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Metaphors

Pericardium: Truth and Science

A Man may come unto the Pericardium, but not the Heart of Truth.—Sir Thomas Browne [1605-1682]: Christian Morals, Pt. II, Sect. 3.

For faithful life-long study of science you will find no better example than John Hunter, never satisfied until he had the pericardium of Nature open and her heart throbbing naked in his hand.—Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809-1894]: Valedictory Address, Harvard Commencement, March 10, 1858.


100 Years Ago
Diathesis to Thrombosis in Cancer
Armand Trousseau (1801-1867)

Je suppose que le cancer ne soit point accessible à nos moyens d’investigation, comme dans le fait que je viens de vous rappeler, il est un signe précieux de diagnostic que je dois vous indiquer. Ce signe, sur lequel je crois avoir le premier, il y a plus de quinze ans, appelé l’attention des pathologistes, c’est la phlébite oblitérante.


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**Applied Science and Progress**

... it must be emphasized most strongly that it would be a grievous mistake to think that all practical problems in medicine could be solved more expeditiously by centrally managed planning. Numerous examples have been given of instances in which practical progress was frustrated until basic observations made without reference to the particular applied research goal, had been made, after which the practical goal became relatively easy of achievement. The genius of science, apart from the enormous power of the method, lies in the intelligence, the training, and the enthusiasm of its practitioners. There is probably no area of human endeavor in which the “free-enterprise system” has been more successful than in science.—Maurice B. Visscher: *Applied Science and Medical Progress*. In: Applied Technological and Medical Progress: A Report to the Committee on Science and Astronautics, U. S. House of Representatives, By the National Academy of Sciences, 1967, pp. 185-206.
An Unique Pacemaker Complication

. . . The patient was seen again on June 2, 1967, several hours after the sudden onset of irregular epigastric jerking movements, occasional spasms of involuntary inspiration, and regular involuntary supinating movements of the right forearm and hand; . . . . The electrocardiogram showed failure to pace and first-degree heart block with a ventricular rate of 50 per minute.

The pacemaker twiddler's syndrome represents a new clinical entity in which lead traction is the result of a capstan effect produced by a rotating pulse generator within a pocket which has become too capacious. Rotation can occur either spontaneously or as the result of repeated twiddling on the part of the patient, as in our case.—