personal habit acquired and inbred in childhood. It was a product of upbringing.

The parents did not allow their children to be healthy. There was a frightful excess of fear suggestion and disease insinuation, stuffing, coddling, keeping away from the sun and the air, protecting from cold, drafts, heat, humidity, water, invisible germs, play. In the end the partially or totally hot-house youngster, the future parent, acquired the illness habit, which was impressed, ingrained, stamped all over him and he must needs transmit it to his own progeny—and so on forever.

For William disease was health, another form of

it. There was a continuous attempt of the system to adapt itself and live. The most recognized symptom of illness, pain, was to him a sign of health. The world as he saw it was healthy even when it was ill. That is why in a large number of cases of disease—perhaps the largest—his treatment consisted of a few simple hygienic instructions. Where more was needed, it was because those instructions had not been followed in time. No treatment was often the best treatment. Nay, treatment frequently meant an interference with cure, with healing.

For these reasons his work was often seemingly a failure and that of his colleagues an apparent success. They always managed to do something. Even when they said to the patient that nothing should be done, that no medicine was necessary, they prescribed a drug or two.

A few of William's patients understood his position vaguely. One of them paid him no fee because, as he said, "He was no doctor but a medical layman." To William that was a flattering appellation. One woman replied to another who recommended him:

"He is a doctor for the healthy, I don't want him."

William was tickled. Yes, he would have liked to be that.

Sometimes William was optimistically inclined.

He was certain that disease, disease as such—not the momentary, necessary slight ups and downs of the body and the mind seeking adjustment and the right balance—could disappear completely under proper environment and healthy living.

"Do you hear, mankind?" he would cry out in his room, lying awake nights on his cot, "You can be healthy! Perfectly healthy! Your nasty diseases need not be. They're not inherent in life. You do not need to carry for days and weeks a bowel full of stinking refuse from which the poison is oozing and backwashing into all your juices and cells, intoxicating

your body and your thoughts. You need not suffer from inflammations of the walls of your digestive tube with writhing pains and nauseating feelings and lack of enjoyment of your food. You can learn how to eat. You can be clean, deeply, internally clean and each meal can be a holiday. You need not have your bones deformed, you need not be pale or red, skinny or obese. All that is an effect due to immutable iron causes and would vanish if the latter should disappear. Your joints do not have to ache. They can be flexible and graceful. You need not be chronically coughing, spitting pus and blood. Your women need not be like inert vessels tolerating any number of children and wilting in kitchens. They need not harbor growths and diseases of the womb. They do not have to be the victims of mutilating internal amputations. Your nerves do not have to be on edge and your mind clouded with raging or blank insanity. You need not be poisoned with fatigue—or brandy. You need not be weak from insufficient and insufficiently nourishing food. You need not be diseased through an excess of medicines. Your ugly syphilis, your dirty gonorrhoea need not be! . . . You can laugh, dance, think, work and be happy if. . . If you are willing to change, to make a fundamental change in your life as a whole, in your life individually!"

He knew that even under today's deplorable conditions great improvements were possible. But an internal revolution was necessary. A metamorphosis of one's physical life was indispensable. Yes, and mentally a relaxation and banishment of fear and worry. Those who were able to do that today were safe.

On the other hand he was pessimistic, despondent, gloomy.

"It will not change. They will never do it."

What he was immediately interested in was—What could he do with his patients at present. What could he say to the man forced to work hard, for

long hours in poisoned air, with his illness gaining ground every minute? What was he going to do with the patient who, although economically independent, would not reform his life? Nothing! He must tell them the sad truth that they had to go on suffering and die from disease, that he could not help them if they could not help themselves. Reluctancy here, inability there—the result was the same. It was fatal. It was the clock. Just as after four o'clock five o'clock must follow, so illness was not to be avoided or cured as long as the causes for it were there.

William was not a public speaker or writer and his opinions were little known in the profession. Each time he thought of writing something, he said to himself: "Somebody else has probably said that somewhere. . . . And what is the use?" But when he was asked what place he gave to the pathogenic micro-organisms in his theory of disease, he replied that they undoubtedly caused disease, indeed they were present and to blame in most ailments, but they were secondary causes.

The profession itself, if logical, should have reached the same conclusion. Even as it was they could never explain the beginning and spreading of disease by the parasitic theory alone and the rules of hygiene were every day more inclined to do justice to correct living rather than to fight the elusive microbe, which, of course, could not be suppressed. It was not always easy to reconcile hygiene and bacteriology. The more intelligent and progressive physicians saw the folly of trying to stop the spread of tuberculosis by forbidding expectoration. They understood that the role of the germ in the maintenance and continuity of digestive troubles was but academically important, that its activity in the contagious diseases was of only technical significance.

William could not cure those who had been scared, struck with fright. Their sickness was



settled in their minds. They did not believe they could be healed. The syphilitic who had been treated successfully but had read about the rare and extreme luetic complications, continued to be ill although nothing ailed him. And he wanted treatment. Right or wrong, but treatment. A work like Brioux's "Avariés"—written with the best intentions—had done greater harm to the world than a battle. A scratch was regarded as a sure sign of the dreaded disease. A sore throat in a child of a father with suspicious antecedents was a hereditary horror, pointing an accusing finger at the man devoured by remorse. He thought himself steeped in vice, while in reality he may have been healthier and internally cleaner than the constant overfeeder, with his continual catharrs.

And there was the doctor's psychology. If one came to him with suggestive complaints and had had the disease in the past—or only a suspicion of it, or had only been erroneously treated for it—the physician became conscious of his responsibility and thought that a new antiluetic treatment was indispensable, which again was further food for fear in the future. There was no end to it.

William X-rayed a patient who had received treatment in pre-salvarsan and pre-Roentgen times. After twenty years the mercury was still radiating in all directions from the needle insertions in the muscles of the buttocks and but little of it had been absorbed. Perhaps fortunately so. There they were—the silent witnesses of medical ignorance!

But that would not have mattered much. What of it? The way to knowledge was through error. What was disastrous was the ignorant certainty with which the doctor considered a momentary *étape* of his science as a finality and rebuked the solitary worker who expressed a doubt or dissented. Twenty years before almost the entire profession would have gone before a jury and testified under oath that a physician who refused to treat an evi-

dent case of syphilis with mercury was a criminal. And now that the newer remedy almost condemned the old one and proved the mistake of the previous generation of doctors, they would regard as malpractice the refusal of a cranky member of their profession to use salvarsan. Was it science? No, empiricism. No, sheep morality.

Case after case passed through William's hands. He could do nothing or next to nothing for them. Mainly because of medical interference. The older he grew, the more he saw that medicine, in its most altruistic tendencies—that is, not speaking about its quackery—was responsible for a good deal of disease and death, that, as a cause of illness it occupied a worthy place after social-economic conditions, personal habits and war and that it entered into all of them.

But he did not exclude himself from the profession. He generally felt his solidarity with it and accepted its errors as his own. Still, in his moments of protest he felt like the village clergyman Jean Meslier of the eighteenth century who, at his death, begged God—in whom, by the way, he did not believe—to forgive him for having been a Christian.

"Asclepius, forgive me for being a doctor and forgive the profession! We know not what we do!"

Respiratory, digestive, circulatory, renal, constitutional troubles; hideous skin efflorescences; macrobial parasitic infections; contagious diseases; so-called rheumatic pains, protean ailments that went under various names—all had their origin in the manner of living. Some, when developed, were incurable, but all were preventable. Besides the frankly somatic disorders, there were the nervous diseases—functional and organic—the neuroses and psychoses and the psychopathies as well as much delinquency, largely a result of both idleness and overwork. Also of the worry and fear engendered by modern life and of monotony, drab monotony at the automatic factory work which weakened the vital activities and led to over-sensibility or to insensibility—a biological fact not peculiar to the human race. William knew a girl who complained: "I make seven hundred buttonholes a day—was I born for that? Did I go to school and perfect my thinking apparatus, do I have a fine nervous system and senses and organs for that purpose? Oh, it's terrible!" Besides, there were the suggestive neuroses which owed their diffusion to the invention of "nervosism" by the doctors of the last century. Did not every intelligent person consider himself or herself "nervous"—something that had become a sign of culture?

The obesity cases were particularly objectionable to William. Was it because of his own leanness? He used to say that man's normal condition was to be thin and supple, so as to enable him to

work and move rapidly. The obese, with their organs lost in a thick layer of blubber, stiff, incapable of bending, were products of a comfortable life in which everything was brought to everybody's nose. They preferred patent medicines, operations, athletic reducing cures, special corsets—to just one simple thing—less eating. "I eat so little," they would say with great self-pity. The Roman patri- cians in their decadent period at least made them- selves vomit artificially before ingurgitating new stuff. But the socially decaying *nouveaux riches* of modern times retained all they swallowed.

The profession encouraged much eating in gen- eral, commencing from babyhood. The result was constitutional disturbances, among others diabetes, for which a new "sure cure" was found, which per- mitted again much stuffing with food.

But overeating was an incessant cause for many other maladies.

The manufacturers of sweets and allied indus- tries caught everybody's eye and tongue with sugars, candies, pastries. Other interests forced other foods down the people's throats. "Eat more bread, eat more meat, eat more apples, eat more raisins, drink more milk!" read their advertise- ments. ("By the way," he thought, "why are there four grades of milk and four prices? The gradation was made according to the number of mi- crobes per cubic millimeter. If germs were bad why must the poor swallow more of them? Why with more money could one buy a cleaner, less con- taminated milk?") And "eat more" of anything was equivalent to saying: "Let me make more money! What do I care about your health—or mine, for that matter? And with the money I shall buy more disease for myself and I shall strengthen my power over thousands of more peo- ple whose health I shall also ruin. When you are ill, I shall have something else for you. I shall make you swallow more of my patented drug—I

shall take it too. As that will make you—and me—more ill, of course, I shall recommend you other medicines that I am making. They are endorsed by great medical authorities.” And so on and so forth.

As William saw it, industry—life as a whole, but industry particularly—amounted to a factory of disease.

Were the country inhabitants, occupied with agricultural pursuits, better off? Were they healthier? No. On the contrary, farmers, being more ignorant in health matters than the city population, were suffering more from disease, and their child mortality was higher. Health did not depend on fresh air alone, but on many component factors together. And—did the farmers breathe fresh air? As little as possible. Only when they could not help it. In their houses they made up with interest what they had lost of the stale air outdoors.

At regular intervals there were stylish diseases that swept the world. They spread by imitative suggestion and acted like epidemics, jumping from person to person as a fire leaps from roof to roof.

When such illnesses had the fortune of being noticed by the modern novel writer, they were sure to extend rapidly. And his attention was especially attracted to them if they were taken up and made popular by great medical masters with winning manners, eloquent discourse or literary gifts.

To Charcot, more of a romanticist than a scientist, a Mesmer of the nineteenth century, but less useful, less efficacious, was due the resounding *éclat*, the mad and spectacular and mentally mutilating success of hysteria. In William's time this so-called disease, not being cultivated any longer, was going out of style only to be replaced by other meaningless groups of symptoms massed together and appealing to the imagination.

The endocrine theory came almost up to Freudism in importance. Although little was known about internal gland secretion to the scientists

themselves, it appealed to the imagination of the journalists and magazine writers. It gained the favor of the overpaid poetical quacks, of the skilful word carvers and fake *literati* of the two-novel-a-year type. They were not out to learn the truth, so they distorted it. Their real, if unavowed, aim was to entertain the readers of the advertisements of the large firms, appearing in Sunday supplements and magazines.

The same thing happened with the rejuvenescence scheme, a scientific swindle which encouraged unhealthy living. It implied that one could live indecently until aged, then repair one's losses and regenerate one's degenerated organs. That at least was addressed to the lowest and rottenest portion of society only—those with the fattest check-books. But its implications contributed to spoil the health ideas of the plain people as well. Old dishes consisting of warmed-up plots, with autos instead of ox-carts, a dash of scientific nomenclature, salted and peppered with brilliant vocables, were advertised as stories and served up to the new generation. Money—again money—was ground out for publishers and authors.

All these things were an insult to William's ethics—the ethics of health—which he had so painfully distilled out of the conflict between the prevailing ethics of disease and his dreams of soundness and beauty and happiness for all.

Worse. He was constantly called upon to repair the damages inflicted on mankind by the vile but victorious interests which he detested. He felt himself beaten. And his powerlessness to do the repairing embittered him still more.

His body and his mental faculties were so tired of his practice and the anxiety it gave him that he was sincerely glad when it began to diminish for the second time. This time it was the Jewish clientele that disappeared. It was attracted by a new element that lately was gradually gaining ground all over the city, but especially the East Side—by the latest healers, the chiropractors. This was perhaps the first time in the history of the Jews that they had been to such a degree unfaithful to the official medical school—they who had contributed so much to its greatness both by their doctors and by their numerous patients.

William was constantly confronted with his patients' questions about chiropractic and he was well prepared to answer them. Unlike all—or nearly all—his colleagues, he had studied it theoretically and knew its worth, or rather, its worthlessness, not from hearsay only. Some of his patients asked him whether chiropractic might not be the remedy for their ills. Others thought it a

kind of massage and wanted William to send them to a chiropractor with an explanatory note. Still others tried to debate with him the merits of the new "science" and repeated the arguments garnered from chiropractic speeches at the street corners and from pamphlets distributed there.

One of them launched into the vaccination question. He was an anti-vaccinationist and, encouraged by the chiropractic apostles, he combined both theories and threw them at William's head.

William was neutral on the vaccination problem. His school had simply taught him how to vaccinate as if no objection existed anywhere. It had not placed both aspects before him. Physicians as a class were either indifferent and vaccinated mechanically because it was so ordered or they savagely and indiscriminately condemned all opponents of vaccination as ignoramuses and cranks. They were not aware that, except those who "did not know what they were talking about", some first rank scientists and officially recognized hygienists objected to antivarioloid vaccination, bringing forward strong reasons for their opposition. Since having left college William had studied both sides and both sides seemed to be right. He remained unconvinced. He was reserved, but inclined to believe that it was modern hygiene and sanitation, and not vaccination, that had driven out smallpox. He knew that its introduction and dissemination coincided with the inauguration of the age of improvement in living conditions. That, unfortunately, obscured the issue. But he thought the time had not come yet for the abolishment of vaccination. There were too many filthy corners breeding disease in the large cities and a smallpox epidemic might assume large proportions. On the other hand every year he was less certain that vaccination was a preventive. Nor did he relish the logical but false inclination of some physicians to generalize the theory and vaccinate prophylactically against all



possible diseases. There were already antityphoid, antidiphtheric, antituberculous preventive vaccinations and others. But their prophylactic power, even according to their adherents, lasted but a very short time. This plan to extend vaccination would have gained popularity more rapidly than it did, if the people were not instinctively averse to it. William could not see humanity vaccinated for the many forms of contagious maladies that were hounding it. That thought was so preposterous, so ridiculous, that no further argument was necessary. And it was clear that, if the effort wasted finding vaccines were put to the service of real hygienic prevention, humanity would benefit much more.

However, when the anti spoke about unclean material injected into the blood stream, that made no impression upon him. Sentimentalism in such matters was out of place. He was no vegetarian, like his East Side friend. Never mind the unpleasantness of the method if disease could be prevented or eradicated by it! He also resented the ferocity with which vaccination was combated, the personal insults used by its opponents and the dishonest motives attributed to the profession. And he could not agree with the claim that vaccination was generally and locally harmful and that it even caused death.

But one day a mother brought him her baby whom he had sent to a city dispensary to be vaccinated. The sore had developed into a sickness that was as bad as the smallpox that it was supposed to prevent.

The next day he went to the same dispensary, watched the vaccinations, took the addresses of the patients and visited them at home, following up their progress. He was amazed to see that the percentage of complications—whether due to improper home care, which was largely the case, or to the vaccinator, or to the vaccine itself—was larger than was known to the profession.

He also went to institutions for poor infants and children and found even more post-vaccinational complications. There they were aggravated by the evils of institutionalism, which meant outwardly clean, but factory-like care which brought up the general mortality to a higher point than in the miserable homes of the poorest from which these babies came.

He decided not to make up his mind until he had a chance to investigate more.

It was the same with vivisection.

One of his patients once took him to a lecture on vivisection delivered by a British doctor who was employed by the antivivisectionists to travel all over the country as a speaker for their cause. But, notwithstanding this doctor's great fame, all he said was stupid. His quotations were dishonest or belonged to old, discarded texts. William himself could have given stronger arguments in favor of antivivisection. Most of the laboratory experiments on animals either gave results that were known anyway or the conclusions drawn from them had no importance for men. Besides, laboratory conditions were rarely similar to actual conditions of life.

He had seen hundreds of animals unnecessarily sacrificed or tortured and he knew that endless holocausts of beasts were uselessly immolated every day on the altar of science. But there were a few extremely important instances in which vivisection had been of great value. Therefore, William waited for more knowledge before taking sides.

Meanwhile he became ill.

Since his adolescence William had always been healthy. But although he knew the importance of correct living, he himself lived incorrectly. He was sober in food and drink, but for years he slept in his back room, which had but one window, opening out on a narrow airshaft without sunshine. And the reform he had recently made—carrying his cot every night into the larger sunlit consultation room and removing it every morning—came too late. He developed an insidious cough that tormented him unceasingly. At first he thought it was a temporary bronchitis and dismissed it. But it did not stop. From time to time he had suspicious chills, headaches and suffered from a general lassitude unknown to him before. He lacked appetite and lost weight. His thin, tall body looked funny. His clothes were too large now, his collar seemed to have been borrowed from somebody else.

His irregular sleeping hours, his lack of comfort and of a servant, the fact that he was forced to do his housework himself, his medical practice and constant study—all that led to his physical breakdown. But his incessant and foolish, because useless, worrying over the fate of his patients, his internal struggle about medical shortcomings contributed to diminish his resistance.

A month of vague sickness wore him down and discouraged him more than he admitted to himself. He rested and slept, but submitted as yet to no consultation.

He could not stay long without practicing because he had no money. His better situated patients, however, owed him large sums, a few years back. He made it a habit not to send bills—neither directly nor through the numerous professional collecting offices that offered their services in return for a large commission. At intervals he burned up his account books. "Nobody owes me anything and I need not think of my debts," he used to say to himself.

But this time William mailed a hundred bills. He received twenty checks. That encouraged him and he decided to suspend his practice for two months and go out to the country for a vacation—the first since the beginning of his career.

On the same morning a telegram arrived. His mother was dead.

In the last ten years he had seen her twice, each time for one week, when she came to New York to visit him. She was dissatisfied with William. He had realized her ideal, he was a doctor. But he was not as she had imagined. He tried to explain to her his ideas, but she could not understand them. She wanted him rich, respected and famous. He was poor and unknown. She was disappointed. And she died with the double disappointment of his failure and of being forced to live so far from him.

The news of her death disclosed to William something he had not known—that he had loved her much more than he thought. And he felt a deep regret over not having lived with her more, not having tried to impart hard enough to her his ideas. "Too late," he said, "too late!"

He was quiet but unable to sit up and leave his bed. He did not answer the doorbell or the telephone. Only in the afternoon did he gather enough strength to dress slowly and go out. But he felt shaky and unsafe. His head swam.

What was he going to do?

And suddenly he was gripped by the thought

that he was henceforward alone, alone in this wide world. Not even the only soul at a distance that had been thinking of him. The only spark in the great darkness that his mental eye used to see from afar, was extinguished forever. He had not needed it, but it had been good to know that it twinkled somewhere. Now it had gone out of existence.

And he thought of Mary.

Why not Mary?

He had never hurt her. They were not friends, but they were companions of study and youth. They had many common reminiscences. Their beings had thrilled so many times in one embrace! That was long ago, but she would still find a tender spot for him, he was sure.

With difficulty he reached her house and rang the bell. A servant came out, and stood in the doorway, holding the door knob behind him.

Doctor Vanish was very sorry, but she was busy and could not see the doctor. The servant disappeared and locked the door.

It was evidently a standing order.

This was the first time she had completely closed her door to William. He waited for a while motionless, as if smitten with giddiness. A shiver ran through his long frame.

He ground his teeth, tightened his jaws to shake off his dizziness and recall himself to reality.

So it was finished. The last line of a chapter, the end of a period of his life.

Now he was completely alone.

From inside he heard the sound of forks, knives and glasses.

She was dining. With whom? A male voice. William caught a few words: "Classical cancer . . . beautiful cellulitis . . . the rectal complication . . ."

A physician, surely. Only doctors can talk about these things at table and continue to eat and enjoy both the food and such conversation.

Downstairs he fell into the hall armchair. And he smiled as he remembered other samples of medical language. He had not forgotten the French doctors' theses received from a European colleague some time ago. The students, not aware of the effect that the grotesque association of love expressions with pathological terms had on lay persons, had dedicated their dissertations to dear friends, masters, relatives, wives. Thus:

"A Study of Abdominal Palpation, dedicated to my mother!"

"Hypertrichosis of the Genital Region, dedicated to my betrothed."

He thought of the medical teachers who were carried away by their subject to such an extent that they were not conscious of what they were doing while they spoke. They would, for instance, pass and repass their hands over the entire length of the patient's nude abdomen, while he or she was lying in front of the class.

When he reached his office he barely had strength enough to telephone the East Side health teacher, who at once put him to bed and sent for a nurse. The teacher came to see him every day, cheered him up and treated him until he put him on his feet. So far William obeyed. But as soon as he felt better, he was reluctant to leave his practice for a considerable time. He had closed his door long enough, he said; he had a moral obligation toward his patients. He promised to be careful in the future and kept the servant who had been engaged during his sickness.

The first thing he did was to go to his piano and write music. There was an unfinished piece with a popular motive entitled "Remembrance," which he had begun several weeks before.

The next day he had a card printed announcing to his patients that he was well again and had resumed his practice. He wrote all the addresses and then sat down again at the piano.

A few days later he appeared at the musical circle where the deformed schoolteacher was the muse. She took his music and within a week she came to his office:

"Say, Mr. Straight—pardon me, Dr. Straight—I showed your new composition to the master and he was enchanted. Any time you want to give up this torture chamber—your office, I mean—he can give you a steady job as a music transcriber and composer of light music for a house . . . I don't re-

call its name. They can use a few such men, he said."

"What the devil? Music hall business, hey?"

"I don't know. It's some place in the West. An anonymous job."

"Well, then I'm no good . . . But what do *you* think of the darn 'Remembrance'?"

"You want the truth?"

"Of course. Go ahead!"

"You've gone backward. You've been sinking. You used to have some originality. But this is just something nice to please. It's cute, that's all. You seem to have tried hard to be understood by the rabble, to write music that everybody would recognize and like. You wanted them to say, 'Oh, dearie, isn't this too pretty for words!' Your success is assured. It's like the painter who makes a picture that is a good likeness. You've written resembling music. Are you satisfied?"

"Why, no. Listen here. This was just a *pot-pourri*, a medley of airs from my childhood. I . . ."

But she did not accept this excuse. He had to promise to write something else in a different style.



When he remained alone William thought of his situation. What was he? A mediocre, unsuccessful doctor, unable to cure, in which respect he did not differ from most of his colleagues and from other healers. But he was also unable to make believe that he cured anybody—there was his failure, that was his inferiority. He was also a worthless amateur musician. The first time he had created something that people might want, it was acceptable only because it was mediocre and easy. When he was through doing mediocre medicine, he would get a job as a mediocre musician! Which of the two was preferable? He did not know. But some day he might need the address in the West. And he earnestly decided to go and get it.

Meanwhile, however, he resumed his medical practice. But although he had promised his doctor to confine himself to the strictly necessary work and to have much leisure, he went to the school of chiropractic in order to study the practical side of this new healing cult as he had intended to do before his illness. He was somewhat ashamed of doing that and tried to keep it secret, but the chiropractors, proud to have a medical man in their ranks, used William's chiropractic study for publicity purposes. They spread the news by word of mouth. One morning William noticed that one of his colleagues from the hospital who passed him in the street ignored him and did not answer his greeting. William purposely stopped him and said: "Hello! Didn't you see me?"

"Yes, I did. But I did not want to make you miss your chiro course."

So that's what it was. William had degraded himself by going over to chiropractic and he had to be excluded from the friendship of decent physicians. He thought: "Perhaps he is right, he seems to be right. But I must know exactly what this new school wants. I cannot condemn it without being sure that it deserves condemnation."

No amount of explanation convinced the other fellow, who simply did not believe him. Nobody does things that way. He replied:

"Doctor Straight, if you permit me to say it, you've always been queer, everybody says that. But this? . . . Tell it to Sweeney!"

The man had always been exceptionally haughty and strictly ethical. He hoped for a professorship because he had been asked twice to speak to a group of postgraduate students, replacing the assistant who was giving the course. Since that time he had been proud beyond measure and showed off before those whom he considered inferior. He first distinguished himself because, at a meeting of the hospital physicians, many years before, he had read a paper on "The Value of Rest in Cases of Empyema and Lung Abscess." In five pages he had said what the merest layman knew—that in those terrific cases the patient needed rest. The paper was published in the hospital bulletin and reprinted by two provincial medical magazines. One of them was the organ of a big drug manufacturing concern that sent its publications, printed in all languages, free to all doctors listed in the directories of all the countries of the world. That article was chosen because it mentioned a medicine made by this firm. It was also reprinted in a little journal lacking original material and issued for the well-paid professional advertisements only. Hundreds of second-rate worthless medical journals appeared in the same way, clogged the doctors' mail and thronged their desks.

This doctor had reprints of the article mailed to

all New York physicians. And there were always a few stray copies lying around, as if by mistake, in his waiting room. On account of that his patients honored him with the title "professor" and accorded him gladly the increased fee he had demanded since then.

There were many men in the profession whose fame and pride were based on the same kind of work. William knew one who for years was nothing but a laboratory rat, a nuisance to his fellow workers, who had stumbled by accident upon a new stain, which, with his chief's modifications, had become one of the many aids in bacteriology. It was described in the special literature as the Grab-Ignar method and had become famous through the quarrel in the medical press between the two inventors as to whose name ought to be placed first and the attack of a third one from abroad who claimed to have published a paper about it ten years before.

Another man had to his credit just a slight change in the curve of a little instrument that was used in rare operations. The instrument bore his name and he commanded a high fee as a surgeon, although he performed only the lesser operations and passed the important ones over to his assistant.

At the hospital William was asked to quit. They wanted no chiropractors there, he was told. Again he tried to explain that he did not intend to devote himself to chiropractic and again he met with disbelief. As he came out of the chief's office, one of his colleagues said to him:

"Sorry, Straight, very sorry. But I think they are right. They can't keep chiros here."

"Say, do you know what chiropractic is?" William asked him.

"Chiropractic? Why, no! I don't know a blamed thing about it. But it must be a fake."

This was the man who had been so busy during the influenza epidemic and scare that he was able to announce to William, two years later, as they

passed a handsome new construction: "This is my flu house."

William understood that this was to be his final dismissal from hospital work and that in the future he would not be admitted anywhere. In former years he had had to change several times from one hospital to another or from one clinic to another, but he had always found a new place to study and work. Once it was because he had protested against the insufficient number of nurses and therefore neglect of the service. The press learned about it, he never knew how. He wanted the ward patients to be attended with more care. Sometimes they had to cry for hours for the bedpan. The nurse was too busy elsewhere or did not care to disturb the sheets, the creases of which must be perfect, just before the doctors' visiting hour. Another time he wanted the service to respect the diet prescribed by the physician in charge. But he found out that in the hospital the least considered persons were the doctors and the patients. The head nurse was more important and the trustees had the final word.

Another time he lost his hospital appointment because he protested against experimentation with adrenalin and other drugs upon free ward patients.

He also had to leave a position in a large insane asylum, because he constantly objected to the experiments made on the patients.

Physicians as a class were little versed in literature and art. Many of them could not explain a Greco otherwise than through a visual aberration. The genius, the idiot, the criminal and the prostitute for them were made of the same material. But the psychiatrists went much further in this respect. For most of them all original persons, all artists, poets, sentimentalists, reformers, radicals and revolutionists were mentally abnormal and only those were normal who faithfully and sheepishly aligned themselves to the common herd. Therefore they

quickly classified William where they thought he belonged.

He went to the "boss" himself, as the chief of the clinic was called, not knowing that all experimentation was done with his consent and under his orders.

"In principle I am not opposed to it," William said, "but most of the work done here is needless and useless."

"I am not sure that any work is needless," the chief replied. "But if your conscience bothers you, the best thing for all concerned would be for you to resign."

In his short stay in that hospital he had learned many things.

First—the workings of the human mind. Abnormal mentality, if one could read it well, revealed many secrets of normal psychology.

Then—to his great surprise—he found out that very many psychopaths were suffering from constipation and the majority of the cases of neurosis, hysteria, neurasthenia, psychasthenia, almost all the depressive, delirious, maniacal conditions were at the same time cases of bad digestion. For the psychiatrist the digestive troubles were but symptoms of the general disease and he said: "When the disease as such improves, they also disappear." William reversed this judgment: "Why could not these symptoms be the central cause of the disease and the latter disappear because the former improve?" He thought that the self-imposed fasting of certain melancholics showed perhaps the way to their cure and that their enforced artificial feeding, as practised in the hospitals, might have the effect of prolonging their illness. But this was a pure hypothesis which he promised himself to verify in his own practice.

He saw many cases of alcoholic insanity and conditions brought about by overwork and physical and mental exhaustion and he thought that society,

which on the one hand induced and caused them and on the other hand treated them, was crazier than the asylum inmates themselves.

He learned that medicine was almost entirely helpless before mental troubles. None of the older and none of the modern remedies were of lasting value.

He studied the unclassified conditions between health and disease of the mind, those at the verge of illness, and thought that there was no real limit and that nobody could frankly be called normal.

Insanity was nothing but amplified sane psychology—or rather—sane psychology reflected in a concave mirror.

And another thing. There were but few people entirely satisfied with life. Almost every normal and thinking person had moments of rebellion against life and frequently even a desire to end it. For the mental specialist this was—erroneously, of course—a sure sign of illness, a beginning of schizomania or mental depression.

William discovered that the millions of mentally deficient and unbalanced, occupying various positions in all walks of life, were generally the regressive element in society, the cause of stagnation and reaction. They were the persons who accepted, preferred and spread false, sensational news; they were the most dangerous ferments in war time.

