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Duties of Physicians as Sanitarians.

There can be no doubt that an intimate knowledge of the primary causes of disease must necessarily be essential to every scientific physician, and should form the very corner stone and foundation of all attempts at treatment. Nor will it be denied that a large proportion of our cases of sickness, suffering and death originate in the transgression of well-known sanitary laws. These elementary principles of the sister sciences of medicine and hygiene are so well known that they have ceased to be novel, and are now recognized as common truisms.

As a natural consequence of the more accurate knowledge of the sources of disease, physicians are able to treat deviations from the line of health more skillfully and successfully than formerly. But many of them have been so much occupied with the investigation of the causes and symptoms of disease and its proper treatment that they have partially overlooked the importance of its prevention. While all agree that public and private hygiene is of great value, all are not as active in sanitary work as might be desirable for the welfare, not only of those with whom they are directly brought into contact, but also of the general public by whom they are surrounded, and who are very largely dependent on them for information and guidance upon these important matters.

There is, however, an explanation and partial excuse for this apparent neglect. A physician in active practice, more

than almost any other man, has his constant duties by day and night, without Sabbaths or holidays that he can consider his own, each hour frequently bringing fresh calls which cannot be postponed to a more convenient season. He must always be in readiness for active service, and prepared to assume serious responsibilities. If he takes any recreation he feels that he is never for a moment, entirely relieved from the responsibility of caring for the sick and suffering, and is liable at any instant to be called upon by those who may need all his time, skill and attention. Can any human being be engaged in nobler work? Is it strange that very many medical men are so interested in the study of the infinite variety of forms in which deviations from the line of health present themselves, and devising ways and means for the rectification of those lines to their normal conditions, that they sometimes overlook the importance of preventive measures?

It must also be remembered that physicians are usually employed to cure rather than to prevent disease. It seems not to have been generally expected heretofore that they should go out of their way as sanitary advisers, but they have been called upon, like menders of broken china or dilapidated furniture, to repair damages previously incurred.

But whether expected or not, in the present advanced science of medicine the study of the primary sources of disease, a knowledge of how those causes operate, and an active interest, not only in counteracting their ill effects, but also in preventing them from acting at all when that is possible, are essentials to every well educated physician, not only in repairing damages, but in the avoidance of injury, and the protection of the individual and the whole people from unnecessary suffering and death. This change for the better is universally encouraged by liberal minded physicians and is beginning to be recognized by the people generally. Dr. Richardson says: "A change has

come over the science of medicine. With nobleness of purpose true medicine has been the first to strip herself of all pretences to cure, and has stood boldly forth to declare as a higher philosophy the prevention of disease. The doctrine of absolute faith in the principles of prevention includes the existence of a higher order of thought, of broad views on life and health, on diseases and their external origin, of death and its correct place in nature."

It may be properly claimed for a great many medical gentlemen that they have endeavored to do their whole duty in this direction faithfully and unselfishly; and it is doubtful whether it would have been possible for our sanitary reform to have arrived at the position it now occupies, or for the people to have been educated to the present imperfect realization of their own necessities, had it not been for the active co operation of physicians in the movement. To such men I will not presume to make suggestions, nor is it necessary to call the attention of members of this Association to the importance of the subject. But it is not impossible in the position I have the honor to occupy as your presiding officer that some words of mine may reach others who have heretofore exhibited a lack of active interest in sanitary matters; a want of practical every day work in this direction, which is much to be regretted. To such I would say that, while I have no disposition to dictate to my professional brethren, and do not imagine I can tell them anything they do not already know, I feel it my duty, with all due courtesy, to endeavor to awaken them to the great moral obligations resting upon them to do all that may be possible for the protection of their fellow creatures from avoidable sickness and death.

