

pears to me that the position of the medical profession in its relations to health and disease is not that which confers upon society the greatest amount of benefit, nor that which will ultimately command or secure to the profession from the public the maximum of good. The physician is associated in the minds of the masses, as he is in reality, with disease rather than with health. Is this as it should be, or as medical men desire it to be? Do they wish to be associated in this way with misfortune, with what Chambers designates as partial death, with defective life, with contagiums and parasitic germs with the loathsome pestilence? Would it not be much more agreeable, more ennobling, more profitable, to be regarded as associates, defenders, worshippers of Hygiea, the "sweet smiling goddess of health?" The science of medicine appears to have been built up, so to speak, on the wrong side of disease. Physicians occupy the position of an army standing indifferently or idly in the rear, and only commencing to act when the country is invaded, and the enemy is in the midst of the citizens active in destruction, rather than that of an army at the front, ever vigilant and ready to prevent the first encroachments of the enemy. Is this an honourable or a profitable position for the members of our noble profession? The duty of the physician is far from being limited to expelling disease; he must as far as possible expel or remove the causes. The science of cure is but a small part, and indeed a secondary part, of the science of medicine. On the occasion of a public ceremony in King's College, London, in June last, Dr. Lyon Playfair said, and most truly, "the physician has to cure his patient, trace the origin of disease, and prevent its recurrence." Without presuming to alter this eminent and liberal physician's definition of the duty of the medical man, may we not entertain a hope that his duty may ultimately be regarded rather to trace the origin of disease and prevent its occurrence. Let prevention rather than cure be regarded as the *first* duty of the physician. Sir Wm. Jenner said, "no one acquainted with the present state of the science and art of medicine will for a moment question, that to prevent disease is its first and most important aim." If there chance to be one in the profession who is so selfish as to have doubts in regard to its being his duty to endeavour to extirpate that upon the existence of which his daily bread depends, he should bear in mind that "bread cast upon the waters will return;" and moreover, he may rest assured that the public can afford to pay infinitely better for prevention than it can for cure, and the public will pay. If the medical profession can be instrumental in saving