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ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE

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Good health in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls;
Who steals my purse, steals trash;
But he that filches from me my good health,
Rob me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

Thus we paraphrase Othello.

Under the teachings of the great pathologist Virchow, who died in 1902, medical science has been dominated by the conception of cellular pathology and cellular organization of living bodies. Out of cells, tissues were constructed. Out of tissues, organs were constructed. All the organs, and nothing more, made up the organism. Analysis was enthroned as a god. The whole was established as the exact sum total of all its parts. All the functions of the whole were derived from its elementary components. Medical particularism held the field, as behaviorism and autonomic materialism ruled supreme.

Gradually, however, there has come a change in emphasis which we may call the outworking of philosophic method in the domain of science. The change is not complete, but as it progresses, we can hope that the inherent values of analysis and the cellular organization will be carried over and completed in the broader and more difficult conception of organic unity and functional synthesis. Thus only can we treat of man as a whole being, as an organism or an individuality, if you please, who is greater than the sum total of his parts. Speaking of society, Pareto2 puts it in these words, “The fact that we deal with individua by no means implies that a number of individua taken

1 Commencement address delivered at Pomona College, Claremont, California, June 17, 1935.