It is true that a physician occupies rather a peculiar position in this matter. The adoption of this course destroys, to a certain extent, the very business upon which he depends for his bread and butter, reduces the aggregate number of patients

and amount of income, and in a strictly business view would seem unwise and quixotic. And yet the education he has received, the opportunities for observation and research he has enjoyed, his position as counsellor, and often as leader in all matters appertaining to the restoration of health, as well as to the avoidance of causes of disease, make the obligations resting on him most binding and sacred.

To those who may be inclined to look only at the business side of professional duties, I would ask: Is there not something more for us to do in this world than to skirmish for bread and butter? Have we nothing better to live for than the accumulation of wealth, the pursuit of fame, or the gratification of our selfish natures? Think of that peripatetic hive of industry called man; the most complicated and the most perfect piece of automatic machinery ever produced. Think of that wonderful little pump which we speak of as the heart—forcing the blood into every portion of the body at the rate of more than one hundred thousand pulsations in every twenty-four hours—no part being so remote or insignificant as not to receive its due supply. Think of the lungs, the most perfect aerating machines ever invented, throwing off waste material and taking in new life at the rate of one thousand inspirations every hour. Think of the organs of nutrition, assimilation and repair, constantly furnishing fresh material to replace that which has ceased to be useful. Think of those great scavengers, the liver, kidneys and skin, removing from the body those residuæ which, if allowed to remain, would speedily become sources of disease and death. Think of the special senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and feeling, each performing its proper function, and each in itself unequalled by any invention yet created by man. And above all, think of the brain and nerve centres constantly sending and receiving messages from all parts of the body more rapidly and accurately than any telegraph or telephone yet dreamed of, controlling, reg-

ulating, overseeing the perfect action of the whole ; and when errors occur, or anything interferes with the normal action of any part, however minute, throwing out danger signals to indicate the conflict going on within the fortress of life. And all this continuing steadily day after day, week after week, year after year, from our first breath to our last sight. Asleep or awake, at play or at work, under all circumstances, and at all times this wonderful machinery keeps unceasingly in motion ; all working so quietly, so harmoniously, so smoothly and easily that we are scarcely cognizant of the existence of any such mechanism simply because it is so perfectly adapted to the ends to be attained.

There is nothing in this not well known to every well educated person. But do we all fully realize its significance? Do we entirely appreciate the objects for which this great automatic machine was created, and why it occupies its present exalted position at the head of all things in this world? What is it all for? There must be some design in it, and there seems but one answer to the question, and that a partial one. In the great systematic plan of creation we have been placed here to accomplish, or help to accomplish, some useful purpose. What that purpose is may be a subject for speculation. But that there is an object to be attained ; that we are, each one of us, parts of the machinery for the attainment of that object ; and that we have the privilege of fitting ourselves for some higher and better position when our duties here are ended, seems to be beyond the possibility of doubt. And we may also believe that it was intended we should enjoy life ; but that our most rational and enduring happiness should be attained by applying the powers and capacities of life to useful purposes ; not merely for the promotion of selfish objects.

If these hypotheses be correct, it naturally follows that each in his own sphere has his own work to do ; his usefulness, his

happiness; his health and his entire success here and his position hereafter depending largely on how he performs that work; and it may safely be questioned whether educated medical gentlemen can come nearer to doing the work for which the true physician was created than to assist earnestly and unselfishly in the protection of individuals and communities from unnecessary illness, suffering and death.

A physician may, and he should more than any other, teach people how to live so as to get the most good out of their physical lives, and to make those lives useful, happy and vigorous. And this can be done, and should be done without invading the domain of the theologian. Daily, and in a practical way, the physician can teach, and should preach the gospel of cleanliness upon all proper occasions, and he should not only practice what he preaches, but if he has the courage of his convictions, he should endeavor to see that others do no wrong in this direction. He can show that cleanliness of person and surroundings is not only essential to physical health, but is a very important factor in morals. He can show that neglect of sanitary laws frequently leads to neglect of moral laws. That perverted physical health often lays the foundation for mental and moral perversion. That filthy habitations and surroundings are directly antagonistic to purity of life or noble aspirations. That human beings are very largely creatures of habit; and, especially in childhood, are imitative animals; and that people born, developed, and in a certain way educated in squalor and filth are almost certain to furnish by far the largest proportion of recruits for the pauper and criminal classes of society. He can show that while a few exceptional individuals rise out of and above such surroundings, a large majority never advance a step in the social scale, while very many sink to the lowest depths of poverty and crime. All these statements he can verify by positive proofs of unanswerable facts and figures. He can show below the moral

