

The Journal of the American Medical Association

VOL. XXVII.

CHICAGO, ILL., AUGUST 29, 1896.

No. 9.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

THE PREVENTION OF WAR AND THE PROMOTION OF PEACE, IN RELATION TO STATE MEDICINE.

Read in the Section on State Medicine, at the Forty-seventh Annual Meeting of the American Medical Association, held at Atlanta, Ga., May 5-8, 1896.

BY E. D. McDANIEL, A.M., M.D., LL.D.

MOBILE, ALA.

The common saying that every question has two sides is generally true. But it is also true that the reasons in favor of one side are more numerous and stronger than those in favor of the other. It is fortunate that this is so. Persons of a fair degree of intelligence, by laying aside selfishness, passion and prejudices and by honestly using proper available helps, can reach such proofs as render truth plain and duty clear. One of the greatest questions that can arise in the course of human affairs happens to be before the nations as *the question of the hour*. It is the question of "war or peace." Two strongly antagonistic tendencies are in energetic action over nearly all the civilized world. The tendency toward war is manifested by the popular masses and their legislative representatives in our own and many foreign countries by an unusual restlessness, a want of forbearance, a spirit of aggressiveness, of pugnacity and a loud clamor for hasty and extreme action. On the other hand, the tendency toward peace is equally pronounced. It is heard in a strong, clear, solemn, impressive voice that comes in great earnestness, spontaneity and harmony from the consciences and convictions of the foremost, the best and the most intellectual men of the times—the great leaders in education, science, statesmanship, economics, ethics, beneficence and industry. Especially comes this voice from the two great English speaking centers of christendom—Great Britain and the United States. It demands that a system of international arbitration be adopted for the impartial and authoritative settlement of international disputes and wrongs, without resort to war. The question is open and urgent. Prompt decision must be had. Even if complete unanimity of *opinion* be unattainable, no neutrality in *action* is practicable. All influential persons and all potent agencies must act with one of the parties or with the other. The present occasion furnishes a fit time and place for discussing and deciding what part State medicine, as the proper representative of all the coördinate departments of medicine and of all the men who make up the medical profession, is to act in the great cosmopolitan drama that is being planned. To invite this discussion and to have the opinions and actions that may be elicited properly set forth is the motive of this paper.

In a subject so momentous in magnitude and scope as the one before us, many things that are more or

less important must be passed without mention. The limited time allotted imposes this necessity. Moreover, the thorough knowledge and agreement known to exist in many pertinent matters would make it equally a waste of time and an abuse of patience to attempt to prove what is already believed and to gain assent to what is already granted. Let us not be understood as ignoring the matters that are omitted or as underrating or disparaging such as may seem to be too little elaborated, or insufficiently emphasized. Let us try to get a correct conception of State medicine, of war and of peace, respectively, then let us view the three in close juxtaposition, that we may better see their just relationship.

State medicine has for its function to formulate, apply and enforce rules for the protection and improvement of health and for the prevention and management of disease in organized communities. Its great and final aim is, therefore, the preservation, protection and improvement of human life. Its *importance* must be estimated by the value of human life. But how may this value be ascertained and if possible standardized? Only by one, or two, or all of three methods: 1. Sacred and human tradition confirmed by the common agreement of mankind. 2. By consciousness and ratiocination. 3. By observation of the work that can be done by man.

Let us look, as in a dictionary, for the value of human life—meaning by life, the *living human being*—as indicated by tradition and fixed by the common estimate of our race, and we find it among the foremost, if not the very foremost of all precious and sacred earthly things. The first uttered injunction to the primal human pair was this: "Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." The first penal verdict was a sentence pronounced upon a shedder of human blood. Subsequently the command was given: "Thou shalt commit no murder." Old Testament writings abound in evidences that the care of life is the first duty of law. In the enumerations of rights and in the preambles and drafts of forms for organic laws submitted to men of various countries, races and times, preparatory to the formation of governments, constitutions and laws, the provision for the protection of life has been a leading requirement and by being ratified has become a solemn pledge of the race. That life is a foremost, if not the foremost and greatest of values, is plainly implied by the fact that prophecy, history, poetry, philosophy and philanthropy voicing the concurrent sense of our race, deplore wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, floods, poverty and oppression as among the greatest of human evils, because of their destructiveness to human life and, on the other hand, extol peace, plenty, security, wealth, domestic repose and abounding health as among the greatest of public blessings because of their benign influences upon the life-interests of the world. That the greatest of these

evils is war, and the greatest of these blessings is peace, are conclusions based upon the clearly implied predicate that life is the greatest and most sacred of human interests and values.

