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MALARIA¹

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MALARIA is a subject of multifarious scientific interest. Its study leads us into many biological considerations involving an undetermined number of species representing at least three phyla of the animal kingdom: protozoa, articulata, chordata.

Considering only human malaria, the subject has important biological, medical, economic and cultural aspects. The topic could have been profitably discussed under the general heading of "Contributions of Science to Medicine," and it is equally adapted to consideration under the caption "Contributions of Medicine to Science," since it is a toss-up whether the scientists taught the doctors more than the latter repaid them. It was convenient when Dr. Laveran discovered the parasite to find that the systematists had a pigeonhole ready for it. It was of immense help when Dr. Ross demonstrated mosquito transmission to find that entomology could furnish many ready-made criteria for discriminating between various kinds of these insects, and many pertinent facts regarding their anatomy and physiology. It has been a pleasure to observe the repayment of these large debts in kind, in the numerous contributions which medical men have made to protozoology and entomology incidental to the study of malaria.

I am not competent to discuss malaria from the standpoint of the protozoologist, the entomologist, even the malariologist, or any other variety of scientist having an academically recognized standing. My contribution must emanate from the modest outlook of the student of public health. The only advantage to be claimed for this outlook is that while too shallow to claim authority in any one scientific specialty, it may be broad enough to appreciate the significance of scientific research in many apparently remote fields and to appropriate to the cause of human welfare scientific knowledge wherever found. I would not have you put a purely pragmatic interpretation on this attitude. Let me say in illustration that I think it is doubtful from which source the child who receives malaria lessons in school derives the greater benefit, from the purely informational source which tells him to swat the mosquito or he will become sick, or from

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