question, and yet of great importance, the vast loss to the individual, to the family, to the community, and to the State in dollars and cents caused by unnecessary sickness and death consequent upon unsanitary conditions.

Vital statistics prove beyond all doubt that the death rate in every part of the Nation is much higher than it should be, and that it could certainly be reduced very materially by efficient National, State and local sanitary supervision. Upon looking over the English official reports we find that such a system gradually reduced the annual death rate in England from 22.6 in 1872 to 18.9 in 1881, and that this reduction was not spasmodic nor due to exceptional causes, but was steadily continued year after year, and the reduction gradually accomplished during the ten years. In other words 3.7 persons in every thousand were saved from death each year after the term mentioned who would most certainly have died had it not been for this careful sanitary oversight. While it is not claimed or believed that the English system is perfect, this statement shows what has been accomplished there, and no reason exists why equal results may not be attained here. Coming nearer home we can obtain useful information from the excellent annual reports of New Jersey. And just here, it seems proper that as an Association and as individuals, we should express our appreciation and approval of the work already accomplished by those who have charge of these matters. No one who knows how much has been done, and how much there still remains to do, will hesitate to testify to the great value of the work, and to urge upon every citizen the importance of a cordial support and assistance of the gentlemen composing our State and local Boards of Health. Taking our figures from the State reports for five years, from 1879 to 1883 inclusive, we find that 29,843 persons died in this State from causes which might have been avoided. Nor do we include consumption in this list, from which there were

15,077 deaths, because while it is largely a foul air disease, it is not yet generally recognized as being under all circumstances a preventable disease, and we include nothing not generally acknowledged as properly belonging in such a list. This shows us that an average of 5,968 persons died in the State of New Jersey from avoidable disease each year during that period, a large number of whom might have been living to-day if we had the proper laws and means to establish a sanitary oversight at all equal to that now in practical operation in England. In other words more than five people in every thousand die annually in this State from preventable causes.

Before proceeding further it seems proper that there should be a clear understanding of what is meant by this phrase "preventable disease," especially as the term has already been the cause of controversy. It is not claimed that *every case* included in the list of such diseases can be absolutely and certainly prevented. In the future we may arrive at the ideal of perfection in our knowledge of all causes of disease and the unfailling means for their suppression. But notwithstanding the immense progress made in the sciences of medicine and hygiene within the past few years we are far from having reached that much desired termination of our investigations. What should be understood is that we know enough of the causes of zymotic diseases and their subjugation to enable us to control their ravages and prevent them from spreading beyond the initial case in nearly every instance; and that by proper care the number of isolated cases may be reduced very materially. For example, it has been known since 1798 that proper and thorough vaccination of the well, and quarantine and disinfection of the afflicted would effectually prevent small pox. Nevertheless we occasionally hear of such cases, and in consequence of ignorance, prejudice or neglect, such an epidemic as that now raging in Montreal is

possible; and yet nothing is more certain than that small pox is a preventable disease when properly managed. Under such circumstances it would be folly to claim that *all* cases of any preventable disease can be always and certainly prevented, but that a large proportion can be so controlled is a plainly demonstrated fact.

