

REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICERS.

The dispensary was opened May 20th, 1867, and the number of patients admitted during the first two years was 224. The number of eye patients was 209; of ear patients 15; the number of males was 125; of females 99; the number of residents of Toronto was 175, and of different sections of Canada and the United States 49. The number of patients discharged cured was 110; improved 91; unimproved 3, and incurable 4. Five patients left, and in one case the result was unknown. The number attending the dispensary May 19, 1869, was 10. Of the eye patients, when admitted, 28 were quite blind; 16 nearly blind; 50 practically blind, and 107 had impaired vision. Of the first-class (quite blind, 28), 8 were discharged with good vision; 8 with vision improved; 4 with sight unimproved. Seven were incurable, and one left. Of the second class (nearly blind, 16), 12 were discharged with good, and 4 with improved sight. Of the third class (practically blind, 50), 33 were discharged with good, and 15 with improved vision, and 2 left. Of the fourth class (impaired vision, 107), 43 were discharged with good, and 58 with improved vision. Five left, and in one case the result was unknown. Of the 209 eye patients, therefore, 96 were discharged with good sight (cured), and 77 with improved sight; but it should be remarked that the number of cured would undoubtedly have been much larger had not many discontinued treatment too soon, from their anxiety to resume work and again earn a livelihood. In some instances also complete recovery was retarded or prevented by the irregular attendance of patients. A large percentage of the diseases under treatment was due to a depraved condition of the system, occasioned by the lack of proper food or by exposure to injurious hygienic influences, and to free the patient from these fruitful sources of disease was often as necessary as was the application of appropriate medication to the diseased organs.

Notwithstanding, however, certain disadvantages incidental to dispensary treatment, an opinion has been confirmed, to which practical expression was long ago given in Great Britain and the United States, viz:—that diseases of the eye and ear are more likely to be successfully treated at institutions especially designed for, and adapted to their treatment, than at general hospitals. The superiority of dispensary treatment merely is of course less marked than that of an eye infirmary, where patients can be received and at once placed under the most favorable conditions for securing a good result.

It should be noted also that 49 patients, or 24 per cent., came from different and sometimes distant sections of Canada and the United States; and that many of these were quite poor and unable