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THE RELATIONS BETWEEN SANITARY SCIENCE AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

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WHAT IS SANITARY SCIENCE?

IT is only about forty years since this subject began to attract general attention. It started with the establishment of the registration of births, deaths and marriages, in Great Britain, by Dr. William Farr. While investigating upon a large scale the causes of death, the enquiry naturally arose, What can be done to prevent as well as to cure disease? This enquiry, from a small beginning, has resulted in the most surprising advance in the knowledge of the laws of health and life. So rapid and extensive have been these changes, that one living during this period can hardly credit them; and never were these improvements taking place faster than at the present day. But the advantages already secured, though great and invaluable, are mere harbingers of richer and more permanent blessings in store. In the progress of this science, every year has signalled the past, that it had a deeper and broader scope, not so much in improving the old methods of work, but in entering into new fields and enlisting new agencies. Its aim is not merely to remove the existing causes of diseases, but to destroy the germs or seeds of disease. It does not stop with preventing this or that contagious disease, or reduce to the minimum the zymotic class of diseases; but when the principles of this science are applied to the fullest extent, they will present the human body so sound and healthy in all its parts as in a great measure to forestall disease.

There is we believe a normal standard of physiology, where all the organs are so sound and well-balanced, and where all perform respectfully their functions

so thoroughly, as to afford small chances for disease. This organization represents the highest standard of health, and the nearer the human body in all its parts approximates to this standard, the better or higher degree of health shall every such person possess. With this view of physiology, it will be seen that all disease is a violation of law, whether it arises from internal or external cause. As there must be some change in the structure or functions of certain organs in the body, for the introduction of disease, is it not clearly the province of sanitary science to take cognizance of such changes? If the violations of law can be arrested or modified in the very first stages, may it not serve to prevent a vast amount of disease? * * *

By commencing early and with the use of proper means, the organization of every individual can be greatly improved and made more healthy; and by a proper application of the laws of inheritance for three or four generations, organization may become so perfected as to diminish a large proportion of the sickness and disease that exist at the present day. This is not mere theory nor speculation, but a doctrine based upon the laws of physiology--laws which should be better understood. Inasmuch as such a change would be productive of sanitation in the highest degree, is it not the province of sanitary science to enter and cultivate this field? Would it not improve health and prolong life upon the largest scale and to the greatest number? What other science or agency can do this work so well? That human organization can be improved, by the laws of exercise, nutrition and inheritance, there can be no question. If the