It is interesting to note that the female sex has profited more than the male sex by this improved state of affairs. This, of course, is as everyone wishes it to be. Some twelve years or more ago, in compiling material for a paper, I found a computation which showed that the medical advance of the preceding half century had lengthened the average life of man by two years, while the average life of woman had been increased by four and a half years. So there is this to be added to all the other advantages which the weaker sex have over their less fortunate but none the less devoted protectors.

While it is not to be denied that some very sensible and excellent public health measures date back to remote history, and while we would be far from justified in arrogating to our day and generation all that is good in hygienic regulation, it obtains in medicine as in every branch of science that very recent years have witnessed greater advance than preceding centuries. The impetus to the wonderful forward movement which I will endeavor to briefly review this evening, as far as it applies to medicine, is unquestionably the development of the "germ theory" of disease. The studies which led up to the marvellously clear and complete demonstration of the causation of certain diseases by the minute vegetable organisms called bacteria, studies with which we associate particularly the names of Pasteur and Koch and Lister, were full of importance and of interest; and, did time permit I would like to relate to you some instances illustratrative of the patient perseverance, almost prophetic foresight, and genius for overcoming difficulties, manifested by these men. But it must suffice to say that proof of the part played by some bacteria in causing disease not only suggested a means of curing, and, better, of preventing disease, but opened up an entirely new field of research and stimulated the study of the scientific branches of the medical curriculum to an enormous extent. Perhaps the first real demonstration of the bacterial causation of disease is to be credited to Davaine, a French investigator, who, in 1863 showed that a bacillus, which had already been described by Pollender, was the cause of anthrax. Anthrax is a disease which affects sheep and cattle in certain countries, and at the