

So they are going to burn the city refuse. A good way to *purify* any community, but an expensive process withal. If I am not greatly mistaken the contractor will be obliged to apply to the council for aid before the year is out, unless he can discover some way of utilizing the inorganic residue for fertilizing or other purposes. Fertilizers are not popular, in Quebec especially. To settle down on new land, to absorb its phosphates for wheat, use up its silex for straw, and never think of returning any of the borrowed elements of plant growth until the impoverished land refuses longer to furnish the requisite food. This is the preliminary, not to the employment of artificial fertilizers but, to moving West—to more new land.

Even empirical proceeding called "manuring," valuable as it is, is not carried out on most Lower Canadian farms with any system or with any regard to the wants of the particular farm.

We have an example of this in the Verdun night-soil nuisance. Those doctors who were brought up to show what an innocent compound city garbage and faecal refuse make, had doubtless advanced a step or two in their agricultural strides, but their sanitary education, it seems to me, requires considerable extension.

If the vile odors and the damp exhalations and the water-carried germs which are constant derivatives of exposed night-soil heaps are perfectly innocuous why carry the city refuse so far away as Verdun? Are there no celery beds and cabbage gardens, to say nothing of floricultural patches, within the city limits capable of revival by this effectual means? Surely it ought not to be necessary to prove that a particular set of water-closets contain the microbes of some specific disease before they can be shown to be unfit as a source of fresh fertilizers!

Too much stress is placed now-a-days on the microscope, and not enough on the nasal organs as a detector of disease. Not, as every one knows, that all deleterious substances have a repugnant odor, or that every innocent thing has an agreeable smell, but it may be laid down as a rule that when *in loco natural*, when not chemically separated from their usual surroundings, compounds antagonistic to the organism insult the nerve extremities of the Schneiderian membrane.

Beyond admiring the measures of Dr. Larocque, very little of practical value has been the outcome of the meeting held in the city last Friday to discuss with representatives of the City Council and Provincial Legislature the proper means to be taken regarding the probable visit next year of Asiatic Cholera. Once the disease has gained a foothold, it will be extremely difficult to prevent its spread, and the only course open, after using strict quarantine regulations, is to keep the towns and cities clean, to pay strict attention to personal cleanliness, to avoid as much as possible affected quarters, to drink well-boiled and *well-filtered* water and to eat only thoroughly cooked food. It is not necessary to dine, *a la* Klein & Gibbes, on raw cholera cocci.

I presume these latter members of the Anglo-Indian commission are now in England as, from last accounts, they intended leaving India in the beginning of the year. Their investigations have, in my humble opinion, thrown no light whatever on the real nature of the cholera poison. I must admit, however, that it is hardly fair to speak positively until one has had an opportunity of reading their report in full. Their theory as to causation of the disease and their suggestions in the way of its prevention, to say nothing of the still more important question of individual conduct during an epidemic, will be awaited with interest.

According to the *Lancet* (London, Jan. 3rd) a partial report has been sent to the Indian Government, in which it is plainly stated that they do not agree with the views held by Koch. Generally they think that so far no specific cholera germ has been found. 'Not only that, but mucous flakes and other discharges from patients dead from acute cholera have been fed to and injected under the skin of monkeys, cats, rats and other animals, and yet the animals remained normal.

Again the cultivation of the "*comma bacilli*" of Koch and the mucous corpuscles (with and without bacteria) so frequently found in the intestines of people dead of cholera (and other diarrhoeal diseases) did not show that they behaved differently from putrefactive organisms. In the face of this report what shall we of the rank and file tell our patients? To keep clean within and without?

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