

# THE CANADA HEALTH JOURNAL.

(PUBLIC HYGIENE AND STATISTICS.)

Vol. V.

TORONTO, ~~APR~~, 1882.

No. 8.

## THE SEED-TIME OF HEALTH.

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The following is an Abstract of an admirable Address delivered at the recent Brighton Health Congress :—

The Greeks knew that life ought to be a perpetual feast. They not only knew the fact, they acted up to it. They were equally well aware that a long and perfect life could alone be attained by perfection of life at its opening, in the seed-time of health. To die at that time was, therefore, an offence against natural rule, against reason, against sentiment. The knowledge of such an event was death to the brain, death to the heart. In this seed-time of health the life was to be made, the life that was to be in truth a life worth living. Animals beneath men, that are worthy of going through their appointed time, and of being made both useful and beautiful, must have their seed-time of health. Shall their human masters be less cared for? If the masters are to be mere slaves, yes; and then it were a pity and a danger; for they who have no respect for life and beauty, who drag through existence and grow weary of it, are to be trusted neither with life, beauty, nor fame.

In the history of great truths derived from the Hellenic wise times, there is not one truth so great as this, and not one so completely missed. It is the secret that was lost. In our day we have lost it so severely that it might never have been in existence for ought we seem to care. The key to all we would have, the key to the gates of

health and happiness, has been lost as if it had never been found.

In point of health our children in these times, proud as we are of these times, are a reproach. Where is there a healthy child? I have never seen one. You may put before me a child in all its innocence. It has done no wrong that it should suffer; it may show to the unskilled mind no trace of disease; and yet I know that if I, or any skilled observer were to look into the history of the life in question it cannot be found intrinsically sound. It will have to battle with future dangers sufficient for the soundest to meet; but it is not itself free from dangers other than those that are prospective and avoidable. It is sure to have some inherited failure, and too likely some that will help to increase the independent risks that lie before it.

So our children under five years are expected to die in what may almost be called a definite proportion. He is a fortunate man who, having four children born to him, retains three alive. Later on, for a short time, the danger is reduced; with adolescence it recurs. Again it retreats, but with such failure all along the line, that one-third of the allotted life, the life that would be, were it planted in sound health, is only attained. And for this we have no shame. There is an assembly of learned men who are bent on understanding to the full these human failures from health. These men spare no pains, and to gain a spark of light will labour like miners in a mine. When last I visited them a puny feeble spark of life was in their presence undergoing their searching yet kindly scrutiny. Except that it cried a