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ART. VII.—*The Medical Statistics of the City of Montreal.* By GEORGE E. FENWICK, M.D., Physician to the Montreal Dispensary and Infirmary for Diseases of Women and Children.

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The custom of offering a holocaust to the deity was practised by the inhabitants of our globe from the earliest period of which we possess authentic record. This service prefigured the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and was regarded by the worshipper as an exhibition of faith in the atonement to be offered for the sins of the whole world. In course of time man fell from the service of his Creator, and made for himself images, which he worshipped and to which he offered sacrifice. The precise time at which human sacrifice was first introduced is undecided. It is probable that the example of Abraham in the intention of offering up his son Isaac, was ill applied, and it became a custom amongst the Canaanites, though Philo supposes it existed as a religious rite amongst them before Abraham's time.

The Egyptians sought to lessen the miraculously increasing numbers of their bondmen, the Hebrews, by afflicting them with grievous burthens. This not acting as speedily and effectually as was desired, Pharaoh ordered all the male children to be destroyed. This order seems to have been from prudential motives. The Egyptians were evidently alarmed at their rapid increase, and no doubt bore in mind the circumstance of their country having been overrun a few centuries before by a tribe of Cushite shepherds. The Phœnicians, a remnant of the Canaanites, practised human sacrifice, offering their young children to Moloch or Saturn. This custom they carried with them into Africa. Diodorus Siculus gives a description of Saturn, the figure was of brass with the arms extended, the hands turned backwards and reaching towards the ground. The child who was to be consecrated to the god was placed on the arms and immediately fell through into a pan or furnace situated at the feet of the image, containing a fierce fire, and there perished. These practices were continued by the Carthaginians until the pro-consulate of Tiberius, who, with a view of arresting this frightful custom, caused the priests of Saturn to be hanged on trees