ally the known foci of malignant disorders, should be repaired and altered in a similar manner. Deposites of lumber ought to have the benefit of free ventilation and an annual change of site; the timbers of neglected wharves and old hulks should not be allowed to rot in undisturbed tranquility; masses of festering chips and shavings should be removed or covered with a suitable depth of clay and sand or gravel; and the harbor especially in the vicinity of the wharves should be deepened, in order to remove the bottom, to which a large portion of the drainings of the city gravitate, from the immediate action of the direct rays of an ardent sun. The old *foci* of the malignant fevers of former years are too well known to require warning or description here: but I would respectfully solicit your attention to the condition of the hollow tract which separates the south eastern portion of the city from Fell's Point. This tract commencing at the Eastern Fountain, and dotted with sundry ponds and marshy spots in its course along the current of the Harford run, terminates in a broad *flat*, spreading on both sides of the run and bounded on the south by a sweep of the cove. Nearly all that portion lying west of the run and extending to Jones' Falls is "made ground," consisting of the black compost drawn by mud scows from the bottom of the harbor, has been considerably improved in condition, and is measurably covered by lumber-yards and work shops. The eastern portion exhibits an unpromising aspect, and may afford abundant materials of disease: it is in the immediate vicinity of the southwestern corner of the Point, being only separated, I might say, connected, with that spot of melancholy notoriety in the annals of yellow fever, by the cove at the embouchure of Jones' falls; this cove or back-water serving no other purpose, I believe, than as a receptacle of the exuviæ or settlings of that stream. The cove, ponds and marshes appear to be special candidates for reformation.

Whilst I submit these hints to your observation, I am aware that much has been done, many ameliorations have been effected, and evils removed by the foresight and vigilance of our councils and sanatory boards; but lest long immunity from the disease in question, should lull you into indolent security, it becomes my duty to remind you, that we have abundant materials left, independently of their accumulation, annually prolific in bilious remittent and intermittent fevers under ordinary circumstances, and only requiring the maturating action of those excessive and protracted heats which at irregular and unforseen periods, prevail even in our temperate climate, to ripen them into pernicious intensity. Preventive operations of magnitude should be conducted during cool or moderate weather: amidst the heats of a dangerous season, they might, as on a similar occasion in 1819, prove fatal to the operators.

In closing these remarks, which although penned under the disadvantages of professional interruptions are the results of personal observation and conviction, and in submitting to your indulgence the delay and prolixity growing out of the interest of the subject, I

would be wanting in duty, were I not to recommend most emphatically to your fostering protection the general health of a community whose interests you are delegated to watch over and control. Without health (the best ingredient of human blessings) contracted is the sphere of enjoyment and usefulness. The judicious operations of the *head* and *hand*, members which, though less *officious* are incontestably more *efficient* than the *tongue*, become progressively more necessary with our numerical increase—a circumstance rendering public health more precarious, by the condensation or contraction of habitable space, the multiplication of morbiferous materials, and the conflicting interests and cupidity of man.

An intelligent and efficient board of health, undivided and untrammelled by multiplying their imposed duties, will have ample occupation for their time and abilities, and will certainly refund your outlay and patronage by actual benefits, and the annual accession of skill and valuable experience. Baltimore, occupying a site midway between the frosts of the northern and ardent suns of the southern States, presenting to the South East an amphitheatre gradually sloping from the water, with a varied undulation of surface, equally favorable to cleanliness, dryness and diversified locality of habitation, provided with a copious natural and artificial supply of excellent water, should, with the aid of an effective sanatory code, add to the *city of monuments and fountains*, the agnomen of the Montpelier of America.

With due respect and consideration,
I have the honor to be
Your obed't servant,

ROBT. A. DURKEE, *Consulting Physician.*

Baltimore, 28*th January*, 1843.