

established. This agency has been more influential than any other, for creating an interest in sanitary matters. In examining into the causes of death, in different localities, and comparing the mortality of one place with another, started many inquiries on public health. The annual reports, also from this office, prepared by Dr. William Farr, added greatly to the interest on this subject. About the same period Dr. Andrew Combe of Edinburgh published several works on the application of physiology to education and health. These works had a very large circulation and exerted great influence in directing public attention to the laws of health and life. The writings of Dr. A. Combe were peculiarly calculated to show the advantages of a practical knowledge of physiology for developing healthy bodies, and thereby preventing disease. While the writings of Dr. Combe were based strictly on scientific principles, they were remarkably well adapted, both in style and matter to instruct the masses.

One of the most distinguished physicians at this time in Great Britain, advocating reform in medical practice, was Dr. John Forbes. In his celebrated paper called "Young Physic," which was published in the *British and Foreign Medical Review*, he made this significant statement: "Redoubled attention should be directed to hygiene, public and private, with a view of preventing diseases on a large scale, and individually in our sphere of practice. Here the surest and most glorious triumphs of medical practice are to be achieved." If this prophecy has not already been fulfilled, it is very evident that in progress of time it will be still more abundantly.

As a result of the interest on this subject, a royal commission was appointed in 1857, to inquire into the sanitary condition of the army in England. This commission recommended that not only some regulations should be adopted for protecting the health of the army, but that a school be established for educating army-surgeons, in which "hygiene and sanitary science" should be taught. This was the nucleus or starting-point of that celebrated work on practical hygiene, by Dr. Edmund A. Parks. This "Manual of Practical

Hygiene," constituting a treasury of knowledge on sanitation, has had a large circulation, and passed through several editions.

The interest in sanitary matters has been steadily increasing in Great Britain among all classes. Its fruits are becoming every year more and more manifest by improved health generally, and by a reduction of mortality, especially in cities. Numerous acts of parliament have been passed in favor of sanitary science. The medical profession and journals generally commend it; and never were its prospects brighter in Great Britain than at the present time.

Perhaps the science has not created so general an interest, nor taken so strong a hold, in the United States as it has in Great Britain; but still its history is one of marked interest. Let us notice a few of its salient points. From 1830 to 1840 Dr. John Bell conducted the *Journal of Health*, in Philadelphia, which very ably advocated the principles of hygiene. In 1835 Dr. Jacob Bigelow, in the annual address before the Massachusetts Medical Society, pronounced a certain class of diseases "self-limited" in their character, and urged that they should be treated accordingly.

In 1842 was issued the first registration-report of births, marriages and deaths in Massachusetts, and have been continued annually, till we have now the forty-fourth report. Sanitary science has been greatly advanced by facts and arguments derived from these reports. Several other states have followed the course of Massachusetts, in establishing registration-department. No one agency can do so much to advance the cause of vital statistics as such registration-reports. The application and progress of sanitary science depend much upon a knowledge of vital statistics; and the more thoroughly these are understood, the better for the cause of sanitation.

In 1844 Dr. Elisha Bartlett published in Philadelphia a work on the "Philosophy of Medical Science," and in urging upon the profession a better knowledge of the cause and nature of disease, said: "The next thing to be done is to find out the best methods of modifying and preventing disease. This is the great mis-