

climate, locality, and temperature, for the special causes of disease, and for the first time in the history of medicine a gate seemed opening by which we might arrive at the hitherto occult origin of maladies. The conjoint science of statistics will in some respects give to the study of medicine all the characters of mathematical exactitude, and by following out this course in all matters to which we can apply it, we shall thus do away with that uncertainty behind which the quack conceals his imposition and the half-educated practitioner his baneful ignorance. We shall proceed in the further examination to study our subject in its moral, medical, and economic bearing, and to elucidate the influence, its study and practice are likely to have on the saving of human life and the general amelioration of mankind.

In every age and at every time the profession of the physician has been necessarily conjoined with that of the philanthropist; his mission ever one of kindness has been to alleviate suffering, and often by the blessings of his skill, to call into effect those almost Godlike functions of the healing art, restoring sight to the blind, and enabling the mind darkened by insanity to return to its sphere of usefulness in society. How often does the medical man give his assistance in the homes of vice, wretchedness and poverty, in hovels reeking with pestilence, and at the imminent risk of his own life, enter when all else have fled; but how frequently does it happen that his skill is unavailing, that the external conditions by which the sufferer is surrounded preclude the possibility of recovery: the place reeks with miasmatic poison, the mainsprings of life have been undermined by a long course of vice; body and soul go down together. It is with such cases as these that sanitary science and sanitary legislation have to deal, numbering as they do their thousands nay tens of thousands. The professor of curative medicine merely offers his skill to save the body, but when he conjoins with his curative knowledge that of preventive science he takes a position far higher, he saves body and soul alike; his usefulness exercising an influence posterior to the present on generations yet unborn. It is in localities low, ill-drained and crowded out of all proportion to surface area; that epidemics take their rise, and immorality its origin. Crowded and huddled together without distinction of age or sex, living under circumstances the most depressing in their character, inhaling an atmosphere loaded with organic miasms, is it to be wondered at that vice and disease go hand in hand together until spreading like a foul ulcer from such vile sources they inundate the land, and reaching at length the abodes of the rich teach them the lesson, that even for their own protection measures must be taken to uproot with a strong arm foci such as these. Lord Shaftesbury in his address on public health at the meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science in 1858, after alluding to the condition of the London poor, thus proceeds,—“Go amongst people, hear with your own ears and see with your own eyes, what I now state, the utter corruption of language and of thought and of practice in all those districts. When I state this I am not speaking in condemnation of those people, for I maintain that the circumstances in which they are, are such, that these things come upon them almost by inevitably necessity. I speak not only of health, but when two, three or four families are crammed together in a narrow house, can you wonder at any amount