

ness constantly shown in an unobtrusive and unostentatious way. Hence, if the members of the congress profit by their discussions, gain clearer insight into the best methods of treating disease, by concerted action secure better sanitation in colonial towns and more rigid exclusion of deadly plagues, instruct and stimulate each other in the adaptation of means to the common end, it is the public that will ultimately reap the advantage. This of itself is sufficient justification for the deep interest taken in the first Australian Intercolonial Medical Congress, of which the welcome tendered to the members of it by the Mayor, the Chancellor of the University, and other leading citizens of Adelaide is only an expression.

The leading idea which pervaded the inaugural address of Dr. Verco as president was happily conceived and admirably worked out. It presented the *raison d'être* of the congress with a clearness and fulness that left nothing to be desired. To a certain extent that topic and the line of thought it suggested were obvious. An anticipation was more natural than a retrospect. The specialties of Australian medical science are yet in their infancy. Isolated individuals and local societies have done good work, but it has largely been in the direction of indicating what there is to be done. Organised and persistent investigation on an extensive scale has yet to be begun. A review of the past would have been unsatisfactory, and enumeration of triumphs won in other fields scarcely appropriate. It was both more inviting and more profitable to survey the regions that await exploration, and to indicate the direction in which treasures of useful knowledge are likely to be found. This country, as Dr. Verco said, is not only the antipodes but in some respects the antithesis of Europe. Being a different sort of world, the physiological condition of its inhabitants, the diseases to which they are liable, the forms such diseases will assume, and the method of their treatment, must have special characteristics. Happily free from some of the severest scourges of humanity which have their home elsewhere, there are here other ailments of greater or less severity which



are not known in other lands. Consumption is less frequent in the statistics of mortality, while hydatids are of far more general occurrence, and it is the same in reference to many other maladies. There are special causes of disease which may by scientific examination be converted into curative agencies. Climatic conditions vary almost indefinitely, and more perfect acquaintance with them may prove of the highest value. The scattered population, and the novel circumstances in which practitioners constantly find themselves through their isolation, rendering consultation impossible but prompt action on individual judgment necessary, furnish strong reasons for the interchange of observation and experience. There is no doubt that an Australian Medical Congress has a vast and attractive field, which will be in its main features apart from that occupied by similar associations. It will learn from them, and may modestly expect to render valuable aid to the cause of science by concentrating its attention on that which is special to the southern world, thereby to some extent at least repaying the obligation.

Dr. Verco remarked in his inaugural address that the congress was neither premature as to time, puerile in its aims, nor petty in its anticipated results. The series of excellent and practical papers that have been read and the



able discussions that have followed there-upon furnish additional evidence that his estimate was correct. In each of the four sections steady and valuable work has been done, so that not only in point of numbers and influence but in the manifest ability of its members the Adelaide Congress is its own justification. Time is necessarily very precious to such a gathering of busy men, many of whom have come long distances; and the most has been made of it, so that a great deal has been crowded into a short space. The success of the undertaking has rendered the holding of future congresses a foregone conclusion, and when that subject came up for discussion on Thursday the only question was as to the frequency with which they might profitably recur. As there is sure to be a large representation from all the other colonies in Melbourne next year, when the Centennial Exhibition is held, it was only natural that some members of the congress favored the idea of embracing that opportunity. The time and place would be convenient, but there are more important considerations than that. For interest to be sustained and influence exerted careful preparation is necessary, and annual meetings must at present be out of the question. The conclusion arrived at was both safe and judicious. The next congress is to be held in Victoria. The members of the profession there will have the responsibility of making all arrangements, including that of fixing the time. Thus they will be unhampered, and have ample opportunity for perfecting their plans. Almost everything depends on this preliminary work, as is shown by the admirable results that have followed the labors of the painstaking committee in Adelaide.

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