

## Chapter Twenty

### Surgery



he discoverers of anesthetics are classed among the greatest benefactors of humanity, because it is believed that ether, chloroform, cocaine and similar nerve-paralyzing agents have greatly lessened the sum of human suffering. I doubt, however, that this is true.

Anesthetics have made surgery technically easy and have done away with the pain caused directly by the incisions; but on the other hand, these marvelous effects of pain-killing drugs have encouraged indiscriminate and unnecessary operations to such an extent that at least nine-tenths of all the surgical operations performed today are uncalled for. In most instances these ill-advised mutilations are followed by lifelong weakness and suffering, which far outweigh the temporary pains formerly endured when **unavoidable** operations were performed without the use of anesthesia.<sup>1</sup>

We do not wish to be understood as condemning unqualifiedly any and all surgical interventions in the treatment of human ailments. An operation may occasionally be absolutely necessary as a means of saving life. Surgery is also indicated in cases of injury, such

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<sup>1</sup> Great strides have been made in surgery since Dr. Lindlahr's day and we feel he might write differently about this art today. On the other hand, he might not. Can one really deny that the more things that can be helped by surgery the less people are inclined to live the life that makes such surgery unnecessary? If we knew that unless we led the good, healthy life we would soon be dumped on the garbage pile of human flotsam and jetsam would we not be more inclined to live in harmony with the natural laws of our being than at present? Admittedly these are philosophical questions, but are they not valid?

as wounds or fractured bones, in certain obstetrical complications and in other affections of a purely mechanical nature.

In all such cases anesthetics prevent much suffering which cannot be avoided in any other way. But anyone who has had an opportunity to watch the prolonged misery of the victims of un-called-for operations will not doubt that anesthesia has been a two-edged sword which has inflicted many more wounds than it has healed.

Many physicians have recognized more or less distinctly the uselessness and harmfulness of "Old School" medical treatment. Dissatisfied and disgusted with old-fashioned drugging, they turn to surgery, convinced that in it they possess an **exact scientific method** of curing ailments. They seem to think that the surest way to cure a diseased organ is to remove it with the knife—fine reasoning for school boys, but not worthy of men of science.

I, for my part, cannot understand how an organ can be cured after it has been extirpated and, preserved in alcohol, adorns the specimen cabinet of the surgeon.

### Destruction or Cure—Which Is Better?

"But," the surgeon says, "we do not remove organs from the body unless they have become useless."

However, this claim is not borne out by actual facts. During the past ten years thousands of patients have come under our treatment, both in the sanitarium and in the downtown offices, whose family physicians had declared that in order to save their lives they must submit to the knife without delay. With very few exceptions these people were cured by us without using a poisonous drug, an antiseptic or a knife.

Several women who, years ago, were confronted with removal of the ovaries, are today the joyful mothers of children. Many of our former patients, who were treated by "Old School" physicians for acute or chronic appendicitis and were strongly urged to have the offending organ removed, are today alive and well and still in possession of their vermiform appendices. Other patients were threatened with operations for kidney, gall and bladder stones; fibroid and other tumors; floating kidneys; stomach troubles; intestinal and uterine disorders, not to mention the multitude of children whose tonsils and adenoids were to have been removed. All of

these onetime surgical cases have escaped the knife and are doing very well indeed with their bodies intact and in possession of the full quota of organs given them by Nature.

Is it not better to **cure** a diseased organ than to **remove** it? Nature Cure proves every day that the better way is at the same time the easiest way.

Thousands of men and women operated upon for some local ailment which could have been cured easily by natural methods of treatment are condemned by these inexcusable mutilations to lifelong suffering. Many, if not actually suffering pain, have been unnecessarily unsexed and in other ways incapacitated for the normal functions and natural enjoyments of life.

Cases of this kind are the most pitiable of all that come under our observation. When we learn that a major operation has been performed upon a consultant, our barometer of hope drops considerably. We know from much experience that the mutilation of the human organism has a tendency to lessen the chances of recovery; such patients are nearly always lacking in recuperative power.

A body deprived of important parts or organs is forever unbalanced. It is like a watch with a spring or a wheel taken out; it may run, but never quite right; it is hypersensitive and easily thrown out of balance by any adverse influence.

### The Human Body Is a Unit

We are realizing more and more that the human body is a homogeneous and harmonious whole, and that we cannot injure one part of it without damaging other parts and often the entire organism. Cutting in the vital organs means cutting in the brain. It affects the functions of the nervous system most profoundly.

A physician in Vienna has written a very interesting book in which he shows that the inner membranes of the nose are in close relationship and sympathy with distant parts and organs of the body. He located in the nose one small area which corresponds to the lungs. By irritating this area with an electric needle he could provoke asthmatic attacks in patients subject to this disease. By anesthetizing the same area he could stop immediately severe attacks of asthma and of coughing. Another area in the nasal cavity corresponds to the genital organs. The doctor proved that by electric irritation applied to this area abortions could be produced,

and that by anesthesia of the same area in the nose, uterine hemorrhages could be stopped.<sup>2</sup>

These and many other facts of experience throw a wonderful light upon the unity of the human organism. The body resembles a watch. You cannot injure one part of it without affecting its entire mechanism.

The evil aftereffects of surgical operations do not always manifest at once. On the contrary, the surgical treatment is frequently followed by a period of seeming improvement. The troublesome local symptoms have been removed, and aftereffects of the mutilation have not had time to assert themselves. But sooner or later the old symptoms return in aggravated form, or a new set of complications arises. The patient is made to believe that the first operation was a perfect success and that this latest crop of difficulties has nothing to do with the former, but is something entirely new. At other times he is assured that the first operation did not go deep enough, that it failed to reach the seat of the trouble and must be done over again.

And so the work of mutilation goes merrily on. The disease poisons in the body set up one center of inflammation after another. These centers the surgeon promptly removes; but the real disease, the venereal, psoriatic or scrofulous taint, the uric or oxalic acid, the poisonous alkaloids and ptomaines affecting every cell and every drop of blood in the body, these elude the surgeon's knife and create new ulcers, abscesses, inflammations, stones, cancers, etc., as fast as the old ones are extirpated.

Those who have studied the previous chapters carefully will readily comprehend these facts. They will know that acute and subacute conditions represent Nature's cleansing and healing efforts, and that local suppression by drug or knife only serves to turn Nature's corrective and purifying activities into chronic disease.

The highest art of the true physician is to preserve and to restore, not to mutilate or destroy.

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<sup>2</sup>This effect is the theory behind the many reflex treatments given today, all the way from acupuncture to foot reflexology.