But though in the abstract, health and disease seem to be almost the opposite of each other, in practice they are found often to shade almost insensibly into each other, making it difficult to tell where the one ends and the other begins, and making it impossible to give an exact scientific definition of either of them. Perhaps the simplest definitions are,—that health means that condition in which all the functions are performed naturally, while disease means a condition in which at least some of the functions are more or less unnatural. In these definitions, of course the whole difference turns upon what is to be understood as natural or unnatural, and how are we to decide as to what is natural ?

We shall probably find the nearest approach to it in the average course of existence of indivduals in a prosperous community. They spring from a healthy parentage ; they are born at full time ; they grow to healthy maturity ; they produce healthy off-spring ; they gradually fade and wither ; they die peacefully and return harmlessly to dust.

But disease may alter all this ; parentage may be unwholesome or depraved ; birth may be difficult or untimely ; growth may be irregular or stunted ; progeny may be misshapen or feeble, or may be wanting altogether ; age may be laden with infirmities ; death may come at any time in a virulent and painful form ; and even the lifeless clay by reason of its virulence may spread pestilence and death among thousands of innocent victims. How different the pictures. Health represents peace, happiness and prosperity ;—disease represents grief, misery and disaster.

What nobler work, then, than to strive to blot out the latter, and to develop the former to still greater excellence ?

But, it may be asked, how far is it possible to exterminate disease and to replace it by health and soundness. Theoretically it ought to be possible to exterminate disease, inasmuch as it is an unnatural condition, and by strict obedience to natural laws, it ought to be made to disappear. But natural laws, like all other laws, are constantly broken ; and indeed anything like perfect obedience to them is scarcely to be expected. They are often imperfectly understood, and when understood they are often beyond our control, and only a partial success in our work can therefore ever be looked for.

But though we can never hope to completely eradicate all diseases, we may confidently expect to exterminate a large number of them, and to so modify and control a still greater number, as to render them comparatively harmless, thus reducing the sum total of misery and mortality in a very important degree. In proof of this we have