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A CONSIDERATION OF THE VARIOUS METHODS OF DRUG ADMINISTRATION.

POST-GRADUATE LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE WELLCOME
MUSEUM OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.

By S. H. DAUKES,

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IT has occasionally been fashionable in the past to belittle the value of "drug treatment." A famous physician once said that he could well dispense with all the drugs in the British Pharmacopœia, provided that he could keep magnesium sulphate. This was a surprising statement, for even in those days the value of mercury in the treatment of syphilis and of quinine in "ague" was acknowledged by all. It is possible that his

attitude was more in the nature of a protest against that blind faith in a bottle of medicine which was tending to sink the reputation of the physician in the mystic potency of his bottled prescription.

At the present time such an attitude would be inconceivable in the light of recent advances in medicinal treatment. We have only to think of the prognostic revolution which has been brought about in such diseases as kala-azar, the black death of India; in bilharziasis, the curse of Egypt; in syphilis, in diabetes, in pernicious anæmia, in diphtheria, in cretinism, and a host of other diseases. We even find drug treatments waging warfare with the surgeon in his stronghold of the upper abdomen, and triumphantly proclaiming their victories over gastric and duodenal ulceration. It is whispered that the exponents of radical