The physicians felt but little responsibility for the irresponsible ward patients whose minds were temporarily or permanently disturbed. They tried all sorts of drugs on them, applying their theories and those they found in their special literature. The results were disastrous. They also attempted cures by the inoculation of organic sicknesses, fevers like malaria or recurrens. The successful cases improved slightly for a short time only. Those that could not resist and died figured but rarely in medical literature.

On the first days of William's service, a physician,

assistant in the clinic, full of scientific fervor, and sincerely and implicitly believing in the efficacy of the newer therapy of insanity, told William:

"You see that fellow? Once I injected one-fourth of a milligram of eserine and it had no effect. Therefore, a few days later I thought that one milligram would be the right dose. But the patient had a terrible reaction and almost died. What had happened? I had simply made a mistake. I gave him three milligrams instead of one! Of course, if successful, that might have led me to find out whether my idea was right. But next time I shall be more careful."

This man was so enthusiastic about his work that he often provoked crises in those of his patients who were on the way to improvement, just to demonstrate how easily he could subdue them by the newest methods.

And there was another thing that William found out with great amazement. The so-called cases of kleptomania, about which so much fuss was made in the press each time they were too flagrant and could not be kept out of publicity, were pure inventions. They only excused the thefts of the rich women in the stores. The poor who stole were simply locked up and their action was not explained as a mental abnormality.

Having lost his hospital appointment, William had much spare time. His practice was also slow. A large part of it was lost through his illness. The new patients who came were refused, as they sought chiropractic treatment.

He had the usual calls for abortions, but he always declined to perform them. The procession of unhappy women with undesired pregnancies was endless. Some offered money—any amount desired—others tears and pleas—more difficult to resist. Still others both. But although millions of abortions were done yearly all over the country, William did not dare.

But in spite of the fact that he regularly refused, they kept on coming. They were all revolted against nature that forced them to be unwilling carriers of children. A steady, dolorous cry rose from their entrails.

One woman complained: "Am I condemned to be a blind, stupid tool, a vessel of nature. Have I no other mission than that of watching babies grow, when they don't interest me in the least and I feel myself called to do something better?"

Another woman was so disgusted with children, that she said:

"No, I won't have a child. It's disgusting! Pouah!"

There were many other requests related to marriage and to the prejudices which surrounded it.

Mothers whose girls had been accidentally injured on the lower part of the body came for certificates to be eventually used in the future, if their virginity should be questioned. Young *fiancées* offered William, before their marriage, large sums for the reparation of the irreparable. All of which was a sad symptom of the still prevailing ancient



servitude of woman—a servitude that was only partly mitigated by her domineering attitude toward man.

As a counterpart to the abortion seeker there was the tragedy of the woman who burned to have a child, but suffered from sterility. More often her partner was sterile. Again tears. Such women would do anything. They would make the most unbelievable suggestions. They were a good prey to the money-making healers in and out of the medical profession. They stood long treatments and one operation after the other. Only after years of torment, when no more cash could be squeezed out of them and no more treatment could be imagined, were they either told that their case was incurable or asked to send their husbands in whom generally lay the cause of the trouble.

One young woman had been under the care of a seventy-year-old healer, an irregular.

“The old man never treated me,” she said, “he had me come for the longest time, had me undress and looked at my body, that’s all he ever did.”

A woman whose husband was sterile came with another man. The latter was acting under the influence of a French novel in which the wife, guided by pity for an unmarried virgin with strong maternal instincts, urged her husband to be charitable to her friend and make her a mother.

A sterile man, seeing his childless wife suffer, permitted her to become a mother and to choose the father of her child. She was bringing a young man to William for a preliminary examination.

Both the abortion seekers and those who desired children used medicines advertised to the laity. Just as for other troubles some were given in secret consultation with the druggist, others were dispensed by him without any question, at the customers’ demand. If efficacious, the abortifacients were dangerous. If they produced but few bad symptoms, their effect was nil.

Then there were those unhappy both to have children and to be married.

Sometimes William thought that at least one-half of civilized humanity would remain unmarried if free to shape their lives and if it were not for the tremendous religious, educational and social mass-suggestion from childhood on that marriage was the self-understood purpose of youth.

Many pharmaceutical products were advertised both to the layman and to the physician, but under different names, as the advertising of a professional medicine directly to the public was considered unethical. Therefore the drug flashed out with hundreds of electric lights on the roofs of the houses and met in the street-cars was frequently identical with the one printed in the medical journals under a difficult Greek name.

Some drugs had been made so popular by the profession and through the manufacturer's publicity that he was able to throw "ethics" to the winds, ignore the doctors and sell his products shamelessly to the public. The trade names of such articles were common household words. Nor was the drug maker dependent on the drugstore alone as a selling place. They could be had in groceries, at soda fountains, railroad stations. Of course, the more they were spread, the more harm they did.

William thought of the drugs advertised in the medical press. When young he had often said: "Why so many for the same ailment?" But now he was so used to them, that they seemed to be a necessary by-product of his professional literature.

The European journals, including the most respectable ones, were even more brazen than the American medical magazines. They published ads in the text, pushed them under the eyes and nose of the reader and accepted ones that no decent professional publication would have passed in this country.

In one French issue taken at random William found: Vanadarsin, Iodaseptin, Azotyle, Jecol, Pelospanin, Zomotherapy, Lipovaccines, Gynocrinal, Gynergen, Nevrosthénin, Chloramin, Uroformin, Rhizotanin, Digimialbain, Amylodiastase, Propidex, Valerobromin, Sodersein, Biosin, Lithin, Neurinas, Alepsal, Santal Monal, Bobease, Terkal, Bromone, Prosthénase, Clonazone, Eutensyl, Immunizols, Pancreatin, Paraffinoleol, Tridigestin, Ulmaren, Antalgot, Tartrate Borico-potassic, Thiocol, Euronal, Fermenterol, Sinahin, Lusoform, Diuren, Aethon, Rethragin, Leucagin, Tothamelis.

And here are some found in one number of a Spanish medical journal: Atophan, Atophanyl, Cascarine, Guipsine, Rhomnol, Neorhomnol, Eumictine, Iodaseptine, Enofosforina, Spartserum, Jarabe Famel, Opobyl, Lactobulgarina, Suero Hemopoietico, Fagifor, Chlorobyl, Lactobyl, Veramon, Paidodinamo, Zendejas, Gadol Castel, Elixir Callol, Calcinhemol, Antiphlogistine, Kelatox, Tetradinamo, Septicemiol, Purgantil, Eumalt, Satupina, Antalgot, Gastrol, Vino Uranado, Riodine, Neo-Riodine, Septoyodo, Agomensina, Sistomensina, Pildora Alofena, Opepeptol, Cardiocinol, Plasteinol, Bronconeumoserum, Kelatox, Urosolvina, Lactofitina, Eurython, Antistenocardio, Pneumogen, Pancrotanon, Anthelmin, Vanadarsine, Theosalvose, Neumo, Estafilo, Gono, Carbuncloso, Stovarsol, Biolactyl, Holos, Digitalina, Regyl, Kaolinase, Atosferin, Gonargina, Leucogeno, Lipoides, Phosphorrenal, Kinyo-antigripal, Santal Midy, Palmil, Bordanol, Creosotal, Petrosina, Calcil, Bionegrol, Bismuthoidol, Yodogeno, Antiasmatico, Anto-byxina, Maltopol, Glorogeno, Carabana, Sil-al, Lactofitina, Lipocithine, Zimema, Neo-Trepol, Nujol, Hormotone, Pneumon, Pirexol, Soluto, Vital, Fosfotiocol, Sierosina, Antiasma, Hierro Quevenne, Aniodol, Pantopon, Thigenol, etc., etc., etc.

And from an Italian magazine:

Sinovial Rivalta, Atophanyl, Gynergen, Scillaren,

Bellafolina, Felamin, Ipecopan, Allisatina, Iodostarina, Larosan, Sedobrol, Arsylen, Thiocol, Secacornin, Spasmalgina, Somnifen, Allonal, Sirolina, Isacen, Pantopon, Digalen, Almateina, Nevralteina, Lecitina, Angiolympe, Quinby, Iodeine, Santalol, Carbosanis, Sciroppo Famel, Fosfoiodarsin, Isocalcio, Endocalcio, Ambriodin, Panbiline, Neurostenol, Jodarsolo, Aglicolo, Katarsolfina, Abekolo, Creosarsolo, Zimena, Lejomalto, Ozidol, Neutralon, Uraseptina.

And from a famous British journal:

Viscysate, Meat-Juice, Peptone, Salodine, Testogan, Thelygan, Lipolysin, Alocol, Allonal, Bipalatinoids, Roboleine, Agarol, Hormotone, Ovaltine, Bynin Amara, Olgar, Molevac, Veramon, Atophan, Lig. Santal Flav., Haemo-Antitoxin, Kerol, Ferrocarnis, Sterules, Biozone, Carnine, Promonta, Peptonoids, Yeastvite, Thryo-Ovarian Tablets.

And from a German:

Emarex, Felsol, Triphal, Visolan, Tomavit, Spiracid, Leukotropin, Carbobolusal, Valyl, Sikasir, Sanalgin, Sudian, Vaporin, Sanguinal, Mallebrein, Extractum Chinae, Digalen, Sedobrol, Calcaona, Sedacao, Phosphozym, Haemosistan, Strontisal, Optochin, Cadechol, Recresal, Staphar, Nujol, Fluinol, Eumecon, Schweizerpillen, Cardiazol, Tannalbin, Dormalgin, Neobornyval.

The most decent medical journal was the official organ of the American medical association. In the last years it had so reformed its business policy that among its many advertisements William could find only a few drugs. But some other American medical magazines were less conscientious. One could meet in one: Seisal, Organidin, Yatren, Syrup of Hypophosphites, Petrolagar, Yeast, Agarol, Befsal, Pyrazophen, Peptomangan, Camphophenique, Interol, Tongaline, Tolysin, Electrargol, Pneumophthysine, Pasadyne, Sulcitacium, Feenamint, Neuronidia, Ceanothyn, Peralga, Solarson, Angier's Emulsion, Gonolin, Ecthol, Neurotone, Quinisal,

Chionia, Sanmetto, Cactina Pillets, Angostura Bitters, Hyperol, Ergoapiol, Tasteless Castor Oil, Sal Hepatica, Neurilla, Animasa, Expuralgin, Cibalgine.

Another American medical magazine contained: Lactopeptine, Pyramidon, Neurogenic, Rhemattan, Testogan, Thelygan, Anusol, Peptenzyme, Boroformalin, Phosphorcine, Iodotone, Probilin, Glykeron, Saline Laxative, Hagee's Cordial, Novasurol, Gonosan, Glycerine Tonic, Arsenaurol.

But these were only a few of the newer medications. There were many more. New ones came out every year and the old standard forms filled a large volume.

Not content with strewing these advertisements in the doctor's path and spreading nets around him, the concerns repeated their announcements, accompanied by samples, by mail, these being followed by the visit of their trained canvassers.

The doctors were glad to prescribe such drugs, because it was very simple to do so. All they had to do was to write: "Give so much of that." While the old-fashioned prescription demanded thought, correct composition, care to avoid incompatibilities or dosal and lingual mistakes. This last consideration was not to be despised, as, contrary to what the public imagined, most doctors knew no Latin.

William had a chance to see the largest number of American and European drugs at a great pharmaceutical exhibition in a large building. At the sight of all those thousands of medicines he could not help exclaiming: "With so many remedies, how is it that we still have so much illness?"

One day a patient who worked in the office of one of the largest pharmaceutical plants brought William copies of confidential circulars sent out to the trade. One of them showed how the entire globe had been divided into convenient commercial sections, as all large concerns were doing, in order better to exploit mankind and fight off competition. In another it was explained how a drug that had

caused many deaths had been made less harmful. But its latest form would not be put into the market until the old stock was all sold out. That, of course, meant that meanwhile it must destroy more lives. The principle of the firm was to avoid financial losses. The letter said:

"This very important product is gathering momentum. We are doing well with it everywhere, but not as well as we should. Two territories, particularly, stand out as having increased sales materially, namely—Cuba and Mexico. There is no reason why we should not be able to duplicate this in other sections. We are continuing our work in Therapeutic Notes, etc. It only needs, therefore, concerted effort to increase its use. Lately our Cleveland Laboratory has been able to make a notable improvement in this product. It is a more highly refined product and contains only a fraction of the proteins represented in the original preparation. This improvement means that the absorption of the effective dose has been hastened and also the factor of safety from anaphylaxis has been increased. It is no longer possible to cause unpleasant accidents with it, although that is of small importance so far as the medical profession is not aware where the trouble comes from. But for the moment we do not intend to send out any general notice about this improvement until a sufficient length of time has elapsed for the old stocks to have been exhausted. Push the old stuff. It continues to make friends with the druggist and with the physician.—Manager, New York Export Department."

William collected at random a few of the New York subway advertisements and jotted down the remarks they suggested to him:

"When muscles ache enjoy the quick relief of Fool's Liniment."—It gives no quick relief, often no relief whatever and often it produces new pains and skin troubles. At the same time it interferes

with the cure of the cause. Relief is the enemy of cure.

"Forger's more than a toothpaste. It checks pyorrhea."—All manufacturers of tooth "cleansers" claim the same thing. None can check anything, but all bring in checks galore. Much has been made of "pyorrhoea" lately, by professionals and others, in order to scare the public.

"Sham Cough Relief—this at least is honest."—No, it is not. Like all cough "remedies" it frequently interferes indirectly with healing respiratory conditions. If there is cough, why relieve it? There must be a cause!

"Twenty-seven germ diseases may be carried by hands—just from touching things; our Life Bunk Soap gets hands cleaner—germs go, too." All soaps clean hands. But if the germs were there they would not go. If they went, they would be back the next minute. "May be" carried—it is cleverly said; but these 27 germ diseases are but rarely "carried" and certainly not all at the same time. Besides, the sole fact of carrying the germs on hands makes nobody ill with any germ disease. Oh, that old exaggeration of the germ danger, the germ scare fostered by our profession, is again used for profit!

"Fight sore throat and infection all day long—Formalthief germ killing tablets, endorsed by 10,000 doctors."—Untrue that they are endorsed even by one physician and that they kill germs. Moreover, there is no need of a ceaseless germ-killer except for a swindling manufacture who wants you never to stop using his rubbish.

"Skidoo's milk of magnesia for acid mouth and sour stomach."—Acid mouth, whatever that means, and sour stomach are usually due to excessive eating or to eating without hunger or necessity and they form in the course of time some real bad disease, especially if the cause is neglected, as it



will happen when mere symptoms are relieved through this medicine.

"Coughing prohibited by Pertussin, the safe cough remedy."—This unsafe stuff is not a remedy and does not stop the cough. It interferes with the healing of the cause that determines the cough and has a bad effect on distant parts of the body, producing indirectly, more coughing. It has made a downward evolution. Years ago it used to be prescribed by the profession for pertussis, that is whooping-cough—but entirely unsuccessfully. As soon as the manufacturers saw that they can fool the doctors no longer—because the latter had been taken over by other charlatans for whooping-cough treatment—they went directly to the public.

"Father Bone's Medicine—not a drug, the greatest body builder."—It is a drug, and a bad one and the greatest money builder for its makers and a disease builder for its takers.

"The Symbol of Health for all ages—Rot's Emulsion."—Yes, the symbol of ill-health.

"To put on good, healthy flesh and always feel fit, McFake's Cod Liver Oil Tablets, the modern health builder."—Our profession, by continually advocating this filthy, greasy, nauseating product instead of correcting troubles and teaching the people the value of sunshine and proper food, has this money-making scheme on its conscience. Are there not obliging doctors who dare tell the ignorant mothers that "cod liver oil is sunshine in the bottle"? What a heinous, stupid, criminal lie!

"To avoid a big cold stop a little one—Wicked's Vaporub—Over 21 million jars used yearly."—That is as many as its manufacturers would like to see used; that's true. But that it will stop any "cold," big or little—that is a lie.

"Mentyne chewing gum keeps teeth white."—Simply untrue.

"Sore-Han's keeps gums healthy."—A lie. Its effect is nil.

"I just love my milk with Bunkomalt."—That will induce the mother to force the child to drink more milk than it wants and so make it ill.

"Yellans for indigestion."—True, it will cause indigestion and other troubles.

"Coffee—good to the last drop."—Millions are caught by this obnoxious suggestion and become heavy coffee fiends, suffering from the consequences.

"Soda cracker with milk—healthy partnership."—  
—"Sugar—the energy food."—More harmful suggestions for overeating and disease-building.

"Ventilating ankle corset."—Creating artificial needs in order to get the cash.

"Eat as you'd like to eat—6 Hell-ans quickly relieve any unpleasantness."—This is particularly vicious. Commit any mistake, stuff yourself, be as sick as you can. You will be superficially relieved so that you can err again and be ready for more Hell-ans!

"Moron destroys dandruff."—Just another lie.

"Bustingall—for colds, coughs, neuralgia, headache, congestion, rheumatism."—How efficient! With one shot! All the suckers, suffering from anything are gathered in. Why not? They are idiotic enough to pay!

"Charlatine—headache, colds, pain"—is more modest, but will catch some fools.

Headache is a symptom produced by any number of disease conditions. The more you—only—relieve it, the worse your fundamental illness becomes. The same with neuralgia and pain, vague terms which mean anything or nothing. Congestion, for the layman, is just an empty word; it makes believe that something has been said. Rheumatism is a garbage can into which any unpleasant symptoms may be dumped by the igno-

rant or lazy healer. It satisfies—both him and the patient.

“Licorice Wafers—infallible for throat irritation.” —Who will do anything if it fails? They will only go on to some other drug. Meanwhile the money will be gone, too.

William found on a subway bench a weekly paper with a large advertisement of a fake doctor who promises “marvelous results” in the treatment of “disease of stomach and digestive organs.” (As if the stomach is not a digestive organ! But that is necessary, so as to overawe the reader with more words.) A large picture shows the “wonders” accomplished by X-ray examination and makes the prospective customer believe that with these rays the doctor can actually see all the abdominal troubles.

On the same bench he noticed another forgotten newspaper with an announcement of Hell’s Cascara, Quinine Bromide: “150,000 dead from colds; colds are dangerous,” and so on. Again this fearful, poisonous scare!

And going out of the subway, in the street, the first thing he saw on that day was a large sign on a door:

“Psychology Service Center. Psychoanalysis conquers nerves, worry, fear. Personality Analysis, Character Reading. Know and master yourself. Expert, scientific, vocational guidance. Find your life’s work. Peace, Poise, Power. Banish your troubles through applied psychology. Key to life. Hope, health, success, happiness.”

Well, nobody can promise more. Another way to catch the simpletons—this time those who thing a lot of themselves and have heard about psychoanalysis.

A large number of venereal patients went to the urinal doctor.

He usually was a regular medical man who had lost all shame and decency and "quacked" openly. He advertised his business in the urinals for men, in the columns of those newspapers that did not object; distributed and sold leaflets, calendars, books, booklets, with his address on each page, in the stores and on street corners. He had a free museum with pathological atrocities calculated to make the hair of the poor uninformed boys stand on end, to suggest disease and to exaggerate the dangers of neglect. By means of this museum the victims were drawn to the office and institute of "the only man," as he modestly praised himself, who was able to cure the worst conditions with absolute certainty within a few days. He was professor of this, that and the other, the best, the highest, the greatest—and so on. It was interesting to note, as William found out, that his unclean occupation did not exclude him from fashionable society where he was in good company. One of these charlatans belonged to the famous Crepuscule Club. This type of quack also figured in the list of physicians published by the official American medical organization.

In his office there was generally a large staff of hired clerks, mostly laymen, who, for a small salary, impersonated doctors and made believe they made an examination, connected the patient with an awe-inspiring electric machine or other impos-

ing contrivance, dispensed some red, blue, yellow or green water called the Brazilian or Arabian medicine and mulcted the young man for as much as the traffic would bear.

Another set of his employes consisted of the writers who edited his quackish publicity. His literature and treatment by correspondence reached the farthest points of the globe.

He might be a descendant of one of the "best" American families, but more often he was one of those innumerable unscrupulous immigrants, the scum of Europe and Asia, who discredited America by bringing in their low, disgusting and piratical methods, which were known abroad as "American." For years he advertised his office in the general press. But when the decent press was closed to him and when new laws against him went into force, he was satisfied to prey upon the hard-working, half-starved, unprotected and unenlightened foreigners, who, blind and bewildered, were unable to discern between good and bad, between honest and dishonest. He frightened the boy in the street, exaggerating the importance of his few innocent intimate "sins." He managed to make thousands believe that some universal unimportant symptom like a transitory headache, or a backache due to fatigue, are connected with masturbation, that the latter always spelled insanity and that it was somehow related to syphilis—or rather to its worst forms. He stole uncountable millions of dollars from horny-handed workingmen, he made permanent physical and mental wrecks out of millions of men. He ruined many families. He was guilty of more crimes—of more abominable and dastardly crimes—than any of the recognized and condemned criminals. He practiced the greatest "American" fraud. He was the "lost manhood" man, the "blood disease" faker, who "cured" "loss of memory", who "saw everything clearly" through the X-rays. He always promised cures and could always do the im-

possible. He was a "specialist" in any disease, but was particularly in love with the sexual sphere, because it was the weakest point in man and that about which men had been taught always to feel guilty; also because it was the darkest and was regarded as the most shameful spot. He was the hyena who was taking advantage of the people's ignorance and misery. Of all the low and cruel robbers and exploiters who had been let loose among a hard pressed humanity, he was the meanest, dirtiest and most cowardly. He created disease in man's mind, exaggerated existing symptoms and, sitting in his corner, attracted his prey and sucked and sucked. The foreign-language press, not excepting some radical papers, advertised him for cash and so shared in his booty and plunder. There were thousands of perfectly healthy young men who went to such swindlers for years and paid them tribute. Each time the charlatans were put in jail, they stayed but a short time, as their money soon freed them.

In the last years the smarter types of these medicasters, following the trend of the times and imitating the life prolongation institutes, enlarged their trade, "examined" both men and women and gave them written instructions. But these were so edited that the merest medical tyro could recognize them as emanating from uneducated lay persons.

When Roentgen rays came into style and made a strong impression on the people's minds, these doctors made believe that they used radiology. A number of pictures were held in readiness to be shown when needed or to be given to the patient to take home. In most cases the pictures of the bones on the plates did not even fit the patient's size or shape.

It would have been easy for the profession—a powerful, influential, well organized body—to curb the pernicious activity of these medical bandits. It could have crushed them throughout the country

within a few weeks. But it did little for that purpose.

Individually, the doctors were too busy, or did not care, or feared they might be accused of self-advertising by fighting publicly for this or any other cause.

Collectively, they preferred to keep quiet about this charlatanism because such a fight might reflect on their own conduct. The enlightened public might be induced to go further and look closer into the work of the ordinary doctor. After all, the medical pirates were medical men. Only recently, as the profession felt the increasing danger from the growth of quackery at the borderline of medicine as well as in the form of new healing schools which rapidly gained ground, did it start a campaign. But it was too late and it was done without vigor, the old prejudices still weighing upon the medical leaders.

Medical mentality was curious. It was between two fires.

Doctors wanted quackery to be eliminated. Officially they said so. But just what was quackery? Where did it stop? A true investigation might lead into undesired domains. Somebody, not they, ought to destroy the weeds and only those weeds designated by them.

Doctors liked to be advertised and secretly they did all they could to that effect. It was a fact that they needed it too, particularly in the first years of their practice and in the large cities. There were too many physicians—at least about twice as many as were really necessary, although some people foolishly complained of their insufficient number. Why should a patient go to an unknown man who was not mentioned by anybody? And how was anyone to learn of his existence? But openly the doctors had to condemn any action that might be interpreted as aiming at self-advertisement.

The quacks published letters from grateful patients who had been "given up by the regular profession"—a favorite but senseless phrase so often encountered in spurious literature—and had miraculously recovered through the ministrations of this or that healer. Sometimes the healer himself claimed to have been ill for years and to have cured himself when doctors could not. He did not always say that he was a physician. Sometimes he claimed to be a patient who had discovered a medicine for himself that was good for others as well, a benefactor of humanity who gave his invention cheerfully to the world in exchange for dollars. Or frequently it was a priest, Father Quack. His picture always accompanied his books and leaflets.

Home treatments—a stupid term—especially those pretending to insure the patient against surgical operations, were as popular among people seeking quackish remedies as "home cooking" is among restaurant eaters. And just as deceiving. How could the naive reader fail to fall into the snare? "If you are satisfied, I ask you to send me eight dollars. If you feel sure it has not helped you, a frank letter giving me the exact facts of the case will cause me at once to recognize it. Some cases—and perhaps yours is one—require the fifty days treatment, for which I charge twenty dollars.... I will guarantee to refund your money if you are not satisfied."

If a reader was unusually inquisitive and wrote to the paper in which the advertisement had ap-



peared—for instance, the provincial Sabbath Reading—he might receive numerous letters, one of them from the office of a New York publicity agent. Thus: “I desire to say that Mr. Healer is an old, and well and favorably known citizen of Syracuse, N. Y., and his reliability is certified to by some of the best known public men of that city. If I did not believe that he is dealing in good faith . . .” And so on.

Who could resist that except those with great experience in such matters?

The foreign language press—particularly the Italian and Spanish—printed half-page advertisements of the miracles done with X-rays. The illustrations displayed the bones of the chest and hands, while the text assured one that the doctor could read the body and its illnesses as from an open book—which, of course, was untrue. It was difficult for the honest portion of the profession to denounce that swindle, as they knew that it was also done within their respectable, non-advertising ranks. Well-known specialists, heads of recognized *bona fide* laboratories, who would not speak to an advertising quack, perpetrated the same imposture in a nicer way. Sometimes, seldom, a criticism against them would appear in a medical journal. But it would be only a timid and incidental mention in the midst of a long article not dealing with the subject as a whole: “It is a common experience of the free Health Center to have patients bring to the clinic series of x-ray plates for which sums varying from twenty-five to fifty dollars have been charged, and which have neither value nor meaning to the patients.”

When the profession really desired to, it always succeeded in arresting the fraudulent practice of any quack, within or without its ranks. But that was rarely done, rarely in comparison with the legion of swindlers. So, for instance, in the case of the health department against a regular, so-called

decent physician, who claimed that a preparation made by him was a specific cure for tuberculosis. Said the official bulletin:

"This case was of somewhat more than usual interest because of the difficulty of obtaining a sample for analysis. Dr. Fake was shrewd enough not to permit any of his 'medicine' to pass out of his hands, for, according to the deposition of one of his patients, his remedy was a secret preparation, ingredients, composition, and method of manufacturing of which were known only by himself. With this explanation, he insisted that he himself could administer it, evidently believing that by so doing he was safe from prosecution, through lack of evidence. However, by rather clever work on the part of the Department inspectors, samples were finally obtained which, upon analysis, were found, as was to be expected, wholly without any curative value in the treatment of tuberculosis. Dr. Fake's preparation, according to the analysis, was a shot-gun mixture of a great many common pharmaceuticals. The case was stubbornly contested by Dr. Fake and by taking advantage of every technicality of the law he succeeded in obtaining adjournments, etc., which resulted in the trial being a most long-drawn-out affair. However, his conviction finally followed and, as a result, one fraudulent cure has been eliminated from the community."

The bulletin did not mention the fact that no medicine as such has "any curative value in the treatment of tuberculosis." Nor did it say that the five hundred dollars' fine imposed by the court did not interfere with the continuation of this man's fraudulent practice. He moved uptown and, as long as nobody denounced him, he went on applying his "specific cure."

But right close to this man the authorities left undisturbed a flourishing medical doctor who assured his patients that he was able to regenerate

the human organism and to prolong life by blood injections.

And not much was done to another regular physician who grew rich from the sale of forbidden habit-forming and extremely harmful drugs. His office was a factory of toxicomaniacs. He was once slightly punished, but his money helped him to get out of the trouble and continue the same business.

And very rarely did anybody interfere with the medical beauty doctors whose false representations were often evident.

Hundreds of women with facial defects or deformities came in vain to William. Nature had made them ugly, or an accident or sickness had spoiled the shape of their noses or jaws, ruining their lives. They begged, they implored. For charity's sake, a drop of beauty! They needed it so badly!

"Oh, doctor, yes, you can! Try!"

There was the doctor who sold beauty for 190 dollars. Nobody could ignore such an opportunity.

If the victim happened to be a working girl, she would eat less, have a worse and cheaper bed and work more overtime until the sum was saved up. Usually there was no success. The girl would come back to William and tell him the story. But though the quack had her money, her hopes did not diminish and, undismayed, a year later she would try another healer. Once, however, when she came to tell William again her ill luck, he was able to show her the following court decision:

"The Supreme Court says that it was alleged in the plaintiff's complaint that she employed the defendant, a plastic and cosmetic surgeon, to straighten and raise the point of her nose; enlarge her nostrils; fill out hollows; correct, eradicate and remove all defects and irregularities in her nose; raise her left eyebrow; remove, eradicate and cor-

rect all scars, blemishes, irregularities, defects, lines, circles, marks and wrinkles in her face, neck and hands; to give her 'a general beauty treatment', correcting all disfiguring distortions of all kinds, and to make her 'a model of harmonious perfection'. All that, it was alleged, the defendant promised to do 'without pain, inflammation, soreness, or inconvenience to the plaintiff, and without leaving any scars resulting from the operation', for which the plaintiff paid him \$190; but that the defendant breached the contract to the plaintiff's injury, for which she asked compensation, damages. A jury rendered a verdict in her favor for \$600, and judgment for that amount is affirmed."

Such trials were infrequent, because the patients, like those of the urinal doctors, were ashamed to confess their case in public, a circumstance of which the swindlers, perfect psychologists as all swindlers are, took full advantage. Only once in a while did a patient have the courage to speak to them as they deserved—sometimes going so far as to emphasize her words with some painful gestures. In those cases the money was immediately refunded, but, of course, lost health could not be restored.

The profession seemed to be helpless or unwilling to do anything against the big, powerful quacks that preyed upon the doctors themselves. There were many. Not only the manufacturers of chemical pharmaceuticals. There were others. The makers of organotherapeutic products, for example. It was impossible to fight them as long as organotherapy was used by medical men to a very great extent and without plan or order, sometimes with favorable results, but mostly with very bad consequences.

The organotherapeutic propaganda was managed from the offices of the drug factories themselves. And who were its sponsors and advocates? Great professors, of course, who were at the same

time agents of the industry, paid in cash or in shares. Their articles were "pure science." How could the ordinary doctor guess the swindle?