If we desire to extend our calculations we can do so by consulting the reports of other States, and as Connecticut and Massachusetts have given considerable systematic attention to State hygiene and statistics, and their reports are now available for our purpose, we will ascertain the results there for the same five years, 1879 to 1883 inclusive. According to these reports the death rate from avoidable disease in Connecticut was 3.79, and in Massachusetts 4.42, while our New Jersey death rate from the same causes was 5.27—the average of the three States being 4.49. Now supposing this to be a fair average for the Nation, and taking the population as stated in the last census at a little over fifty millions, we have a grand total of *about two hundred and twenty-five thousand unnecessary deaths every year in the United States*. Just think of it for a moment. Nearly one-fifth of the number of people in the State of New Jersey permitted to die in the United States every year in consequence of neglect of proper and well-known sanitary laws! If an epidemic or a war, or any disaster should carry off that number of people in any one year or in any five years the whole country would be aroused into a state of intense excitement. And yet this thing goes on year after year, and those who endeavor to remedy the evil and prevent this great waste of life are frequently considered visionary, and are sometimes called “sanitary cranks.”

Suppose that in the State of New Jersey nearly 6,000 cattle should die from avoidable causes every year, or in the United States over 200,000 should be so lost annually, and that it could be demonstrated with almost mathematical precision

that more than one-half such loss could be prevented, how long would it be before all requisite legislation would be obtained, and all the machinery and means for its enforcement supplied in the most liberal manner? It would be regarded from a business stand point, and business methods would be adopted to prevent such unnecessary waste. Are human beings of less importance than cattle?

For the benefit of those who are more impressed by a cold blooded calculation than by any statement of sickness and sorrow, and who care more for dollars and cents than for the thousands of heartaches of the people, the physician who understands sanitary science and statistics can show that thousands of unnecessary deaths means the loss of a vast amount of money. Although the time at our disposal will not permit us to enter into this calculation to any great extent we will skim over ground which might be cultivated to considerable advantage, in order to give a rough idea of the enormous money loss resulting from neglect of proper sanitary supervision.

In estimating the loss to the State in consequence of unnecessary deaths, we must take into account the following items, viz.:

1st. A sick person's productive capacity ceases during illness and convalescence, while those who die are permanently lost as producing members of the community.

2d. For every one who dies a large number are ill who recover. This is an important item, and the data are not as complete as could be desired, but we can obtain enough information for our purpose by seeking for it. The Registrar General of England says: "We shall probably be well within the mark if we assume that for every fatal case of illness there are four or five cases which end in recovery. This is about the proportion in enteric fever, which is a more fatal disease than the average of diseases." It is evident that the

Registrar General is "well within the mark" here, and includes only serious cases of illness which confine the patients to their beds for a considerable time. And this view is confirmed by Dr. Sutherland, who said in an address delivered at Glasgow, that he found by examining the reports of the Registrar General for twenty years that the proportion of deaths to the number ill was, in typhoid 10 to 1, and in typhus and diphtheria 6 to 1—while the average illness of those who died was, in typhoid, 20 days; typhus, 14 days, and diphtheria, 10 days; and the average illness of those who recovered was in typhoid 90 days, typhus and diphtheria 30 days, thus showing that the direct loss of time during the illness of those who recovered was about three times as great as in the cases of those who died. Upon this subject Dr. Playfair, a most careful and conscientious observer, says, "For one unnecessary death there are 28 cases of unnecessary sickness, and in London there are yearly 10,000 untimely deaths and 250,000 cases of unnecessary sickness." The statistics of friendly societies and insurance tables of England show similar results, while in this country those most competent to judge, seem inclined to consider the calculation not far out of the way. It is safe to estimate that for one fatal case of illness there are four or five dangerously ill who recover, and from fifteen to twenty who are afflicted with comparatively slight ailments.

3d. Every sick person during illness and convalescence requires the care of others as nurses, etc., thus preventing one or more persons from attending to the ordinary duties of life to a greater or less extent.

4th. In case of death the time of a large number of persons is occupied with the final disposition of one who has permanently ceased to be a producing member of the community.