Let us next appeal to the tribunal of consciousness and ratiocination. In doing so let us clothe ourselves in devout humility. Let us remember that we are nearing the dark border of the spirit land, and let us take heed that we put not unholy footprints beyond the proper boundary of human territory. Let us exclude all physical, metaphysical and theologic methods, doctrines and dogmas—efforts to understand, or demonstrate the essence, origin or eternity of life, as not at all pertinent to our present purpose. Let us also leave out all evolutionary questions as to what may have been the forms and capacities of man in periods of duration that have long vanished into the remote past, or what may be his possibilities in a future period that lies beyond the reach of all reasonable and practical speculation. Thus we will find ourselves at home, as it were, among beings of like size and born with ourselves—face to face with incarnate life—life with bodily limitations and instrumentalities, with consciousness, sensation, power of motion, reason, conscience, speech, knowledge of good and evil and tendencies to both. This is plain, practical, undeniable, tangible, personated life—rather it is living man, the man of our past, present and future—the typical man of our planet and our era. What value do his conscious superiority, and his capacious attributes and his regular courses of action, assent and maintain, as due to his life? Obviously the highest that can attach to any earthly interest, and beyond all fixable estimate. All else that man has, will he give for his life; and, as a rule, all else that he has, he does give for his life when its redemption is required.

In the Declaration of American Independence life is held to be an "inalienable right." In accurate definition life is not an inalienable right, nor, indeed, a right at all. The life of a living being is an attribute, an endowment, a possession of that being, and like other endowments, possessions or trusts, it is conditioned, forfeitable and alienable in case of both individuals and communities. It can not be maintained that human life is an absolute, persistent, fundamental good; it is only a fundamental *possibility* for good, and this even alone makes it a thing of priceless value.

The third and only remaining method of ascertaining the value of human life is the plain and easy one of judging a tree by its fruit. What work, then, and how much of it, both on the side of good and of evil, is man able to do, so far as we can judge from what he has already done, what he is now doing, and what he is evidently proceeding to do?

Thousands of times he has desolated the earth by his resistless blows in war, and thousands of times he has restored it to prosperity, by his all-conquering perseverance in peace. In schemes for wreaking his vengeance on the one hand and of extending the field of his blissful beneficence on the other, he defies all dangers and disregards all costs. He compasses both sea and land, sending his ships and his cables through the one and his telegraphs and cars over the other. He scales the loftiest mountains and fathoms the deepest oceans. He marches through clouds of dust and seas of blood. He enters as a missionary the far off abodes of horrid cruelty in the face of all privations and perils. He treads under foot the slow mov-