When a branch of a Chicago packing company sent out a circular that a specialist would deliver to the profession a free course of lectures on nervous and mental diseases, many physicians responded.

It was said that he "made the study of the endocrine glands easy and covered the latest methods of treatment, explaining fully the lymph compound, luminal thyroid gland combination treatment for epilepsy. . . ." And so forth.

"True, I'd like to find out what that damned endocrine thing is," the common doctor would say, "Let's go."

The previous generations of doctors were certainly well intentioned when they closed up the tuberculosis patient between four walls and tight windows and doors, away from light and air, and scoffed at those who called for sunshine and open spaces. But nevertheless they probably killed millions of individuals.

One generation of surgeons removed the thyroid and the ovary to such an extent as to destroy health and life. The next fed their patients ovarian and thyroid extracts. And each time this therapeutic *tâtonnement* was considered a great scientific acquisition. The profession knew so little about treatment and was so eager to learn something that it ran after each remedy announced.

Why not believe that they were making terrible mistakes at this very moment? thought William.

No, nothing could convince him that the profession of his own time was right.

William was not cured.

His cough had established itself and would not leave him. From time to time he suffered from chills in the late afternoon and his headaches obscured his thoughts. He often faced his patients with a blank mind. He passed his hand over his brow to drive away the cloud. But his chest and shoulders sank down with fatigue.

He, the early riser, often could not get up until a late hour.

But a mysterious inner fury coming from the farthest depths of his being drove him on to work and investigate, as if something told him that this was his last chance.

He had finished chiropractic and osteopathy. He took up Christian science, Couéism, Whitism, naprapathy, naturopathy, Denverism, physical culture and the lesser cults.

The more he was acquainted with these so-called sciences, the more he felt that, with the exception of the last three, which contained truths applied in the wrong way, they were invented for mental deficient.

And he thought:

So these are the schools that are supposed to replace regular medicine! Each one of them and all together.

Dishonesty, swindle, fake, quackery rampant!

They criticize, blame, upbraid, accuse medicine. Oh, give me back our own wickedness, fake, and quackery! It is honesty personified, innocence itself, compared with the robbery going on there.

We are intolerant of ideas from outside? True, but *their* intolerance is infinitely greater.

We are doing harm at each step we take? Undoubtedly—but what we are doing is loving and hugging compared to what they are doing. And we are working, facing reality, taking responsibility. We do not shun, skulk, dodge cowardly. With few exceptions, we accept all those who come to us. The most horrible conditions, the curable and the incurable, the agonizing, the hopeless. The irregulars avoid the worst, desperate cases. They leave them to us. They pass them over. Of course, apparently they have no mortality. How could they? Their mortality is to be counted in *our* hospitals. Ah, you are successful, are you not? Yes, you are. See the victims of your success treated by us, your errors corrected with our hands and, where this is impossible, your “successful” results dying in our arms! How would your successes look if you had the opportunity to be harmful?

We bungle, we make mistakes. We do. We do not know much. We don't. We are searchers in the darkness. But if we place ourselves side by side with you, we are high scientists, serious thinkers and you are ridiculous illiterates. One bit of our ignorance is sublime learning, perfect knowledge, by the side of your loftiest erudition.

Our ignorance consists of an excess of science and laboratory research. But if our school is drenched with science, drowned in it; if its wheels are clogged by it; if its real light is blotted out by thousands of little false flames—the irregular schools are innocent of all science.

William was exhausted. He lay down on his couch. Thoughts continued to come.

But these quackish cults, these quackish healers are our creation. Yes, our own. We are to blame for their existence. We have been bad gardeners and have let the weeds grow, the scorching nettle, the strangling, throttling parasite that creeps and

climbs and destroys until its host withers and shrivels. We have not been broad-minded enough to listen to those who had something to say about healing. We should have paid attention even to the most stupid ideas, examined and extracted whatever was good and acceptable in them. We have wrapped ourselves up in our respectability. We have passed with long faces and half-closed lids, casting disdainful glances all around us. We have forgotten that ours was a science of life, that it must be practical if it is anything. We have allowed until yesterday, nay, we still allow a criminal pride and stubbornness, a prejudicial "ethical" stumbling block to separate us from the people of whom we are, to whom we owe ourselves. Our lips were foolishly locked and we forgot how to speak plainly to the men and women around us in a plain, understandable language. We have not been severe enough toward our own errors, our inner quackery. We have given food for arguments to our adversaries. We are guilty.

This is the reason for the immense prosperity of the quackish healers. They can truly point to us and say to the public that we do this and leave that undone, while they do not speak about their own failures.

The public, the patients, the silly loiterers do not discriminate between criticism and criticism. They do not see that sand is thrown in their eyes by the pickpocket so that he can quietly plunder their pockets. They cannot perceive that those who censure and condemn others are not necessarily honest themselves, that just speaking about dishonesty does not make the speaker honest and that the crook can use the same weapons as the just.

We should have been our own censors and cleaned our body of obnoxious brethren. Cleaned incessantly at the risk of remaining few in numbers.



There was naturopathy, nature cure. In itself very plausible and certainly carrying many truths, it could easily have replaced medicine if it had been approved by honest and learned men. But as it was, it was repulsive to all truly scientific and really fair minds. It was supported by a lot of uneducated healers and exploited through low, quackish methods. Any new money-making fake, no matter how unscientific and empty, as long as it was drugless and could be called natural, was listed among its cures and proclaimed as miraculous. There was a time when the existence of micro-organisms was denied and ridiculed by most naturopaths, for the simple reason that none of them had taken the trouble to look through a microscope. Later they went so far as to admit that microbes were not a myth or a medical invention, but affirmed that they had absolutely nothing to do with disease. They had to use all sorts of subterfuges to explain contagiousness, but their readers and patients, fanatized ignoramuses, could be easily satisfied. They claimed to do nothing that was not in conformity with nature and many exaggerated the danger of alcoholic drinking and of other beverages to such an extent as to condemn the use even of a small amount of beer, wine or coffee. Anyone who ate white bread was regarded by them almost as a criminal. But in spite of their druglessness they took, prescribed and sold at good prices many of the drugs found in pharmacies under other names. Herbs and roots, they called them—drugless drugs,

as it were. Their schools were often composed of almost illiterate teachers and their students were recruited from among people whose only call to healing was the fact that they had no other job or wanted to change their line of work. While naturopathy had degenerated in this country more than elsewhere, it was not much better off in Europe. In some countries, like Spain, most of its practitioners had won their degrees through short, so-called correspondence courses, taken from worthless American nature-cure schools. But even Germany, the mother country of this cult, where it was at its highest and best, abounded in swindling "nature healers." One of William's friends, who was traveling abroad, described to him the dense and dangerous ignorance with which Kneipp's and other flourishing institutes at Woerishofen were conducted.

Father Kneipp, for millions of people an authority in health matters, an author of books printed in many editions and translated into all languages, a teacher who had dedicated his entire life to the healing of disease, was in reality nothing but an ignoramus. His institution in the famous Bavarian village was now in the hands of illiterate monks who treated all patients almost alike, with nothing but water and a few drugs. They had no idea about diet or other hygienic measures. Perhaps the most efficient remedy was the Jesus with his bleeding heart hanging out of his garment in the pictures over the beds of all the health seekers.

Physical culture had done much good. It had turned the people's attention to a number of individual health-promoting rules and devices which the official profession had completely neglected. But when, intoxicated with success, it overstepped its boundaries, it failed miserably. Physical culturists became healers, treated the sick and criticized medicine. Their literature bristled with ignorance and many of their victims succumbed as

a result of ill-treatment and greed for cash. A glance over the advertising pages of their periodicals showed at once what swindles they embraced. An acquaintance with some of their priests made it clear that they did not discriminate as to who should be their colleagues and that their practice was a center of attraction for the most unscrupulous. Even their health teaching was marred by a mixture of cheap, loud athleticism and ugly beauty-seeking—a base catering to their patrons' desire for sporty sensations. Their readers and followers would rather become gaping admirers of the morbidly and unnaturally strong than be themselves powerful. Physical culture publications were written for the moneyed classes and disregarded the workers and the specific causes of their illnesses. Health instructions were given in such a manner as to make it almost impossible for the poor to follow them. The most successful of their street speakers were illiterate men who scoffed at all that was great and noble in the medical profession.

Physical culturists adopted fasting as a cure. Within certain limits it could have accrued to the benefit of millions of chronic as well as acute cases of illness and might have opened the eyes of the medical doctor to sane, rational therapeutic ideas. But they soon allowed the fasting cure to become the tumbling place of all sorts of unprepared laymen, half-ripe healers, miracle-mongers and charlatans whose generalizations directly and indirectly sent hundreds to their graves as a result of wrong or exaggerated fasting.

Out in the West, in the region of wide spaces filled with the spirit of pioneering, where ideas were yet unsettled, healing cults and sub-cults were springing up daily. But they disappeared just as quickly in the mountain mists of the morning, swept away to the sands of the deserts. Prospecting had not been abandoned there. But now the frontier men searched gold above the ground instead of in it.

There was Whitism which, in numerous tracts as large as encyclopedias and as heavy as tree stumps, expounded with an absurd magistral pedantism, a few drops of truth—where was not at least a particle of truth to be found?—in a maze of repetitious material and new superstitions gravely clothed as science.

Then there were the so-called dietitians and food specialists.

One layman without the least knowledge of physiology, chemistry or pathology proclaimed himself as a food specialist and was soon nationally reputed as such—of course, not among scientists. He wrote many books on food in relation to health and disease and sold them at fabulous prices. All contained the same subject that could have been told in three lines, but it was variously repeated—a few half-truths that everybody knew, and numerous untruths. His greatest claims to fame were his attacks on the medical profession. He treated disease by correspondence and naturally was piling up money. Also, naturally, many of his

misled victims suffered from his mistakes and ignorance.

Denverism was spreading more and more both through its publications and through the wonderful energy of one able man. Although most of its followers had found that it was too extreme to be of help, and that in the long run it was harmful, they proclaimed its high virtues as long as they believed in it. The mainspring of its partly deserved success was its unceasing and generally correct criticism of medical practice and the emancipation it gave its friends from medical prejudices.

Years before, its leader had begun by explaining disease as a result of auto-intoxication—an indefinite term that signified little—and by considering overeating as its main cause. The latter explanation was of great value. But unsatisfied with that, he later transformed that idea into the theory of toxemia as the cause of disease, which, while partly true, was not a discovery. It had always haunted the medical profession, in one form or another, and it was not as all-embracing and perfect as he and his disciples would have the world believe. It had been quite popular for a long time and one could find the word in any good-sized dictionary. After all, it meant nothing but a vague poisoning of the blood, which was not the definition of a cause but a way of begging the question. The germ-theory, with its toxins originating more or less indirectly from germs, was about the same thing. Toxemia was really an effect, while the causes were numerous and elsewhere—everywhere. It explained nothing. Besides, introduced as it was by its author, it was not even based on proved facts. What did he say?

“When the nerve energy is below par, we have enervation, and following enervation we have checked secretion and excretion. The retention of excretion builds Toxemia, which becomes the fun-

damental base of all disease manifestation. . . . The conservatism of the body establishes vicarious excretion through the mucous membranes; hence we see catarrh as a forerunner, or first symptom, of all syndromes or symptom-complexes which make up the list of all so-called diseases found in the medical nomenclature. . . . Disease defined is poisoning by waste products retained in a body too enervated to eliminate through natural channels. Overstimulation, enervation, checked elimination, and Toxemia, which add to overstimulation—this may be called the vicious circle extraordinary; for it accounts for all man's ills, making it unnecessary to go looking for microscopic devils to blame for what he brings upon himself because of his ignorance, stupidity, or wilfulness."

None of these ideas were new and it was a bit ridiculous to see their author catch from time to time somebody using the word toxemia or the reasoning over which he had declared a monopoly, and accusing others of plagiarism, when one was aware that a good deal of his theory had been common human property for centuries.

The remarks quoted above were merely assertions. How did the author know, for instance, that "when the nerve energy is below par, we have enervation" and that "following enervation we have checked secretion and excretion" and not increased secretion and excretion? This was just a contention and not a proven scientific fact.

He also said: "An enervated body fails to throw off waste (poison). The waste remains to poison the system; and this means toxemia. The amount of poisoning and the length of time it has been developing determine the severity of the impairment. Where nature has been compelled to establish a continuous vicarious elimination of toxins, such as we see in catarrh of the mucous membranes, like catarrh of the nose, it ends in chronic disease—chronic rhinitis, atrophic or hypertrophic,

etc. One type is hay fever; other types of catarrh are tonsillitis, enlarged tonsils, inflammations of other mucous membranes and of the sinuses; also adenitis or lymphatic inflammation. When pronounced toxemia has developed, acidosis, tuberculosis, Bright's disease, diabetes, etc., manifest in the tubercular diathesis; and lithiasis and rheumatism of all kinds develop in the gouty diathesis."

Perhaps it was so. But where was the proof? Was it not misleading to claim that tuberculosis of the lungs, for instance, was due to toxemia and to toxemia alone? William asked himself: Was this half-truth not harmful in that it was hiding the part played by environmental circumstances, working conditions, social causes, etc.? Or, better expressed, did it not attract our attention too much to one of the multiple causes of consumption? Perhaps such semi-blindness was inherent in those who were hopelessly entangled in the ideology of the exploiting classes. But William expected a brilliant, clever, witty man, with a clear head for other facts and with wonderful talent as a writer, to see deeper and to write in such a manner as to leave nothing in obscurity.

William also believed that the Denver teacher's claim that nothing was good in regular medical science was wrong, and that it was wrong to utterly disregard or deny the spreading of diseases through contagion.

In his naïveté William objected to the Denver doctor's using his magazine—almost exclusively—as an organ for the advertisement of his private institution, which cast a shadow of distrust over his entire public work.

Many of the contentions and criticisms for which this man's admirers were worshipping him could have been signed by almost any physician of any school. They were found in all writers on popular health questions, including those who continued to belong to the regular medical profession. But he

was original in his over-emphasis of the theory that disease could be healed by correct food combinations and in his neglect of most of the other, even "natural", methods of treatment. Here again very few could agree with his idea of what was "correct". The *exaggerated* fear which he had spread among his followers, of certain foods, for instance of starch as a food, his fanaticism about mixing starchy food with other foods in normal persons, had done immense harm. And, while it was beneficial to popularize raw vegetables and salads, it was ridiculous to claim as an original invention such a thing as the so-called "Denver-salad" which was eaten both in this country and in many other parts of the world by people who were not acquainted and will never be acquainted with this city's name. Many were the illiterates who ate raw tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, celery, cabbage, who mixed these things together, and at the same time spoke about "impure blood" and "blood poisoning," without having heard about Denver or toxemia.

What dissatisfied William particularly was the fact that, while the Denver man constantly attacked the medical profession, not only for their present sins, but also for the sins of the past generations of physicians and even for the mistakes of the people at large, he never mentioned the charlatanism, the humbug, the fake, the criminally harmful teachings of those who had become his allies and pupils and who leaned on him as on a pillar of strength and light. He neither praised nor blamed the chiropractors, osteopaths, or other irregular healers, although he certainly disagreed with them. This was very shrewd and tactful, but did he mean to imply that their very irregularity and opposition to the medical profession sanctified them and absolved them of all errors.

He was not less unfair to the medical profession than it was to him. William would have expected a great pioneer to be patient and tolerant



and less bitter toward those who were unjust to him and to understand that old traditions and scientific errors could not disappear within a short time, that they too, like everything else, had to pass through an evolution and that physicians at large could not forget their old teachings at his command.

And so William, who had come close to Denverism, turned away from it thoroughly disappointed. Later, as he learned of the Denver doctor's high-priced, extensive but harmful practice by mail in cases where a personal examination was an absolute necessity, William was disgusted and ashamed to have admired the man.

Abramsism was also a product of the Golden West.

William was interested in it and investigated it as much as he could but was unable to decide about its value until he heard his East Side friend lecture about it in English. Many of the ideas expressed in that talk were like a mirror picture of his own thoughts or of thoughts that had gradually become his own, but he enjoyed their repetition.

And this was what his friend said:

Doctors cannot cure.

This applies to the doctors of all schools.

At best they can help nature to improve symptoms or do the curing. Often they cannot do even that.

Conditions in which we live make it impossible for most of us to be healthy. Instead of improving those conditions individually and socially, we are hunting for miraculous cures. The obvious and rational explanations of our physical and mental ailments are too simple for most of us; we are always looking for mysterious causes. The more crooked, the more unknown, the more transcendental a theory and the more it fails to appeal to our mind and judgment, the surer it is to find followers. Anyone who claims to hold the secret of health and happiness, who knows a charm, an enchanted formula which will drive away disease and pain, is always received with enthusiasm. That opens the door to the daring adventurer who is a crafty student of human nature and human frailty. And we keep it open until we are tired of him or we see through his fingers. But even after having discovered our blunder we are not cured of the need of being deceived. We rapidly fall into the arms of another impostor.

Most healers are dishonest.

That includes the healers of all sects. They take advantage of the people's suffering and credulity. But who is honest? Are lawyers, preachers, statesmen, judges, writers, artists, manufacturers, grocers, plumbers, more trustworthy? Are

we not all tools and victims of the same immoral profit system which sanctions the desire of getting from others as much as we can without giving anything in return? And are not the few persons with true and sincere intentions rare exceptions that look ridiculous? And the majority of those who are upright—are they not so because their situation forces them to be so? How long will it take until all will see that it is useless to replace our professional men, our storekeepers, our doctors, by another set of individuals, as long as the system which has warped our original life motives continues to exist? Placed in conditions in which dishonesty will not benefit us, nobody will be deceitful. Of course, while this explains dishonesty, it does not condone it.

And so we have, besides regular medicine, osteopathy, chiropractic, Christian science, naturopathy, hypnotism, electrotherapy, X-ray treatment, hydrotherapy, mechanotherapy, naprapathy, neuropathy, suggestotherapy, Coué treatment, food therapy, magnetotherapy, electric belt treatment, Indian remedies, church healing, rejuvenation treatment, Hebrew science, auto-hemic therapy, spectrochrome therapy, specialists in "secret" diseases, "anatomical museum" healers, fountain of youth regenerators, unauthorized white and black men and women treating in institutions of their own, dispensing salves and medicines and herbs invented by them, and so forth. Some of these methods contain seeds of truth. But under the circumstances even those truths may be and often are so distorted that the truth becomes a lie and the manner in which it is applied is a swindle.

Spice your little curing device or healing trick with some insults and mockery addressed to other healers and your success and fortune is assured. If you say that your neighbor is a crook, you will rarely be wrong and the people will believe that *you* are certainly built of different material and they will swallow your medicine or method with the greatest confidence. How difficult it is for the common mind to distinguish between the genuine and the fraudulent critic! Don't they both condemn, or say they condemn, falsehood?

Oh, Molière, where are you? Oh, for a modern Molière!

With filthy brains and tissues and juices, ailing in reality or scared into the belief that we are ill, groaning from overwork and replete with discontent, we are in a mad rush for saviors, big and little. We absorb drugs, we let our bodies be carved up and our backbones stricken, we expose ourselves to electricity, Roentgen rays and radium, we wear more or less scientific amulets, we correct our feet and bellies with metal and rubber goods. We run from one doctor to the other and back to the first and to all of them together.

And in the midst of this turmoil and confusion and despair a new prophet has arisen and, introduced by his friends, he

promises a fundamental transformation in our methods—nay, a tremendous revolution in our old ways. We are groping in the darkness—he brings us light. He is attacking the problem from an entirely new angle; he goes to the bottom of the philosophy of life, health and disease.

Your body does not only consist of organs, tissues and cells, but its basic components, like those of all so-called matter, are electrons with vibratory motions and with a definite radio-activity according to the condition of body and mind, according to health, according to this or that disease—more than that, even according to acquired habits or thoughts. By means of electricity and a certain technic our most vital fluid will reveal to us the trend of the rays emanated from the interior and we will read our internal life as an open book. If we know nothing about a patient, a drop of blood is all that is needed in order to discover what is the matter with him. He may be at the Antipodes; a blotch from his veins on a piece of blotter will tell us his story and we can give him advice without ever seeing him. It is mysterious, weird, uncanny, and it shows the infallible, mechanical, inhuman, superhuman, fatal certainty of the machine that is devoid of man's erroneous factor and that knows no passion, no partiality, no personal weakness. The treatment is the simplest that we can imagine. By means of an apparatus the properties of the electrons are modified in such a manner that the disease disappears. Not only symptoms, not only unimportant ailments are treated successfully, but the most terrible chronic and acute diseases disappear as if by magic within a few weeks, usually leaving no trace. And there is no speculation about it; the cures are certain. Tuberculosis is healed; cancer is healed or it is so transformed that it loses its malignity, which means that one cannot die from it. Syphilis is driven out of the body.

The electronic reactions are rendering both the services for which medical science has been vainly yearning for centuries: it diagnoses correctly and it heals with certainty.

The genial inventor also has an interesting theory of disease. All or most disease is due directly or indirectly to syphilis, to human and "bovine" syphilis, and it may be congenital or acquired. And vaccination, in its past and present form, is the source of the immense spreading of syphilis, so that now nearly everybody (or is it everybody?) has syphilitic blood. But the world could be de-syphillized, in fact all or most disease could be eliminated from all men and women, if they all underwent the new treatment, especially if all children were treated prophylactically. But if you, in your plain logic, have concluded that the author of this theory is an anti-vaccinationist, you are greatly mistaken. Vaccination is

necessary, but we should use a de-syphylized vaccine. In parenthesis be it said that, in my stupidity, I might ask why the new apparatus cannot destroy smallpox so that no vaccination would be needed and in my dishonesty I might suspect that at the beginning the inventor accepted vaccination as a concession to the medical profession, so as not to estrange it and that now he has to stick to it. And in my plain logic I would explain the so-called general human reaction for "syphilis" by the fact that just because it is so general it is not the sign of a disease, but a common factor that may have no importance. However, in the face of the crushing facts and ideas which I have just described, I must silence such audacious and critical thoughts.

Who is the man who claims to accomplish the above-mentioned results? An impetuous, hot-headed, inexperienced and enthusiastic young man, who believes that everything that shines is gold? A sectarian? No, it is Doctor Albert Abrams of San Francisco, a middle-aged physician, 58 years old, who claims to have had a long practice, to have taught medicine for years and to have been connected with medical institutions. He is the author of such scientific works as: "Clinical Diagnosis", "The Blues", "Auto-Intoxication", "Diagnostic Therapeutics", "Domestic and Personal Hygiene", "Leaves from a Physician's Diary", "Diseases of the Lungs and Pleura", "Diseases of the Heart", "Nervous Breakdown", "Consumption". He is the editor of a medical magazine which is an exponent of his theories. His chief book is a volume of six or seven hundred pages called "Spondylotherapy", which has seen a few editions. In it he advocates the treatment of many diseases by means of concussion of certain portions of the spinal column in order to influence the centers of the spinal cord and through them the organs which are under the control of those centers, a treatment which, by the way, has probably much in common with chiropractic or osteopathy. I have known that book for several years and I read Dr. Abrams' articles on various subjects when they appeared in the medical press. Many of his ideas seemed very plausible when read, but none were convincing and sufficiently proved and somehow none would ever work in practice. That, however, could not justify me in ignoring the work of a man with radically new, original and bold principles in diagnosis and therapy, of a cultured writer and scientist. And I decided to study him more carefully.

But soon a new situation presented itself.

About a year ago a writer sent me an article on Dr. Abrams' theories and methods. It was the same article which he has since published elsewhere, which has made a deep impression on many of his readers and which has given those theories and methods, until then known to a few, enormous

popularity among all real and imaginary sufferers from disease. That article could have meant a fortune for my magazine, whose financial situation is far from brilliant on account of its uncompromising attitude toward friend and foe alike and on account of its constant refusal of all advertisements which are not strictly honest. But I could not accept that contribution without doing a great injustice to my readers whom I had to protect at all costs. It praised Abrams' work with the full power and sincerity of which its author was capable, but there was not a shred of proof that any of its claims were true or could be substantiated. I was then insufficiently informed in the matter in order either to corroborate those claims or to disprove them. I had long known that this writer, in spite of his admirable qualities, was altogether unrelfiable when he attempted to approach anything that looks like real science. His is an unscientific mind and it is easy to make him believe almost any impossible dream.

Only those few people who have had a thorough modern scientific training are unsatisfied with simple affirmations and do not readily acquiesce in what even the great authorities may assert unless there is dependable and absolutely convincing backing. They want facts and deep, not superficial, proofs, through actual contact with and follow-up of the material as well as through experimental work. And the greater and more wonderful the claims, the more exacting a scientist is. Especially is this skepticism needed and wholesome when the allegations are concerned with human health and happiness. So many times the people's hopes have been sadly, painfully and dangerously shattered by so-called miraculous and wild "discoveries" and "inventions" that it is time for us to learn to be extremely careful. A good physician, one who has the people's health at heart, must fulfill two conditions: first, he must have an open mind and study everything pertaining to his subject, not disdaining even those ideas which originate in the humblest minds; but secondly, he must not hurry in drawing conclusions, he must be very prudent and as conservative as possible. The more radical he is, the more conservative he will be—and this is not a paradox.

But there is such a thing as a *too* open mind, one whose doors are wide open to all winds and dusts and filth and give unobstructed access to all schemes, or vibrate in unison with any noise that comes along. And many of us suffer from or enjoy what has been so appropriately called "the will to believe"! That is why any juggler or conjurer with a smooth tongue and with some skilful medical or similar *hocus-pocus* can steal close to the people's heart and pocketbook. Many are socially so situated that they *cannot* be healthy; others insist on committing sins and errors against their health and

*must* be ill. But all crave long life and freedom from sickness—at least theoretically—and they wish to attain it with the least effort and disturbance of their habits. So they are always running after some prodigious “short cut” to or substitute for health. They think that correct and rational living, which is the only means both to conserve and to regain one’s health, may be replaced or adulterated by some vicarious devilish methods and that they can cheat nature. Those who are thoroughly imbued with the true principles of health can never, under any circumstances whatever, become devoted to any healing scheme, be it ever so ingenious, if it does not require a complete change in the living methods of the patient and if it forces him to depend on the “healer” or his medicine or machine. They know that the best a drug can do is to relieve temporarily; an apparatus can improve superficially; correct feeding is not to be found in a pill; fresh air is not contained in a bottle; sufficient rest is not given by an electric wire. They know that no treatment of disease is worthy of its name if it fails to use the same principles as those through which the disease might have been prevented. They are also aware of the fact that permanent changes in the body or in a part of it, due to long lasting processes, can never be effaced or repaired and that therefore organs and tissues which have been chronically ill can never be restored to their normal condition by any witchlike performance. That is why no rationally thinking person has been swept off his feet by that article on Abrams.

The famous writer urged me again and again to send some patients’ blood specimens to Abrams’ laboratory for diagnosis. I did not follow his advice. And for the following reasons:

The mere fact that this or that diagnosis had been proclaimed by Abrams in a given case would never convince me that he was right. Of course a credulous author and other naive persons with a similar mental makeup would fall for it immediately and would stand in awe before the “genial” prophet who, from a distance, can see this or that disease, in a drop of blood. But I cannot believe that something is so, just because this or that man says it. Perhaps it is I who am naive and childish in the true and best sense of this word, as I believe only what I see or what appeals to a straight, unsophisticated mind. Anyhow, I would have to confirm the diagnosis made by the Californian “wizard” and it stands to reason that if I can do so I do not need his help as then I would be able to diagnose the case myself. On the other hand, if his diagnosis happens to disagree with mine or if I am unable to make a diagnosis, I shall never know whether he is mistaken or not. Subsequently I did put the San Franciscan doctor indirectly, through another physician, to test and found him wanting. His diagnosis was wholly wrong.

The "electronic" theory as such and this new explanation of disease, looked like a shrewd appeal by a physician who was aware of the psychology of the masses, to the gallery of scientifically unprepared persons who could not fail to respect a term so pregnant with ... meaninglessness and to reverse the very thing which they did not understand. To make use in medicine of the electrons which in physics are a convenient way to explain phenomena just as the dethroned atomic hypothesis has served the same purpose for a hundred years, was as interesting as it was clever. It was not easy to prove the correctness or the falsity of the theory and not only the layman, but the average physician would have to respect it. I received many letters and personal inquiries from readers and friends as to my opinion concerning the "electronic reactions". Some of them told me about the new wonders and what benefits they had derived from them. But I always found that those who had been rapidly converted and whose ailments had been quickly "cured" by Abrams' apparatus were: 1) Either those of my patients who were sufferers from an incurable disease and happy to deceive themselves. Or 2) the cranky variety of people who had never been ill but found health uninteresting and desired to be told that they were the fortunate possessors of a serious disease and that they were the subjects of great and brilliant experiments,—in other words, those who are often called neurasthenics. Or finally, 3) those whose upbringing had prepared them to believe—to believe in a more or less idolatrous divinity and its representatives, to believe in heaven and hell, in spirits, in soul-wanderings, in "Christian Science," briefly, in everything except that which is smooth and clear and straight.

I had thought that the Abramitic practitioners would be glad to enlighten a member of the horribly benighted regular profession and I applied to them. But to my great amazement I found that they were very reluctant to give information, fearing probably to lose their clientele through competition. However, my frequent visits to the waiting rooms and offices of the sub-wizards helped me to see the light. While previously I thought that perhaps these reformed physicians were zealots and believed in their mission, I soon understood that their purpose was less idealistic. My great experience with all sorts of patients had taught me long ago that it was not difficult to make a sick person "feel better" or even "very well" temporarily by using any method. But I was soon surprised to see that these Abramitic patients, when questioned closely, admitted that they did not see a worth-while improvement and those who had been "cured" a few weeks previously began to complain of their old troubles, so that their doctors did not even have the satisfaction of having charmed them for some longer time—except in a few cases.



One of the tactics of many irregular healers has been to tell the patient that he is suffering from some awful disease so as to make it appear that the treatment is amazingly successful. They put up a straw man which will lend itself easily to destruction and which they can knock down at will. The Abrams physician usually "diagnoses" a number of diseases in the same patient. As a rule he finds the gravest conditions and, after some time, he declares the patient "cured". And, what inspires even less confidence is that he is quite generous in his promises of "cures"; which he distributes right and left. Knowing as we do that promises usually savor of quackery, because none of us can be sure how the human body and especially this or that individual will react to our treatment, it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of one who guarantees the healing of disease.

