

Vienna may be reached in less time than Toronto or Montreal. Errors reaching such distant and inaccessible portions of the world survive to do their mischief long after they have ceased to delude the minds of men in the larger centres.

In the steadily-increasing number of medical journals all over the world—some of them established in the interests of the public; some in the interests of the profession; some in the interests of a medical school; and not a few in the interests of some nostrum retailed for profit—in all these kinds and qualities America has her share. The exact number published it is difficult to arrive at.

The medical library in connection with the Surgeon-General's Office at Washington, which, under the able guidance of that marvelous worker, Dr. Billings, is unique in extent and completeness, receives 700 medical journals of all sorts a year. Of these, 30 are devoted to dentistry (15 of them from the United States); 38 to pharmacy (8 of these from the United States); 32 to veterinary medicine (2 from the United States); 22 to homœopathy (14 of these from the United States); 9 are eclectic, and all 9 are from the United States—leaving 121 for regular medicine for the United States. Journals on popular medicine are not included in the foregoing list. Some of the journals referred to are conducted with great ability, while a few reach a high level of excellence. Not infrequently, in articles inelegantly written and quaintly expressed, the mechanical genius of the people is conspicuously shown in a manner to command the attention of those more favorably circumstanced. Readers of the journals of both hemispheres have occasionally noticed in yours a greater precision in reporting cases and in stating facts than is generally met with in the western world. You do not so often indulge in unknown quantities, while dates and other circumstances are stated with greater fullness. I

have noticed the same features in your discussions. An absence of that precision in America must not, however, be allowed to take from the value of a statement or a report. It is due in great measure to the hurry and unrest, the variety of fatiguing work a surgeon is called upon to do, and the difficulty, even in cities, of having properly qualified clinical assistance. Outside of hospitals there are well-qualified nurses for the rich—their services are, beyond the reach of the poor—and they append the temperature and pulse chart, but beyond this there is often no further record till the case is finally summed up by the surgeon, when the details of treatment are added.

Men of action who have left and are leaving the impress of their intellect in the more practical departments of our art are often obliged to search in their visiting list or their day-book, where the more methodical and leisurely arrangement of your work enables you to be more precise.

Sometimes the facts are drawn from memory, and, for all that is essential, correctly drawn, though dates and other precise circumstances are often wanting. It is from this hurried manner of reporting cases that doubt is sometimes felt of their credibility when given without reference to minor parts which are not considered essential to their truth. The older members of this Association can recall how the statement was received from America, some years ago, that a crowbar had been driven through a man's skull without killing him, and how brain matter had been found adherent to the strong bar of iron at a distance of many feet. The number of feet was not given (I cannot give it now), but the statement nevertheless was true, even without the lesser detail of distance.

Some of you will remember how little disposed many were to believe that a sponge probang, charged with a solution of nitrate of silver, could be got beyond that watchful sentinel, the epiglottis, and be