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ABSTRACT OF THE ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CANADA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, KINGSTON, ONT., SEPTEMBER 5TH.

By J. A. MULLIN, M.D., PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

After thanking the members for the honor conferred in electing him to preside at this meeting of the association, he referred to the pleasure and advantage of attending these annual meetings, and hearing the views of representative men here assembled, all united in efforts to advance professional knowledge. He spoke with regret of the loss the association had sustained through the death of the late Dr. David, of Montreal, one of the oldest members who had discharged the duties of general secretary for many years, and was held in high respect by all. He alluded to the losses to the profession each year through death, notably in the last year that of Sir Thomas Watson, the author of the eloquent lectures on the practice of medicine, which had for many years been the guide of students of medicine. He referred to the importance of the annual meetings, uniting the members of the several local associations, and by holding the sessions in different parts of the Domi-

nion securing the co-operation of the most prominent members of the profession. Its work has been successful in the past, and we have reason to be hopeful for this year, coming as we do to the old city of Kingston, one of the earliest centres of education in this Province, whose institutions are worthy of its history, and continue to influence the minds of our youth with a vigor corresponding to the growth of our country.

Adverting to the progress made in professional knowledge during the past year, he did not propose to traverse the whole field, but to confine his remarks to some of the investigations recently made respecting the influence of minute organisms in causing disease.

Lister stands foremost in advancing this branch of professional knowledge. His antiseptic method of treatment may not be, and indeed is not considered by himself an ultimate result beyond which it is impossible to pass, but the great merit of his work is, he first called attention to the agencies which effect the decomposition of organic substances. Some hold that these pass into decay as soon as life ceases, and having fulfilled their part, decay is inevitable; that their ultimate particles are held together by so loose a bond that the cessation of life gives the forces of chemical affinity power over them. Organic substances exposed to atmospheric influences, apart from those of vegetable life, will, in time, become decomposed; this, however, would be a slow process, for when pains are taken to prevent vegetable growth, decomposi-