But what does our author say in his article that brought so many patients to the offices of the Abramites? The layman who reads the article carelessly will certainly gasp at the wonders therein related. Let us analyze it with a free mind.

In his introduction he quotes one of his friends, a layman, who, in his ignorance, could not help but see wonders. Then he mentions a great doctor, "late president of the British Medical Association", who is now Abrams' disciple. This, of course, means nothing to me who, in my search for facts, have lost all reverence for names. I have read this doctor's article in Abrams' magazine and it did not convince me. Besides, I know at least one late president of the American Medical Association who is now regarded as a quack by the same Association and I am certain that other presidents have been more or less incapable doctors. Further, our author describes how Abrams recognizes several cases of disease from the blood sent to him from distant points. But what makes the author think that the diagnoses are correct? Just Abrams' word! Some of the physicians present in the laboratory claimed that Abrams had diagnosed their cases. Is that convincing? Why believe these doctors, or why believe that they were not mistaken? And are there not in some cities other doctors who had sent in some blood and were disappointed? In one case Abrams finds that the specimen is sheep's blood. How do you know that this is true? Why not examine it also microscopically and otherwise, as the blood of each animal has some characteristic signs?

"But one thing quickly becomes clear to you: the hypothesis of fraud must be excluded," says the author. But how does he know? Why does he not use the methods which he employs in exposing the capitalist press and the bourgeois colleges? Or shall I doubt the correctness of all his investiga-

tions? Does not Abrams charge a large fee for blood examinations, for his apparatus, for his treatment, for his course?

A "little drama" is told of a physician-patient for whom Abrams locates the exact spot of the former's pain. But the author fails to notice that the location of the pain was not found at the same time when the disease was diagnosed, but the next day. What, pray, assures you that meanwhile the necessary information had not leaked out? And what shows you that the diagnosis of "cerebro-spinal tuberculosis" was correct in that case? The fact that it had been also diagnosed at a sanitarium? Why must we believe that that was correct?

We read further: "The fact that letters continue to arrive by special delivery can have only one meaning—that the physicians find his diagnoses correct." That may be true, but one can draw other conclusions: that new physicians are trying out the theory, or that the physicians who think that their cases have been diagnosed correctly are wrong themselves.

The case of the Irish woman whose cancerous breast was "saved" by Abrams, can convince only those who want to believe it. How does the author know that "she had been treated in one of the largest hospitals" for cancer? And that "six physicians diagnosed her case"? How has the diagnosis of mere regulars suddenly become reliable? And if it is, why do we need new methods? But supposing the doctors did make that diagnosis, what proves to us that they were right and, furthermore, supposing they were right, what proves that the patient is now cured and will stay cured?

And so the author is certain the Greek blind boy has recovered his eyesight and the actor who can walk now had been paralyzed previous to Abrams' treatment. But we physicians are not so easily satisfied. On the other hand, our writer never alludes to the fact that such "marvelous" cures are frequently seen in the offices of ordinary old-fashioned doctors. And, curiously enough, failures in the new treatment are never mentioned, which is, of course, suspicious to those who know that the human body is not a mechanical toy and who expect at least a few failures in the application of any healing methods.

How unprepared this author is to speak intelligently about medical subjects can be seen from the following, comparatively unimportant but significant, quotation: "Percussion is to some extent a lost art, and few physicians have the necessary skill to recognize the dull area."—Where did he learn that? As a matter of fact, percussion is an elementary routine work constantly performed by all regular doctors

and, usually, if they know nothing else, they know at least that.

He speaks about a case where the Abrams instrument "was used for eleven consecutive hours and completely cured an acute case of appendicitis." How does he know that it was a case of appendicitis? And why is he so misinformed as not to be aware that acute cases of appendicitis frequently improve or heal without any other treatment than eleven hours of perfect rest?

In another place he says: "Several times I have seen Abrams mark out a cancer area, using the glass rod on the body of his subject, and had him invite me to take the rod and see if I noted the sticking of the rod to the subject's skin. I found the reaction unmistakable. . . . And then the patient was brought in and put behind a screen, so that Abrams could not see him, and connected with the apparatus, and Abrams' assistant would move the electrode about until Abrams would cry, 'Mark it', and the electrode would be on the proper spot every time. I have seen that done a dozen times in succession. . . . I have seen it done with a cancer specimen. . . ."—But how does all that prove that the patient was actually suffering from cancer? Other physicians said so? May they not be mistaken? Do the Abrams reactions show it? But they are yet an unproved theory. How can we prove something by that which is not yet proved?

A New York socialist paper published a series of articles on the experiences of their author with the Abrams method. The tone was wholly that of a paid advertisement. Why will radical papers so often harbor the questionable healers? Is it ethical according to radical principles to deceive the proletarian readers? The writer of the articles described his condition as "subject to colds in the nose, throat and ears, until it seemed that a heavy object had become imposed upon my body; chills and fevers alternately took possession of my body; my digestive apparatus balked at functioning, and my legs refused to operate beyond a distance of a quarter of a mile. . . ."—He would have probably been embarrassed if he were asked what was the difference between chills and fevers and how he knew that his digestive apparatus really balked at functioning. But, supposing his description to be true, any experienced physician would recognize in it the symptoms of a slight condition which might have been easily cured within a short time by a change in his way of living. And what was the diagnosis? "An advanced stage of cerebro-spinal syphilis of a congenital nature and tuberculosis of the kidneys and abdomen."—Horrors! Out of pity for his frightful diseases I pardon him and his doctor the

tuberculosis of the abdomen, which means nothing, the abdomen not being an organ, but a more or less indefinite region of the body. I also pass over the "syphilis bacilli" which he claims to possess. As nobody has ever had "bacilli" of syphilis, he is a unique specimen and should be treated with great consideration and indulgence. But he was treated, instead, with the "oscilloclast". And what happened? "Presently the confounded aches in my back seemed to disappear, my brain cleared of the vague sensation which had cloaked it for a week and I felt the blood coursing through my being with an unaccustomed vigor."—How well he knows the condition of his brain! How distinctly he "felt the blood coursing"! Of course, we recognize at once the type of the imaginary invalid who always feels his blood performing all sorts of stunts when no one else feels even the existence of his blood beyond the skin. Then he continues: "How simple, how obviously scientific was this whole business!"—How obviously foolish or crooked this sentence and with it the whole article! A little further he is cocksure that "the germs are broken into fragments"!

"At the tenth treatment the doctor examined my blood again and announced categorically that there was no longer any tuberculosis in the abdomen and right kidney, that the strain in the cerebro-spinal region had been reduced to an almost negligible degree, but that the left kidney was not yet wholly free from disease."—The terrible diseases which had been diagnosed *in the blood* are now cured or nearly so *in the blood!*

Within a few months Abrams' methods were accepted by some physicians who were either unscrupulous as to the manner in which they practiced or who were more or less ignorant in medical matters—there is but one exception to this, as far as I know. Indeed, many of them were osteopaths and one belonged to that class of naturopaths who always manage to combine any new money-making scheme with their so-called nature cure. This healer succeeded in gobbling up the Abrams method, after having accepted osteopathy and chiropractic and reconciled them—the devil knows how!—with his own theories.

How quickly the Abrams method is spreading could be seen from the fact that they are already incorporated in the advertisements of dealers in all sorts of fake health paraphernalia. Some time ago I returned the money received from a Chicago "Home Health Improvement Institute" which applied for advertising space in my journal. Its catalogue contained besides "special vitamin foods", "organic mineral salt treatment", "yeastole", "electric healing lamps" and other swindles, the curing qualities of which were extolled, particularly

"electronet" and "vitonet", the results of which were "remarkable" in a whole list of diseases. It also offered to the public "electronic diagnoses."

In order to learn as much as possible about the Abrams' method I had to adopt the ways of the detective, as an open, impartial investigation was possible to a limited degree only. I was able to see the diagnoses being made and the treatments given and to get the impression of the victims. And none of the actors involved, doctors, nurses, doormen and other personnel in the service of the electronic practice, contributed to strengthen my belief in the new work. Least of all the numerous patients whom I interviewed or whose conversation I overheard.

An eloquent example of what "the will to believe" will do may be taken from the case of a medical doctor who is a dentist at the same time and who has been treated. Most of the patients rapidly become dissatisfied, as they see that the new treatment fails to cure them. But that medical patient, who claimed to suffer from stone in the bladder, was content and happy. He was feeling better. When asked with insistence whether he really saw an improvement, he would say: "Of course, I still feel the pains and the other symptoms, but. . . ." When asked what sensation he had while being treated with the "oscilloclast", he said, as all patients do, "None". And when I ventured the question, "How do you know that you are being treated?" he answered, "Because I see the machine!"

In spite of all these lessons, I did not condemn the Abrams method yet. I thought that all those who endorsed it, misrepresented it and that some were a discredit to the man who had discovered or invented the electronic theory.

But an opportunity to see and hear Dr. Abrams himself came in the early fall. He was coming to New York and a public meeting with him as speaker was announced.

The impression that I gained from the Carnegie Hall meeting was lamentable and the disillusion of the more intelligent members of the huge audience was visible. A few evidently untrained physicians spoke, alluding to Dr. Abrams as "the genius" and "the master" without at any time giving the least excuse or evidence for such praise and calling one another "brave" and "courageous" for the great feat of grasping the opportunity to jump suddenly out of their obscurity into the limelight. One of them used some oratory which was entirely comparable to a good election campaign speech. At last came Dr. Abrams' turn. But what did he say? He made a few cheap jokes, repeated what his friends had said--that medical doctors were dishonest, that they were intolerant because they had not applied his methods, that medicine

was not a science, that doctors were unable to diagnose correctly except in a small percentage of cases and that cancer was on the increase. And that was all? Yes, unbelievable as it sounds, that was all! He did not speak about his theory, he explained nothing and, although his apparatus was standing all the time on the platform like some exhibit in front of a cheap country circus near the barker or puller-in in order to attract "easy marks", he dismissed it with the statement that a demonstration was impossible then and there. He also refused to answer questions except one or two and hurried away to a train for Boston. What he did in Boston may be seen from the following note in the Journal of the American Medical Association:

"On Monday, October 9, Abrams appeared before the Board of Registration in Medicine in an informal hearing. The opportunity had been given a representative of the 'electronic' cult to inspect the room and arrange for proper wiring so that Abrams could give a demonstration of his method. When the meeting came to order, however, Abrams said that it was impossible for him to give a demonstration at that time. His followers then started to hold an 'experience meeting', detailing the marvels they had wrought. Naturally, the chairman of the Board of Registration in Medicine refused to permit the meeting to be turned into an advertising 'stunt', and the meeting was adjourned. The day following Abrams gave a clinical demonstration of his method in the laboratory of one of his disciples. Our Boston contemporary points out that, by a remarkable coincidence, while Abrams' followers in the rear of the room were able to see and hear the reactions claimed by Abrams, those members of the Massachusetts Medical Society who occupied chairs close to the demonstration, could neither see nor hear them. Abrams, it is said, refused to submit the method to any test offered, but confined himself to demonstrating the presence of lesions 'the existence of most of which could be proved only by post-mortem examination.' A member of the staff of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, a man in perfect health, was selected for experiment. By his diagnostic methods, Abrams discovered in this healthy individual a streptococcus infection, tuberculosis of the intestinal tract, congenital syphilis and intestinal sarcoma—otherwise the man was all right! It is understood that the volunteer inconsiderately refused to submit to a postmortem examination. The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal declares that Abrams' visit to Boston disclosed two outstanding facts: First, the man persistently refused to submit his methods to tests that could be scientifically controlled or to give a demonstration under conditions that would be subject to the usual rules of scien-

tific criticism; second, in the one case in which he did demonstrate his method, he found syphilis, tuberculosis, sarcoma and streptococcus infection in a healthy individual. As the Journal points out, if Abrams can diagnose disease where no symptoms exist, he certainly should have been willing to submit to a test based on the diagnosis of blood specimens from patients with definite ailments. The fact that Abrams refused to perform such tests speaks more eloquently than any critic."

I left the hall in great disgust. I felt that I, as well as all these thousands of people, had been cheated, had been treated like children or mentally deficient persons. Were we really expected to believe without proofs, out of consideration for the "master", for fear of being called intolerant persecutors of a great prophet and martyr?

Still, even then I did not give up hope. After all, I reasoned, Dr. Abrams may be an unpractical man and may harm and discredit himself, but his theories may be perfect and his methods useful. I shall try to make his acquaintance. And I did.

Meanwhile I was answering mentally and silently his objections to the conduct of the medical profession in his case and I, who have many times exposed the errors of my colleagues, caught myself defending them. Our profession is dishonest. Possibly. No, undoubtedly. But the sponsors of the young Abrams school are already complaining hypocritically that its methods have become commercialized, not to mention our own opinion about its practitioners. I was glad that medical doctors had not hurried to apply this method. They had all the interest in the world to use the new practice in which there was more money to be made than in anything they ever did, although their mere acceptance of the method would never prove its correctness. But they waited and, by waiting, they protected the public. They wanted to learn all about Dr. Abrams' theory and get full evidence about its value. I wished they had acted in the same manner on a number of other occasions. Medicine is not a science. True, but it is an art. So much the better for humanity. If it were a dry, pure science, physicians would be heartless and unfeeling mechanics, who would not understand the complex human being and his environment and the finer side of life which cannot be found out in the laboratory. A large number of our cases are incorrectly diagnosed. How does Dr. Abrams know it? He quotes medical authorities. So we admit it! We ourselves are aware of our failures—rather a good and healthy sign. But is our inability to diagnose proof that Abramites or others do diagnose their cases? What percentage of failures do *they*

admit? Cancer may be on the increase; but why imply that doctors are responsible for that?

At last I was present at an improvised Abrams' clinic! The "master" himself was diagnosing. And a careful watching of his work made me lose my last illusions. After spending several hours with Dr. Abrams I left completely disappointed. What I had cared to know was: Was I going to learn something practical, something of immediate use to my patients? And, judging from their point of view, the cure of disease was really the test of the theory. Could it help me to heal them? Very soon I had to answer in the negative.

While my impression from Abrams' books and articles was that of a learned man, he himself impressed me as being scientifically dishonest, eager to be right at all costs, exaggerating here, underrating there, using authority at other points, in order to impose his opinion, with little respect for the real truth.

From time to time he would enounce some elementary rule or would show some well-known symptoms with which any physician is familiar, or would use some Latin or Greek or unusual and pedantic name of a disease, and his followers would be in ecstasy over his erudition and express amazement at the depth of his learning.

And he knew how to make use of suggestion.

—Do you see, doctor, how this rod goes on?

—It stops.

—It shouldn't. Try again!

And the man, all confused, finds whatever he is told.

—I see from the blood that this patient has a pain on the right side.

To the patient:

—Where is the pain?

—On the left side.

—Are you sure it is not on the right side?

—Maybe, sometimes!

Then, Abrams, triumphantly: "See?"

I fail to hear what he claims there is to be heard; I fail to see what he claims should be seen. Other physicians look on and feel the same way. But when Dr. Abrams says: "See how clear?" some of them mumble that they do see. Which reminds me of my younger days when, as a student of medicine, I saw many boys agreeing immediately with their teacher as to symptoms, although they confessed to me that they did not see or hear what the instructor had mentioned. They were ashamed to admit their disagreement and wanted to get rid of the insistent teacher.

—By concussion of the neck I scatter the toxins.



How? Where? Which toxins? Where are they? Questions are impolite—the master has spoken.

—This patient suffers from diarrhoea.

—No, I don't.

—Are you sure? You never do?

The patient, intimidated: "No, never; once in a great while, yes, very rarely."

—Here my autograph will come out on the skin. You see?

As there is no trace of it, he says, "It is not as marked as it should be."

—This girl suffers from acquired syphilis. She has had a chancre on the lip."

—Have you ever had sore lips?

—No.

—Doctor, do you see the scar?

Several physicians examine the lips; none sees a scar. Then Dr. Abrams stands up and says: "Don't you see?" And a few observers say with a faltering voice: "No, yes, yes."

Very often he cleverly shows a change in the percussive abdominal sound by deftly turning the patient to one side so that the muscles are more or less contracted as the case may be.

—Doctor, do you see the light on the abdomen?

—No.

—Don't you see?

—Yes!

And further:

—Gentlemen, here is a case of sarcoma. There are no palpatory symptoms, as it is at the beginning.

—And how do you know that it is?

—By our reactions!

So he is proving the existence of something by something which is yet disputed and the existence of which is by no means proved!

And he adds: "The diagnosis of the medical doctor cannot tally with ours, as he is wrong." So all avenues to a proof are closed; we must believe!

—All these people with infected sinuses suffer from hay fever. . . . Do you have hay fever?

—No.

—Are you sure you never had?

—Maybe. . . .

A man complains that after a long treatment he sees no improvement. But Dr. Abrams becomes angry and cries: "This is not the moment to take that up." And he dismisses the case.

A shaky old man.

—Sarcoma of the brain!

Why must I believe that? Where is the proof? Again in the reactions? But I doubt the reactions! So much the worse for me. Dr. Abrams' friends are happier; they need no proofs!

I meet an osteopath who is the fortunate owner of a few oscilloclasts and whose office is always thronged with patients—as are the offices of all Abramitic practioners. He has not discontinued osteopathy and he boasts even of prescribing some drugs, although he cannot explain why osteopathic treatment is needed in the face of the "marvelous" results of the Abrams therapy and how he could consistently adopt the latter when osteopathy itself, according to its followers, constitutes "a tremendous revolution in diagnosis and treatment." He speaks about a severe case of a nervous disease which physicians have "given up" (the lay phrase which no doctor has ever used) and whose tremor improved after a few hours of Abrams treatment. But at the same time he assures me that some cases will need a year of treatment! And I know that many victims have already had several months of daily treatment without the least result—for the patients. The ethics of any regular doctor who treated a case so frequently and for such long time would be questioned. . . .

When I asked him to allow me to see the oscilloclast, the acquaintance of which I had made elsewhere, he showed it to me reluctantly and from a distance—and for a fraction of a minute.

This fact that the oscilloclast is surrounded with so much mystery—its temporary possessor (it is not sold, but leased) is not allowed to take it apart!—is somewhat suspicious. It reminds us of the childbirth forceps which, a few centuries ago, were known to a few members of a family who, for mercenary reasons, kept them a secret and monopolized them for a long time—except that in the latter case the utility for the patients was evident.

I asked the healer what were the majority of his cases and he admitted what I knew and what was to be expected—that most of them were neurasthenics and imaginary invalids.

In several cases of another Abramite, the patients having complained that there was no improvement after the Abrams treatment, they were given all sorts of medicines. I have in my possession a prescription calling for "chologestin" in "gallstones," given after the gallstones had been several times . . . permanently "cured" through the Abrams' apparatus.

What is interesting is that in most cases the patient is not asked as to his detailed symptoms, his way of living, his occupation, etc. There is no need of that as the dumb machine is not supposed to explain what changes in

his mode of living the sufferer must make. And this leads me to another question: Even if we considered the new treatment as valuable, is it a causal treatment? It claims to cure syphilis, cancer, tuberculosis, etc., but, after all, these are only the results of wrong living—socially or individually. Can any rationally thinking person accept a method which “cures” disease, but which will have nothing to do with roots—eating bad food, too much of it and wrong food combinations, breathing bad air, being too much indoors, sitting or standing or walking too much, sleeping and resting insufficiently or having too little exercise, living an irrational sex life, overworking, inhaling dust and chemical poisons in factories, worrying?

From that point of view I may even say that, for the purpose of treatment, a perfectly correct diagnosis is not always needed, although I know that this will be considered a great heresy in the ranks of medical doctors. In many cases the right treatment and the proper instructions to the patient will be more or less the same, regardless of the diagnosis; besides, there is no such thing as a disease of an organ or a growth without some affection of the general body and it is not entirely established whether any disease is really a definite and circumscribed disease or a complicated condition known to us by some characteristic symptoms or manifestation—not to speak of functional disorders and conditions which leave no pathologic traces. That is another reason why a rationally thinking physician will not exult in enthusiasm for the new diagnostic method, the main claim of which is exactitude. I go so far as to resent any narrow classification of disease. The very attempt to distinguish them so perfectly seems to me to conceal something erroneous. But, be that as it may, I wish to emphasize here that, if one may have yet a doubt about the impossibility of diagnosing disease through the Abrams method, no one who has tested it will have the least doubt as to its value in the treatment of real disease, which is nil.

Let me also add that one of the main reasons why I oppose the Abrams theory is that it scares and discourages the people. While it is necessary to enlighten humanity and tell the truth about sickness and health, we are doing only harm by exaggeration. For generations we have frightened the world into submission to doctors and healers until very few have any trust left in their own vitality and resistance. We have created bacteriophobia, phthisiophobia, syphilophobia, etc. Almost everybody fears disease and can hardly live in peace. And now comes Abrams and makes us believe that we are all syphilitic and that many more than we know are tuberculous and harbor malignant growths. Such a theory is

worse than any poison, it is a mass-poison. It is wrong and will cause untold misery!

You may ask me: If the new treatment is unsuccessful, will not the patients soon find it out and those of the Abramites whose intentions are not pure will have to give up their work, while the honest Abrams follower will give it up through altruism and therefore is not your exposure unnecessary? Of course, patients will give it up and many have done so already. But all that any healer, operating with any scheme, wants is to have the patient in his hands as long as the latter is naive and credulous. Success or no success, the fee has been obtained and the dissatisfied client may go. Meanwhile other believers have come. There are enough fools to support the frauds for a lifetime.

For instance, among the numerous cases which I have examined before and after the Abrams treatment and where it had failed, I know a case of a chronic incurable heart disease with complications (my diagnosis). At the beginning the woman thought the oscilloclast had benefited her and she praised her doctor to all her acquaintances, so that hundreds of new patients came to him through her propaganda. But when she felt decidedly worse and stopped the treatment, her friends, being yet in the favorable phase, continued to enjoy the oscilloclast and to bring more patients.

The greatest advocates of Abramsism are my friends and I am extremely sorry to have to disagree with them and even to be forced to expose them. They know that I represent nobody but myself, that I am not a defender of this or that healing method or school of medicine, but of justice and fair play to the public. The truth is more important than friendship. As to the originator of the whole theory whom I met for a short while, I have no bad feeling for him. I only deplore that he has left the solid ground on which he stood in the past and that, in his theoretical and ethereal speculations, he has lost his balance.

And another healing prophet came to spread his hands over the people's heads and give them his blessing. This time from the East, from Europe. It was the famous Coué, probably a well-meaning but a misguided man who thought that most diseases may be cured by autosuggestion. The wealthy ladies discontinued their card games and drawing room chats long enough to organize harmfully successful meetings for this Frenchman.

William went to see his performances and these were his thoughts as he came out of the hall:

Life is full of suggestion and autosuggestion. All beliefs, superstitions, hopes, ambitions, illusions with or without a foundation in reality, are due to that. Religions, idolatry, gods, devils, witches are nothing but the results of suggestion. Day and night dreams are due to more or less conscious autosuggestion. Wars would be impossible without some half-hypnotic suggestive swindle. All healing schools and sects owe what success they have to self-suggested delusions. Most of our diseases are either entirely non-existent and imaginary and a product of imitation or they are greatly exaggerated through fear and autosuggestion. We are more inclined to suggest to ourselves that we are ill than that we are healthy. Our so-called friends are rarely kind enough to tell us and suggest to us that we look well; they usually find a great pleasure in torturing us with the news that we look "bad". Without suggestion and continual artificial encouragement and a willing

forgetfulness of eternal death, life itself would be unbearable, as we should always have in our mind the horrible truth of its final uselessness and emptiness.

Every peddler, canvasser, merchant, financier, diplomat uses suggestion. All advertising is suggestive and it makes us buy many things needlessly. You cannot sell a sewing machine, an insurance policy or real estate without it. The playwright, the novelist, the journalist, the composer, the painter, the sculptor is more or less successful insofar as he is more or less capable of employing it. Love-making contains much of it. The doctor of all times, beginning from the period of the primitive medicine-man and priest-physician up to today, has always mixed it with his magic, his soothsaying, incantations, dances, ceremonies, herbs, drugs, injections and surgical operations. The most ignorant wife often knows how to lie beneficially to her bedridden husband and to tell him that his condition is "not very bad" and that he "will soon get well."

Suggestion is a harmful or a helpful weapon, according to the service to which it is put.

Simply to imagine that we are well when we are not may have a good effect in an imbecile individual. Every half-intelligent person wants some palpable proof. While all real and organic troubles, if rationally treated, will improve more quickly in a patient radiant with optimism than in a downhearted, discouraged skeptic, autosuggestion alone will have but little effect in such cases. On the contrary, where necessary treatment is neglected in favor of autosuggestion, physical illness becomes worse. Even where the disease is wholly imaginary, it will rarely be entirely cured by suggestion or autosuggestion alone, in spite of the contentions of miracle-working swindlers. If there is an amelioration in such cases, it is mostly temporary. Stories in which the favorable results are claimed to be

permanent should not be believed until proved; seldom will they stand an unbiased investigation.

Right living,—conscious, knowing, willing, intentional, — is followed by the most fruitful auto-suggestion. When we live so as to conserve health and avoid disease and we are fully aware of it, we are healthy, first, because we make but few mistakes against our body, and secondly, because we feel that we ought to be healthy and have no fear of disease. We are also confident that if any common sickness, due to our own fault or to circumstances, should begin, it will not continue for a long time, as some simple, reasonable treatment will soon overcome it.

Coué's stubborn repetition of a stupid, meaningless formula, which supposes us to be brainless, thoughtless, or partly mechanical and partly half-witted beings, can have no real power over any true physical or mental ailment. If you are informed how to live in order to stay healthy and to heal disease, you do not need his idiotic, oft-ruminated sentence, as your suggestion is contained in your preventive or curative methods. If your way of living is conducive to disease, no amount of absurd words and pious desires will suggest health.

Coué's prayer-like sentence, which is an insult to any normal intelligence, is only lip-service and can never have the deep penetrating effect of the conviction one gets from knowing that one is committing the minimum of sins against one's body. Moreover, the endless repetition of "I am getting better and better" will strengthen in many the idea that they are certainly ill at the present moment—and so the formula will defeat its own purpose.

The little French druggist was bound to be worshipped in this country of advertisement, of money-making, of newspapers dealing in sensations and of publishers who throw on the market millions of cheap and worthless booklets sold at high prices. His advent was a revelation for the big, grown-up,

credulous, foolish children of America. His fakish promise of "getting better and better" as a cure-all was welcome by our economic pirates who are glad to have one more chance to put the common people to sleep.

The French pamphlet *La Maîtrise de Soi-Même par l'Autosuggestion Consciente* by Emile Coué and its English translation, *Self-Mastery Through Conscious Autosuggestion*, shows its author not only to be unable to write his own language correctly, but not to have any idea of any science, let alone psychology. The book contains many untruths, a few self-evident truths which, in the company of the former, lose their value, and a number of testimonials which we may ignore, as we know the worthlessness of such documents from long experience.

It is a well known fact that, the greater the ignorance, the more one thinks one knows. Therefore it is easy for Coué to "stop hemorrhage", to "cause fibrous tumors to disappear", to "cure tuberculous lesions, varicose ulcers", etc. But if anyone should rely on suggestion in a real bad case of hemorrhage, it will undoubtedly stop at the time when life had ceased and not before! And if we should use but suggestion against tuberculosis, our patient would soon be in his grave! How clearly he explains the "disappearance" of a growth through suggestion! "The unconscious having accepted the idea 'it is to go', the brain orders the arteries to contract and the tumor, deprived of nourishment, dries up, is absorbed and disappears." That sounds nice, but its only defect is that it is not true. The author would be very astonished if I asked him to prove it—not through testimonials of poor peasants who have no idea what a tumor is, but in a scientific way. Is there need of a proof? Is not his affirmation sufficient? And is his explanation not alluring? Why disturb it?



William had heard about church healers.

One of his colleagues who was traveling in Europe visited Lourdes and wrote him about it:

"Here, in the deepest South of France, under the shadow of the Pyrenees, there is Lourdes with its so-called miracles and mysteries. You have read Zola's book about it. Since its appearance other literature on the same subject has been published. Even scientists have taken this place seriously enough to discuss it. The mistake made by all, including the non-believers, is that they accept as a settled fact the claim that incurable patients are often healed here. Doctors are only concerned with its explanation. All they want to know is—how a cure is possible. But I doubt whether such healings occur or have occurred at all. If one should examine deeply into each of the cases that are quoted, it can be found that either there was a swindle, or there had been no disease or there had been no cure.

"I was curious to see Lourdes.

"A sensationally, romantically pretty mountain country, a rapid creek, an old village.

"Patients are brought from the entire country, from all Europe. Tuberculosis, cancer, bone-disease, deafness, dumbness, blindness, all sorts of paralyses. With crutches, on mattresses, in carriages, in autos, by train. Some are in a dying condition as they arrive. They hardly breathe, their lips are blue, parched; their eyes closed; their bodies—skeletons. The stench of their running,

pussy wounds rises up to the clear, blue sky. Idiotic faces and bright ones. Eyes changed and twisted through suffering.

"During the last three days, during this year's greatest pilgrimage, thousands of patients have been brought and about fifty thousand healthy people have come, pious pilgrims, curious travelers and those who accompany the sick. Entire religious organizations from various cities, congregations of many churches with their leading clergymen or monks and nuns, with holy flags, with insignia on their arms or bottonholes.

"The village consists of hotels mainly and almost all the rooms of the private houses have been rented. Even barns are occupied as sleeping places and dearly paid for by transients. No one thinks of comfort. Stores and stands are overflowing with sacred relics, imitations, statuettes, pictures, souvenirs, objects recalling the Virgin, Bernadette and Lourdes with its mountains and grottoes. Business both for the merchants and for the church fathers is flourishing.

"At four o'clock in the afternoon the ceremony begins. The main procession moves slowly between two dense rows of spectators toward the holy cave in the rock where seventy years ago Jesus' Mother is supposed to have appeared to the feeble-minded country girl Bernadette. All sing and pray. A number of representatives in different places lead the singing. From time to time they speak. They speak loudly and ardently and call upon the Virgin to show a miracle.

"Other processions have formed and they come from all sides, from the valley as well as from the paths on the wooded heights. Singing becomes still louder and takes on more fervor. The same words are steadily repeated—thousands of times—and their echo rings back from the mountains.

