ON THE HUMANE
PREVENTION OF RABIES.

During the late International Hygienic Congress, I attended steadily the sessions of Section III on "The relation of the Diseases of Animals to those of Man."

In the course of a discussion on the subject of rabies, a suggestion was made that a resolution should be passed by the Section, and sent to Government, recommending measures for the prevention of hydrophobia.

As two opposite methods of dealing with rabies had been ably supported by Professors Roux and Fleming, I called attention to the fact that nothing had been said in the discussion, of the sufferings necessarily inflicted upon animals, where the Pasteur method advocated by Professor Roux, was adopted; and I stated that in a Pasteur Institute, dogs were kept in a state of madness. I therefore recommended that Municipal and County Regulations with their excellent results, as shewn by Professor Fleming of London, and Professor Ostertag of Berlin should be adopted, rather than Pasteurian methods.

In illustration of the sufferings of dogs when made mad, I referred to my visit to the Rue Duphot on June 2nd,
1889, where, after inspecting the Hall of rabbits, guinea pigs, and pigeons used in experiments for rabies, anthrax, &c., I went to the cages of three dogs also used for experiments in rabies, who were in various stages of madness, one dying after its ten days' agony; a second in the full fury of madness; a third in frantic terror clinging to the bars of his cage, imploring to be let out.

Professor Roux's statement in opposition to my recommendation of the humaner methods of dealing with rabies, seemed to infer that dogs were not rendered mad in a Pasteur Institute, or in dealing with rabies. But when I stated to the Professor that I had myself seen this series of three dogs being made mad, he replied:—"Oh, you might have seen a great many more, but they are not to inoculate people."

Now it is well known from experience that it is too dangerous to inoculate direct from the dog to the human being. But the fact that dogs are constantly made mad for experiment in the Pasteur Institute or in any institute that adopts Pasteurian methods, should be honestly acknowledged not evaded. The fact that this frightful disease of rabies is kept up for purposes of experiment, although the virus be transmitted in changed form through other animals for the inoculation of human beings, is in itself a grave fact, and it bears directly on the point which I dwelt on at the Congress; viz. — that in choosing the method of protecting humanity from a rare but frightful disease, the method that does not involve severe sufferings to animals should be adopted by a Christian nation.
I have taken much interest in this Hygienic Congress—a Congress which has certainly shewn that the Future of Medicine belongs to Sanitation. But I am struck by the growing tendency in biological research, to treat living and organic tissue, as if it were inorganic, or what we call dead matter. Now I acknowledge the importance of biological research of close and trained observation, and also of experiment within rational humanitarian limits. But the possession of human reason involves the responsibility of guiding intellectual activity by the Moral Sense. Intellectual activity or curiosity uncontrolled by the Moral Sense, is a danger to society. It may become not true science, but insanity, and its practical result—medical manslaughter.

I say deliberately, that to continue to make dogs mad, thus perpetuating a fearful disease, and voluntarily producing in intelligent creatures a prolonged agony, so great, that these tortured creatures will break their teeth, or smash their jaws in their frantic efforts to get free, is both intellectual folly, and a crime against humanity, that should be forbidden by law.

ELIZABETH BLACKWELL, M.D.

August, 1891.