

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS.

The first meeting of the Congress on this Continent has been held, and is now among the events of the past. The divisions which occurred among the medical men of the United States, concerning it, caused no little anxiety as to its probable success. It is, therefore, satisfactory to know that it was fairly successful, though, of course, it cannot be denied that the absence of the majority of those who have made American medicine known abroad militated considerably against its *éclat*. Many eminent men from abroad were also induced to absent themselves, on account of this division among the American profession. The numbers present were, however, very large, the Western States being well represented, and Canada sent a fair contingent, Montreal as usual being well to the front. Several very valuable papers were read and ably discussed; but, upon the whole, the foreign representatives think that the meeting was deficient in purely scientific work. We need hardly say that the social work of the Congress was just that for which the large-hearted generosity of our American friends are so noted. Those who came from abroad, we are satisfied, returned home, feeling that they had been visiting a great nation, whose people are alive to all the great issues which affect the human race.

FRESH AIR.

The advantage of pure air, uncontaminated with the impurities, which surround all cities of a considerable size, is admitted by every one, in a hygienic point of view. Physicians know that bad hygienic surroundings not only predispose to disease, but prevent a return to health, when disease has once been developed. It does more, it stunts growth, prevents muscular development, and renders the various organs of the body, especially those concerned in alimentation, unfit to perform their functions in a healthy manner. From various causes, some preventable, and others not, a large portion of the population of cities are born and reared under such surroundings. As a result, when the warm summer days come round, disease attacks those thus situated; and being unable to obtain the proper remedy, pure air, the mortality becomes excessive. This condition of things has, for several years past, been attempted to be remedied in New York, and in a few other large cities, by the formation of a fund known as "the Fresh Air Fund." The object of this Fund has been to

send to the country, and to the sea shore, such children of the poor, who being ill or even in delicate health would, it was believed, be benefited by the change. During the past summer, through the energy of Mr. Hugh Graham, Proprietor of the Montreal *Evening Star*, our good city fell into line, and established its Fresh Air Fund. Willing workers were not wanting, and willing contributors came forward with the means in money and in kind. The result was that for the first time in the history of Montreal, a very large number of the sick poor were enabled to visit the country, for a long or short period, as the circumstances of each case seemed to demand. The complete result of the charity has only just been given to the public. From the report of the chairman, it is learned that the committee rented two buildings for the season. One of these at Murray Bay, a famous watering-place on the Lower St. Lawrence, accommodated fifty persons, and was intended for those who, in the judgment of physicians, required sea air to restore them to health. At this place no fewer than 159 persons were maintained. It was ascertained, however, that a very large number of delicate mothers and sick children would be benefited by a simple change of air, and plenty of wholesome food. Steps were therefore taken to secure a home for these nearer Montreal, and, as a consequence, the second building, an hotel at Varennes Springs, about 13 miles from the city, and bordering on the St. Lawrence, which had been vacant for some time, was secured. The period during which each guest was entertained here was ten days. At one time the Home had 160 inmates, and during the entire season it accommodated 550 poor guests. In addition to the sick poor sent to Varennes and Murray Bay, a number of children with their mothers were provided for in the homes of farmers living at some distance from Montreal. Some of these were paid for, but others were entertained gratuitously by generous families. But this is not all. The committee did not content itself with the care of the actual sick. The chairman says it was known that there were hundreds living in the low places of the city, not ill, it is true, but whom a day's "outing" in the country or down the river would prevent many a visit from the doctor. Accordingly, the committee arranged a series of weekly excursions by boat and rail. "In this way, 5,537 persons shared the immense blessing of God's fresh air, for one day. "The glowing cheek and sparkling eye testified to "the benefits which hundreds had derived from