

"Our duties to the public refer entirely to the prevention of disease and not to its cure. A general knowledge is sufficient to appreciate the truths of the former, but a special education is absolutely necessary to understand the latter. On sanitary matters the general public is well calculated to judge, and is prepared to receive instruction. For instance, in matters of drainage, cleanliness, ventilation, and other hygienic measures, they are well enough informed to appreciate what is new and useful, and to apply the truths accordingly. In so far as pure Sanitary Science is concerned, the profession may be considered as speaking to a well educated, appreciative, and discriminative audience."

Dr. Lee, above mentioned, after drawing attention to the fact that the death rate of London was, 200 years ago, 42 per 1,000, and that now, with a population about seven times as great, the death rate is only about one-half; due chiefly "to sanitary legislation, judiciously conceived and faithfully carried out," and that the death rate of Paris has been reduced one fourth in the past thirty-one years by the same means, says: "With such convincing results staring them in the face, can anything more be needed to arouse our legislators, state and municipal, to a sense of the urgent importance of this question and of their duties under the premises! Yes, unfortunately, I blush to say it, for it is the shame, not of our legislators only, but of our people, of whom are the legislators, one thing more is needed—to show them that this matter has a financial aspect. It must be brought home, not only to their hearts and their hearth-stones, but to their tills and burglar-proofs. They must be taught that a human life has an actual cash value, as certainly as that of a horse or a cow, and that when, by neglect of well ascertained precautions they waste human life, they are squandering untold millions of substantial wealth as well."

It is gratifying to find that "here and there the good work has begun," even on this continent. In the U. S., one State after another is dropping in, and forming a State Board of Health. Georgia is one of the last, and its Board consists almost entirely of medical men. Though the President of the Board, Dr. Thomas, of Savannah, who is a member of the Legislature, and was chiefly instrumental in having the board established, says, in a communication which I have received from him, "Strange as it will doubtless appear to you the greatest opposition to the measure, came from physicians in the general assembly." It is to be hoped, for the credit of the profession, the opposition was from political motives. But I will here again quote a few lines from the address above mentioned, to