

were lampooned and his discovery written against—that Democritus was pronounced a madman; Roger Bacon, a sorcerer,—that epilepsy, St. Vitus's dance, and numerous other diseases were ascribed to demoniacal possession, the phenomena of electrical and galvanic apparatus, to the agency of spirits—that the devil was declared really to be the chief personage, though disguised, in the lodges of freemasons—that the truths of the physiology of the brain, of the lacteals, and then of the lymphatics, bark, antimony, the stethoscope were pronounced to be no truths. Let us recollect all this, and then let us ask ourselves with what sentiments we, at the distance of a couple of generations from the decriers of these truths, now regard their opposition, and then let us determine that coming generations shall not so regard us, but that they shall be obliged to confess, that however superior and advanced they may be in science, they do not excel us in our attachment to it; and that we have been guided in the present and every other inquiry we have instituted, by a love of truth, of progress, and therefore of God and his revelations. And above all, let us remember that our Heavenly Father does *not* find any satisfaction in "the deep earnest cries" of suffering humanity*—"does *not* find pleasure in the death of him that dieth;"† but that on the contrary, God's love for us surpasseth that of a mother for her tender babe.‡ Yea, "The Eternal, the Eternal is a merciful God and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."§

Montreal, February 23, 1850.

ART. LVII.—*Report of the proceedings of the Sanitary Committee of the Board of Health, in relation to the Cholera as it prevailed in New-York in 1849.* New-York: 1849. Pamphlet. Pp. 106.

We have delayed noticing this valuable report, until the present moment, in the hopes that we might have appended some observations on the progress of the cholera in this Province; we have no means of obtaining this desirable information, except from an official report of the Central Board of this Province, established last year. We are not aware whether such a report has been presented to the Government; but the Profession and the public have, it seems to us, some right to demand it at their hands.

The first case of cholera which appeared in New-York, occurred on the 14th of May, and on the 16th the sanitary committee was appointed, and invested with full powers by the Board of Health. Accordingly, recognizing the value of the following circumstances in reference to the origin and propagation of the disease, they assumed them as the basis of, and guide in, their operations.

"1st—That the general cause of the disease appears to exist in the atmosphere.

"2nd—That in attacking individuals, the disease generally gives notice of its approach by some preliminary symptoms.

"3rd—That these preliminary symptoms are usually under the control of medicine, and being arrested, the further development of the disease is prevented.

"4th—That the agency of various exciting causes is generally necessary to develop the disease. Among these causes the principal are the existence of filth and imperfect ventilation, irregularities and imprudencies in the mode of living, and mental disturbance."

They forthwith established hospitals in such succession and in such parts of the city, as the spreading of the disease required, until the whole number amounted to five. They accomplished a thorough purification of the city; indicated in publications, and enforced the necessity, of caution, as regards diet and regimen, and finally took means to afford in abundance, prompt and efficient medical relief. Some important reports conclude the pamphlet. The first of which, is that of Dr. Græer, resident physician of the city of New-York, which is drawn up with great ability: after detailing the progress of the disease through the several wards of the city, he gives a synoptical view of the general weekly mortality from May 19th to Oct. 13th; on which latter day the disease ceased. From it, we glean that the total mortality was 15,219; of which, 5017 persons died of cholera asphyxia, 901 of cholera infantum, 226 of cholera morbus (sporadic?), 615 of diarrhœa, 349 of dysentery, 378 of inflammatory affections, and other diseases of the stomach and bowels; exhibiting a proportion of 8064 out of the whole mortality, occurring from diseases of alimentary canal. The total mortality for the corresponding period of 1848, was 6362, and the total mortality from bowel affections, of that number, was 1565. The result of practice in the five cholera hospitals, is thus summed up. The total number admitted, was 1901; deaths, 1021; cured, 880; furnishing a per centage of cures of 46.29, and of deaths, of 53.71.

Under the auspices of the Sanitary Committee, several important investigations were instituted in regard to the chemical condition and constitution of the atmospheric air. These were intrusted to the charge of Prof. Ellet. We extract the most interesting portions of this report:—

"The observations of Dr. Prout, made in London in the year 1832, seemed to indicate the presence of a foreign body in the atmosphere at that time and place—presenting itself simultaneously with the appearance, and continuing throughout the duration of the cholera in that year. Assuming the correctness of Dr. Prout's experiments, and that the existence of the same disease amongst us at the present time, would be probably attended with a similar change in the condition of the atmosphere, it seemed desirable to institute rigorous experiments upon the subject. It therefore determined to submit large masses of air to such processes as would be calculated to insulate from it, and prevent in a sepa-

* Ex. xxii. 20—27.

† Isai. xlix. 15.

‡ Ezek. xviii. 32

§ Ex. xxxiv. 6.