

May Physicians Hasten Death?

"I do not retract anything said by me at the Congress. I certainly did there state, and here repeat, that in my opinion a physician has the moral right to end human or brute life by administering drugs, under the circumstances above set forth; and that *I know that physicians do so end life*. I consider a physician only humane who relieves one of a positively ascertained fatal and torturing physical malady or condition by administering drugs that will end life painlessly." This is the reply made by Mr. Albert Bach, a lawyer, and the Vice-President of the Medico-Legal Society, to an inquiry in the New York Sun. So far as the personal opinion of Mr. Bach is concerned, few persons would attach much importance to it. Most would be disposed to regard it as the utterance of one of that somewhat numerous class of persons whom we instinctively class in our minds as notoriety-seekers, who delight in startling those who may be within reach of their voices by sensational opinions. But the declaration, made on the authority of the Vice-President of the Medico-Legal Society, that physicians are accustomed to terminate the lives of suffering patients at their own discretion, is too startling to be allowed to pass without challenge, reflecting, as it does, most seriously upon the profession. The Sun indignantly repels the accusation as "false and infamous." But what do the doctors themselves say, most readers will ask. We should expect them to come forward, almost as one man, to deny the foul aspersion, and to demand proof or immediate retraction from the author of it. The following is the reply of the Medical Record: "To promote euthanasia is the right and the duty of the physician. To take the life of a dying man, or to hasten his dissolution by the administration of drugs, is no more justifiable in the physician than would be the ending of the patient's life by the stiletto or the pistol, or than poisoning is at the hands of some expectant heir or avowed enemy." This is explicit enough. But if Mr. Bach is a man of any influence whatever, or in fact, whether he is or no, his unqualified assertion is pretty sure to arouse painful suspicions and misgivings in the minds of many, such as may lead to deplorable results. That assertion should be met with the emphatic and categorical denial of every physician within the area in which the slander is likely to find circulation.

The Death of M. Pasteur.

IN the person of Professor Louis Pasteur has passed away one who has long taken rank among the most distinguished scientific experimenters and discoverers of the age. During half-a-century his name has been prominent among those whom philosophical associations and other learned societies have delighted to honour. The versatility of his talents is indicated by the variety of departments in which he, at different periods of his life, won distinction, and the large number of schools and scientific institutions which have conferred their highest honours upon him. As a student of geology, of chemistry, of physics, and as a specialist in the departments of bacteriology, fermentation, inoculation for the prevention of diseases in men and animals, etc., he may almost be said to have stood unrivalled. He was a man of high personal character, and appears to have been actuated by lofty motives in his enthusiastic devotion to scientific investigations. His name will probably be longest remembered in connection with his method of inoculation for the prevention of hydrophobia. In this he had achieved a reputation, and his specific treatment had won a measure of faith, such as appear to sceptics, of whom there are a goodly number even in scientific and professional circles, to border on the superstitious. Through the agency of the Victoria

Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, many able tracts and other articles by men of reputation as physicians and scientists, have been published from time to time, distinctly challenging the efficacy of the alleged specific. This society, year by year, has published a Pasteurian Table, containing a record of every alleged cure performed at the "Institute," together with facts going to show that in the case of large numbers of the patients treated at the "Institute," whose names are set down among those of the cured, there was no proof that they had been bitten by rabid animals; that in a large proportion of the cases in which the patient had really been so bitten, death ensued after treatment; and that, in a word, the tables of cures published from time to time, when carefully analyzed, utterly fail to establish the efficacy of the Pasteurian treatment. Be the question of fact as it may, there are many, among them men and women of distinguished ability and high personal standing, who strenuously maintain that no amount of good that can possibly result from the treatment can atone for the fearful agonies which have been and are every day being inflicted upon countless numbers of dogs and other domestic animals, in the course of the Pasteurian researches, and those of his admirers and imitators in all countries. The terrible virus of the passion for vivisection has in some cases even found entrance into the public schools, and been inoculated into the tender minds of children. The whole question of the moral effect of the practice of vivisection, and even of the knowledge of the practice, upon the higher nature of young and old is one which has not yet received the serious attention it merits. Whether, even admitting all that is claimed in regard to its past and prospective success as a means of discovery of the nature of disease, and of the mode of its successful prophylactic treatment, there is room for doubt, in the minds of those who think that there are things much more precious than the physical life, whether the end justifies the means.

Copyright.*

THE question of Copyright has become one of considerable prominence. There has been, for some time, persistent agitation with regard to it. It is desirable that in dealing with such questions the precise facts should be first ascertained, and then the point at issue can be fairly discussed. Both English and Canadian authorities have written about the matter and there is sufficient material from which to draw up a fair statement of the claims of both sides. Excited declamation or appeals to prejudice or party spirit are not required.

We desire to furnish, first, a sketch of the history of the law of Copyright as it affects Canada; next, to give the results of the present state of the law here; and then hear the claim of the Canadian publishers and the English answer to that claim.

The necessary preliminary to this discussion is to explain what Copyright is. It is the "exclusive right of multiplying copies of a literary or artistic work already published." There are Domestic Copyright and International Copyright, terms which explain themselves, but containing a distinction which seems to have been lost sight of. Further, there is a difference between the right of an author to con-

* In the literature relating to this matter there has been too much stress laid upon a supposed violence to Canadian rights, as if these rights were being trampled upon. So far as we can judge there has been no attempt to infringe any right we possess. If, hitherto, the legislation proposed by the Dominion has not been acceded to, common-sense would suggest that there was some valid reason for the delay and that it is not capricious meddling. To understand the delay we must examine the reasons stated. The subject must be approached absolutely impartially.