"Over the cave many crutches are hung, inside hundreds of candles—large and small—burn on a

background of darkness and as the processionists reach the place they bring more candles.

"They drink the holy water that springs from the cave and carry their ailing relatives, one after the other, resting on stretchers, into the pool formed by the water of the same spring.

"The crying, weeping, moaning, screaming, singing becomes louder and louder every minute. The thousands of people who stand on the stony steps of the long stairs, those who occupy the wide place in front of the church that is built above the cave and those on the roads and walks in the woods—all repeat the songs and prayers and add to the unimaginable din and noise.

"Now the patients, all on stretchers, are put down at another spot and the processions are directed toward it. The priests and bishops, dressed in white embroidered gowns, form together a special group and they sing in Latin. The archbishop walks slowly and majestically alone, in their midst, under a gilt canopy. They are the last of the procession. They pass close to each patient, stop and sing for him or her.

"But outside of all the rows and all alone in the middle of a wide, empty space, a Capuchin friar, dressed in his rough, brown frock, with a rope around his waist, walks in measured steps. He is tall and powerful and handsome and has a broad beard. His voice is sad, but exceedingly strong and agreeable. From a far distance he can be heard: 'Kindhearted Virgin, pray for us!' And tens of thousands of voices repeat his weeping call. 'Foreseeing Virgin!' or 'Immaculate Conception! Thou, from whose entrails our Man-God has come out!' or 'Blessed, saint Bernadette, pray the Virgin for us;' And again 'Saint Bernadette!' and the same thing over and over again. Also: 'Make thou that the lame shall walk, the blind shall see, the dumb shall speak, the deaf shall hear.' And further: 'We shall be submissive and obedient.'

"At any moment a miracle is expected. All look in all directions. Eyes are riveted on the sick upon the stretchers. In the next minute that cadaverous body will stand up and regain the color of healthy flesh. The halt will throw away his crutch and jump and dance and laugh and praise the Lord. There are seconds of intense and dramatic waiting between the appeals. But nothing happens. The patients are carried out from the cave as they had entered. There is no difference; they are the same after as before the drinking of the holy spring water. The sick are removed from the bath as ill as when they were brought in. With a broken heart their friends take them away unchanged after the procession and after the contact with the clergy.

"Kindhearted Mary has not heard the thousands of voices, the loud sobbing or the silent fervent weeping of other thousands. The ecstasy of the faithful has left her cold.

"Even if it is true that a hysterical person may once in a while be so influenced by this theatrical demonstration as to get suddenly rid of his imaginary ailment, is the whole noise worth while? And is not the fear of the fancied nearness of the divine being and the sorrowful disappointment over the failure of the fateful step, is not this harmful to the majority of the patients?

"But nothing has happened. Absolutely nothing. They will all have to return to their distant homes unhealed. And how many will suffer more as a result of the great effort? How many will die as a consequence of this supreme strain?"

And now a miraculous church healer had arrived in New York and William decided to see him.

The old Chapel, the black and smoky church in the center of the business section, buried in a canyon formed by tall, white, glistening skyscrapers, surrounded by thundering elevated trains and by rumbling subways, in the midst of a fast and noisy street traffic and crowds of ant-like men and women hurrying close together and filling the narrow streets, was seemingly asleep and deaf to the buzzing and crashing life. But in reality it was powerful and always awake. Although other temples, those containing banks and offices and stores, had overgrown it, although the people worshipped these places immensely more than they did the church, the latter was far from giving up. It was the hand of the past reaching out into the present and through thousands of invisible fingers clutching this modern machine, entering all these palaces through their marble doors and penetrating into those countinghouses, those halls full of merchandise and rooms full of desks and papers. It was death subduing and often completely smothering life and eternally taking possession of the brains of men and crushing them.

From time to time, when the old religious methods became too stale and had no effect, a revival would take place. Instead of the habitual nasal prayer and incomprehensible ceremonial, something new would be injected. A big noise would attract

everybody's attention to the church. This time it was a healer of diseases.

The church was actually beleaguered by an immense mass of health-seekers. Both lines, to the right and the left of the small side door, the only one that was open, had been disorganized and broken up and there was a desperate struggle and push toward the entrance. The pressure was so strong and the jam so compact that the multitude could not move and no one was able to get in. Not until the police arrived was a semblance of order established.

William was pressed into the line and, after long and patient waiting, he was able to pass the door. Meanwhile he watched and studied the people.

They were of all ages. Most of them walked and stood up alone and unaided. Some were accompanied and others supported or carried. A few had crutches. The blind ones and those who were entirely helpless had kept at a distance from the rushing mob and now they were led in first.

The faces were strained, the eyes solemn. Everybody spoke in whispers. But the bits of conversation that could be overheard were characteristic and enlightening. Many did not seem certain that they were ill and that they needed the healer, but they would not miss him "for anything in the world", as they said, because they were convinced that he could help them become healthier. Others were simply overcome by the splendid idea of coming close to a dispenser of miracles and they felt that this contact would elevate them. One woman near William forgot from time to time that she claimed to be unable to move her right arm, which was really paretic and not paralytic, and lifted it to her forehead to wipe off the sweat. A little boy with a crutch and an almost ankylotic knee spoke to his mother as an expert. He foresaw what was going to happen. Had he not "thrown away his crutch" three times during the

last two years, once at a meeting of Coué, the second time in the office of a Christian Scientist and the third time in an uptown church? There were half-idiotic individuals; some with grotesque faces and fearful tics and distortions. Side by side with a young person from whose mouth the saliva came out in a constant dribble, there was a tall, respectable, intelligent-looking, silent, middle-aged man and a short, diminutive, humpbacked and very old grandmother, who never stopped moving her lips, muttering and shedding tears. They were almost all very poorly dressed, but a neighbor showed William an elegantly attired lady, whose car was stationed a little further away, and who was carrying on her shoulder her besweatered poodle, whose health she wanted to correct or perfect.

This was a part of the population that one had but rarely an opportunity to see, as it was composed of folk who usually do not leave their houses and who, even at home, are hidden from the eyes of strangers or the uninitiated. It was a mixture of those who fill the institutions for incurables and the refuse of the regular hospitals. Many faces resembled those one meets with in insane asylums. Others seemed to have been taken from the darkest pages of Dickens's stories or to have come directly from Daumier's sketchbooks.

But all of them, collectively, like some immense, uncouth individual, were dominated by one great desire which was expressed in their gestures and in the general forward thrust and straining toward that dark, mysterious door under the symbolic Cross. The tension was so great that those of the sufferers who continued to be indifferent and were unaffected by the general atmosphere, but who were being led by their numerous friends and relatives, were entirely unnoticed and did not mar the general picture.

Inside, a modern, clean-shaven gentleman was

sitting and speaking a word or two or a few sentences to everyone who passed him. He said: "Lord Jesus Christ, make thou this body whole." Or: "You will get cured through the powers of God's love." Or: "Pray, my child! God has sent me here to help you." Or: "The Great Master said that the Kingdom is within yourself." Or: "The greatest thing in the world is love." Or: "Jesus is here today." Or: "If you want to be healed have faith in God. With faith you can move mountains." Or: "Keep on smiling. Your soul must be well if you are to be well in body and mind." He laid his hands on all who came near him.

But the order did not last long. The throng surged forward and became a fighting mass about the chancel steps. The divine doctor was invisible for a while. One could only guess where he was because from time to time he would lift a child thrown into his arms by a wild mother. The healer would murmur a prayer or something. And then in a loud voice: "I want you all to pray because miracles are happening. The Lord is in the building. He will not desert us if we do not desert Him. Oh, Lord Jesus Christ, touch this Thy child and heal him!"

All the afflicted men, women and children, without any exception, left silently and without the least improvement or change. Their eyes were glowing, because they thought that the help would not fail to come later. And they tarried near the door, hating to have to leave the holy house and go out into the cold, cruel godless world with their infirmity. The church employes and the policemen, however, who regulated the outflow, pushed them gently but firmly out and only when their faces were struck by the bright daylight and the fresh cool breeze could one read in their eyes the poignant pang of disappointment that gripped their hearts.

In one case the patient declared at the first



touch of the fingers of God's man that her pains had stopped suddenly and she walked away with a serene face. The reporters, who were present in large numbers, took her name and address at once. But a few steps further, she had an attack and the contortions of her features indicated a throe of internal physical anguish.

The boy with experience from other healing places, who had forgotten to lean on his crutch as soon as he had entered the church and who was looking intensely and with evident amusement at the crowd, approached the healer with his wooden support kept above his head. The reporters immediately surrounded him, while somebody took his crutch from him and leaned it on the altar. The child walked out smiling. He was limping just as much as before he came.

One newspaperman, seeing that the favorable and interesting cases were comparatively few, and far between, engaged some of the patients in conversation and, by all sorts of leading questions, tried to show them that they were benefited. In one instance he even carried to the altar a crutch that the owner was reluctant to give up, and helped the latter to drag his heavy feet to the door.

And so the blind were as blind, the deaf and dumb as deaf and dumb, the lame as lame and the pain-stricken as pain-stricken as before.

When William left the church he was thinking of the belief, prevalent even in his own profession, that some ailments were amenable to faith-cure. Was it true, he wondered? Or was it just a "logical" supposition that was unsupported by facts?

And when he opened his medical journal at home, and read an article on church healing, where the following sentence occurred: "As a rule, no actual physical harm results from the ministrations of the sincere faith-healer and in cases where he is dealing with imaginary ills it is even conceivable that he may do some good," William said to himself

aloud, "Conceivable? Conceivable? But is it so? Is it sure that no harm results? And why sincere? Is there sincerity?"

On the other hand—how was it, he mused, that all these Christians failed to see the insult to their divinity and the irreligious note contained in this so-called "faith-healing"? Did they believe their God to be such a cruel fiend or revengeful beast as to heal only those who had faith in him and prayed abjectly? Would he do nothing for those who paid no attention to him? And how could his all-powerful mind or will or decision be moved by the intervention of an insignificant human being? If it could, why should it? And why must these things be done in a church and through the intervention of a "holy" man? And why, oh why, does he maim and cripple and spread disease? Why does he not prevent pain and sickness?

For the first time in his life, William saw clearly that prayer was blasphemous. But suddenly his mind jumped to another thought. Was there, could there exist a being with all the impossible qualities and horrible traits that are attributed to him?

William had a talk with a medical doctor who was a churchman at the same time and who had just returned from his mission in China. The missionary described the marvels of the Orient and the great things done by Americans for the poor heathen Asiatics. But William was in a skeptical and contradictory mood. Ever since his experience with spiritual healing, he had been thinking and reading about the effect of religious faith on the people's physical and mental welfare. The conclusions to which he had arrived were not flattering for religion. The clergyman was surprised to see how little enthusiasm he had aroused and he wanted to hear William's opinion. After some hesitancy, the latter said:

"I am not convinced that the Chinese need your help or that they are grateful to you. And I

cannot see the connection between religion and medicine. From your standpoint doctors should be useless, God being the great healer. The Church should even fight them, as their very existence, the idea that physicians are needed, is a negation of God's power, goodness and grace. Do you seriously believe that the Omnipotent and Omniscient needs an unimportant being like you or me, a speck of dust, to convert the heathen? If he wants to convert them, he could do it in no time! I, the unbeliever, am certainly a better Christian than you when I say that if God made the Chinamen what they are, it is not our business to interfere. Moreover it is very probable that your ungodly or inhuman activity in Asia is the seed of very un-Christian future wars. Besides, from another point of view, I feel that the Church, through her alliance with the governing classes everywhere, as well as through implanting in all of us a contempt for the body and exalting the spirit, is responsible for a great deal of illness. The Church goes to China to cure disease and takes her Savior with her wrapped in a medical prescription, but in our own Christian lands she has made us all ill . . . And why is your God better than that of the Chinese?"

Christian science, more Christian—or perhaps more pagan—than scientific, was based on the idea of autosuggestion. It really recognized no science, none of the results of scientific research whatever and none of the rational thoughts on healing or preventing. It was logically blind to everything that was not its own limited theory. Illness—that is evidence—was denied. Salvation and cure was cruelly limited to a minority of mankind, the believers in Jesus, and only to those who trusted him sufficiently to use prayer only as a treatment. He, of course, was not generous and unselfish enough to accord health and healing broadcast, without any effort on the part of the unenlightened, benighted, unconverted or stubborn disbelievers. Spe-

cial churches became necessary and elegant palace-like constructions built by the idle and playful rich housed this neo-Christian ignorance-science, its leaders and followers. Its effect was to direct the people to put more faith into something imaginary than in themselves and so it resulted in less health. Leaving out the few so-called successes consisting of those exceptional cases that could have been healed anywhere and without eddyitic intervention. Christian ignorance did immense harm as a whole. There were also the apparent cures in the cases of errors in diagnosis, in those where there had been no real illness from the start, in those where a cure was prematurely announced, only to be balked later by the facts, but never publicly retracted and, finally, the multitude of lies and exaggerations.

Some Jewish rabbis, envying the coin that began to be poured into Christian treasuries by women of the Jewish characterless middle-class which loved to honor and imitate all that was gentile, and fearing the proselytic power of this Christian fad, invented a Hebrew Science. This was a poor, ridiculous, senseless, inefficient copy, nay, a shameless counterfeit, not at all in keeping with the spirit of the Jewish religion.

William learned about a debate that his friend, the East Side health teacher, was going to have with a noted chiropractor, this time again in English and not on the East Side.

Of course, William attended the meeting and here is what happened: The chairman was a well-known popularizer and educator, the author of an extremely famous book called "The Story of Philosophy." He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I know nothing about chiropractic and perhaps I should have been compelled therefore to pay my way in. I am very anxious myself to learn just what it means, just what are the limitations of the theory, just what are its methods and its claims, and surely the gentlemen who organized this meeting could not possibly have secured persons on either side of the question more representative than these two men. I think you don't want me to spend any more of your time flourishing my ignorance of the subject. I want to introduce to you, briefly, a man whom we will all recognize as at the head of his profession, not only in New York City, but in America, the man who, perhaps more than any other chiropractor, has contributed to establish the chiropractic literature; a man who has organized two leading chiropractic schools. So that we may rest assured that we shall get the side of chiropractic adequately represented to us by the speaker whom I am introducing first.

First Speaker:

Mr. Chairman, fellow students and citizens, ladies and gentlemen—I congratulate you upon being here tonight to witness and mark an epoch in history. This is the first time, in the history of the world, that a chiropractor has been called into debate with a member of the medical profession. As time goes on apace, we are constantly doing things that we had never done before. I presume that no period in the world's history is so full of remarkable, unusual and first-time deeds as has been the world in the last few years. You must remember that lately we have gone up into the air considerably more than five miles; and during the same time, I am informed, we have gone down into the earth something over 2,000 feet. That the greatest events of the world's history have been accomplished in that period goes without saying, and tonight you are here to witness an elevation that very much exceeds a mile to the chiropractic profession.

I cannot make you a speech; I would be very glad indeed if I could do so, but I am here under the dire necessity of a debate, which confines the whole matter and makes it a matter of academic statement.

You all have seen the subject. It is: "Can chiropractic remove the cause of disease?" You will understand that paramountly the whole proposition resolves itself into a definition, for we must understand each other, and I am going to define all these matters. First by the books, which my opponent cannot deny are his books, not mine. I am going to use for the purpose of definition the books of therapy. You must remember that chiropractic is not a therapeutic science. Eleven supreme courts in the United States of America have held that chiropractic has nothing in common with medicine, that it is not a department of medicine, and is entirely separate and distinct in all its tenets and in every regard. Therefore, if in the beginning I es-

establish fundamentally by the books which are older than chiropractic is, what we are talking about, my opponent will not be heard to deny the truth of what I suggest afterwards. I will, if permitted to do so, connect up the various phases of these matters as we go along.

"Can chiropractic remove the cause of disease?" "Can", you will understand, as defined in Webster's Dictionary, means, "to have the power or ability." "Chiropractic" is defined in Stedman's Medical Dictionary as follows: "Chiropractic is the science that teaches health in anatomic relation and disease, or abnormality, in anatomic disrelation, and teaches the art of restoring anatomic relation by a process of adjusting by hand." My opponent will hardly be heard to say that a definition found in a standard work on medicine is not correct. Incident to this definition there are several others that I desire to take up a little later. Now this, "Can Chiropractic remove?" This is a little tedious getting started, but we have to be a little tedious because the truth is always a little tedious. "Remove: put from its place, take away, withdraw." Then we would have to put from its place disease. That is to say, as far as we have gone, chiropractic would have to put from its place disease. Now, "Can chiropractic remove the cause?" and let us consider what these distinguished gentlemen say the cause is. I quote from Dorlan: "Cause, that which brings about any condition or produces any effect." Stedman says that cause means, "that which brings about or puts in operation anything." Now then, that brings us to the question of disease, and when I am through with that, I am through with the tiresome part of this proposition. Dorlan says: "Disease: any departure from a state of health, any illness more frequently pertaining to the kind of disturbance to which any particular case of sickness may be assigned. Any departure from health." Sted-

man says: "Disease, morbus, illness, sickness, an interruption or perversion of function of any of the organs; a morbid change in any of the tissues or an abnormal state of the body as a whole, continuing for a longer or a shorter period of time."

Now again, for it may be charged that I am posing here only my definition of chiropractic and therefore that I am in error about that and for the sake of your understanding I will call your attention to the fact that chiropractic is but twenty-seven years old the fifteenth day of last September. Just a little more than old enough to vote. If it were a female, it is just getting into the age of old maidenhood and if a man, hardly a bachelor yet. A child, if you please, produced from the brain of a man twenty-seven years ago, at which time there was but one chiropractor and one patient, whereas tonight there are eighteen thousand chiropractors in the United States alone, in practice. There are tonight more than two million and a half of patients of chiropractors in the United States. There are tonight in the United States more than twenty million friends and boosters of chiropractic. There are tonight twenty-five states in this Union which have the power to issue licenses to practice chiropractic and eleven states, in their courts of last resort, have declared that chiropractic has nothing in common with medicine and that chiropractors may practice their profession regardless of the General Medical Practice Acts. I merely call your attention to these things for the purpose of having you see that, while chiropractic is an infant in age, it is a giant in power, in comprehension, in the magnitude of that which it has accomplished.

Now, I wish to call your attention to a few definitions written by D. D. Palmer, who was the discoverer, it is said, of chiropractic. He, at least, was the founder of chiropractic. Away back yonder in 1910 he published a book which was copyrighted in 1911, and in that book he says some very remark-



able things. I call your attention to one of the books. There are very few people today who have one of them. There were only one thousand printed, so you see there were not near enough to go around in the chiropractic profession. D. D. Plamer says: "Chiropractic is the name of a systematic knowledge of the science of life, biology and a methodical comprehension and application of adjusting anatomic displacements, the cause of biological abnormalities. Also an explanation of the methods used to relieve humanity of suffering, thereby making this stage of existence much more efficient in its preparation for the next step, the life beyond." Again, further on: "Chiropractic is not a system of healing." The human family is prone to constantly revert to the proposition of healing. The word "healing" is a joke. There never was any such thing as healing. People either get sick or get well. They cannot be healed. From within out, then, the individual gets well—if he gets well. The individual who assists him is not a healer; he is but a help to the processes which must occur in order that the individual may get well.

"Chiropractors do not treat disease. They do not manipulate the spinal column. Chiropractors adjust any and all of the three hundred joints of the body, more particularly those of the spinal column." And further on in the same book by D. D. Plamer, chiropractic is defined as being "the science of adjusting by hand any and all subluxations of the three hundred joints of the body, more especially those of the fifty-two articulations of the vertebral column, for the purpose of freeing any or all impinged nerves which are the cause of disease."

These are a sufficient number of definitions, so that I may branch into the subject, entirely free from the necessity of talking to you any more about general definitions. The cause of disease, you will notice, was not disclosed in the definition

that I read you from Dorlan and Stedman as to what disease is. You have a right, honest, upright ladies and gentlemen and laymen, citizens of this great commonwealth, you have a right, when you pick up a medical dictionary under the definition of disease, to find stated there, definitely and exactly, the cause thereof. You will not find it in any medical dictionary that is in print today. You will not find a definition of disease anywhere given in any lexicon, any textbook, medical textbook, therapeutic textbook, that gives the cause of disease. The therapeutic world has never known the cause of disease and has never promulgated the cause of disease to the people. When the medical world gets a start, they have no trouble in dissertating most knowingly upon the subject of disease. For instance, if you have pneumonia, they will tell you that the cause of your pneumonia was a bad cold; but they cannot tell you what caused your cold, except they will say that it was exposure. When you ask them what they mean by exposure they are as silent as the Sphinx that gazes across the desert of Sahara. They are in the situation there that the individual was, who was in the hospital and died, to all intents and purposes. He was very carefully examined by all the medical attendants and they said that he was dead. The professors were called in and they examined him and they said he was dead and they started with him for the morgue department of the hospital. That's the most important department of all hospitals. On the way he came to. There was a big Irishman carrying his head—that is, the head end of him—and he rose up and he said: "Stop, stop, hold on, where are you going?" "Why," the Irishman says, "we are taking you to the morgue." "Why," he said, "don't; I'm not dead." "Hush up," the Irishman said, "hush up, lay down, lay down, lay down. Do you think you know more about it than the doctors and professors?" So they took him to the morgue. When you ask the doctors

and the professors for the cause of disease, immediately they begin to talk either in Latin or Greek. (they won't trust the Hebrew—somebody might know) or some other language which the people of the particular vicinity in which they are talking cannot talk or understand.

You know, I studied medicine once; you wouldn't guess it from my remarks, but I did. I also studied theology. Now don't you dare tell me that you know by my remarks that I had studied theology, although if you were about me a good deal you would find that I use some of the same terms. You know the reason I quit studying medicine? I had studied for a year. I studied medicine to see if I could find out what the cause of disease is. I was sick; I had been sick from birth and was sick until I was twenty-nine years old, suffering the agonies of the damned every day. Spent two or three fortunes with my friends, the M. D.'s, trying to find out what was the matter with me, what was the cause of my disease. They were splendid friends to me. They met me kindly; they entertained me; they charged me outlandishly; they receipted my bills when I paid them and invited me to come again. Just as they did to the Irishman. The Irishman came to see the doctor and he says: "Doctor, I'm very sick." The doctor looked at him and felt his pulse, squinted into his eyes and listened to his heart, while the Irishman put his watch on the other side. After he had finished up, I wrote a prescription, handed it to the Irishman and charged him \$2.50 and said to the Irishman, "You go home and get this prescription filled and take according to directions and if it don't cure you come back and I will write you a prescription that will." The Irishman said, "Write that prescription now." Well, that's the way they talked to me. First they said I had dyspepsia, then I had nervous prostration, then I had general acidosis, then I had tuberculosis, and finally when I got into the secor

phase of tuberculosis, they sat down with me kindly, eight of them, eight as fine looking, intelligent gentlemen as I have ever seen, and they said, "We have most carefully examined your case, young man"—I was then around twenty-nine years old, a young aspiring lawyer with a young and handsome family—took after their father—I didn't want to die; I hadn't gone through prohibition and everything like that. I had a lot of other things that I had never done yet—I wanted to live, and these eight gentlemen sat around kindly and sympathetically and said, "Young man, you will not live in the Mississippi Valley one year and you will not live anywhere five years." That was when I was twenty-nine. I am a little past fifty-six now and I am still living. That was away back yonder. I had a few touches of chiropractic and have done two men's work every day since and enjoyed it. This hair slipped off the top of my head a good many years ago when I had typhoid fever and a medical doctor doctored me. He got my hair and my money but I kept my brains.

The therapeutic world talks about disease much like you would talk about a robber that had got into your house and robbed you. When you got up in the mornng, you found your jewels were gone, your money had gone, all that you held dear in the world, in the way of property, had gone out of your house, but the windows were closed and locked on the inside. All the doors were closed and locked on the inside. There was not the slightest evidence that any one had had ingress into the house. Now, you would call your neighbors together in such a case and you would say, "These things have been taken and therefore it is absolutely incontrovertible that the thief has been here, but just how he got in I do not know"—and that's the way they talk about disease.

I was a delegate from Oklahoma to an International Congress on Tuberculosis. The first

chiropractor that received any recognition in the world. The Governor appointed me to represent the State of Oklahoma, along with a lot of medical doctors and others. When they found I was appointed, not a single one of them came, so I had to bear the responsibility for the whole state of Oklahoma on my shoulders. It wasn't much trouble; the state wasn't very large at that time. I listened to what all those wise guys said. There were wise guys from China, Japan and England and from Germany and all of the European states, from Italy, etc. Every nation of any importance in the world had a delegate there. Every one of them said this about pulmonary tuberculosis: "Of course, there must be a recipient condition in the lungs, in the tissue of the lungs, or there could be no such thing as tuberculosis," but not a single man or woman at that entire convention stated one syllable in explanation of what that recipient condition was.

When the therapeutic profession is talking about disease, you will find that not a single one of them ever attempts to explain what is the cause of disease, how disease comes about, what it is that causes this departure, this original incipient departure from health. "Oh, yes," they say, "we have certain congenital adversity; we have certain hereditary adversity, we have certain chemical adversities." In other words, "we have all of these different phases of receptivity to disease," but not a single solitary syllable will you find telling what that receptivity is, what composes it, what it consists of.

If there was some way that I could get the people of this world to understand that up to the discovery of chiropractic there was absolutely no knowledge of the cause of disease at all, there would be some hope of having the human family, as a generality, understand something of what disease is, and there would be some definite opportunity to secure the evolution of the human family as re

specting these things. But here has been the situation in times past. You must remember that in the first place it was the duty of the priesthood to take care of the people; the priests were the doctors. When I say priests I use that word in its most comprehensive sense. I mean those men who peculiarly looked after the so-called spiritual or moral welfare of the people, regardless of what the religion was that they held to. Those were the doctors. Well, after a while their duties became too onerous and burdensome for them to care about waiting upon the people and then they parcelled out the work to certain underlings whom they brought in and instructed to do their bidding, to go out and represent them in restoring the people so far as their bodies were concerned. It was in this way that the physician got his start, and the remarkable part of that whole proposition is, my friends, that today, in this enlightened age, when we claim that we are the great civilized and Christian nation of the world, today, in our very country, you will observe that, regardless of what is said, there is and there continues to be the closest connection between the physician and the priesthood. It has always maintained and it will continue to maintain until the human family have learned and become reconciled to the fact that the therapeutic world has never known and does not know the cause of disease, and therefore, not knowing the cause of disease, they have not been able, and in the twenty-four hundred years of medicine, have completely demonstrated their inability, to address themselves successfully to any phase of disease.

Here is a remarkable thing that I want you to get into your minds. In all the two thousand four hundred years of medicine, there has not been a single specific medicine produced. Now let me see what is a specific medicine? I want to be perfectly fair and frank with you. A specific medicine is a medi-

cine that can be given to you for a given condition which will bring about in you a specific and definite result. In other words, a medicine that may be given to humanity generally and will produce the same result in each human being to whom it is given. No such medicine has ever been found and until such a medicine has been found, how can an individual say that he has the right to represent to the human family that he is competent to attend to their needs in the hour of their trouble.

You know it to be a fact that if you went to ten physicians in New York City tomorrow and they did not know who you were, that you would come away from the ten with ten separate and distinct diagnoses, no two of which could be reconciled or made harmonious. It is a dreadful situation. It is the most remarkable thing in the history of the world. It is a condition that should have gone and should remain hand in hand with the sickle with which humanity cut their grain for more than two thousand years without a change. It is not a condition, if you please, that has a fit relationship to aeroplanes, dictographs, telephones, wireless telegraphs, radio and all of the magnificent advancements that have been made in our present civilization. In other words, the medical profession is standing back in ignorance and superstition and is still saying to the human family the same old dogmatic stuff that they did more than one hundred years ago, sticking to the same exact tenets, and have not changed.

Now, my friends, in closing this opening address let me call your attention again to the definition of chiropractic. Chiropractic is that science which teaches health in anatomic relation and disease in anatomic disrelation and teaches the system of securing anatomic relation, by a process of adjusting or relating by hand.

Let me call your attention, my friends, to the fact that disease exists in a change of anatomic re

relationship and in that alone. If you have a fractured femur you have disease. If you have a mashed thumb nail, you have disease. If you have skin knocked off somewhere, you have disease. If your joints are pulled apart, you have disease. If they are slightly pulled apart, you have disease. If a poison has been injected into you, has been taken in with water, has been taken in in respiration, and has precipitated in your body, causing a disrelationship of your molecular constituents, your anatomic relation, you have disease and you will continue to have disease until those things have been adjusted or until the original relationship has been substantially restored within the area of distortion.

#### Chairman

I think our friend has left the medical profession in a precarious condition that may require a doctor, an M. D., a D. C., or perhaps even a D. D., I cannot tell, but if there is any man that can restore the medical profession to some sort of respectability and good health, we have him here tonight. I think we are all fortunate in that the man who is going to defend the medical profession is one who has often attacked it, a man who has shown himself by no means a prejudiced lover of his own profession, who has spared himself no dangers, who has undergone all manner of abuse and suffered, I have no doubt, very many material losses in order to force upon his profession some sense of the fact that our knowledge of the human body is growing and that our knowledge is perhaps growing beyond the ordinary grooves in which medical knowledge has usually run. Our next speaker has been editing for many years one of our interesting health magazines. He has in that magazine exposed many of the abuses of the medical profession. If he defends the medical profession tonight, we may be sure that it is without prejudice and we may be sure that he has an open mind on the subject.



**Second Speaker:**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Opponent, Friends—I am tonight in a double predicament. I have as an opponent an able speaker, which I am not. I am also in an atmosphere of people who are perhaps, with very few exceptions, frankly chiropractic. This means that we are having a fight, and although I am not an Irishman, I don't dislike a fight.

I am sorry that my opponent's friends have not informed him about my opinions, because if they had he would have known that most of what he said does not apply to me. He thought that he attacked the medical profession in my person, which he did not, for the simple reason that I do not represent it. I am not representing the profession; I have not been sent by them. If I were a real M. D. in the sense that I would be perfectly loyal, I would not be here; I would not be here, because our profession has not outgrown that primitive tendency to be intolerant to everything new and they certainly would not discuss, would not deign to discuss in public with a chiropractor, any chiropractor. So I represent nobody except myself, which if you wish, may be the same as nobody. Therefore, I do not think that the greatest part of what my opponent has said has been addressed to me and if I wanted to answer what he said, I could not fill up the forty minutes. Again, therefore, I shall have not only to answer but to add something, especially, that my opponent has forgotten to answer just one question—oh, the least important of all—the very question under discussion: whether chiropractic can cure the cause of disease. So, it seems to me, that I will have to put the proposition before you and answer it too! I will oblige him by rendering this service to him, by doing something which he should have done himself.

