

be uselessly spent in the attempt to annul the climatic effects of fifty or sixty, perhaps a hundred centuries!" General views of this nature should impress upon legislators the assistance they might derive from a knowledge of vital relationships, if they would act upon broad and far-seeing principles. But it perhaps is too much to expect that men will so act until the demand for legislation is too palpable to be overlooked. To the medical man they are important as they will lead him to a more correct estimate of circumstances which may be of service to the well-being of those who commit their health to his charge. For a knowledge of the effects of climates in forming certain temperaments and conditions will enable him to meet the requirements of special cases even by artificial means. Whilst these general causes act over large areas there is a multitude of minor agents which are probably more important as to their influence upon communities and which more or less affect vitality in every locality. Among these, diseases general and local take a prominent stand, and more prominent than disease itself, are those conditions which acting upon the animal economy, weaken its powers of resistance and render fatal what would otherwise be a passing disturbance.

Our profession stands first and pre-eminently first in its qualifications for investigating this broad field of causes. The law-maker may apply his regulating powers when he has sufficient knowledge to act. The divine and philanthropist may urge the consciences of individuals or communities to obey the requirements which reason and law would enforce. Yet, though the legislator and the moral teacher may both help in demonstrating the many evils to be avoided, and both be necessary in the great work of advancing the race,—as to the knowledge of the principles which tend to the amelioration of society, the medical man, by his acquaintance with dis-