ing glacier and the never melting snow. He traverses Alaska by voyage and Sahara by caravan, and explores and develops the resources of both. He tames the massive elephant into a kneeling beast of burden. He drags from the rivers, the shores and the seas their monster crocodiles, alligators, sturgeons, sharks and whales, and converts them into food and merchandise. He plays with the manes of the strongest lions of Africa and with the teeth of the fiercest tigers of Bengal. He sinks quarries and mines for sandstone, freestone, limestone, granite and coal, the useful and precious metals, thus furnishing employment to the idle, indispensable necessities to the poor, comforts to such as can afford them, desirable luxuries to the affluent and rich. Many valuable commodities to commerce; many appropriate materials to manufacturers, artists and artisans; many avenues to varied employment; to trade a widened domain and to finance an available standard of value. In pasture, forest, farms, fields and fishery, he provides the great ruling contributions to clothing and food for the human family. He opens wide and deep channels through everglades, pocosons and lakes at once making waterways for trade and reclaiming for cultivation millions of acres of valuable land. He sinks artesian tubes through the thick, dense strata of many vast unwatered areas and brings up copious unfailing streams to fructify the soil and soften the air, and thus causes the desert to blossom as the rose and waste places to teem with population and wealth. He bores deep into the earth's crust and taps great long-sealed reservoirs of gas and oil and brings up the contents to furnish mechanical illuminating and various other materials that give diffusion to human progress and well-being. He spans great rivers and straits with bridges and ferries. He has already or will shortly have, his sleepless sentinels on watch, in hailing distance of each other, all over the continents and islands to give timely notice of storm centers that may form or threaten to form, and to warn all men to provide against blighting blizzards, desolating tornadoes, wrecking ocean forces, or inundating cloud bursts. In Byron's day, it was only in the transporting frenzy of poetry and when live lightning leaped from cliff to cliff and the loud thunder shook the far off air that "Jura answered back to Alps;" now in words of soberness and in stormless calm, the Himalayas can talk with the Rockies and the Urals with the Andes. Orders of the President, issued with gentle but considerate firmness in Washington, are instantly heard throughout most of the States and territories of the Union. Victoria speaks in London and her words of love and authority are promptly heard by dwellers in Great Britain and Ireland, in India, Australia and New Guinea, in the East and West Indies, in the Dominion of the Canadas, in provinces in South America, and in various other far off possessions. Nearly two thousand years ago the Great Galilean told his Apostles that they should do greater works than even he was then doing, and, by the instrumentality of railroads, telegraphs, telephones and phonographs. Talmage and other evangelists are now enjoying the promise and fulfilling the prediction by preaching in New York or Washington and being heard the same day, to the ends of the earth.

Cleveland touched a button, and instantly the machinery from all the world went into motion in far distant Chicago. He touched a button and every spindle, lever and engine in Atlanta responded to the touch.

In travel, the day's journey of antiquity is now accomplished in less than an hour. We lie down to sleep when we start for a distant destination and when we awaken we are there. The hours of darkest night are now as valuable for travel and many other purposes as those of brightest day, and rest is as effective as the most energetic toil. In midst of densest darkness men can cause radiant light to shine—not by the slow word of command, but with the quickness of thought. In all the departments of applied mathematics man displays his wonderful works of perseverance and capacity. He gives to navigation all her maps of the stars and constellations, her charts of the oceans and seas, her compasses, barometers, chronometers and quadrant. He marks the boundaries and calculates the areas of states, nations and continents, and the altitudes of their various parts; locates routes and estimates costs for railroads and inland water ways for travel and transportation and adjusts the gradings of railroads for thousands of miles. In the department of bookkeeping he is the accountant without whom no census could be taken, no tax levied, assessed or collected, no financial suits settled in law, and by whom it could, without egotism or boasting be said: "By me kings reign and princes decree justice." In statuary, painting, poetry and oratory man has opened in the hearts of his fellows new fountains of justice, pity, tenderness, sympathy, compassion, forgiveness and of love. But it is in astronomy, geology, cosmology, physics, chemistry, biology and medicine that in the more recent times man's achievements have become the most transcendently glorious, marvelous, beneficent and financially important. He has analyzed the earth, separated, differentiated and classified its elements and their combinations; has measured and weighed the earth and the moon and ascertained their orbits, distances and revolutions; has done the like for the other planets and satellites of our system; has discovered and explained the causes and laws of the tides and predicted the times of their coming for all the points of the coasts of the world. Away back in the millenniums of time much was undoubtedly known about the conditions of health. Thirty-five hundred years ago the great Hebrew lawgiver wisely recognized cleanliness as essential to health, and enjoined morality, isolation and purification as safeguards of the life of individuals and communities. But disregard of this wise enactment was followed by outrage and war and these by famine, poverty, filth and discouragements. These conditions brought on many horrid and loathsome pestilential epidemics that ravaged and sometimes almost depopulated medieval nations and cities. One hundred years ago, there lived in Gloucester, England (the place just now under an epidemic of smallpox) a humane physician of very studious turn and great aptitude for scientific research. His name was Edward Jenner. His acumen, patience and perseverance were all taxed to the utmost for a time longer than the average man lives, but finally accomplished the wonderful and beneficent discovery of a preventive of smallpox. The discovery was so valuable in itself, so hard to account for, and so suggestive of some great underlying principle that it excited the curiosity of scientists all over the world. These scientists by careful, persevering and protracted study, observation and experiment, have discovered many disease germs and germicides, and much about the sources and laws of action of these, and have

already obtained such control over some of the dreaded epidemic diseases of animals, plants and man as to effect an annual saving of thousands of human lives and of countless millions of property values in animals and crops.