By the way, while speaking about the intolerance of the medical profession, I must say that the chiro-

practicers are not less intolerant. You have witnessed here a sample tonight.

I will begin by answering the very few things which really should be answered. I had brought much paper and about half a dozen pencils, thinking that I might have to take many notes and be very busy. But I am disappointed. There were but few things of any importance that had to be taken down. Of course, I do not mean the jokes. I am not going to make any; my answer shall be very dry. I must say that I expected more from such an able speaker and an ex-lawyer.

Our friend, as well as all the other chiropractors, says that chiropractic is not therapy, and they say that because they do not know what therapy means. They do not know that therapy means treatment in the widest sense of that word and if anyone treats anybody, it is the chiropractor. We, medical doctors, even the conservative ones, often allow ourselves not to treat a patient, that is, we allow ourselves to teach a patient how to treat himself and instruct him what to do himself. I am doing that all the time. Sometimes we really do nothing, and perhaps that is best. But the chiropractor always treats. He always does something. Chiropractic means that something is done by hand. We physicians are not obliged to do anything by hand or otherwise. If we do not want to, we do not have to prescribe any drugs. For instance, here I am practising in this city for eighteen years and for the last twelve or thirteen years I have not prescribed an internal drug to any patient in a large practice. Nobody compelled me to do it. No physician is ever compelled to prescribe any drug if he doesn't care to do so.

My opponent has given you the definition of chiropractic as worded by old Palmer, the founder of chiropractic, and also the definition of chiropractic as given in a medical dictionary. He fails to state that the dictionary, wishing to be fair, is giv-

ing besides its own definition, that by a chiropractor and that this additional sentence is really a quotation from a pamphlet written by no other than my opponent. But let us pardon him this small fraud. Here I have the definition of chiropractic by B. J. Palmer, the famous teacher and successor to the founder. In one of his books he says, and you will see the difference: "Chiropractic is a name given to the study and application of a universal philosophy of biology, theology, theosophy, health, disease, death, the science of cause of disease and art of permitting the restoration of the triune relationships between all attributes necessary to normal composite forms, to harmonious quantities and qualities by placing in juxtaposition the abnormal concrete positions of definite mechanical portions with each other, by hand, thus correcting all subluxations of the 300 articulations of the human skeletal frame, more especially those of the spinal column, for the purpose of permitting the re-creation of all normal cyclic currents through nerves that were formerly not permitted to be transmitted, through impingement, but have now assumed their normal size and capacity for conduction as they emanate through intervertebral foramina—the expressions of which were formerly excessive or partially lacking—named incoordinations." I do not know whether you understand it, but I must say that I do not. A long sentence which shows the ignoramus who cannot write his own language correctly and clearly and who has no idea of punctuation. And, mind you, he is a born citizen of this country. I might be excused for not knowing English perfectly, as I am an American citizen by choice only. But such are your chiropractors. And, by the way, my opponent's English, although tolerable, is far from correct.

If chiropractic has to do with theology and theosophy, it was very well for my opponent to study theology before he began chiropractic. I

have never studied theology of any kind and therefore I may not understand chiropractic. You see, this is not a joke. It proves that men who have no preliminary education compose their profession. "B. J." is the son of the father of the profession. He is the leader, the leader of a great school. Thousands of chiropractors come out of his school. He gives you a definition that means really nothing, because if chiropractic has to do with theosophy and with all those other things, then it is not a system for healing disease and it is very probable that the man does not know what theosophy is, because all theosophists would protest if they saw that he has embodied their creed into his definition.

Chiropractic is popular; it is a giant. There are 18,000 chiropractors today, affirms my opponent. I do not doubt that. There will be more, but is that the proof that they can cure the cause of disease? That may be satisfactory to you. For me it is not, because I want real proofs. I am from Missouri, although I have been there only a few days. What does it prove, that something has had success and has become popular? If that is a proof, then medical science has much more success. There are 150,000 doctors in this country; medical doctors. That isn't a proof that the medical profession is right. Who knows who is successful? The fact that the people come to you doesn't mean at all that you are successful in curing disease. They have been flocking to all sorts of things. Christians ought to say that Mohammedanism is successful. There are hundreds of millions of Mohammedans; it is a great success; they probably possess the truth. All Christians ought to become followers of Mohammed.

My opponent fails to find in any medical dictionary a definition of the cause of disease. Of course he will not find it. Of course you will not find it, and the simple reason is this: that physicians, med-

ical doctors, medical scientists say, and say so loudly, that they are groping in the dark; that they know enough to affirm that they do not know. We make mistakes and only people who know nothing think that they are infallible. That is rather in favor of the medical profession. I am sorry to have to praise them, but the fact that they claim that they don't know is something really good—and especially the fact that they never affirm that there is one cause for all diseases, as chiropractors contend, more or less.

Then there is that standing joke that medical doctors talk Latin. Well, it is easy to show that medical doctors do not know Latin and can't talk Latin; all medical books and journals are printed in English. Anybody can read them. You can go up any day—any one of you, without being a physician—to the medical library of the Academy of Medicine on Forty-third Street and read everything medical in plain English. Of course, there will be some technical terms, which are English too. And if you know French you will find some French medical books. You will find there very little Latin indeed, because very few would understand it. So let's do away with those myths. It is easy to make jokes; it is easy to ridicule anything.

Medical doctors do not know how disease gets into the body. Well, they don't. Of course, they don't. If they did there would be an end to all research. We would know all about it and would need no laboratories and so on. You know it. With you, science is finished. You began twenty-seven years ago and you know everything about disease! We started—the medical profession—thousands of years ago and we never know anything and I do not believe that there will be a time when we will know something, and I mean it in the most serious sense.

There isn't such a thing as knowing. A real scientist never knows, and that is again something

to be cited in favor of the medical profession. I personally will never affirm that I know anything, because I know that I do not know. I have learned enough, I have failed enough, to know that it is difficult to know. And I am really not only a physician, but a chiropractor. I have studied chiropractic, and I found that it was wanting, and that is why I stand here tonight. Of course you will not believe me; you will continue in your errors, you chiropractors and their followers, but it doesn't matter.

I also wish to tell you that, if we suppose that medical science is a failure—even if that were true—that fact would not prove that chiropractic is a success—I mean it in the moral sense. I have studied it; I have practiced it; but I am not a chiropractor in the usual sense and I will never be. I have investigated it and that is the reason why. And now, as I said, I have to go on in order to fill up my time, because I have answered all that was worth while.

As to my opponent's romantic story of his illness and cure, it should be taken with a grain of salt. It looks like one of those hard-luck stories of a would-be sinner, of some Salvation Army convert.

I will go on and state the case. Somebody wrote me a letter in the last few days. I receive all sorts of letters from all sorts of sources, some unsigned and some signed. A physician wrote me a letter in which he warned me of the tricks of debate. Now, I hope that there will be no tricks of debate and that those who believe that we are here to listen to tricks and not to ideas will be disappointed. I must tell you also that I have debated several times with medical doctors. A few years ago I debated with a prominent medical doctor about the necessity of drugs. I think that what I said then about drugs would satisfy my opponent. I say that just to acquaint him with the fact that I am not a blind medical doctor.

I protest and have always protested against my

profession for not investigating everything new in the field of healing. The profession as such ignores you and ignores everything that doesn't come up from its own ranks. Sometimes they ignore even that which comes out from their own ranks. It is bad, but there is something good in that too. Conservatism isn't entirely bad, because, if we accept easily without much pondering and analyzing what anybody says, we may fall into error. It is better to resist; it is better to resist and at the same time examine, investigate, find out and learn, and learn from anybody, learn from a baby, learn from any healer, no matter how primitive he is and find out where the truth lies. Well, our profession carries this too far, it is too conservative and they will suffer on account of that. They will wake up some day to find that there is no room for a medical doctor in this country.

One of the good things that chiropractic—or rather its forerunner, osteopathy—has brought to light is the idea that there are mechanical causes of disease. That—in a broader sense. It is true that there are mechanical causes of disease which we, as a profession, have neglected. We do not pay much attention to this, but we will in the course of time; we will have to, and some of us, the minority, have learned that already. However, to speak about one cause alone, as the cause of disease, is presumptuous. For instance, to say that autosuggestion is the only remedy and at the same time the only cause of disease, is foolish; that germs cause all diseases is unscientific. To say that only wrong food or wrong combinations of food cause all diseases, as some believe, would be certainly untrue. Such errors are a result of human weakness. As soon as we think that we know something, we build up one all-embracing theory; we generalize, we want that really to embrace everything, and there lies the mistake. Generalization is usually connected with ignorance. It is the ignorant person who general-

izes; it is the ignorant person who finds this or that quality or defect in an individual and says the whole nation has it.

I have my own way of judging disease and health; I judge it from the standpoint of health conservation and not from the standpoint of treatment and that is why I publish my little magazine. I publish it with the view of teaching the people not to come to medical doctors, or to chiropractors for healing or treatment, but to treat themselves. I want them rather to prevent disease wherever it is possible, to treat themselves before they are ill,—to conserve their health.

Chiropractic is not only popular, but also successful, in the sense that there are many patients flocking to the chiropractors. For some this is a proof that they can cure the cause of disease. But is it? For others, the fact that chiropractic has developed a special technique is a proof that it possesses the correct idea. Pharmacology also has a technique for preparing drugs, and astrology also has a technique. Should we be astrologers?

If you ask me, "Can regular medical science remove the cause of disease?" I will reply "No!" or if you ask "Can Naturopathy remove the cause of disease?" I will say "No!" Only somebody who doesn't really understand the question—what it means to remove the cause of disease—can come here and affirm before you and perhaps before the world that chiropractic or any system or cult of healing can remove the cause of disease. No healing system can remove the cause of disease. The cause of disease is something that is too difficult for any profession to remove. It is something complicated. *We* cannot remove the causes of disease, but the chiropractors cannot even see them. There isn't one cause of disease; there are a million. There are larger causes; there are smaller causes; there are numberless causes. And that is why I say that, if a man or a profession does nothing else that is



wrong but to affirm that he or they can remove the cause of disease, they are judged. It means to me that they don't know what they are talking about; they don't know what disease is and what the term "cause of disease" means, in spite of those book definitions quoted by my opponent, which were entirely useless and ridiculous. It is characteristic of the beginner and of anybody who knows little, to be very sure, infallible, to know it all. A little child of five thinks he can fly to the moon; he is absolutely convinced of it because he is a baby, because he hasn't had any experience. At the age of ten you will hear him affirm, "I can't do it." At that age it is perhaps the first time that he will confess that there is something he is unable to do. The chiropractor is that baby who is yet in the stage in which he says, "I can do everything." Well, I am at the age of the very old man who says, "I can do nothing or very little."

No, I wouldn't say that the chiropractor cannot at all remove the cause of disease, but how would I understand it? Suppose you walk in the street and some dust falls into your eye. The consequence is irritation, inflammation; the eye is inflamed, red, painful. Now, if you will step into any intelligent physician's office and ask him, "What is the matter with my eye?", if he sees the foreign body in your eye, he will say at once: "The cause? Why, the cause of that trouble is the foreign body. Let's remove it." We can do that. Now, does it mean that, because we are able to remove that foreign body from the eye and so cure the inflammation which was produced by that cause, therefore removing foreign bodies from the eye will cure all diseases in our body? It is the same with chiropractic. Here and there it can replace a displaced vertebra and remove a pain. That could be done in a few minutes in one adjustment. I often do that. But the important diseases have nothing to do with nerve impingement in the spine. And be-

cause chiropractic can remove some minor causes of disease, that is not a reason why we should say that it can remove the cause of disease at large.

If chiropractic alone removes the cause of disease, then the head of the Davenport school is right not to be what they call a "mixer". He is right to say: "Accept, adopt no other treatment; adjust, adjust the spine; there is nothing else." And in this respect I know my opponent is not in agreement with Dr. Palmer, but they are both chiropractors. I am not debating with this man alone but with chiropractic and there is no doubt that many more pupils are being thrust upon this country and upon suffering humanity from the Davenport school than from any other chiropractic institution.

If there is one, only one important cause of disease, why use water? Why use fresh air and sunshine? Why advise the proper diet? Why recommend fasting? There is no need for that. You can cure disease by one method and Palmer in his simplicity is right. And how about abscesses and tumors?

But the chiropractor as he goes along and finds out that his principles are wrong (I have known a number of chiropractors who have given up their profession; they were honest men and they did not believe in it any longer; there is one here in this hall at present) will add to his armamentarium; he will steal some methods from other healing schools, some even from the hated medical profession—even drugs. Yes, there are chiropractors who prescribe drugs! I have seen that and those who know will not deny it. It may be said that they are not loyal and faithful to their profession or science; all right, but they do it.

It is a good thing for chiropractic that it is not recognized legally—at least in this State. To be recognized for them would be the greatest misfortune. It would mean: goodbye exceptional conditions! Who will come to chiropractic? It will be

difficult to learn; it will be difficult for the usual candidate for chiropractic. Medical doctors ought to fight for the legal recognition of chiropractic and chiropractors should be against it!

Always, all my life, I have tried to do hard work and to avoid easy work. I do not like easy triumphs, I do not believe in them. I believe that we have to be thoroughly prepared for doing our work, while the appeal of chiropractic to the usual unemployed man and to all who come to it in masses, is the fact that it is easy. It is the "science" of the illiterate. He can at once do something with it. We see the chiropractors having meetings in the street just as at election time, calling the people, anybody, anyone, calling you all, whether you have an education or not, to go and become a student, a pupil of chiropractic. That is the public from which they recruit their candidates. Such people, of course, cannot judge as to what is the cause of disease or any other scientific subject. They haven't that background which preliminary education gives and which all scientists need.

Here is an example of how chiropractors understand what a diploma means and that shows that these people are not able even to study the cause of anything. A chiropractic school advertises: "This school will issue to each student having an average of 98 per cent or over on final examinations, at expiration of his three or nine months' course (according as he is an M.D., D.O., or a layman) a diploma conferring the degree of Ph.C. (Philosopher of Chiropractic). If below that standard, the usual D.C. (Doctor of Chiropractic) will be granted. All students completing a P.G. (Post-Graduate) course of three months and passing an advanced philosophical examination with an average of 90 per cent or over, will have the degree of Ph.C. conferred upon them." Then it says: "The diplomas are genuine parchment, 17x22 inches, made from lithograph drawings printed in colors." Of course that will

appeal! And how much do chiropractors study? And how long do they study? Why, it is ridiculous!

I have seen their books on anatomy and physiology and I tell you they are much below and more elementary than those that are given to a high school student, when he takes up anatomy and physiology. I don't intend to speak about the many foolish, unscientific ideas that they present there about the soul and God and misunderstood telepathy, etc., etc. But I want to say that people who write such books or learn from them cannot judge about the causes of things. And it seems to me that chiropractic in this country is in its proper place. This is its logical place—a country in which until lately we had Grade C medical colleges (that is, low grade colleges for doctors), where Christian scientists can be successful, where all the Barnums can be successful, where the Abrams' theory was born, where evolution is denied at this late hour, where advertising reigns supreme; a country which begets the mentality that revels in such smart words as "onlivo", "oysters R in season", "rexall". This is the country where such things can easily be born and spread.

Of course, once the chiropractor is so unprepared, he cannot learn.

You may think that he may study later, but does his practice give him an opportunity to learn what is the cause of disease? Not at all, because when there is a really difficult case a chiropractor never takes the responsibility; he seeks to get rid of the patient and sends him on to the medical doctor. He does not believe in a surgical operation but, when it is absolutely necessary, he lets the medical doctor do it.

The chiropractor makes diagnoses as to what is the cause of disease from the patient's story, mainly. I have seen chiropractors who listened to the patient and as the patient said: "I have rheumatism," they put down, "He has rheumatism," "I

suffer from paralysis," "He suffers from paralysis," "I have catarrh," "He has catarrh," and so on.

For them the human body is very simple; it isn't as complicated as it is for me, and so they know it all. But I affirm again, without having finished all that I have to say, that I am not one of those who know it all, who know it easily, who will be attracted to something that is easily learned.

First Speaker:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:—A few moments ago I had the most terrific shock that I have endured for a long time. A great many of you have seen The Hairy One from Davenport. While my friend here was reading that definition, I thought it was B. J. and it gave me a chill, a shock, if you please, and for a long time I thought I was not going to get relationship of the distorted parts of my anatomy. Now, the gentleman needn't have told you that he never studied theology. A man who can talk like that and get as far from the truth as that, never studied theology. I desire now to inform you that the gentleman undoubtedly had a course in the school whose pamphlet he read from. I presume that if you would go over to his office, you would find a 17x22 parchment. He talks like that element of chiropractors, the element, if you please, which clings to the strong and virile body of chiropractic exactly in the same way that the cooties stuck to the bodies of our splendid soldiery.

You cannot break off at one fell swoop the ignorance and superstition that follows in the train of that which takes hold upon the mass of humanity. And when he dares to ridicule the fact that chiropractors go upon the streets to advance the cause of chiropractic, he is flying in the face of the very methods, if you please, used by the meek and lowly Nazarene upon the shores of Galilee. He is daring to fly right in the face of the very methods, if you please, that have been used in this country

from time immemorial to bring forth the patriotic consideration of the American people to the greatest questions that humanity has ever given consideration to. I am ashamed to hear him talk like that, and you are ashamed to hear him talk like that. It is un-American. The streets, if you please, the hustings, the goods box on the corner, the truck, have been the means of disseminating all of the patriotism and all the intelligence that humanity possesses from the very grass roots to the very highest citizen rank of our country. For shame upon a man who says his English is not that of an American and who dares to criticize the very methods of our people that have brought us to our splendid evolution. (Confusion, hisses, cries: "Stick to the point!" Chairman calls for order.) Now, I don't suppose that in that same country which I am extolling there is any citizen who would not patiently listen to a fair discussion of a given situation. I listened with patience to the ridicule of my opponent and so did our friends. Now, you listen with patience to what I have to say.

It is a well known fact, my friends, that the chiropractic profession, from its beginning, has evolved of its own motion, without anybody else's suggestion, from a three-months' course in the beginning to three academic years of six months each, of twenty-one hundred sixty-minute hours of study. It is true, if you please, that the leading schools of chiropractic today have these courses: the three-year course, the four-year course, the six-year course and the eight-year course in chiropractic. Now, do not deny that, because I am the dean and president of one of those institutions. Yea, verily, of two of those institutions, that teach those several courses, and I want you to know now that the requirements for admission into those schools of students is a high school education, or its equivalent; if you please, an equivalent, then, to the seventy-two Regents' counts of this State.

In this State now there is an endeavor to get legislation and the chiropractic profession, of its own motion, is asking the seventy-two Regents counts as a requirement for admission. I didn't suppose we were coming here to meet rot and bunk and ridicule that has absolutely no fact behind it.

Now, aside of this, I suppose, I am in duty bound to apologize for the ignorance of a large number of chiropractors and I very gracefully and willingly apologize for them; but, my friends, the ignorant must have been the chosen people of God, for He made so many of them, particularly in the medical profession.

Let me give you a little history. In Oklahoma, in 1908, when the Medical Practice Act was re-enacted and it became necessary for every medical man to be licensed under that bill, they put in a blanket clause. Why? By actual investigation we found that sixty per cent of the medical doctors of Oklahoma had never been in a medical school.

That's neither here nor there. What we were talking about? "Can chiropractic remove the cause of disease?" And first I want to call your attention to the fact that chiropractic is not therapy and the gentleman failed flagrantly to show you anything of the kind. Therapy comes from the word "theory". There is no theory in chiropractic. It does not follow any such proposition.

Chiropractic has discovered and proclaimed to the world that the cause of disease is a disrelationship of the parts of the human body. Now you know very well that the smallest particle so far revealed of matter is called an ion, a great many times too small to be seen even with magnification and yet, you can understand, the ions in the normal have a specific relationship and in the abnormal they are thrown out of that relationship. Now then, chiropractic claims, if you please, and poses the proposition that it has discovered a means of restoring this ionic, this atomic, this molecular re-

lationship, when it is lost in a human being, for the reason that it has discovered that that which causes the human body to develop, what constructs the human anatomy in the first place, is what we have called, for want of a better term, nerve stimulus or nerve force.

It has been ascertained, and there will be no denial of this fact, that nerve force courses through the brain and along the nerves and applies itself at the periphery of those nerves, constructively, when there is no impediment, no interference with those nerves, and destructively, when there is impediment, or when there is interference with those nerves. We can restore, or aid the human body in restoring, such anatomic, ionic, or molecular relationship as will free those nerves from the brain throughout their entire course, to their final endings. Then there will be a chemical construction that is normal, a construction, if you please, of the ions in such form, size, shape and color that they will assume normal or anatomic relationship, and, therefore, will proceed to operate physiologically, which result is absolute health. There is no contention on the part of the chiropractic world that it can always secure anatomic relationship in a distorted body. It only claims that it can usually do it, but the cases in which it cannot restore normal relationship are the very cases, if you please, which prove that anatomic distortion is the cause of disease. Take a case of tuberculosis that has gone so far that chiropractic cannot remove the cause of it, and it is self-evident that it is the dis-relation of the structure of those lungs that has caused the difficulty. Take a case of chronic liver trouble that has gone along so far that chiropractic cannot remove the cause of it, that it cannot restore the relationship of the distorted particles of that liver and the very situation itself proves fully the truth that it is the distortion of that liver and it is the interference with nerves applying



themselves to that liver that is the cause of that phase of disease. This is no less true, if you please, of the stomach. Take a condition in which there is such dilation of the stomach that it is three or four times its normal size and it is impossible to restore it by application of the principles of chiropractic. The anatomic relationship of that dilated stomach cannot be restored. Isn't this very fact itself overwhelming proof that that's what's the matter, that it is the distortion of that stomach that is causing that difficulty?

You see the difficulty about it. And now I don't like to treat the gentleman as he treated me. I don't like to have to say that men who have not studied law and who are not familiar with analytical analysis, really have no education and are ignorant, because it is not their fault that they do not understand these things; it is only too bad, that's all. I pity them from the bottom of my soul. Ignorance is a subject for pity. Men who do not understand the anatomic formation, the anatomic structure, the means by which human beings came into existence in the first place, the means by which human beings at this time come into being and maintain at maturity, for a period of time, and then fall into dissolution—men who do not understand these biological facts, these chemical facts, are subjects for God's pity, and particularly so, when they assume at the same time to be doctors and to know something about the human body. But I cannot help that; that's not a matter that I have anything to do with. I wish to tell you, my friends, that up to this very moment, in this debate, there has not been a word said, tending to disprove what I told you is the cause of disease. There has not been a word said that controverts the fact that chiropractors can remove the cause of disease. In fact, the gentleman flatly and openly admitted it. He said, "Yes, chiropractic could remove the cause of some minor diseases." That wins the debate.

That's all there is to it. (Protests in the audience. Cries: "No!") If you will read the question you will see that it doesn't say that chiropractic can remove the cause of disease. A simple little question. It was written by myself and I have the misfortune to be a reformed lawyer and I know how to state a proposition when I want to win on it. I knew that he would have to admit that chiropractors do remove disease and when he admitted that he admitted and acknowledged the fact and I would have been in an attitude of forgiving him, if he hadn't impersonated B. J. and given me such a shock.

Second Speaker:

Again I will abstain from answering the unanswerable; that is, for instance, my opponent's outburst of cheap, overworked patriotism. He seems to think that this is a personal quarrel and not a debate. I will also refrain from answering all sorts of allusions that have nothing to do with our question; it would only take my time. You have punished him enough by your protest a while ago. However, I must say that if the chiropractor takes Jesus as a model for science, Jesus, who, by the way, is in every respect more related to me than to him, and whom our opponent shows to have walked in the street and preached—well, I don't think that any of us would want Jesus as a modern physician, or that Jesus would accept chiropractic. That is not the kind of science that we want when it comes to real science. That reminds me that in a certain assembly of physicians about fifty years ago, they were discussing a case. It was a case of some sort of fever, I do not know which, and one doctor said that he had given one drug that didn't work, while another one said, "Well, you try my drug." They all disagreed with him and asked, "How can you give him that? It may kill him. What would you say to God when you come before him in the other world?" And this physician

answered: "Now I am going to take God by the shoulder and say, 'God, mind your own business; don't you mix in; you have no idea about these matters.'" Well, we don't have to bring in such witnesses; they have nothing to do with the question.

A trick was used in this debate after all, when I was pitied by my opponent for my "ignorance". How ridiculous! The very word "chiropractic" shows ignorance and lack of taste! And in spite of official chiropractic announcements, I insist that the great majority of existing chiropractors, far from having had a high school education, are nearly illiterate, have learned their profession within a very short time and are uninformed about the human body.

As to inferior and uneducated "medical doctors" who have not studied in college and are practising without a license, they are not medical doctors at all, but swindlers who are being prosecuted by medical societies.

I did not know that I had committed such a terrible crime in quoting B. J. Palmer. I did not know that our opponent was so terribly antagonistic to him, but their enmity is a matter of indifference to me. I am analyzing chiropractic and chiropractors and Palmer is a chiropractor, whether you consider him a ridiculous one or not; he is the teacher of thousands of students who go out and treat the people.

No. I don't think that chiropractors, if they were real scientists, would recruit their students, should recruit their students, from the street. That is not the way. That is not the way to get the people who study, who learn seriously.

It is easy to be a dean of a college when you are a chiropractor. I could not be the dean of a medical college unless I would do much work and distinguish myself. Who makes the chiropractors deans? Who proclaims them professors? Any one of you can

open a chiropractic college today; anybody can practice chiropractic.

And again I must state that it is not true that "therapy" does not mean what I have said. "Therapy" signifies "treatment" and nothing else, and comes from a Greek word meaning "service". It is therapeutics. Which shows again ignorance: using a term which they don't understand. Look it up in your dictionary!

But let us come to the subject. Can chiropractic remove the cause of diseases due to factory work, to dust, to insufficient rest, to overwork, to insufficient exercise, to wrong food, poor food, wrong combinations of food, overeating, alcoholism, tobacco, sex errors, insufficient sleep, bad shoes, chemical fumes, bad air, congestion in rooms, exposure to heat and cold, diseases due to worms and all visible and demonstrable parasites, to absolutely sure infections like gonorrhoea? How about anemia, respiratory, digestive, mental, heart, nervous, circulatory and skin diseases? I could mention many more. Now, to put this question is to answer it. To treat a case of constipation with chiropractic is the same thing as giving a patient a bottle of medicine, instead of teaching this patient how to live in order to cure and avoid constipation.

You cannot put right living into a bottle or pills; I cannot and nobody can. Likewise you cannot put right living into chiropractic treatment. Chiropractic is treatment only and never prevention. The chiropractor, as I said, has always something to do with the patient. He adds one more thing to the existing therapeutic measures.

We physicians have been criminal enough to scare the world with disease and take from the people their trust in their own vitality, in their own strength, and now we have an additional scare. All the people will think that their spinal columns are out of place. Under the most normal conditions the

spinal column may be and often is slightly out of place, but that does not matter.

Chiropractors say that nerve force is what matters. The nerve force comes from a central organ and if there is anywhere some occlusion of the nerve stimulus that comes from the center, then we have disease. It looks as if the nervous system were something apart, something metaphysical! And that would mean that there is only one path for that stimulus; that is, coming from the center and not from the periphery and going to the center—which is untrue. It would also mean that all those diseases, and they are numberless, in the zones controlled by the nerves that never pass through those places (the spinal column) which chiropractors claim that they can fix, those conditions which depend on the nerves that go directly from the brain into the body with many complications of fibres from all parts and all sorts of connections—that those diseases cannot be cured by chiropractors even according to their own theory. And all that they say about the nervous system is just theory. Where is the proof?

My opponent believes he has an easy victory. He says he has won the debate. I don't care. It doesn't matter who wins the debate. That is foolish. What we are concerned with is to know where the truth lies. If you are satisfied with what I have said, that the chiropractor can cure the cause of disease only to the same degree as the extraction of a foreign body in the eye will cure all important ailments—well then, I am satisfied, too, because then chiropractic doesn't go very far.

I have examined the spinal column and each vertebra in many cases of disease that have come to my knowledge. I have done that having in mind chiropractic, believing that I might find the cause of the disease in the spine. With very few exceptions I have not found it there. And there are millions of cases of people who have had chiropractic

treatment and have experienced no improvement at all. I have studied chiropractic upon lots and lots of people, I have studied all your books and I have visited some of your schools. (Somebody interrupts: "In what school have you studied chiropractic?") It isn't important where I acquired the knowledge; it is important to know whether I am informed or not.

My opponent says in one of his books, which, by the way, is full of errors from beginning to end (this is easy to prove—I have here some quotations from his books but there is no time to give them to you) he says that occlusions of stimulus may be "articular, ossific, skeletal, visceral, lacerational, contusional, disintegrational, enlargemental." Then why correct the vertebrae? This may seem an unimportant question, but it is the main question after all.

And now that nothing else remains to be answered to my opponent, I may continue my lecture.

There is no such thing as perfect health; there are no perfect vertebrae, there is no perfect spine. There can be no such thing. Life is a continual adjustment to surroundings. Health is a continual adjustment to surroundings. If your spine is out of place at this moment, the next moment it may be in place, and it is out of place many times, in spite of what medical doctors say.

There isn't such a thing as perfect health because, as I said, perfect health has to do with adjustment to surroundings. If you have health at this moment, you may not have it in the next, because the surroundings may have changed. There is something like near-health, near-perfection, near-normal, but nothing is normal and the chiropractors may keep on adjusting the spine, it never will be adjusted—it does not have to be.

If displacements of the vertebrae are the main cause of disease, it makes no difference what else

the chiropractor may add, if those displacements are the cause of impinged nerves and on account of that, the cause of disease, I ask you what is the cause of those displacements? As you see, I must go further and deeper because I am not as superficial as a chiropractor. I want to go as deeply as possible into every subject.

