

THE CANADA LANCET.

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Criticism and News.

Communications solicited on all Medical and Scientific subjects, and also Reports of Cases occurring in practice. Advertisements inserted on the most liberal terms. All Letters and Communications to be addressed to the "Editor Canada Lancet," Toronto.

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THE PAST YEAR.

We are again upon the threshold of another new year, and as has always been our custom at this season we propose to take a retrospective glance at the work done during the year that has now come to a close. The labor of even a partial and incomplete review, as ours must necessarily be, of the events which have transpired in the medical world in this short space of time, is of no ordinary character, and we would gladly forego the task were it not that such a resumé, however imperfect and incomplete it may be, cannot fail to be of interest to most, if not all, of our readers, provided the references partake of a practical character. The progress of medicine is necessarily slow and sometimes even discouraging, yet the watchword is ever onward and upward. Many problems in the etiology, pathology and therapeutics of disease remain unsolved, and will no doubt require for their elucidation the combined labors of scientific observers the world over for many years to come. The investigations of scientists demand much sacrifice of time, and great patience and perseverance under difficulties, but the elucidation of truth brings its own reward—the highest of all distinctions, and the consciousness of a life not spent in vain. With the aid of instruments of precision much has been accomplished in minute investigation, which, a few years ago, would have been considered almost, if not quite, impossible. We have therefore much to be hopeful for, and much that is encouraging.

The subject of state medicine has received increased attention by the profession and the public both at home and abroad, during the past year. The Federal Government of the Dominion has given its attention to the subject, at the instance of the Canada Medical Association, and a liberal grant has been voted to give the scheme adopted a fair start. The collection of statistics in the large cities is but the inauguration of a larger measure of sanitary reform, which will prove of inestimable value to the people of this country. If the probable success of an undertaking may be measured by the activity displayed by those who are concerned in its promotion, then we have reason to be hopeful as to the future of this great question of sanitary reform. The large and influential deputations to Ottawa, and the meetings of sanitary organizations and the work accomplished, tend to show the interest that has been awakened on this subject and its probable result in the near future.

In medicine and therapeutics much valuable work has been accomplished, new ideas have taken the place of old and crude notions, and the curative action of remedies has been more accurately investigated and determined. The space at our disposal will not permit of a very extensive review of the many points of interest in this connection which might be alluded to, but we will notice a few that press themselves upon our attention. Dr. Sidney Ringer, (*Brit. Med. Journal*), referring to the dangers of bromide of potassium, chloral hydrate and opium in adynamic states, suggests the substitution of bromide of sodium in such cases as being less injurious, the sodium salts being only slightly inhibitory of the heart's action, whereas the potassium salts are ten times as active. This would seem to point clearly to the advantages of bromide of sodium as a hypnotic, and indeed as a substitute for bromide of potassium in very many cases. The bromide of sodium has also been highly extolled in the treatment of migraine, by Dr. Morton (*Med. Gazette*, July 21, '83). Drachm doses are to be given at the onset and repeated in an hour if the attack does not cease. Cod-liver oil and iron may be given in conjunction with the bromide. Nitrite of amyl and nitro-glycerine have also been used in the treatment of this and other allied affections. The latter is given in one to five drop doses of a one-per-cent. solution, three times a day. The etiology of erysipelas has received