In the above feeble attempt to place in view man's working power, not as much as a tithe of all that invites consideration has been said or even alluded to. But surely enough has been said to show that man is, in reality, the lord of earth's present era, that he is discharging the commission of subduing the earth, with a prospect and promise of final success, that his life is, therefore, the leading object of human care, and that everything that either directly or remotely affects it, for better or for worse, lies within the domain of state medicine.

We come next to consider how war and peace stand related to human life.

It is admitted that war deserves the credit of having done much good, of having sometimes carried the blessings of civilization to benighted barbarians, of having aroused activity where energy was dormant, of having forced hostile and disunited tribes to dwell together and form states and nations, of having improved its votaries in enterprise, courage, patriotism, magnanimity, gallantry and chivalry. It may also be admitted that peace has its proneness to certain evils, such as supineness, slothfulness, effeminacy, enervation, gluttony. It is believed to be fair to let these opposite influences offset each other and that our purpose will be most quickly and fairly subserved by placing the conceded effects of war and those of peace side by side and letting the spectator impartially judge for himself.

It has been shown already that by the traditions and common consent of the human race, the fact is admitted that war is the arch enemy of human life and peace its best friend. To some it may seem that our whole case might rest here. But others may think that proofs are so numerous, obvious and available and the cause so momentous that something more should be added.

Especially formidable would be an array of the statistics of war and of peace. But for this there is no time available here. We must refer to histories, official reports, and compilations of census returns for figures to show how vastly and palpably peace protects life and war destroys, how peace increases population and war diminishes it, how peace establishes law and order and war brings anarchy and chaos. Peace clears land, fences it, plants seeds, raises crops, builds homes and farm houses, rears domestic animals for food, clothing and profit, drains and reclaims swamps, fens and bogs, thus converting sources of pestilence into fountains of health, wealth and life. War burns or razes these homes, kills or otherwise destroys the inmates, consumes the flocks and herds, leaves fields that were ripe for harvest a naked surface on which victims of famine must drop down and die. How peace by long periods of patient toil, steady perseverance and unselfish economy, builds highways and factories, villages, towns and cities; and how war rapidly reduces all these to ashes and ruins. How peace covers continents and islands with happy travelers and merchants, with depots and stores of food and clothing and other human comforts and luxuries; war with armories and magazines for destruction and death. How peace checkers the oceans and rivers with merchantmen, happy voyagers and hopeful trad-

ers, that as they pass each other exchange smiles and wave friendly greetings; war with privateers and battleships commissioned to rob, kill and destroy. How peace, by encouraging thought, industry, invention, discovery, enterprise, science and art among the millions of earth's inhabitants, stores up billions upon billions of accumulated value—crystallized profit-coined capital—thus furnishing means for additional strides in the path of upward progress. How war, both by paralyzing the agencies of peace and by a wholesale process of consumption and waste, by enormous reduction of income and extravagant expenditures, exhausts the treasuries of states, of nations, and often of the entire civilized world; then resorts to promissory paper and accumulates public debts to amounts of billions upon billions, tempting following generations of children to repudiation, or subjecting them to endless oppressive, impoverishing, vexatious, demoralizing taxation for the payment of claims which they did not contract and did not approve. How peace, for all the countless and boundless benefits it creates and bequeaths, expects, and, as a rule, receives no state appropriations for its veterans and dependents, leaves no public debt and imposes no tax. Ben Franklin sent heavenward an ardent invocation. His prayer mounted up to a dark cloud that was flashing with lightning. From the midst of the cloud there descended a great angel agent and filled a vial with blessings to be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth—blessings that now fill not only all lands but also all seas. They are blessings, the fruits of peace, priceless but costless. Franklin's compensation is the halo of glory that encircles his name. The like is true of Galvani, Faraday, Morse, Roentgen, and of the great host of scientists whose gratuitous but invaluable achievements can be accomplished only in the quiet retreats of peace. From the same beneficent retreats, in our own days, came the discovery of anesthesia, all without cost. A great phantom-like apparition that made its first earthly advent, that Eve might be born from Adam's painless side, and its second in the fullness of time for the fulfillment of the prediction: "There shall be no more pain." Long, Wells, Jackson and Morton received no compensation or pension. Military and naval academies, navy yards, veterans and their families cost the world billions upon billions of dollars annually, necessitating oppressive taxation, this taxation causing poverty, and poverty bringing exposure, disease and death.