I have never seen a chiropractor really looking for the cause of any trouble. If you go for treatment he will say: "You say that you suffer from constipation," and he will look in his book, or his memory and will add: "Constipation corresponds to this or that vertebra; consequently I must adjust this or that vertebra." He never stops to see if the vertebra in question is really dislocated, because if it is not, he will adjust it just the same. He takes it for granted. He never uses the new, scientific, inductive method of judgment. He is dogmatic and cares little for facts.

Here is something from a book on chiropractic, a book on symptomatology. It is from one of those books which they study every day. "Eyestrain is a condition developed by prolonged effort on the part of the accommodating apparatus of the eye. Adjustment, upper cervical." Now, if you strain your eye, if the condition is developed by prolonged effort on the part of the eye, well, what to do would be to give that eye a rest. That would be what any logical mind would say, but the chiropractor is going to adjust your spine for that. If you have a corn he does not pay attention to your shoes. The author says: "Often this is caused by wearing poorly fitting shoes." He does not add, "Take other shoes," but adjusts something. Meningitis of the brain has nothing whatever to do with the spinal column; the author writes, "It is an inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain. Adjustment, atlas or axis," which are bones of the spine. "Measles"—adjustment, a certain vertebra, and so on it goes.

You may think that you can judge about the

cause of disease by the result of the treatment. Chiropractic can remove the cause of disease if its effect is good; that is, if it can remove the cause. Now, it is true that chiropractic helps sometimes, but anything helps sometimes, even if the cause is not removed. I will show you a remedy which, together with all sorts of incantations, has been for a long time considered as a valuable remedy and has been much praised. It is the following: "Blue lizard's liver carried silently for three miles, well mixed with saliva and boiled with pig's hair at first full moon after Christmas." There were plenty of people who thought this remedy efficacious, but as scientists we want to know what really helps. Just to affirm something is not sufficient. We want proofs. Where have chiropractic experiments been made? What scientific work have you done to find out the truth? Some ignoramus who calls himself a magnetic healer, whatever that may mean, invents something and claims that he can cure disease. Where is the investigation? Investigation, as we mean it. No, we, those damned doctors, are not satisfied with superficial and easy work. In our circles, if someone contends that he has found something new, he must show it and prove it, not once, but hundreds of times, and this is what the chiropractor, as yet, has failed to do.

Here is a quotation from B. J.'s journal, the *Chiropractor and Clinical Journal*. Answers are given by the editor to the readers, who are mostly chiropractors. Some chiropractors are very perplexed. They come to the teacher and say, "I cannot treat." One chiropractor confesses that one of his patients is "always constipated although she has taken one hundred adjustments this year." The chairman notifies me that I have only one minute. Therefore, let's leave B. J. Another very prominent chiropractor in Newark lately published the following testimonial. His patient, a woman, writes: "You gave me three adjustments a week for one and a



half years and then two adjustments a week up to this time." Which makes 234 adjustments in the first year and a half, not to speak of later treatments! If chiropractic can do no better than that, it is the greatest failure among the healing professions. There is no doubt that no physician who claims to be an honest man would give 234 treatments to any patient in any case.

Homeopathy? It existed, of course, and it was flourishing. But it had partly capitulated before the old medical school, while the latter, in its evolution and rapid forward march, had partly borrowed some of its tenets. There was a tacit armistice and compromise. The opponent of a hundred years before had become an ally. A few of the newer healing schools, like nature cure and others, consistently derived some ideas from homeopathy. But it was confounded with so-called allopathy in their attacks.

Sometimes, seeing that no healing school satisfied him, William was afraid of his mind and its judgment:

“Am I not a hypercritical fool, maybe a maniac or a paranoiac?” he thought. “Or are all the healers crazy? They, together with their followers Or perhaps one must be abnormal in order to see the truth?”

But besides the accepted healing cults, there were odds and ends, scraps and crumbs of older quackeries, remnants from previous centuries, still lingering among the people. Mesmerism in its primitive form, magnetism, Matteism were not altogether extinct.

There were electromechanic healers, who, not satisfied with using electricity, had additional spiritual and material cures. The magnetic healers, descendants of schools that were in vogue a century or more before, were often mysteriously related to palmistry and astrology. Some mystic ideas were attached to all the irregular healing schools and were floating from one to the other. In fact, these healers seemed to prefer the uncertain, the undemonstrable, the old, the refuted, to the new, clear and tangible theories. Phrenology, which had been long since discarded by all scientists and later so splendidly replaced by the principle of functional localizations in the brain and spinal cord, was still in its prime for the dissenters. And they managed to connect it somehow with the healing of disease.

Besides the direct healing cults, William became acquainted with a number of systems that were vaguely related to healing through particular health and curing concepts which they taught and extolled to their adepts. To mention but a few—theosophy, bahatism, mazdaznanism, which seemed to be more or less innocent amusements for adult children. As one member of a similar sect once told William: "What would you have me do? But

for this, life would be a bore. When one is through earning a living, one must have fun."

And William saw old withered crones with stiff crooked fingers and with an advantageous resemblance to the people's idea of a witch, busy around the sickbed. They were able to make money among the benighted, superstitious people by uttering incantations, by the use of exorcism magic and charms brought over from the old country. Or he surprised an ugly, forbidding, bearded hag pouring molten lead in the sick-room and moving her lips as William unexpectedly arrived.

In the opinion of many unemancipated persons concealed benevolent or malevolent energies were still healing or bringing disease. Some patients otherwise sane and mentally normal, told William that their illnesses were due to evil eyes and spells coming from a powerful, though invisible, enemy. They were absolutely convinced that hidden forces could be summoned for good or bad purposes as of yore. And they wanted the doctor, who was for them the sorcerer, the wizard of old, to employ his ancient clairvoyant influence for the purpose of conjuring the sickness so produced. Or—they did not say it, but alluded to it—they would have desired him to pass their trouble over to their enemy.

When he saw in his office undressed patients with amulets hanging on their necks or tied around their waists, when he witnessed the precautions against evil spirits taken in the confinement room William could not help thinking that the ancient minor divinities and the beliefs and fears originating from the ape-man were still alive.

Once, as William woke up in the middle of the night, he was all wet with sweat. He shivered and drew the quilt up to his chin. He had fever and in his fever he had had a dream. There were no doctors of any kind, all the healers had disappeared or had never existed.

He went on dreaming with open eyes. What would happen if that were true? Indeed, what? He had no doubt that, as a whole, humanity would be much better off. It would be sick and die from disease, but less than under the rule and control of healers. At any rate it would be free from one big cause of illness, from that which was due to the ignorance and cupidity of all sorts of doctoring persons. That would largely make up for the loss that would accrue to mankind through the disappearance of those who made their living from the people's illness, he thought.

On the one hand, the world would be badly off.

And he saw lots of incarcerated hernias, appendical abscesses, croupy children, gangrenous limbs. Death, inexorable death mowed them down. And it kept on mowing others and still others.

People with heart diseases, lung troubles, liver swellings, uncompensated kidney inflammations succumbed.

Where was the splendid, if modest and unheralded heroism of the little village doctor braving the snowstorm on a frosty night to save by intubation a life dear to the watching, marvelling parents? Where the dramatic scene of a blue, asphyx-

iated head suddenly invigorated by a deep breath opening its astonished eyes to new life?

All that was beautiful. But on the other hand the saving, curing and helping were many times wiped out by the errors and frauds coming from the same class of men, William concluded.

But what was the use of these reflections, he continued to think. A humanity without healers was impossible. The people wanted them and could not imagine life without them. They would be invented. They would spring up spontaneously. In fact, every person was a healer. Each human being had some health advice to give, some cure to impart, some pet healing idea to teach. Those who were more daring would be the first professional physicians.

William said to himself:

"Now I can see why the people have a grudge against doctors and healers. It is because they need us. We are the living symbol of their helplessness. Instead of being angry at themselves they are angry at us."

The next day he could not work, he was too ill. But he loathed staying in bed. That would have been a confession that he was again badly sick, an avowal which he postponed as long as possible.

As he wanted to be in the fresh air, he did something that he would have forbidden to any of his patients under the same conditions. He went with the autobus to the end of the line. Then he walked to the Hudson.

It was in March. The fast and mighty river carried heavy ice-floes. The opposite shore was framed in the characteristic Palisades of gray-greenish rocks, blue at a distance and broken up by streaks of melting snow. Here and there the ice was packed into a corner, ice-bound as it were, and the oncoming floes climbed on it with a cracking noise.

William forgot where he was. His burning forehead, pressed against the cold lamp-post, gradually cooled off. He wanted to proceed further, but he was fascinated. He could not take his eyes off the running stream.

"It is always flowing in the same direction. . . . How childish to think of that! . . . For centuries. . . . What a foolish remark! . . . And it will always do so. . . . Everybody knows that. . . . Always. Who knows? What is our 'always'? . . . Nothing original in that question. . . . It is the symbol of the stubbornness of things, the picture of life itself. Why will it go on? What is the use of it all?"

Somebody roused him. Several persons alighted from an automobile. One of them was the doctor



with the "flu"-house—that was all that William, in his half-conscious condition, knew—he did not remember his name.

"Hello, Straight, I recognized you and I stopped the car. We were taking a ride on the drive. What are you doing here? Let me introduce you. . . ."

A handshake, a smile, some sounds, another handshake, a broad laugh. A fat woman busy with her nose. A man noisy with his throat. Then a silent boy.

"Let's walk a little! It feels so good!" said the doctor with the "flu"-house.

They talked.

Two groups naturally formed themselves.

William was with the lady and the noisy man. He was told that they had heard from their friend the doctor that William had eccentric—the speaker corrected himself—original ideas about medicine and health. William had to explain, which aroused and excited him beneficially.

When he was done and thought that his audience had had enough, he kept silent, waiting for questions. But how astonished he was when the following came from the noisy man:

"I think you're right; but say, doc, what's good for a cold?"

William was used to such pests who tried to steal a consultation whenever possible. At other times he would have given the desired answer; he always did. But this time he was too sick and too angry at the lack of interest and understanding of these people in his ideas. He lost his temper, and, to avoid getting rough, he did not reply, but said:

"Excuse me," and went over to his colleague.

"Yes," the latter answered to William's wish to go home. "We'll go back too. But these friends live around here. They're not coming with me. You can jump up. I'll take you to your office. All right, Straight?"

William sat down near his colleague who was driving and who, after a while, asked him:

"What's the matter, doctor, not well? Looking bad. Temperature, I think. You know, you have no business out here. Who is taking care of you?"

William admitted that he was ill, that he had been ill for some time and that today he felt particularly miserable. In response to the other fellow's advice to stop practicing and go to a sanitarium, he confessed that he had no money. He was expecting some, as he had sent out bills—this time to all those whom he could recall as still owing him small or large amounts.

"Say, Straight, meanwhile I can let you have what you need."

William was surprised. He looked up and said:

"All right, thanks."

"Not at all. You're welcome."

But the man with the "flu"-house could not refrain from a sneer:

"I don't mind lending it to you. But I can't forget that you call fellows like me rapacious and what not. Well, as a matter of fact, somebody else must be rapacious for you."

"You're right, I won't take it."

"Don't be silly, Straight, I was joking."

Within a week William had improved in health and had resumed his work.

But even when he felt well he could not practice. He was tired of seeing people, both the sick and the healthy.

The healthy? Their health was so fragile and worm-eaten with illness, he thought. Illness could be seen through their thin, transparent layer of health. He forgot just then that he had always contended that the people were healthier than it was claimed and that the sick were not as sick as they pretended to be.

Just the sight, the odor of plain human flesh was offensive to him.

He could not stand the people's teeth, their stupid noses, their foolish ears, their navels. He was loath to examine the feet, the rectum, the abdominal organs.

He hated the idiotic, automatic tic-tac of the heart, the sound of bellows in the chest. The shapes of the breasts and bellies and backs irritated him.

The mouth was a primitive aperture communicating with the excretory ending through a tube in the endoplasm, and eating was an indecent gesture which should not be shown in open places.

But why did he have to see the sick only? he asked himself.

How long, how long would he hear complaints? How long would he see sullen surly, scowling, gruff faces? He felt like grimacing back to them, jeering, mocking, ridiculing them.

The sight of dental protheses, eyeglasses, orthopedic corsets, trusses, artificial legs, crutches, elastic stockings, foot arches, scrotal suspensories made him nervous.

He abhorred dilapidated old age, senescence, caducity in all its form, that lived only because it had not the force to fall to pieces and perish. He was weary of the enforced avarice of the weak, who avoided spending themselves, whose very debility was their strength and who lived on and on, often longer than the strong individuals.

He had had enough of the mentally deranged, beginning with the hypochondriacs, who came with their symptoms carefully noted on pieces of paper, and finishing with the decaying minds, the demented and the dissolving general paralytics!

He had visions.

Begone, emaciated, marasmic babies with large bony skulls and deep-set eyes amidst sallow faces with protruding jawbones, with dilated stomachs and no chests and thin, fleshless sticks for limbs!

Depart, middle-aged paunches distended with grease or dropsy! And you, cachectic, waxy bodies! Away, lame ghosts, dragging your drooping arms and legs!

His old question about life and death came back.

Life? Where was it? Enclosed in a mixture of throbbing, palpitating, struggling, animated bits together with dead and rotted chunks of tissue. Yea, indissolubly merged with death in every cell! Nothing but a product of intertwined chemical combinations and physical, light and heat forces. The soul perhaps the sum of various hormones. Living and thinking—results of the same sort of action as that which makes the sunflower turn to the source of light and the yellow poppy open its petals at the touch of its rays—photo-mechano-thermic effects. Yet — there was life everywhere, in the most incredible places, in the crevices of the rocks, in the deep wells, in the ocean, in the air. He knew

the answer to his objections too. What if everything was explained and analyzed? Was the sky less beautiful because we understand its blue color? But all this quibbling was only an excuse for his being tired of life and medical practice. He could not face them any longer. No, a hundred times no!

He looked out through the window, toward the setting sun and then took up again the thread of his meditations.

Do the healthy, the strong, undress and say—Look how handsome I am? No, they would not give him that satisfaction. No, not even his cured patients. They forgot him as soon as they were well. Scarce were those who rewarded him with the news that they were at last in good health. All they gave him was money—and many not even that. But money was no payment. It certainly was no wages for devotion. It was just what one needed to live. Money was necessary whether one worked or not, whether one worked badly or well. The means for a livelihood should be denied to nobody. But he wanted something else, something undefinable, a smile, a friendly word coming from the soul, he did not know. Where were they?

He decided to go away. Where? He could not say. Far, far from organs, excretions, secretions, cases and healers. Away from himself.

And so, one day he tore up all the old letters from friends, pictures, shreds of paper that were dear to him. It was as if he were tearing away, throwing away, bleeding bits of flesh from his own body, palpitating portions of his soul.

But he kept Louise's old love letter.

It was at that time that he broke down definitely. His extreme neglect of himself had had its effect at last. A dangerous complication arose. His friends, the physicians, could not agree as to the diagnosis.

He was going to be transported to the hospital when Mary Vanish learned about it. She arrived in a hurry and the private ambulance waiting at the door carried William to her house. Perhaps he would have objected, but he was delirious with high fever. Perhaps she was not glad to have him, but she was ashamed before the colleagues assembled there.

She gave him a large room and the best care. He was attended by three nurses, each one being on duty for eight hours.

For many days William was nearer to death than to life. Mary did not interfere with the treatment. There were four physicians in charge, one of them being the East Side health teacher to whom the other three subordinated themselves in deference to Williams' friendship for him.

After his crisis came a period of confusion.

He would open his eyes and have a glassy look full of stupor as if trying vainly to orient himself in space and time. His thoughts seemed to be held in a viscous, clammy medium from which they were not able to emerge. Both the past and the present were a blank. It was impossible to rivet an idea; it escaped, it slipped away as soon as he attempted to gather it. Only a few vague visual and auditive illusional images flickered past, but

could not be detained or connected. Sometimes they crystallized into a true hallucination which terrified him and forced him to make involuntary defense movements. No questions of any kind could pull him out of his mutism, no shaking could draw him back from his aberration. When a little clearness began to filter through his cloudy brain he was yet completely unable to understand where he was and why. He still had long moments of immobility and an imitation of deep, but useless concentration.

But gradually he learned again to think. However, for some time his thoughts were slow and stagnant and his answers came late. His sleeping and waking states were not sharply defined, but shaded into one another, so that his dreams often continued in both states.

When he started to speak, his language was at first incoherent. He enounced sentences and half-sentences devoid of sense or logic. From apathy he passed into a condition in which he searched himself, making an effort to comprehend himself and his situation. Hours of depression, despondency, dejection, with the feeling of sinking and sagging away, were followed by others of half-unconscious well-being, in which he remained with great complacency.

He had promised himself to take down exact observations of his condition. But he never did. At no stage of his illness was he sufficiently master of himself to do it.

In his lucid moments he was happy and had a quiet smile of beatitude. As he recalled later, he had never in all his life had such a wonderful time. It was a splendid luxury of helpnesses, the acme of pleasure. A great peace descended into his mind and he forgot all his previous troubles and worries.

Some afternoons, during slight febrile relapses, were a real delight. William sat in bed, in a sea of whiteness, near the window, propped up with

high pillows. He had regained his consciousness completely and enjoyed the sun's rays playing upon his pale skin, penetrating him with their mild warmth and counteracting his chilly feeling.

He, who had never before consented to be helped, loved to be served now by someone, to be coddled like a spoiled child to whom nothing was forbidden.

One of the first things about which he thought at the beginning of his convalescence was the unconscious opposition of many patients to a cure. He understood them now. Were they to blame for not wanting to leave a state of sweet parasitism for one heavy with duties, hardships and responsibilities? Sickness was not as bad as it was commonly held to be.



One day, as he opened his pale bluish eyelids, he saw three men sitting near his bed.

They were speaking, but he could not make out the meaning of what they said. He listened attentively and lo! it was not an effort to do so as it had been at his previous attempts.

Three pleasant voices. Coming from three persons whom he knew, especially one who was particularly familiar and beloved, but at first he could not tell who they were. . . . Yes, he remembered.

One of them was the Southern doctor, a wealthy man who left his city because his life was in danger as a "Nigger lover." His sin consisted in protecting the colored people, his neighbors and patients, from injustice and persecution, and in explaining their rights to them. In New York he took his revenge by eating at his table with his black servants and going with them to the theatre, although that barred him out of the orchestra seats and forced him to see the show from the balcony.

The second was a pediatricist who loved children so much that he was always to be seen with a band of youngsters. Every week he picked up a few of them from the poorest streets and went with them to the circus or the movies. His pockets and visiting bag always contained playthings. "Toys are my best remedies," he used to say. His wife explained:

"These toys make him thrice happy. Once when he orders them and handles them in the store. The

second time when they are delivered. The third time when he gives them away. As a child he had never had any, because his parents were too poor to buy them, and now, as a compensation, he is instinctively looking for chances to play so as to regain what he lost in his childhood."

Of course, in spite of these bribes, he was often bitten, pinched, spat at, kicked at by the little patients—but that made him only laugh.

When he was asked whether he had a child, he replied:

"I have about ten thousand kids, I guess!"

The third doctor was the East Side health teacher. He was just then saying:

"Don't expect mankind to be too good and you'll not find it very bad. Don't expect it to be perfectly healthy and you'll not be disappointed with it as it is. Don't expect too much honesty. A certain percentage of fraud is inherent in human character. Combat it, but don't get incensed over it. . . . And why take men so seriously? Why give them so much importance? We seem to forget that we spring from a tiny insignificant seed and that even when grown up we're almost nothing."

"How can you reconcile this skepticism and lack of enthusiasm with your inveterate optimism?" asked the second doctor. "Did you not confess the other day that you did not believe in the existence of death or in sickness, you who have faced both so often and so bravely? And that deep in your mind you were not certain that all disease, no matter how visible, was not a sort of malingering, and death a simulation?"

All three laughed. The health teacher replied:

"How beautifully you exaggerate—that is, lie—but let us suppose that that is true. . . ."

At that moment the door opened and a fourth doctor entered. He looked like the typical poet of the romantic period. He was it too. He had

published a book of extremely sentimental verse and, although he had signed with a pseudonym, he was recognized as its author and jeered at in medical circles. There was one poem that was particularly ridiculous. He wanted to take into his arms all those who suffered and console them. Men and women, the sick and the weak, the unhappy, the unsightly, the forsaken, the wicked, the failures, all those in misery. The refrain repeated: He was the doctor, he must not, he could not and so on.

When he arrived at his medical club, his colleagues shouted: "Here comes Jesus!" Somebody recited incorrectly, teasingly, a verse or two from his poem that began: "The repugnant old maid . . ." "No, it isn't so," another corrected.

But William closed his eyes and fell back into his slumber.

It was in the middle of May when William was allowed to leave his bed and sit in a chair. Also to go out for one hour daily.

He saw Mary often. In the first two weeks their conversation was that of two perfect strangers. Indifferent, but polite. The doctors came less often. Once every few days. Sometimes one, sometimes the other. Whenever they wanted to talk shop, William protested. He said he was not interested in medicine.

Many of his debtors, even the most recalcitrant ones, hearing about his illness, mailed him checks, so that now he had a small fortune, which he did not need for the present, but which he expected to use within a short time. His plan, which he had communicated to no one, was to go leisurely West as far as his money would take him and then—

And then he would—he did not know what he would do. Anything but medicine.

He felt he must change his life radically.

How?

His thoughts sprang from one idea to another. A job—any job—a musical job—study music—write music—see Louise—

Louise, Louise—he had been thinking of her so often in the last year that, although he had no idea whether she existed in reality or was but a figment of his imagination, he mixed her into his plans. Sometimes he asked himself: "If not, what?" But he stifled the question immediately.

Meanwhile he was in Mary's hands. Her behavior,

from kind and considerate, changed as his normal strength returned. His presence in her house was a burden and, not knowing how to send him away, she made all kinds of suggestions.

She had recently acquired a fine country house and much land around it. She offered it to him for one summer until his complete recuperation. But he refused. He was determined to leave New York and the East definitely.

As time went on Mary was more and more embittered. From time to time she dropped unpleasant remarks. For instance, she mockingly reproached him his physical condition as compared to his health ideals.

"Oh, I know I am not normal," he replied. "My life is a failure and I don't care. I am not a model of correct living. But that is no reason why others could not live better and be healthy. I am wrong, but my ideas are right."

Often in his brief recurrences of debility, he tired quickly, after a short walk, and she had to give him her arm, which she resented. She often lost patience. Once she even permitted herself to rail at him.

"So, this is the powerful man, the protector of the feeble sex, leaning on a woman's arm!"

He did not answer, but looked at her with an expression of disdain. Then she added:

"Oh, I didn't mean it. Just a bad joke."

Another time she said:

"If you wish, you can stay in my bungalow out in the country behind the big house for the rest of your life."

"Do you really want me to do that?" he asked.

"Well, if you wish to retire from practice?" she said.

"From practice, but not from life. How about yourself? Would you do that? Would you go there at your age?" he asked further.

"I?" She hesitated. "Why. . . If I, if. . ."

If I were incapacitated I would. . . . I would rather . . .” She made a sign as if she were pressing a trigger against her forehead and she added: “Is that not your theory also?”

He shouted:

“Mary! . . . So that’s what you want me to do! Because I am useless to you and you can’t get me out of the way, you try to suggest to me that I shall always be an incapable, that I’ll never be well again! . . . Maybe. . . . But whatever happens to me, I shall certainly not be in your way.”

He banged the door and went out.

Without stopping at his office, which he had not seen for nearly three months, William went straight to the East Side health teacher.

"I am going away."

"Where to?"

"I don't know. Away from my practice, from the East."

"For how long?"

"I shall never return."

"Where do you want to open your office?"

"Nowhere. I am done with medicine and I thought you might want to come along."

"I? No, my boy! I see you've never understood me. I am made of a different material. Not as delicate and fragile as you. I'll fight and stay on."

"You're too level-headed, too brave for me."

"Not at all, Straight. I put my hope in my work, in our science, in our profession."

"You're fooling yourself. Your work is useless; you can make no headway; nobody, nobody who is of any importance, listens to you. Our science is a glittering soap-bubble. Our profession rotten to the core. The other healing professions much worse."

"But all that will change. . . ."

"I know, you're waiting for the social revolution. You'll wait a long time. And I am not sure that even then . . ."

"Listen, Straight. Medicine has changed in the past and will change again. It is unfolding itself under our very eyes. Young health ideas, fresh

prophylactic conceptions have begun to penetrate and enliven it. As to the profession, it will be transformed when the entire social body is placed on a new basis, when the profit system disappears, when we'll do things for service only, not for profit. Doctors are not different from other people. There may be a few white sheep among them, but as a class they're not extraordinary. They can't be. They're not selected. The study of medicine requires no special talents or staunchness of character or exceptional honesty. The average doctor is an average person. He is . . . He is your grocer. Would not the small dealer suggest buying goods which the customer does not need? The doctor is the plumber who repairs something in the cellar, but tinkers with something else until that too needs fixing. He has been compared to the fireman. Well, he is the fireman of old, the kind we don't have any longer, who got paid only for the number of fires he put out and as long as the fire lasted, instead of having his living insured whether there was a fire or not. Can you blame the doctor? Can this world blame him? This mad world, where nothing is secure? What right has it to protest when he sets a fire and protracts it, as long as society does not provide for him, but turns him loose like its other wild children? . . . I am not excusing, I am only explaining.

"Do you expect the doctor to be superhuman? How could he? And if it were possible, it would not be desirable. He could not understand those entrusted to his care. He must be made of the same stuff as they, must have their weaknesses, pass through their hesitations, make their mistakes, taste their miseries.

"Yes, the change will come. But meanwhile martyrs are needed—those who will dare to tell the truth. Oh, the truth! It is never welcome at first. But later—a hundred years later—more, less—who



knows? I don't know—it will impose itself. It will stand out in full light.

"It is the same in private life. We always hate the person who tells us an unpleasant truth. And the truer it is and the more directly it is told, the angrier we are. Our fury is even a sure sign that we're wrong. We're really raging at ourselves, although we're punishing the other fellow. If we're right, we keep quiet. But there comes a time when the irate individual thinks it over. Then he will in cowardly manner accept the truth just as it had been elaborated before and proclaim it as his own. Let him do it!"

"But meanwhile—that is—during your entire life—you'll have to be in the midst of criminals, thieves and assassins!" said William. "How can you be so patient?"

"I can't agree with you, Straight. I admit that our *médicaille* is no better than the rest of humanity, but it is not worse. Besides, crime, theft, and murder are relative terms. They depend on the time, the place, the circumstances. What is criminal for one is bravery for the other and deserves at least a monument. Theft may be called sacred property, acquiring a fortune or—expropriation. Murder may be a deed of valor. To assassinate may mean to kill the enemy, to chastise the villain, to execute the culpable, to free the people from a tyrant, to slaughter for food, to hunt for pleasure. In war our morals are reversed. Virtues are vices and vices are virtues. Carefulness, preservation of one's life is cowardice. Prudence, reasoning, clear thinking is defeatism. The courage of opposing mob psychology is treason. So, you see, and you know it yourself, there is no such thing as a moral act. Morality is artificial. It is made and shaped by those who dominate and, if they want to, they transgress it at their pleasure.

"Besides, why not live with criminals? Thieves, assassins, liars, prostitutes are everywhere and in

all trades. You're mistaken, Straight, if you think you can avoid them or run away from them. And you and I and everyone have something of them. And we're all guilty of their crimes. . . . Even according to my own morality, stealing is not always immoral. Often it is a Nemesis or a redistribution. I cannot always condemn murder. I have often seen it as a noble act and resulting in a great salvation."

"You say that?" asked William surprised. "You, the vegetarian? You, who literally would not kill a fly?"

"I wouldn't, because personally I don't mind any nuisance. But I would destroy life if it were absolutely necessary. Nor would that be a contradiction to my vegetarianism. Oh, Straight, let's leave morals alone! Let's not preach! The world has had enough preaching and that has never improved it. And who can tell what is good and what is bad?"

"But life as a whole is not worth living. Especially that way! Always fighting! It is terrible!" answered William, who approved most of what the teacher said, but who was too tired to discuss much.

"Life in our present age can be nothing else but struggle. Life as such should be left out of the question. It is a constant factor. We're in it, we're it. We must not think of it—or we must end it. The thought of life interferes with living, just as a too intense thought of speech may hinder speaking and close attention to our gait may be an obstacle to walking. Life must be automatic, involuntary."

"So, I am going alone," concluded William.

"Do as you like, but I am not leaving the profession. I stick to it."

There was a long embrace and William left.

William wanted to get as rapidly as possible into real country. He did not care to see the unpleasant, hybrid, suburban region, which he knew from many previous outings. Nor was he interested in the ugly land allotments opened near the city by clever business men, land sharks who took advantage of the people's thirst for fresh air and of the general desire to get out into the open and away from the infernal noise and suffocating urban dust-laden atmosphere. Nor did he wish to visit the much advertised settlements founded in the name of some high-sounding principle, but covering some strong money-making ambitions.

Therefore he took the train and, after a few hours riding, started to walk.

He had been mainly city-bred and knew the country very imperfectly. It was always a mystery for him and whenever he went to see it, he felt like a stranger. But he never ceased to desire it. At last he was close to it, in it, a tiny spot lost in its green immensity. And as he slowly wound his way through its woods and meadows, he wondered at everything he saw.

An old farmer who answered his questions about tilled fields, wild weeds and birds, was struck by his ignorance:

"What are you doing in your big schools? What are you learning there? Just your trade, hey?"

William remembered how he had studied botany. The herbarium with the dry, flattened plants, so different from the living leaves, blossoms and grass

es moving in the wind, growing abundantly, talking and appealing to the passer-by. This evoked the labels of medicinal roots, stalks and flowers. The drugs which he was supposed to prescribe twenty times a day and of which he knew the pharmaceutical appearance only—sometimes not even that, but just their names. And on the shelves in the drug store the white jars and black bottles, mostly empty, but making the customer believe that they contained the things marked on them with golden letters: Semina, Pulvis, Flores, Folia, Hordeum, Radix, Cortex. . . Also Unguentum, Tinctura, Tabellae. . . Then The Maronites' Tea, The Fountain of Youth, the Practical Farm Remedies, Dr. So-and-So's Gall Stone Solvent and the large shelves of the so-called scientific patent medicines. What did he know about all these things?

And there were the foodstuffs. He saw them growing. The modest vegetables, the vast stretches of corn and wheat and oats—he learned at last the difference between wheat and oats, which he had always wanted to know. And now, as he ate his bread, he realized the amount of labor each piece of food concealed.

