

sion of England into a common brotherhood, it may be safely affirmed that he did not dream that he was laying the foundation of an association which would ultimately not only embrace the whole of the British Isles, but extend to that Greater Britain beyond the seas, and become an association of imperial magnitude and of imperial importance and significance. I have no hesitation in expressing my belief that the British Medical Association will be an important factor in bringing to a successful issue that great scheme of Imperial Federation which now exercises the minds, and, let me add, the hearts, of the leading statesmen of the Empire. Sir Charles Hastings' aim was to bring town into professional union with town, county with county; now it has become the aim of the Society he called into being to add State to State—and may I not say continent to continent?—until all the nations and peoples who live under the British flag are brought within the beneficent influence of the Association.

With respect to the objects of the Association, as set forth on its foundation, they may briefly be stated to be :

1st. The collection of speculative and practical information through essays, hospital reports, infirmaries, dispensaries, or private practice.

2nd. Increase of knowledge of the medical topography of England through statistical, meteorological, geological, and botanical inquiries; the investigation of the modification of endemic and epidemic diseases in different situations and at various periods, so as to trace, as far as the recent state of the art would permit, their connection with peculiarities of soil and climate or with the localities, habits, and occupations of the people.

3rd. The advancement of medico-legal science through succinct reports of cases occurring in courts of judicature.

4th. The maintenance of the honor and respectability of the profession generally in the provinces by promoting friendly intercourse and free communication of its members and by establishing among them the harmony and good feeling which ought ever to characterize a liberal profession.

During its earliest years the movements and proceedings of the Association were quiet and unostentatious, the meetings simple in their arrangements; but it was not long before medical societies began to join the newer body, and towns in all parts of the Kingdom soon came to regard it as an honor to entertain the Association. Gradually the best men of each district enrolled their names, and the membership increased so greatly that subdivisions into branches became a necessity. Each branch, with its own ordinary and annual meetings, was practically a replica of the parent society, possessing its own president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, council, and by-laws, subject to the approval of the Council of the Association, to which, besides, each branch sent representatives according to its numerical strength. In 1837, five years after the foundation of the Association, there were three of these branches formed, namely, the East Anglian, the Bath and Bristol, and the Lancashire and Cheshire. By the end of 1878 the Association had spread over the whole United Kingdom, the total number of branches at that date being 30—one of the 30, it is interesting to note, being Jamaica, the first Colonial branch to be formed. It was organized in 1878.