But the industrious work of many lives and the vast volumes of many libraries would not suffice for the endless detail of the stunning contrasts between war and peace, and the opposite tendencies of their respective works as shown in the gross and obvious facts that are presented in ordinary statistics. Even if this overwhelming task were accomplished only a few pages of the momentous history would be written. Nature has vast regions that lie beyond the domain of statistics. The greatest and dearest of human interests are of things for which there is no commercial unit and no possible place in mathematics. During one of the fierce battles of our recent war it is estimated that ten thousand men were killed in not more than ten minutes, but the value of these men in all directions and the cost to the aggregate interest of the world of their horrible slaughter can never be estimated until death sighs can be painted and family agonies analyzed, family bereavement measured and the suppressed possibilities of themselves and of their

prevented offspring can be understood. It is a saying that more men are lost in war by disease than by the enemy. It is probable, on due reflection, that the damage caused by the remote, long-lasting, unrecorded and ramifying influences of war far transcend its direct, obvious and loud-crying evils. These remote and recondite influences contribute in numberless ways, in various degrees and for indefinite periods, to reduce human vitality and to increase the mortality of disease. They are solid realities in casting shadows on the face of the world and in darkening the homes and the highways of men. They are not visible to man's eye, nor audible to man's ear, nor enumerable in man's figures, but, nevertheless, they are potent agencies in drying up fountains of life that otherwise would have fed perennial streams of hope, faith, love and happiness.

Here this humble thesis must end. The conclusion reached is: That human life is man's paramount earthly interest and the foundation of his temporal happiness; that war and its effects are great destroyers of life; that peace and its fruits are great conservators of life; and, therefore, that the prevention of war and the promotion of peace are not only legitimate but imperative works of State medicine.

Hoping that the medical brotherhood of this country may desire to place itself properly on record on the question above presented, and that some practical action may be inaugurated and expedited, I beg to submit to the Section on State Medicine, and through it to the AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION is in favor of the movement now in agitation for the establishment of an international system of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes and wrongs without resort to war.

Resolved, That the said ASSOCIATION constitute the Surgeon Generals of the U. S. Army, U. S. Navy and U. S. Marine Hospital Service its representatives to act with the great organization already at work in favor of said arbitration.

HEALTH BOARDS AS DISTURBERS OF THE PEACE.

Read in the Section on State Medicine, at the Forty-seventh Annual Meeting of the American Medical Association, at Atlanta, Ga., May 5-8, 1896.

BY CHARLES MCINTIRE, A.M., M.D.

EASTON, PA.

LECTURER ON SANITARY SCIENCE, LAFAYETTE COLLEGE, ETC.

With a title as sensational as the one that I have ventured to announce for this paper, it may not be amiss to hasten the statement that no violent attack upon boards of health is contemplated. The great good accomplished through the official supervision of these boards, whether municipal or State, is so patent that he would be foolish, who, at this late day, would asseverate the contrary. It is not necessary to attempt to enumerate the good accomplished nor to chronicle the unselfish labors of the men to whom all honor should be given, and by whom these things have been brought about. But, acknowledging the good, and wishing them greater usefulness and power, it may not be amiss to have some of their acts pass in review for kindly inspection, and to criticize, in a friendly manner, should errors or failings appear.

You are all familiar with the Oriental fable, where the Cholera on his way to Bagdad, informs a dervish in the desert, of his intention of killing 10,000 people with his plague. And on returning from his mission, is met by the same dervish who accuses him of a much