

Health and Disease may be looked upon as the antithesis of each other, having much the same relations as light and darkness, pleasure and pain, good and evil. But opposite as these things may seem to be, we cannot in our minds disassociate them, for light would scarcely be realized as light if we were ignorant of darkness, pleasure would scarcely be so enjoyable if we had never felt pain, and we could scarcely fix a standard of health, if it were not possible to contrast it with disease.

In this way the study of Medicine and the study of Hygiene meet and overlap each other; the one cannot properly be understood without some knowledge of the other; the Physician in studying Disease fixes his attention upon those points in which it differs from Health, while the Hygienist, in adjusting his standard of Health, must be able to recognize the signs and symptoms which indicate Disease.

This common ground of study between the Physician and the Hygienist or Sanitarian, instead of producing antagonism or divergence, really binds them together, the studies of the one passing imperceptibly into those of the other, so that every Physician becomes more or less a Hygienist, and nearly every Hygienist becomes, or at least qualifies himself to be a Physician. Both are working to rid the world as much as possible of Disease, but while the Science of Medicine aims both at the prevention and cure of Disease, the Science of Hygiene occupies itself almost wholly with its prevention; and inasmuch as prevention is always better than cure, Hygiene as a part of Medicine is assisting in the noblest part of its work.

It may be said therefore, that the peculiar province of Hygiene is,—the study and practice of all those means that tend to preserve and to improve health, and to prevent disease.

In its most comprehensive sense it includes all living things, but in its usual restricted sense it applies more particularly to the human race, with its subdivisions into states or nations, provinces, communities, families and individuals; a common sub-division of the subject being into: (*a*) private or individual Hygiene; (*b*) public Hygiene and (*c*) international Hygiene.

In its highest sense also, Hygiene concerns itself not only with the physical health of individuals and communities, but also with their mental, moral and even their political health.

We have seen that the functions of the sanitarian and of the physician, though having much in common, differ chiefly in that the one studies health and endeavours to preserve it, while the other studies disease and endeavours to cure it, and their relative spheres of action seem tolerably well defined.