

ART. XXIX.—*On some points in connection with Sanitary Science.* BY  
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The historic records of nations from the earliest down to the latest times, present us, in each and all, with periods of elevation, culmination, and finally of decay. In some, the attainment to greatness was dependent to a very large extent, not on the people themselves, but was rather owing to a race of despots, who by their extensive and enlarged minds, and their wide spread knowledge of mankind, were enabled to elevate the lands over which they ruled to temporary greatness, but such greatness was never in such cases permanent, but rapidly died away, when the men by whom it had been effected disappeared from the scene. Nations like individuals, require that cycles, whether of years or centuries should be passed in their attainment to greatness, and when such conditions have not been complied with, the structure as a rule, falls to pieces even more rapidly than it was built up. Necessarily and intimately connected with a nation's progress in advancement towards a high civilization in the arts and forms of life, is that tendency which civilized man has to enquire into the conditions of his own existence, to enquire on what they are dependent, and how the individual singly, or society at large, may be affected by the external circumstances of time or place.

Human progress in its onward march, fails not to see how health, and life, and the good of the body politic generally, are affected by such external conditions, and as it is a self-evident fact, that the wealth of the entire nation is dependent on the capabilities of productive power incident to each individual composing the mass, it becomes a necessity in the advancement of the country, that causes injuriously affecting health should be taken account of, and as far as possible removed. It is only, however, in lands, in which progress in wealth and civilization is going on in a high degree, that this kind of reasoning as regards the causes of mortality, their prevention, and the capabilities thereon dependent of its population obtains, we find under conditions less advanced, another cause and one much more general, which usually directs attention towards investigating and warding off the accidents of disease and death. This latter takes effect through the fear of death and wide spread devastation accompanying and following in the train of pestilential diseases, and holds good for the most part in countries where legislative wisdom is neither far enough advanced, nor its acquired capabilities sufficiently powerful to carry out measures adapted to the purpose. Often it happens, however, that even the frightful impress, made by the march of epidemic pestilence, fails to rouse a people to a proper sense of their danger; and when such is the case, human life has no marketable value, and is therefore, looking at it in an economic point of view, not worth the preservation. If we look back for a brief period into the condition of the North American Indian races, and the same will apply to almost all half civilized nations and savage tribes, we find the low value at which human life was and is estimated. Child murder was common, and to prevent old age, or rather that period of life, which with civilized man is looked up to for wisdom and advice, becoming a burthen, cool, deliberate, and even sought for sacrifice of life, was