

be commencing cataract, glaucoma, retinitis, optic atrophy, choroiditis, retinal hæmorrhage, granular kidney, or some grave muscular difficulty. All this means that in the interests of the people such a bill should not become law.

IGNAZ PHILLIP SEMMELWEIS.

This great man was born in 1818 at Ofen or Buda, of Hungarian parents. He received a scant education. He studied medicine in Vienna and graduated in 1844. He at once devoted himself to the study of midwifery. He became full assistant in 1846. In a few months he had to resign his position in favor of another assistant. At this time Semmelweis was devoting much attention to pathology under the famous Rokitsansky.

The death rate among the lying-in patients was very high. In the wards where the medical students visited and received practical instructions the death rate rose to ten per cent. This was accepted as a sort of unavoidable miasma and the disease still went on. This state of affairs took firm hold of his mind and he determined to discover the cause and find a remedy.

At this juncture of events a medical friend of his, Kolletscha, died as the result of a post-mortem wound. The symptoms were the same, to the mind of Semmelweis, as in the case of a woman who died of child-bed fever. The truth then flashed across his mind that the disease was due to some poison introduced into the system of the confined woman. But Semmelweis was a very diffident man and shrank from proclaiming his great discovery by speech and pen as he should have done.

Times of great political trouble came in Vienna in 1848, and he quietly left and went to Buda-Pesth, where he carried on an obstetrical clinic. He was surrounded by difficulties and professional jealousies. He tried to introduce antiseptics and disinfectants, and with excellent results. Chloride of lime was much used by him. In 1860 he brought out his work on the etiology of child-bed fever. The teachings set forth in this work were coldly received. This preyed on his sensitive nature, and he lost his temper. He called his opponents murderers, because of the high death rate which occurred in obstetric practice.

The story of his life was soon to be told. The conditions of opposition, jealousy, and high mortality drove him insane in 1865. He was confined in an asylum where he died in a few days as the result of a septic wound on his finger. He thus died of the disease he had so bravely fought.