

thing to do with diet or with climate. The herbivorous animals are liable to it as well as the carnivorous, and, so far as I know, it prevails in all parts of the world where the conditions are favorable to longevity. Wherever, from whatever cause, they are not so, there cancer becomes relatively infrequent. It is almost unknown in those of our domestic animals which are used for food, for the simple reason that we never let them grow old, while in dogs, cats, horses and asses it is common."

Dr. Billings says: "The increase of mortality from cancer with advancing age may be explained either on the theory that the cause of cancer becomes more potential in advanced age at the period of physiological decay, or on the theory that the predisposition to cancer belongs to the strongest and longest lived." The fact is settled beyond question that in those populations where but few reach old age cancer is proportionately rare. There are some curious and interesting facts in regard to the geographical distribution of cancer which science as yet does not satisfactorily explain. The last census of the United States demonstrates that this disease is especially prevalent in the New England States and on the southern Pacific coast; that it is prevalent in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and in the interior of Michigan and the southern part of Wisconsin; that it is least prevalent upon the Mississippi and in the South, and that the proportions are generally lower in the coast regions than in the interior. An examination of the reports of death from cancer in England and Wales made by Dr. Havilland led him to conclusions quite in accord with those derived from our own census. Both banks of the Tweed near Berwick, and of the Tyne at Newcastle, some parts of Yorkshire, and the whole of the beautiful Lake District, are fertile beds of cancer. The Isle of Wight is all but free from this disease, while it is common in Brighton, Folkestone, Dover, Ramsgate and Margate. Statistics also demonstrate, as other facts have seemed to prove, that density of population, poor living and laborious toil have very little to do with the development and appearance of cancer. Thus in London, in which, as a whole, cancer is very prevalent, the parish of St. Luke's, the neighborhood of Bishopsgate Street, crowded Bethnal Green, the Isle of Dog, Rotherhithe and Bermondsey are almost exempt from this disease, but in the respectable part of the metropolis, about the Marylebone Road, Regents Park and Primrose Hill it is exceptionally frequent. Liverpool, which has a large mortality from other causes of death, as shown by the fact that, with a population of 552,000 in 1878, the number of deaths exceeded those of the total number of its births by 1,000, the percentage of deaths from cancer was exceptionally small. In the future it may be discovered that the localities where the prevalence of this is most frequent have certain characteristics

in common which science may overcome, and thus notably diminish this tendency in such localities.

In the "Report on the Vital Statistics of the United States of the Tenth Census in 1886," it is remarked that the peculiarities of the differences in the mortality from cancer in different localities may be in part explained by differences in the population of these localities as regards race and age. It is a disease which is much less frequent in the colored than in the white race, hence the mortality from it is greater in the North than in the South. It causes the greatest proportion of deaths where there are the greatest proportion of people of advanced age—that is to say, in the New England States. Hence in any given locality, a large proportion of deaths from cancer indicates to a certain extent that the locality is a healthful and a long-settled one, and has a large proportion of inhabitants of an advanced age. Cancer is not a disease due to misery, to poverty, to bad sanitary surroundings, to ignorance, or to bad habits. On the contrary, it is a disease of the most highly civilized, the most cultured, the wealthy, and of localities which are the most salubrious. One of the characteristics of cancer is that, unless the brain is involved, it leaves intellectual power and force unimpaired. Nay, it seems that in some cases it almost increases these qualities. No pathetic incident is more indelibly stamped on my memory than a visit made to a victim of this disease whom I found, as I often had before, seated at his writing table, his drawn, pallid face expressing fatigue and suffering, but still more expressive of will force and a remarkable power of endurance. "Excuse me," he said, as I entered the room, "until I finish a paragraph I have just begun." After a few moments he laid down his pen, saying, with a sad gleam of satisfaction, "There, since your visit yesterday I have written eight pages." After the commencement of his painful illness, stimulated by the hope of overcoming reverses and leaving his family in circumstances to which their former position entitled them, he succeeded in accomplishing a larger amount of work, and receiving a greater pecuniary reward for it, than in the history of the world was ever before attained for literary work in so short a period of time.

Census reports are to most persons uninteresting, and the value of the two large volumes of the last census which relate to the vital statistics of this country can be appreciated by but few persons; nevertheless, I wish to call your attention especially to the importance of these books, and to the remarks in which Dr. J. S. Billings, of the United States Army, under whose direction they were compiled, sums up the conclusions which may be drawn from them, and points out the way in which such statistics should be extended, improved, and made reliable as a means of increasing our knowledge of the causes of pain and death, and of