As he walked on he witnessed the slow dance of the flowers in and out of the land. The dandelion yielding to the buttercup. Then the invasion of daisies and blackeyed Susans and goldenrod andasters and the hundreds of other little eyes of the earth—and so on through the summer. He appreciated the beauty of the mountain flowers, studied the varieties of the humble clover, the leaves and flowers of which he loved. Also the hundreds of small bright spots in the shadow of the grass that offered themselves to him. His hand caressed them at the edge of the road as if they had been the heads, the cheeks of little children. He admired the ferns, the mosses, the lichens, the water plants, the shrubs. The trees were like big protecting friends whom he greeted with humility.

He disdained no insect, no bird. The triumphal call of the robin, the exquisite virtuosity of the thrush, the song of the warbler, the busy, machine-like knocking of the woodpecker became familiar to him.

He silently watched the squirrel's pranks and the chipmunk's surprised glances, he studied the worm and the turtle.

His days were carefree and thrilled him with interesting facts. The white roads stretched out before him, lost themselves in the wooded hills and reappeared at the next incline. He was not much disturbed by that road pest, the auto, because he became accustomed to it and also because he chose the quietest, least frequented, although longer thoroughfares. He loved to let the wind play with his hair or to lie down on his back in the grass and look at the sun and into the deep blue.

He learned to know the scent of the freshly cut hay, the gusts of honeysuckle perfume, the more modest whiffs of mint fragrance that stopped him on his way and made him look for the hidden plant in tall weeds or dense bushes.

His cheeks grew rubicund and sunburnt, he ceased to cough altogether and was healthier than he had ever been.

He walked on and on.

He followed the moon in the daytime—a tiny piece of fine, whitish cloud—until twilight, when a little gold was mixed with its silver and it was many times crossed by the erratic flight of the bat in his sudden deviations and unexpected plunges.

He observed the struggle for existence of the larger and smaller animals and said to himself: "All these things live because they must and live so and not otherwise because they cannot help it. They eat each other. The strong destroys the weak. Only men and domesticated animals are an exception. Among them the few and less cap-

able, powerfully entrenched, strangle the strong and the many."

He, who was afraid of a cow, once saw with surprise a whole herd of cattle turn their backs as he approached. If they only knew their strength and his weakness! But was it not the same thing with people?

Further beyond, in another enclosure, the isolated bull, separated from the cows, who were the whole day in full sight of him, bellowed with a hoarse note. That reminded William of the enforced abstainer—timid or impecunious—who, in our human, insecure society, sees women, women everywhere, but not a drop of love for him. And it made him think of the old maids, who, during half of their lives, until faded, blunted, and devitalized, suffer from sex hunger—in the long run a worse torment than that caused by bread hunger.

William liked to watch the children and the young folk in the villages play. Their plays and gambols were always interesting, but they were the same through the whole breadth of the country. The children also were about the same everywhere; they resembled each other much more than the grown-ups did among themselves. That had probably been so through thousands of years, in all countries and in all stages of civilization and perhaps before that. William was convinced that the coat that separated civilized man from his primitive ancestor was very thin. His childhood and ours, if untrammelled, were exactly alike and civilization has to begin with every one of us from the beginning, if we are not to fall back into barbarism.

In some places William had to state his profession and immediately he was assailed with demands for prohibited alcohol prescriptions—one of the new doctors' revenues all through the country.

He had a long talk with a young country physician who was strongly on the side of prohibition. The latter confessed that he did not care for medi-

cine and that, before starting his studies, he had wanted to be a restaurateur.

"Why?" asked William, "were you anxious to feed the people? Did you find in yourself the ability to give them better food than others would?"

"No," the doctor laughed. "I thought—and still think—there is much money in it. My uncle has five eating places and his pile is growing every year. Don't you know—feeding the people, even with bad food, is the best business? We all enjoy eating—and eating much."

"But now you're doing something akin to that. Only instead of giving the people food, you're enabling them to drink."

"Well, I hated the practice so much I should have left it, had it not been for the prohibition prescriptions. My income jumped threefold."

"Oh, I see—no wonder you're for the continuation of the alcohol prohibition law."

"No, my ideas are based on hygienic grounds, I...."

William laughed:

"You—and hygiene! How can you ally hygiene—or even medicine—with the dispensing of alcohol? You are here to cure disease, while alcohol is producing, as you know, a large percentage of all the insanity cases and much of organic illness."

"Well, that's just it. There is no better ally of our practice than alcohol," he cynically replied. "But say, Dr. Straight, if you believe so much in hygiene, you ought to be even a greater partisan of prohibition than I am."

"There you are mistaken. I think there is but one way to get rid of the evils of alcoholism—and that is education, education in the right way."

"Oh, that is a long road."

"True, but the shortest after all."

But the country doctor was anxious to change the impression made through his cynicism and said:

"What I said a while ago was just for fun. You

know I don't mean that. But, here, we're both professional men, I can speak frankly. . . . Really, how can we be expected to think of prevention? We're nothing but cogs and gears and screws in the big machine. Why not ask the alcohol dealer to discontinue his pernicious work? He must go on too. He is but a larger wheel than myself. As long as the machine itself lasts, we cannot help it."

"And so you will not stop making money by spreading disease," William concluded.



Everywhere on the mountainside and in the valleys he saw curved backs working away, and in the villages ugly, deformed, oldish men and women, all crooked and aged before their time. They were the farmers. They were living badly, eating only canned foods and selling the fresh stuff they grew or giving it to the farm animals whose slaves they were. And still, all these people were stronger than he. Or rather they were more trained to hard labor. Each time he tried to saw wood or mow a piece of field, or hold the handles of a plow, he had to cease soon, while they were able to continue indefinitely.

They were pious and listened attentively to their priests preaching pity and charity, but—without being aware of it—were cruel in their relations among themselves and toward their horses, cattle and other beasts.

One day William watched the draining of a pond. Hundreds of fish remained waterless, with the same effect on them as if our air were pumped out. The fish floundered and fluttered, splashed desperately through the mire, but, with the exception of the people who were busy catching them, the crowd stood around and viewed the agony of the water animals with great amusement and with a stupid grin. A large turtle, burying itself into the mud, was caught by a man, who stuck his knife laughingly into it. The people applauded loudly. A fat woman asked for the largest fish and clucked her tongue at the thought of the food to be made from

it. No one seemed to think of the fish as beings fighting for life.

The sense of property was developed in the country people to the utmost. They knew exactly what belonged to each of them. They had taken possession of smaller or larger portions of soil which they had not made, which they could not make, and held on to them desperately. The larger landowners, with their four-footed and two-footed watchdogs, always endeavored to enforce their rights as much as possible, even on their idle holdings, recurring to the law if necessary. Once William, tired from a long walk through a path between two fenced-in gardens, sat down near one of the doors of a large stock-raising estate. Immediately a servant and a pointer were sent out to look him over, to smell him and to tell him that he had encroached ten feet on the property.

There were endless idle lands everywhere. They made him think by contrast of the swarming multitudes of sweltering residents in the cities, the continuous increase of births, the competition of mouths, the standing army of unemployed and the wars for more land and more natural resources.

In the vicinity of a large town he saw a group of week-enders crouching in the grass and examining an ant-hill. They commented with stupefaction on the large number of tiny black busy things that kept on moving, emerging from their galleries, disappearing into them, carrying objects. But compared to a human city this heap of soil with its inhabitants was much less densely populated.

William slept in small hotels, taverns, inns, in farmhouses and even in barns. When he happened to sleep in the back parts of the farms, he remembered some of his friends who wrinkled their noses at barn smells, but did not notice how their parlors, apartments, blocks and cities reeked.

Once he stopped for a long time to look at the

construction of an aqueduct. He admired the engineering work. It was splendid. Could there be quackery and swindle in it as in his own profession, he wondered. He remembered a physician at a medical meeting who had asked that question.

On that night he slept in one of the spacious cylindrical concrete pipes waiting near the river to be put into use, and his mattress was a thick layer of grass.

He had a delightful dream. He was the mayor and leader of one of the small towns which he visited. He gave the citizens full freedom and helped them to re-arrange their mutual relations, their collective life, in such a manner as to avoid oppression. He was a sage. The townspeople came to him for advice and they always followed it. As his wisdom became known far and wide, he was invited to direct the destinies of large cities. But he refused. He was also wanted to fill the governor's seat of his state and many times he was asked to be a candidate for Congress. He declined. He would not leave his little town where he was able to make his fellow-townsmen happy and give them the peace they needed for their development. He was working out the final details of his administration concerning art, street embellishments, festivities and so on, when he was awakened by the laborers who came to work in the morning. As he rubbed his eyes he thought that perhaps it might not be a bad idea to settle down in a small locality and grow with it, trying to be useful and gain prominence. But as he spoke with the men of the nearest town and heard about the plots and intricacies of local politics and the stubbornness of the inhabitants, he decided to go further, to walk on.

The towns and cities through which he passed were uninteresting. They were all more or less identical. Nowhere an attempt at originality. All ugly. The same chain stores, the same clothes, the same houses, the same schools. Standardization

reigned everywhere and killed individuality. At a given moment all the people—chain people—sat in chain restaurants, read the same kind of chain newspapers, and put into their stomachs the same chain pie and coffee and into their brains the same chain opinions.

And lately, since the advent of the radio, the minds were even more standardized. Originality was an impossibility.

He went on and on.

The fall with its coolness and resplendent colors gave him more energy.

The winter did not stop him. It had its beauties.

At last he arrived in the mid-western city which was his momentary aim.

William was thirty-five years old when he set his foot again on the first American city in which he had lived as a young boy, coming over from Europe.

His mother had died a few months before in the same city.

He went to the cemetery, found her burying place and passed the day near it. It was good for her to be dead now, he thought. What would she have said, how would she have suffered, had she learned of William's illness? Then of his desertion of the medical practice? What a blow that would have been for her!

The next day he went to the house in which Louise had lived with her parents and older sister twenty years before. Louise, the eleven-year-old girl who had made love to the little boy he was then. Louise, who had unlocked his childish heart and opened a flood of fiery feelings unknown to him until then and which had almost destroyed him.

Ten years before, to the day, he had come to look for her. But he had departed without seeing her. He feared that her actual presence might ruin the ideal picture of her that he had painted in his mind.

Her love letter, now twenty years old and turned yellow, was still in his pocket.

How was he going to find her?

His imagination pictured a woman with broad haunches and a lot of children of all ages. But he drove this apparition away and for a while another picture was superposed—the poetical goddess created in his childhood and still living in his con-

sciousness. Both were products of his fancy and a struggle of both was in progress in his mind as he reached the place.

He was not surprised to learn that the D . . 's were not living there. Nor was their store there. Only a few persons in the neighborhood remembered them. One woman said: "That's how people disappear and leave no trace." However, he succeeded in getting their address, which was far away.

He found a patriarch with a flowing white beard and trembling fingers. When the name of Louise was mentioned, he began to cry. He sobbed and swallowed, in succession, a few small glasses of whiskey, after having offered some to William, but in vain.

He was her father.

"She died a week ago," he said. "The poor girl. Now I am the only one of the family who is alive. They're all dead...."

He could not speak, drank another glass.

"She was married and luckily her two kids died when young; but she was sick for the last few years," he continued later.

He showed William her photo. The matron type. The common variety. The hair done up, dressed like all the women whom one met in the street.

As he went out, William felt not only that Louise had died, but that the ideal so long nurtured by him was also gone, had disappeared at the first contact with reality, at the moment he glanced at her picture.

He went to his hotel and sank into an armchair near the open fireplace, exhausted, warming his hands at the fire.

Then he took out the old love letter and placed it slowly in the flame. It was quickly consumed. But in its ashes the words were still readable—until William destroyed their last trace.

He opened his purse. He paid for his room and had one dollar left.

Although he did not know how he would manage to travel without money, he went out of the city and walked straight ahead. He was going westward.

THE END.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

1. Anyone who quotes from this book in such a manner as to make the author say what he does not intend to say will be doing something dishonest.

2. This book is not an autobiography. It should rather be regarded as a composite picture. It contains but a few facts from the author's medical life—easy to recognize—as in some group pictures the painter reserves for himself a modest corner.

3. Nothing in it is invented or imagined.

4. The author does not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed in it.

5. This book was mentally prepared between 1900 and 1925, and written mainly in Capri in February, 1926, and in Chevreuse, near Paris, in May, June and July, 1926.



# THE CHILD AND THE HOME

By B. LIBER

New, third, edition increased and improved, cloth, 248 pages, published by The Vanguard Press, New York. *To be had through RATIONAL LIVING, BOX 2, STATION M, NEW YORK CITY.* Price, 50 cents. If ordered by mail, 10 cents extra for carriage charges.

A rational book on the upbringing of children, translated into several languages in Europe, discussed all over the world. A book for parents. Preface to first English edition by Upton Sinclair. Preface to French edition by one of the greatest French writers, Léon Frapié. Preface to German edition by a prominent Berlin teacher, Professor Paul Oestreich. A Rumanian translation has appeared in Bucharest.

Admiring the wisdom of this book.—ANATOLE FRANCE.

To the serious problem of the education of the child within the family, he brings remarkable contributions, observations and suggestions both practical and moral, which will be of enormous benefit to all those who have at heart an intelligent and profound love for the child. *The Child and the Home* will make parents and educators think deeply, bringing their attention to many a gap in upbringing as it is generally practiced today. The book is addressed to all classes.—LÉON FRAPIÉ, Paris.

It is independent, it makes appeal to self-responsibility, it lays more stress on the conduct of the educator than on his preaching. . . . It is a leader toward independent thinking. Both for parents and teachers.—PROF. PAUL OESTREICH, Berlin.

An absolutely non-theoretical, plain, but unreservedly true book. These qualities make it directly and richly useful to every reader, particularly to parents. The author is a modern Pestalozzi.—*Neue Erziehung*, a monthly, Berlin.

The talks are admirable and would do very many parents great good.—PROF. G. STANLEY HALL.

The book is saturated with libertarian ideas, which the author puts before us in a plain and practical manner. . . . We have derived much pleasure from this book in which the author shows his great sympathy with and unbounded faith in the young generation "knocking at the door".—*Freedom*, London.

Hoping that your book will be accorded the good reception it deserves and be given a wide reading and careful steady.—EUGENE V. DEBS.

Your book is vivid and interesting. It strikes me as quite an achievement to have stated the extreme libertarian position so well as you have stated it. I do not agree at many points, but you make me think.—LEONARD D. ABBOTT.

One will have to go a long way to find another book expressive of such refined sentiments, recording such sympathetic observations and giving such intelligent advice as is found in these pages. It is quite evident that Dr. Liber is by temperament a child's man as well as a true physician.—ELIZABETH B. FERM and ALEX C. FERM, Ferrer Modern School of Stelton, N. J.

Uncommonly good luck.—*Truth Seeker*.

In this book Dr. Liber has established a new test for radicals.—HEYWOOD BROWN, in *The World*.

Most comprehensive book, invaluable aid to parents and others interested in child welfare.—*New York Call*.

Much practical good sense is packed into this volume.—*Birth Control Review*.

Every parent would be benefited by reading it, the thoughts are profound and well expressed.—*Labor Age*.

These essays will accomplish a great and needed work.—*New York Medical Journal*.

Sound advice.—*The New Republic*.

Excellently conceived and finely written.—*Pearson's Magazine*.

A primer of liberty and interesting to experts as well as to tyros.—BOLTON HALL, in *The Survey*.

These opinions are original, but too radical to be safe.—*The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Contains radical and ultra-radical opinions, will stimulate intelligent parents to think.—*The Friend*, Organ of the Workmen's Circle.

The sort of book we should like to shout about from the housetops.—*The Spectator*, London.

This is the most rational, logical, illuminating treatise on child nature we have ever seen. Priceless in value.—*The Vegetarian Magazine*.

A rational book from a very rational thinking man.—DR. J. H. TILDEN, in *Philosophy of Health*.

Many books on the upbringing of children have been published. But it is not exaggerated to say that none of them treats the question of the children's upbringing from the first moment of their birth until their later school-years so thoroughly and completely as does Dr. Liber's book. . . . Dr. Liber is really an outspoken friend of the children.—*The Freiheit*, New York.

All readers will agree his experience in children's upbringing has been wide and varied, and his recommendations, if not universally acceptable, at least contain suggestions which will coincide with the views of many successful parents.—*The Japan Advertiser*, Tokyo.

The book is well worth reading. Each chapter gives the reader a better notion about the child, his needs, his psychology and possibilities, than we find in most parents.—*Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, New York.

A book that all parents and others having children to bring up should read.—*The Critic and Guide*.

We commend the spirit of this book.—*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*.

An excellent book, refreshing, courageous, full of truths.—*Vegetarische Bode*, Amsterdam, Holland.

Contains a large amount of frank common sense about children. It should be thoughtfully read by parents and teachers.—*Education*, Boston.

I have at last met with a book which discusses, without fear of adverse criticism from the orthodox, the rational education of children.—*The Literary Guide*, London.

The book is characterized by rare frankness and provokes thinking.—*United India*, Delhi.

This book swarms with judicious reflections on the child's upbringing in progressive families.—*L'Idée Libre*, Paris.

His thoughts and descriptions are characterized by a sober clearness.—WERNER ZIMMERMANN, in *Tau*, Switzerland.

An honest, courageous book.

We recommend it to parents who wish to avoid difficult theoretical discussions. Its revolutionary viewpoint recommends it particularly to proletarian parents.—*Volkswart*, Breslau, Germany.

The book is recommending itself and will find its proper place in Europe.—*Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, Vienna, Austria.

It is not the voice of a preacher in the desert! Clear, straight advice, delightful to read and inciting parents and educators to think. No gray theory, but sober, often sarcastically observed reality. A current of the purest truthfulness blows through the stories, confessions, adventures, suggestions and answers. *A physician, but what a capable pedagogue!* Excellent words and plain examples are dedicated to sexual upbringing. *It takes courage to follow Liber's advice, but those who'll do it, will advance education very much.*—*Saechische Schulzeitung*, Dresden, Germany. (A teacher's journal.)

It is written by a non-professional teacher, by a biologist, by a warm-hearted man and father. It is laymen's pedagogics, pedagogics from the life and the love of a Pestalozzi! This book has, in comparison with the pretentious theories of the professional text-books, the great merit of bringing something immediately practical.—*Der Beamtenfreund*, Germany.

Liber is no professional pedagogue. But he possesses a rich treasure of pedagogic knowledge. Unembarrassed by the usual theories he faces the educational problems in a splendidly direct manner, not caring whether he is throwing down right and left barriers that seemed unconquerable and whether he is declaring war to all traditions.—*Neue Juedische Rundschau*, Tchernovitz.

An excellent book. Treating the question of child upbringing with much intelligence and reason. Serious but popular, written by a man who loves, knows and understands the child.—*Intransigeant*, Paris.

Treats masterly the problems of modern childhood.—*La Dépêche*, France.

Liber destroys and constructs and goes to the utmost deductions. It is a Gospel the reading of which is extremely attractive and profitable. A vivid and new work. Interesting courageous.—*La Tribune du Centre*, Nevers, France.

Astonishing when we think that nobody has written such a book

before. Seductive by its pleasant form, expressing strong ideas in a popular way.—*L'Ere Nouvelle*, Paris.

This little volume deals with soundness of thought in the proper raising of the youth of America from cradle days. To many it will seem daring, but to the intelligent it will give much food for thought, to the layman parent, to the teacher, to the family physician, and to the minister. It invites truth, that children, told falsehoods in their early days, may not grow up to learn facts about themselves away from home and bring home these facts to parents who sooner or later must explain. *Tiny in size, this book is a giant in purpose and worthy of a place in every home.*—*Pittsburgh Press*.

## CONTENTS

### Chapter I.—*Fundamental Errors.*

Chapter II.—*Some Practical Advice*—Start early, The Child's Dwelling Place, Playing and Fighting, The Child's Conflicts, Influence, The Parents' Assistance, Clothes and Dressing, Boys' and Girls' Work, The Heroic Age, Coercion, Punishments, Rewards, Fairy Tales, Obedience, Good Manners, Religious Ideas, Making the Child Immoral, The Higher Morality, Superstition and Intolerance, The Child's "Vices", The Only Child, What Is Order?, Work and Responsibility, The Kindergarten, The School and the Home, Mistakes of Radical Parents, Means and Aims, Some Objections Answered, Final Remarks.

### Chapter III.—*Instances From Life.*

Chapter IV.—*Sex and the Child*—Sex Morality, Children's Questions, The Girl's Plight, The Boy's Plight, Masturbation, Opposition to Sex Education, Conversation on Sex, Dialogues Between a Wise Mother and Her Daughter.

Chapter V.—*Health and the Child*—Introductory Remarks, Birth Control, Influences During Pregnancy, Remnants of Savagery, Circumcision, Kissing, Vaccination, Drugs, Surgical Operations, Fads, The Senses, Gibberish, Speech Defects, Corporal Punishments, Fear, Habit Movements, Clothes, Bathing, Air, Food, Vegetarianism, Defecation and Urination, Enuresis Nocturna or Bed Wetting, Cleanliness, Illness, Health Habits, Weight and Height of Normal Children.

### Chapter VI.—*Advice and Discussion.*

Answers to Questions from Readers of *The Child and the Home.*

Taking a Walk, Going to Bed as a Punishment, Friendship Between Parents and Children, Profane Language, Food and Clothes, Naturism, Eyeglasses, Love Fixation, Institutions for Children, Sane and Insane Nationalism, Colored and White Children, Talented Children, Stealing, Lack of Appetite, Additional Studies, Timidity, Lying and Stealing, Tyrannizing the Parents, Lack of Pugnacity, Nursery Rhymes, Confiding in Parents, Adolescence, Bath, Powder, Clothes, Food, Diet, Hot Food, Nursing Mother, Sweets, How Often to Feed the Child, Homosexuality, Observation, Books for Children.

*Letters and Press Comments:* Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Ferm, The Author's Reply to Mr. and Mrs. Ferm, Letter from Upton Sinclair, The Author's Reply to Upton Sinclair. Some Press Comments, The Author's Reply to Press Comments.

# RATIONAL LIVING

An Independent Magazine Devoted to the Teaching  
of Rational Methods of Living

B. LIBER, Editor

ADDRESS: RATIONAL LIVING

BOX 2, STATION M,

NEW YORK

A magazine published at a loss.—No paid advertisements.—No doctors, institutions, drugs, or curing methods to recommend.—Its aim is to teach its readers to become as independent from all such things and people as possible. Limited circulation.—*Free sample copies to new readers.*

Subscription: 12 numbers \$5.00 (Europe \$2.00). *Confidence System*: Those who cannot pay the full price may pay as much as they can. Single copy 50c. (Europe 20c.)

---

## WHAT READERS THINK OF RATIONAL LIVING

(A few of many letters)

I am gratified as well as amazed to discover that there is a doctor in New York with courage to start such a magazine.—**DR. J. P. WARBASSE**, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Noted Surgeon, Leader of the Cooperative Movement in America.)

Highly interesting.—Editor One Big Union Monthly, Chicago.

I like very much the spirit in which R. L. is edited. I feel throughout the magazine that it is directed with a sort of divine fury,—that you are raging, burning with fire and indignation and sarcasm.—**P. S. GIBLING**, Taliesin, Spring Green, Wis. (Writer).

It is certainly unlike any other public medical magazine that I know.—**DR. CH. BOLDUAN** (Chief, Section of Public Health Education, U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, D. C.; Lecturer on Preventive Medicine and Hygiene, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.)

The contents of R. L. are very good.—**DR. WM. J. ROBINSON**, New York. (Editor, *The Medical Critic and Guide*.)

R. L. is worth much more than you ask for it.—**WILL DURANT**, Ph. D., New York. (Author of *"The Story of Philosophy"*, Director of the N. Y. Labor Temple School.)

I read your magazine from cover to cover (incl.) and like it much.—DR. H. LORBER, New York (Noted Gynecologist.)

Your magazine contains much interesting material and I congratulate the editor for his achievement.—S. D. MOTT, New York (President, N. Y. Vegetarian Society.)

It is a wonderful journal and deserves all the success in the world.—E. H. JULIUS, Girard, Kansas (Editor Appeal to Reason.)

Here at last is a periodical devoted principally to health conservation and disease prevention that is thoroughly sound economically and socially. The department on "Labor and Health" alone is worth the price of the magazine.—*The World*, Oakland, Cal.

The spirit of R. L. is a spirit that transcends all prejudice, that is not sold to any party dogma, and which is in truth, as well as in name, "rational".—S. SHAPIRO, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Teacher.)

I am reading R. L. with real interest.—L. D. ABBOTT (Writer, Leader of Radical Thought.)

I like your journal very much. The matter therein is strongly presented and I particularly like your clear short sentence style.—CH. OWEN, New York (Editor *The Messenger*, a Magazine for Colored People.)

Your magazine is filling a much needed want. You combine in it knowledge, the truth and the courage which has been lacking in similar publications heretofore. At last we have a magazine which is calling "a spade a spade", yet is constructive in its work. You are doing one of the greatest works that are done today in America; you are putting the tools of education where they should be.—RICHARD MAYER, Boston (Cotton Merchant.)

R. L. fills a long-felt want in health literature.—J. MARTIN, Chicago (I. W. W. Leader.)

R. L. is a valiant attempt to stimulate interest on many questions of primary importance—health, fitness, eugenics, procreation, and disease prevention.—*The Worker's Dreadnought*, London, England.

A magazine in handy octavo, typographically excellent, full of good reading material. The editor, Dr. B. Liber, cannot be exactly labeled in his radicalism. He is essentially an eclectic, trying to absorb and popularize the most vital ideas in all systems of advanced thought. R. L. strives to cover the whole range of life. It deals ably and in lucid, popular style with the problems of health, particularly those affecting the life of workers. An implacable foe to the commercializing tendencies that are entering the service of health, it exposes and brands all kinds of quackery and humbug. It is down on patent medicines and widely advertised cure-alls. It recommends sanitation and prevention of disease as far more useful than drugs. At the same time it proposes a profound belief in vegetarianism, both from the medical and the humanitarian viewpoint. The range of Rational Living is not limited to health alone. It includes art, literature, economics, politics, morality. The reader may once in a while differ with the views presented, but

he will invariably feel that they express an honest opinion. The service derived from the perusal of that lively monthly messenger is worth many times the financial expense.—*N. Y. Call Magazine.*

After having been a subscriber to almost every health magazine published in the U. S. for the last 25 years yours appeals to me as the ablest of all.—*M. BOAS, Coreys, N. Y.*

We quote and translate very freely from R. L. Indeed we find most of your work so interesting that we cannot resist the pleasure of translating it for the benefit of our readers.—*E. M. OSIER, Valencia, Spain (One of the Editors of "Helios", a Spanish "Vegetarian-Naturist" Magazine.)*

I want to write you a line of comradely greetings and tell you that we appreciate the work you are doing in your magazine and will be glad to boost it. R. L. is eminently worthy of survival and Mrs. Kate Richards O'Hare and I will do what we can to help it along.—*F. P. O'HARE, Girard, Kansas (One of the Editors of "The National Rip-Saw".*

The friends your magazine makes seem to be of the type that the Russian journalists used to call "reader-friends". They come to enquire weeks ahead before the magazine comes in.—*M. N. MAISEL, New York (Book Dealer and Publisher.)*

R. L. is truly a great magazine, one of the very best.—*W. MERCHANT, New York.*

I cannot express in words the great good R. L. has been and will be to the people, for it is the most honest health paper printed that teaches the right way of living; and it should be in every home.—*B. C. BLAKE, Charlevoix, Mich.*

I wish to congratulate you upon your splendid achievement; your magazine is a revelation, and if "*mens sana in corpore sano*" be a true saying, as I believe it is, R. L. is the most fundamental step in the right direction within this last decade. Radical organizations of all shades could do no more useful work than to boost the circulation of your magazine.—*A. MARKY, Suffern, N. Y.*

You make us realize that there is more in the question of health than we are apt to think.—*F. SPER, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

R. L. is like a clear spring of clean truth in a desert of falsehood. It helps me to live right.—*O. W. EVANS, Tobar, Nev.*

Each issue that I have seen I recognize as of unusual value—and the very best of all the health publications.—*A. PARK, Palo Alto, Cal.*

I wish to compliment you for the rich contents of the last number, which is a real source of intelligent information upon the most vital and most neglected subject—health, physical as well as spiritual. I consider your achievements in this field of the greatest importance for a saner and healthier society.—*M. BELLITT, Los Angeles, Cal. (Secretary, Los Angeles Vegetarian Society.)*

*Articles from Rational Living have been reprinted by a number of publications in various countries.*

# AS A DOCTOR SEES IT

By B. LIBER

Elegant volume, hard binding, price \$1.50

**FREE** with a yearly subscription to Rational Living if requested.

**IT CONTAINS NO OPINIONS,**

but facts, instructive facts—and it is packed with documents of human and modern life.

**OPINION OF AN EXPERT.**

"It certainly sums up the total of human misery that a physician is able to observe in a great city as dramatically as anything I have read."

But it is far from being gloomy. There is not only a touch of humor in almost every story, but there are pages which will make you rollick with laughter.

**173 STORIES.**

In its 208 pages "AS A DOCTOR SEES IT" contains 173 stories—not the cheap, long, boring, so-called "short" stories that are often dished up in sensational magazines, but the **shortest, tersest** little stories with the most energetic, **thought-provoking** and stirring material you have ever read.

**PENCIL SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR.**

Moreover, this unique volume is splendidly illustrated with 64 rapid pencil sketches from life, by the author, who is also an artist.

**SEVEN PARTS.**

Part one "In the Sweat of Thy Face" contains stories from the life of the **WORKING PEOPLE**; part two "Poisoned Pleasure" deals with **SEX LIFE AND BIRTH CONTROL**; part three "Pain and Sorrow" speaks about sad situations in life as the doctor meets them; part four "War Echoes" shows the disastrous **EFFECTS OF THE WAR** among the common people; part five "Life Waves" gives a number of unusually interesting pictures and problems; part six "Shop Gossip" is what its title implies, gossip on things about which doctors prefer to talk among themselves; and part seven "Between Consultations" takes the doctor away from his work for a while and makes him see other things, but always from the doctor's point of view.

**ADDRESS: RATIONAL LIVING**

**Box 2, STATION M,**

**NEW YORK**