5th. The productive powers of many persons are entirely suspended or partially obstructed by invalidism, more or less

chronic, which is frequently so severe as to occupy the time and attention of others.

6th. Illness and invalidism sometimes drag down individuals to such an extent as to render them incapable of caring for themselves, and they become charges upon relatives or friends, or upon the State as paupers or criminals, and in some cases as occupants of insane asylums.

7th. It is generally admitted by all who are familiar with social statistics that every active individual of mature age and in good health is worth to the State as a producer one thousand dollars.

Now in making our calculation it must be borne in mind that as a general rule an individual does not become profitable to the State until maturity, and ceases to be a producer in advanced life. The direct money loss is confined therefore to those who die or are ill during the producing age, but the indirect loss for nurses, &c., must be allowed for all ages. It cannot be denied that it is very liberal to offset the indirect losses mentioned against the loss of non-producers, and estimate the direct loss to the community at not less than one thousand dollars for every death. There are few people who appreciate this fact, as there are few who realize the value of a single tree destroyed and not replaced. But the loss in the aggregate is fearful and is worthy of careful consideration.

Coming now to practical arithmetic and putting our figures together we find that 5,968 unnecessary deaths every year at \$1,000 each means a direct loss to the State of New Jersey of nearly six million dollars per annum. Supposing the result of careful sanitary oversight to be less favorable than in England (and there is no reason why it should be), and calculating the saving of life at only three in one thousand, this would give us a saving to the State of over three million dollars each year.

Extend our calculations to the Nation, and we find that two hundred and twenty-five thousand unnecessary deaths at

\$1,000 each, means a general loss of at least two hundred and twenty-five million dollars per annum. If the saving of life should be less than has been demonstrated in England to be practicable, say three in one thousand, we should have a saving of at least one hundred and fifty million dollars per annum, and it would be perfectly safe to assert that less than one-tenth of this sum properly expended would cover the entire annual expense, general and local, for the perfection and efficient administration of the most complete system of sanitary supervision now known, which would largely prevent such a shameful and worse than useless waste of valuable lives. This calculation might be very materially extended, but surely it is business-like and cold-blooded enough to induce men who care for nothing but facts and figures to stop and think, and if the statements and calculations here presented cannot be disproved, it ought to be sufficient to cause our law makers throughout the land to act promptly, wisely and effectually to save the millions of dollars and thousands of human lives now annually wasted, besides the sickness, suffering and sorrow which it may be thought sentimental to take into the calculation, but which are unfortunately a very essential part of it nevertheless.

These general facts can be demonstrated by the physician as to the value of sanitary supervision. But in his intercourse with individuals in every day life he can educate the people in the elementary principles of sanitary science. He should insist that every one shall have fresh air and plenty of it without impurity of any kind. He should teach the great importance of sunlight, as second only to pure air. He should show the absolute necessity of uncontaminated water for domestic purposes. He should explain the great importance of cleanliness of person and surroundings, the necessity for active exercise at appropriate times and with proper restrictions, and he should make suggestions as to food and drink,

clothing, temperature of dwellings, recreation, rest and sleep, each and every one demanding intelligent supervision to insure healthy homes and healthy lives. It is not necessary to enter into details upon these points, and these suggestions are thrown out merely as food for thought and to show the large field which can and should be occupied by the physician in assisting individuals to guard against disease.

But there is another way in which medical men can be of vast service to the community as well as to the individual, viz., by being as conversant as possible with the laws governing the propagation of disease, and with the methods of protecting persons and localities from their reception. We know that neglect of proper precautions often leads to fearful results as, for instance, the epidemic of diphtheria during the present year at Paris Roads, in Pennsylvania, where one case, not properly quarantined and cared for, devastated an entire neighborhood; or the typhoid fever epidemic at Plymouth, where one case of typhoid, in which the passages from the body of the patient were not properly treated before being disposed of, caused over a thousand cases of sickness, more than one hundred deaths and an immense financial loss not only directly by illness and death, but also by an almost entire suspension of business for a length of time. Where does the responsibility rest for such disasters, whether to the individual or to the community? The time when any others than fatalists and other idiots could insult the Almighty by attributing such fatalities to "mysterious dispensations of Providence" has passed away in enlightened communities.

