

of them, been possessed of more practical knowledge relating to the diseases which caused the death of their children, and the means of avoiding them, the children would have been saved and be still living. Were they now living, they would be aged about 20, 16, 10, 8 and 5, respectively, and two or three of them would be in all probability of some use to their parents or others. The family now instead of counting in a census only four in all, would count nine. To say nothing of the bereavement, nor of the costs of their sickness, in paying doctors bills and druggists bills, the parents had sustained them—nursed, fed and clothed them—in all during what would be equivalent to sustaining one child a period of twenty-five years—the aggregate age of the five. This was a total loss, not only to the parents but to the country—a loss of just what it would cost to keep

a child for 25 years; amounting to many hundreds if not thousands of dollars.

There are doubtless thousands of families throughout Canada which have been reduced in like manner, from nine or twelve or more in number to four, five and six individuals, by deaths from preventable diseases. Yet but very little is being done to prevent this destruction of young human life. Hardly any special systematic means are being employed for educating the masses of the people in matters pertaining to health. It is true something has been done in this way, but comparatively very little. And so death claims many victims and the waves of mortality roll high all over the land; probably, or, as shown by the mortuary statistics not less than twenty per cent. higher than in over crowded England.

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“YE GODS, IT DOTH AMAZE ME.”

THE following from Medical Classics will interest both medical practitioners and other readers at this time.

Epidemic influenza is the most contagious disease known. There are authentic cases where crews of ships have caught it from merely sailing past an infected coast, even at a distance of miles.

The present epidemic has spread until it has become pandemic. In Paris, at the time of writing—January 7, 1890—out of a population of two and a half millions it is estimated that one million have been or are its victims. Here in the City of New York, Dr. Edson, of the Board of Health, estimates that fully half a million of people are its victims.

A disease which causes medical men as well as laymen to exclaim:

“Ye Gods it doth amaze me,”

ceases to be absurd. Medical science must bestir itself. The welfare of humanity, and, our professional pride demands every possible activity, in searching for its cause, prevention and cure. Medical men cannot pass lightly by the taunts that have

been flung at us by the lay press so frequently of late, that, “physicians and scientific experts are alike at fault and powerless in the face of the varying symptoms and terrifying progress made by the epidemic. While the doctors are debating and charlatans are making fortunes by trading on the timidity and ignorance of the panic-stricken masses, the disease continues its course practically unchecked and with increasing virulence.”

History repeats itself. The same slurs, taunts and sneers were cast in the teeth of the medical profession, long, long ago and many times and oft. Tobias Venner, writing in 1638, speaks of this very habit and says some good things concerning the poor taste and ignorance that it shows: “It is strange,” he quaintly remarks, “to see the ignorance of most people, how backward they are to give the learned Professors of Physick their due, and ready to lay scandals upon them: but forward to magnify Empiricks, their physick, their honesty, their care, and to excuse and passe over their grosse slips and absurdities.”