

the grateful beneficiaries. . . . Meetings of the kind contemplated have not hitherto been held in this state. The opportunities that lie before such gatherings for accomplishing good are practically boundless. No long addresses will be delivered, but after a few five-minute talks from physicians in explanation of our public-health system the floor will be open to any persons who may wish to be heard." The educational value of such meetings held under the auspices of the state board of health, at which the people can present any supposed complaints or criticisms and can learn the facts on hygienic matters from an authoritative source, must be apparent. Again the fact is emphasized that only through education and enlightenment can progress come.

#### BACTERIA OR ALGÆ.

It is a matter of at least academic interest to physicians to learn that Professor Dunbar,<sup>1</sup> as the result of an elaborate study continued over a considerable period of time, has come to the conclusion that bacteria are simply a form in the life stages of the algæ instead of being a special separate type of lone vegetable organisms. He took a pure culture of a single-celled alga, one of the *Palmellasia*, and by modifying the culture medium by the addition of various substances, acids, alkalies, or traces of copper salts, he observed other organisms, chiefly bacteria, but occasionally moulds or yeasts, and even spirochetes, appear in the culture. The appearance of these last-named organisms in such conditions would seem to throw light on their true position in the organic world, for they have not usually been classed among the members of the vegetable kingdom, though their position among the protozoa has been questioned. That is, of course, should there be no error in observation or method in Dunbar's experiments, and *Nature*, in its comments, seems to credit them with special care and accuracy. The assumption of a possible explanation of the appearances by Bastian's heterogenesis will hardly be generally accepted. We know so little of the natural history of these low organisms that by themselves show so few tangible characters other than their chemical and pathogenic properties, that Dunbar's findings seem rather striking and possibly even epoch-making in their way. They will undoubtedly be thoroughly tested by bacteriologists, and if confirmed, may even develop some practical importance. There may be more pathogenic possibilities in the "green mantle of the standing pool" than we are inclined at present to admit.

#### A SANE OPINION OF VIVISECTION.

It is refreshing to read the sensible remarks by Mrs. Cadwalader Jones, president of the woman's auxiliary of the S. P. C. A. at a recent meeting in New York City, and to see that, although she regrets the commotion it has caused, she has the moral courage to face the opposition she has aroused. Humane societies will not find that emotional exaggerations and misrepresentations

will be profitable to their really meritorious objects in the long run; no good cause can afford to be supported by reckless misstatements. It would be well if all philosophic organizations were led by like sensible counsellors. The great surgeon, Nicholas Senn, who has just passed away, and to whom we owe no small share of the knowledge that has made some of the most brilliant achievements of modern surgery possible, said many years ago that no one is fit to attempt abdominal surgery on man who had not prepared himself by operations on the lower animals; and it is still safe to say that no new operation should ever be tried without prior assurance of its usefulness and practicability from animal experimentation. In fact, the question resolves itself into this: Are we to learn to help our fellowman by experiments on him or on less valuable lives? The charge that vivisection for the benefit of our race "annihilates the sense of mercy" hardly calls for refutation. We need not go so far as to admit with Mr. Cable's Dr. Sevier that the true philanthropist must be cold-hearted, but he can do no good by self indulgence in useless emotionalism. Such sentimentalism that can not bear to look on what seems like pain can do nothing to alleviate it and is all the while the cause of far more human and animal suffering than all the animal experimentation for legitimate physiologic or surgical purposes that ever has or will be done. The physiologist and surgeon are not necessarily hard hearted, much less delighting in cruelty, and the wholesale charges against their humanity are positively immoral.

### Medical News

#### GEORGIA.

**Atlanta's Board of Health.**—The Board of Health of Atlanta has organized for the year with the following medical members: Dr. Bernard Wolf, president and Drs. William B. Armstrong, William L. Gilbert, secretary, and Cyrus W. Strickler.

**State Board Appointments.**—The governor has announced the appointment of Drs. Francis M. Ridley, La Grange, and Dr. Isham H. Goss, Athens, as members of the Allopathic Board of Medical Examiners, Dr. Ridley succeeding himself and Dr. Goss succeeding Dr. William D. Travis, Covington.

**The Grady Hospital Trouble.**—The contest between the Atlanta College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Atlanta School of Medicine for equal representation on the medical staff of the Grady Hospital has been settled by the city council by the adoption of a rule permitting bedside instruction. Both schools are said to be satisfied, the Atlanta School of Medicine obtaining a parity of professors on the hospital staff and the Atlanta College of Physicians and Surgeons securing the privilege of allowing its students bedside instruction in the wards of the hospital.

**Medical Society Elections.**—At the annual meeting of the Georgia Medical Society, held in Savannah recently, Dr. Thomas J. Charlton was elected president; Dr. Jabez Jones, vice-president; Dr. John K. Train, secretary; Dr. William W. Owens, treasurer; and Dr. John A. Crowther, librarian, all of Savannah.—The Fourth District Medical Society was organized at Columbus March 5, with the following officers: Dr. Charles L. Williams, Columbus, president; Dr. M. M. Hallum, Carrollton, vice-president, and Dr. Charles A. Dexter, Columbus, secretary-treasurer. The meetings of the society will be held semi-annually.

#### ILLINOIS.

**Millikin Entertained in Bloomington.**—Dr. Daniel Millikin, Hamilton, delivered an address March 5, before the McLean County Medical Society, Bloomington, on "The Historical Value of the Work of the Physician." Dr. Millikin, while in the city was the guest of Dr. and Mrs. John L. Yoltan, who

1. "Die Entstehung von Bakterien, Hefen und Schimmelpilzen aus Algenzellen," published by R. Oldenbourg, Munich and Berlin: *Nature*, Feb. 13, 1908.