Some one is responsible in all such cases, *and if the physician neglects his duty in the use of efficient sanitary precautions to prevent the spread of the disease, that responsibility rests on him.* It is his duty to see that proper measures are adopted not only to save his patient, but to prevent that patient from becoming the cause of disease and death to others. Neglect

to do this is assuming a moral responsibility for any consequence which may result from such negligence. And just here, a physician must necessarily become a public as well as a private sanitarian. Without a knowledge of sanitary laws, an active interest in sanitary reforms, and keeping abreast with modern discoveries and improved methods, the physician soon ceases to retain the confidence of the people and drifts inevitably into the ranks of the unscientific and insignificant pill pedlars. Now that the germ theory of contagious diseases appears to be rapidly passing from the stage of theoretical discussion to that of plainly demonstrated fact, there can be no excuse for any physician who neglects his duty by permitting such germs to be thrown broadcast amongst the people. Many medical men now believe that it would be no more possible to raise a crop of wheat by sowing oats, or rye by planting corn, or potatoes by setting out onions, than to produce typhoid fever, scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, malarial fevers, or any other contagious or endemic disease in any other way than by the absorption into the system of the germs of those diseases, and of those germs only.

In all neglected spots, in all dark corners, even in our cultivated gardens, we find useless weeds and troublesome plants, and just in proportion as the land is neglected and allowed to run to waste ; just as fresh air, the bright sunlight, and the cleansing rains are kept away from such corners, will they be covered with rank, useless vegetation, and in time, by the decay of waste material, those places become unwholesome and unfit for the habitation of man, and degenerate into breeding places for poisonous reptiles, noxious vermin, and disease germs. Just so it is in the animal economy. Let the individual become vitiated by breathing unwholesome air, by improper or insufficient food, by unsanitary surroundings or habits of life, and the preparatory arrangements are made to receive and hospitably entertain the sneaking and treacherous

guest that, in the shape of a disease germ, has been carelessly permitted to escape and start out on an excursion to find a lodging place where it can do most harm. . . That germ falling upon an individual in robust health and prepared to resist its intrusion may be rejected, neutralized or destroyed, and may do no damage. . . But what right has any person, more especially one whose duty it is to know all that can be known of such matters, to let loose such a pest in any community when he has the means for its confinement and destruction within his grasp. It is his moral duty to use every possible exertion to prevent such disaster. The use of efficient disinfectants and germicides should be well known to every educated physician, and it seems unnecessary to do more than to arouse the members of the profession to the importance of their prompt and thorough application. It is proper, however, to call especial attention to one point which is sometimes carelessly guarded, and that is the make believe disinfection that is frequently permitted. I refer to that sort of disinfection that does not disinfect ; to that kind of protective display which is worse than useless, as it gives a false sense of security which is most dangerous. Some time since I had occasion to speak to a physician in reference to the necessity of thorough disinfection in a case of scarlet fever, not only as important for the protection of others, but also as being beneficial to the patient, who was certainly injured by continued breathing of a poisoned atmosphere. I was assured it had all been attended to. When I inquired in what way, I was informed that chloride of lime had been provided. Upon further inquiry I found that one pound of chloride of lime had done duty as a sort of apologetic disinfectant for nearly a week, and the box was not yet quite empty. What sort of child's play was that, and how could anybody be benefited or protected by such methods? And yet that physician stands well in the profession, and is a gentleman for whom in other matters I have

much respect. Why, if the germs of that disease were visible entities, and could appreciate a joke, we should be more likely to find that they had injured themselves laughing at such futile efforts for their suppression, than as having been seriously affected by anything that well meaning gentleman had done to destroy them:

