

Picki, has at length succeeded in cultivating the micrococci of vaccine, and from the culture fluid producing a normal pustule in a child in which subsequent vaccination with natural lymph from another child failed to produce any results.

THE DOMINION MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETY, have secured some good members in Ottawa, and we trust the number will be much enlarged. The cost of covering a life risk in it is very much less than that of stock life companies and quite as safe, we believe. Many stock companies prove failures, from bad management.

OVERCROWDING A CAUSE OF DIPHTHERIA.

—Dr. Hutton has, within three years, treated sixty four cases of diphtheria, occurring in Minnesota, and says in the *Medical Record*: These cases were all in comparatively new houses, in a belt of country where white men never had lived before, so that there was no accumulations of filth. Diphtheria had never before been there, and could not have been brought by visitors; it was of a malignant type, and some families lost five and six members each. Every house where cases were was small and greatly crowded. Many of the winter outbreaks happened when the temperature was 30° to 40° F. below zero, which would have been death to all ordinary surface germs, when the surface of the earth and all bodies of water were frozen solid. Dr. Hutton says, Diphtheria may occur sporadically, "and any small, overcrowded, ill-ventilated house may prove a diphtheria factory."

COPPER IN FOOD.—A report presented to the Paris Society of Public Medicine in 1879, supported the view that copper salts introduced into our food are harmless, and stated that there is no reason for interdicting the colouring of preserved vegetables by sulphate of copper. The Council of Public Hygiene in Paris, however, do not appear to favour this idea, since they have recently forbidden the use of these salts in the most peremptory manner possible.

WATER ANALYSIS.—In an elaborate paper on this subject, by C. E. Cassel,

F. I. C., F. C. S., Department of hygiene, University College, London, Eng., and Dr. Whitelegge, extracts of which have appeared in this Journal, the authors state that as regards the cultivation processes, which are somewhat prematurely credited with the capability of altogether supplementing present methods of analysis, it is well known that practically all waters are found to contain organisms, the commonest of which are the easiest of cultivation. It is asserted that by a cultivation process carried on in a 5 per cent. solution of previously sterilised gelatine, or other nutrient substance, the presence of sewage can be demonstrated by the differences in the naked-eye characters of the spheres which form in the matrix. But even if this be so, it merely forms an additional test for the detection of sewage—a detection which is already satisfactorily effected by other processes; and it cannot, therefore, supersede these unless it can be shown to afford a means of distinguishing between specific and comparatively harmless organisms. Whatever future success there may be in store for the cultivation processes, at present they can tell us absolutely nothing of the presence or absence of specific organisms or specific poisons of any kind.

TWO DEATHS have just occurred at Wolverhampton, with symptoms resembling those of cholera, ascribed to the effect of eating tinned salmon. The medical attendants believe that the poison which proved fatal was not a metallic, but an animal poison, the result of decomposition.

A POISONOUS FUNGUS in dried cod has recently been discovered: Distressing gastro-intestinal disturbance was set up in persons after partaking of the cod, which on section, especially near the spine, presented a vermillion red color. M. Bertherand (*Jour. de med. et de Chir. de l'Algerie*,) suggests that the red fungi may merely indicate a toxic modification in the flesh of the cod, and not be themselves poisonous. This may be so, but it is exceedingly probable that the flesh of the fish first undergoes a distinct change fitting it to support the new life. Even assuming this, it is probable that fungi