

copiously. Cold water dressing was applied, and on the third day the wound had completely cicatrized.

In March, 1871, Dr. McVean asked me to visit the same child, again afflicted with retention of urine. On introducing a catheter, it came in contact with a stone immediately outside of the os pubis. As soon as the patient was sufficiently under the influence of chloroform, Dr. McVean introduced a bistoury into the urethra, between the os pubis and the stone, and cut forward about an inch, and with a bent probe extracted a calculus similar in size to the former one. The same treatment was adopted as in the first operation. The child has ever since enjoyed uninterrupted good health.

WILLIAM WILSON, C.M.

Carleton Place, Sept. 25, 1873.

### Selected Articles.

#### EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS ON HYGIENE.

BY L. B. BOTSFORD, M.D., ST. JOHN, N. B.

(Read before the Canada Medical Association, August 6th, 1873.)

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 disease, by study of the circumstances which enter into its production or prevalence, must occupy the vantage ground in hygienic investigations. He knows best what value to place upon collected data, and is ever seeking for causes to account for them. Most if not all the reports upon sanitary matters have been furnished by him, or he has supplied the data upon which they are based; and in the future this must continue to be the case. Medicine is a noble profession, and we cannot too highly esteem the men who adorn it in their endeavors to remedy the ills, and assuage the pains of their fellow-men. And Surgery, which grapples with the destroyer and

snatches many victims from his grasp, stands in the foreground of high praise, yet both must be regarded as *specialities* in themselves. Advanced as they are and wonderful as they are, they but contend with the visible results of noxious principles. A much higher, and a more advanced position will be that, which will occupy itself with the numerous and ever working conditions which are the fruitful *sources* of disease and suffering: an ignorance of which may render futile the most masterly performances of the surgeon's hand. Medicine may do battle, even successful battle, with the armed men who spring up from the sown dragon's teeth, Hygiene destroys the seed ere they touch the mother earth. Surgery, like Hercules, may strike of the heads of the Lernean Hydra; Hygiene, Iolas like, sears the roots from which they continually re-issue.

It must be evident to all that in order to establish a true Hygienic system the foundation must be laid by a thorough registration of the deaths which occur; these must be registered not by practitioners as such, nor in limited areas, but must be exacted by a government system, general in its operation and embracing a whole people. That advances are being made in this direction, I will quote a few remarks of Dr. Acland. At a late meeting of the Social Science Congress, he said: "We must find out a way of getting at the precise data of mortality—the rate of life in all civilized portions of the world—such was the astonishing success that the Registrar-General was actually able to tell us at breakfast once a week, how the people are getting on, not only in Oxford, London, Manchester, and so forth, but he told us also of New York, Vienna, St. Petersburg, of Bombay and of Bengal."

A mere record of deaths can be accurately accomplished by any civil machinery, but will be of little use, unless the cause of death is also ascertained. At this point comes in the importance of the medical profession, an importance increasingly acknowledged when the effort is made to ascertain the remote and subtle influences which intensify the death rate.

As the rate is not uniform, but varies in different localities and at different periods, the next step will be to ascertain the conditions which precede or attend the mortality, and this opens up all the causes which diminish the vital powers of man. Among these may be ranged: mental depression, social habits, local influences, meteorology in all its phases, food and drink, overcrowding, bad sewerage, and whatever in fact tends to undermine the functions of life, and subjects the animal to premature death.

Diseases which are communicable have long occupied the attention of Governments, as well as of the profession. They are palpable, and force their consideration upon all. Terrified by the