The ways in which a physician can be useful in the line of his profession in public affairs are manifold. He can advise and assist in looking after the public water supply, in suppressing nuisances, in advising as to public sewage systems, removal and disposition of garbage, ventilation of buildings, cleansing of streets, collection of vital statistics, and all the numerous processes which are essential to the welfare, comfort, happiness and health of every community; and he can and should do all this discreetly, without fuss or making himself appear meddling or unpleasantly officious.

But the people must co-operate with him and with all efforts made in their behalf. To do this effectually and intelligently they must be educated at least in the elementary principles affecting private and public sanitation, and, as previously stated, in this way the family physician can accomplish most useful results. When speaking on this subject Lord Derby, of England, said: "No sanitary improvements worth the name will be effective whatever acts you pass, or whatever power you confer upon public officers, unless you create an intelligent interest in the matter among the people at large. The State may issue directions; municipal authorities may execute to the best of their power; inspectors may travel about; medical authorities may draw up reports, but you cannot make a population cleanly or healthy against their will, or without their intelligent co-operation."

Since Lord Derby expressed himself thus in England the people there have advanced rapidly in sanitary education, and the results have been a very decided diminution in the rate of

mortality. In this country our people are just fairly awakening to the importance of preventive methods, and the necessity of encouragement and co-operation in all reasonable efforts for improvement. Medical men should be—nay, they *must* be amongst the leaders in this movement. The time is not far distant when it will be considered a disgrace to a physician not to be as thoroughly conversant with, and actively interested in all matters essential to prevention of disease as to its proper treatment. The people are rising to a higher plane in regard to their every day life and its surroundings. They are beginning to expect, and in time they will demand, from those whose opportunities have enabled them to observe and study the conditions of their fellow men that they shall be among the leaders in this movement for the amelioration of the ills of life ; and the time is not far distant when not only physicians, but also law-makers and interpreters of the laws, will understand (and they already begin to realize the fact) that the people require not only punishment of crime and cure of disease, but also, and primarily, the prevention of crime and disease. And they will insist on protection, not only of property and life from violence, but also all possible protection from the unseen, but none the less dangerous, causes of disease and death. Great reforms have seldom paid in a money way or in popular appreciation in the beginning. They usually start slowly, hesitatingly, and advance with great difficulty. But if the reform is genuine and really needed, it goes moving onward, constantly increasing in volume and force until, like a mighty ocean wave, it overwhelms all that stands in its way. And this is the case with our sanitary reform. It is not a new movement by any means, but it has within the past few years been making rapid advancement in this country, and its success means the prevention of a large percentage of unnecessary suffering and mortality ; the prolongation of human life ; making that life more useful, more active, more

vigorous, more worth living ; and as each citizen helps to form the mass of people constituting the State, so by improving the individual we benefit the State in all its relations. Make individuals healthier, happier, cleaner, better in any way, physically, mentally or morally, and you inevitably elevate the State, and by beginning at the bottom raise the whole social structure to a higher, nobler, better standard. And it is safe to say that any movement which has such an object in view should receive, and will receive the endorsement and hearty co-operation of every thinking, right feeling man and woman in the community.

We have no reason to suppose that sickness and suffering, sorrow and death, will ever cease to be found on this earth. They are the necessary terminations of man's physical life. But it is the privilege, it is the duty of each and every one of us to employ the abilities with which we have been endowed for the benefit of our fellow creatures ; for the prevention of unnecessary heartache and mortality. Only those who do not neglect this portion of their duties can claim to be true followers and disciples of "the beloved physician"; and if this be done earnestly, unselfishly, faithfully, and well we may reasonably hope that when the time comes for us to render a final account of our stewardship, we may find this item entered in full on the credit side of our account.