office what is called the care of destitution and the care of health. I say that the two subjects are inseparable; and that in the present state of civilisation it is necessary that, in some form or other, these two great departments of State should be united.

Sanitary Self-government Essential.—I think that the Act of 1872, which placed the administration of these matters in the hands of guardians and town councils, and divided the county into rural and urban districts, was framed with great judgment. In adopting that plan it appears to me that the Government of Mr. Gladstone proceed upon the wise principle, that instead of waiting until they could construct a perfect theoretical system they should avail themselves of the existing institutions and habits of the country. In resting upon the local self-government of the country for the administration of this vast subject, Mr. Gladstone followed the principle that has made England what it is, with all her faults, as unquestionably they exist, and with all her virtues which, unquestionably, are great. He relied upon the principle that has made her people self-reliant, and therefore capable. He recollected that he was dealing with a practical people, whose forefathers, sailing from this port, laid the foundation of the American republic, gaining for their country new worlds and new reputations. And this practical people I have yet to learn, when they have new duties assigned to them, and they are told calmly and kindly how they are to discharge them, will refuse to act up to their character as Englishmen. There is one thing, however, in the Act which I for one should wish to see repealed. It is absolutely necessary that there should be attached to the office what are called scientific experts. A scientific expert is not necessarily a man who has not succeeded in his profession, and wishes to be delivered from the troubles of private practice in order to devote himself to the care of a Government salary. What is necessary is, that whoever our scientific experts may be their decisions should be able to command respect, and stand such a test as the opposition in a court of law of my friend Sir John Coleridge, and the evidence of such men as Letheby, Frankland, and Liebig. It is not enough to send down experts in the profession to lay down the law before the guardians; they have got to remember that the English people would resist a doubtful opinion on appeal. The point is very easily met. What is wanted is not that the Local Government office should pay experts large salaries, but that the services of the most eminent scientific men should be retained, and that they should be paid fees for their opinions. In this way you would be able to get the best opinions which the world can produce, and avoid any subsequent contest in a court of law. It is my belief that the Public Health Bill—and I have carefully abstained from having any communication with members of the Government upon the point—so that I can speak my own opinions—has conferred upon the great central authority, and upon the very competent person who holds the chief position in it, powers to divide the country into such areas as in the several localities may be desirable; and to obtain the assistance of any number of experts to aid him and the local authorities in their honest and upright endeavours for the promotion of the national health.

Further Legislation.—With regard to the legislation of the next session, Dr. Acland said he would not take the responsibility of urging the Government to take up further action next year.—I earnestly desire there may be no Public Health Bill in the next session, and that the powers of the Government shall be given to the question of local taxation. My reason is perfectly plain. You cannot expect to treat this public health question with finality. I do not think we are in a position in which any legislation on this question can be final; and I hold that local taxation must be settled before you can even complete your arrangements for the payment of your new sanitary officers and even for assigning to them their proper duties. Another reason why I am anxious that no bill should be brought in next year—always remembering that our present position with regard to the question is tentative—is that we must not overwork our public men, and that we should give them our support while they patiently meditate those vast problems which we have committed to them to solve. I would implore the Association to support the Government, until they see what are the effects of the existing laws, and until the local authorities throughout the country have had time to mature their plans. It is only waiting for a few months, when, I hope, both parties in the House of Commons will combine together to propose a permanent sanitary code, and not a mere consolidation. I appeal to any person whether it is possible to complete a work of that kind under pressure, or in the presence of a feeling of want of confidence. If you wait for completeness you will simply put off from year to year doing that which can be done. Depend upon it in all respects this country is in a progressive state; that unquestionably the fundamental questions which lie at the root of our institutions are not only now being criticised and being discussed, but will have to be very considerably modified, if not in our own time, still in that of our children; and we may congratulate ourselves upon the admirable

foresight of Mr. Hastings which has provided in this Association a means of preparing for that work. There is a class of persons who seem to me to be of opinion that we who are engaged in sanitary work are somewhat fanatical, and occupied in altogether a second-rate employment. Bred a physiologist and a physician, I am not in the least afraid of being called a materialist. I believe that by our birth, by our inheritance, by our climate, by our lives, we are what we are; that the great qualities of a people, unless in rare and exceptional instances, depend upon the physique of a nation. Some of the highest of man's qualities have been shown in an eminent degree in days when there was no writing nor any systematic education. We still see that great moral qualities in men are connected, with here and there an exception, with a certain kind of physique. I have known eminent men who might have rendered far more service to the world than they did, die simply because they were overweighted with work; and I say that there is no possibility of over-rating the importance to the world and to our country of fostering and caring for the body of man. It is not only a casket which contains the soul. It is more than that. It is a casket which under certain conditions moulds it and modifies it. That casket may be injured by vice; or parents may transmit disease to their children. You may ruin a nation by letting it rush into commercial speculation; you may also ruin it by neglecting the health of its people. As one who has now passed middle life, doing his poor endeavours to promote the health of those with whom he was brought in contact, I urge upon all not unawares to destroy that most precious gift of God—that health which enables our minds to do good and great work, our duty to our fellow-creatures, our duty to ourselves, and to God.

WOUND OF ABDOMEN, WITH INJURY OF INTESTINE: RECOVERY.*

By HENRY HORTON, M.R.C.S., Eardisley.

ON August 9th, 1865, late at night, I was called to see F. M., a wood-cutter, who, as the messenger most truly described the case, had walked into the town with his intestines in his hand. He had brought wood into the town, and was returning, as was his custom, with a bottle of rum inside his guernsey. When about a mile or so on the way home, the night being very dark, he drove his cart into a pit. He was thrown off and the bottle was broken into several pieces. A portion, in shape like a huge lancet, penetrated the abdomen to the left, and about two inches below the umbilicus, making an irregular-shaped wound externally, cutting through the large omentum, and dividing the peritoneal coat of the jejunum. Protrusion occurred on his rising, and increased at every step until he reached the town; so, that when I saw him there were from ten to twelve inches of intestine, and a rather large piece of omentum to be dealt with. There had not been much bleeding, but the omentum was darker than natural, and, as also the protruded bowel, quite cold. As there was not much prostration, and the patient was otherwise in good health, we (another practitioner had been sent for and arrived about the same time) thought it the best course to return all *en masse*. This was done, and five silver wire sutures were applied. Full doses of opium with a little calomel were given every two hours. Next day, August 10th, I saw him twice, as there was a good deal of tenderness and threatened peritonitis; but, on the whole, he had passed a tolerable night. He was ordered to continue the powders. On August 11th, 12th, and 13th, he was seen once daily, and nothing special had then occurred. On the 14th, there was very great distension of the abdomen from fluid, so that I had to loosen the lowest suture; when, after turning the patient as much as possible into the prone position, a great quantity of bloody, grumous-looking contents escaped, to the great relief of my patient, and I must say to my own personal alarm. On the 15th, the condition was even more alarming; and, as he complained of very great thirst, I gave him an anodyne mixture with mineral acid. This state of things continued for the next three days, and each morning a further quantity of fluid was evacuated from the abdominal cavity. On the 19th, a gradual improvement set in, which continued without any drawback until August 30th, on which date I took leave of my patient, who, in a few days afterwards, resumed his ordinary employment.

I saw him several times during the next three or four years, and the only complaint was that he sometimes felt a little "pinching" just at the part injured, and which, I suppose, was the result of the omentum becoming adherent to the abdominal wall at that spot. In every other respect he declared that he was as well as he ever had been.

* Read before the Surgical Section at the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association in Birmingham, August 1872.