

Physicians and Surgeons recognized here, but failed to discover any trace of it. Has the affair fallen through?

The death of Father Damien, the heroic priest who devoted his life to the care of the unfortunate lepers of the Hawaiian Islands, has roused the public here to a consideration of the whole question of leprosy. The first outcome of Father Damien's death has been the appointment of a large committee headed by the Prince of Wales and composed of men of all creeds and all ranks, to raise funds, (1) to erect a monument to Father Damien on the Island of Molokai, where his remains are interred; (2) to construct a leper ward in London, to be called "The Father Damien Ward," and the endowment of a travelling studentship to encourage the study of leprosy; (3) to institute a full and complete enquiry into the question of leprosy in India, one of the chief seats of the disease, where there are about 250,000 lepers, and no adequate means of dealing with the evil. In accordance with the recommendation recently put forth by the Royal College of Physicians, it is said to be necessary to send out a commission to India in order to discover the steps that should be taken to alleviate and if possible to eradicate the disease. This matter should possess something more than general interest for Canadians, who have more than their fair share of this horrible disease on their own shores.

That leprosy is a contagious disease there can be but little doubt. Such cases as that of Father Damien and many others furnish us with positive evidence which it is idle to attempt to explain away. The fact that numerous persons have lived and do continue to live with lepers without becoming themselves leprosy is a merely negative one. On the same grounds might one conclude that because syphilis is rarely spread by accidental contagion, therefore the disease is itself not contagious. The immunity of some persons simply shows that leprosy is not *very* contagious and that some

persons probably display an unknown but large amount of resistance to inoculation. Common sense and the results of scientific investigation point to complete isolation of every case as the only way of getting rid of this terrible disease. I saw in Vienna a sailor affected with the tubercular form of leprosy and in which the bacillus leprosy had been discovered, who was exposed to sources of contagion but for a very short time. Dr. Hawtrey Benson publishes a case where a man became a leper in Ireland. He had never been outside the British Isles, but had slept in the same bed with his brother who had acquired leprosy in India. No doubt that, as in other diseases, the leprosy bacillus requires not only contiguity of soil but is also very particular about the kind of soil, whatever that may be, in which to flourish.

The contrast between the way in which dogs are allowed to go round unmuzzled here and the strict watch kept upon such animals in Germany is about as marked as is the difference between the number of cases of hydrophobia in the two countries. Twenty-two mad dogs have been killed on the streets of the metropolis since the beginning of the year, and now the County Council is about to petition the Privy Council to make compulsory and stringent regulations for the whole Kingdom. Even the killing of unlicensed dogs, as practised in Canada and elsewhere, has been shown to be a great preventative of rabies, to say nothing of the genuine humanity involved in putting out of misery the half-starved and homeless animals that would otherwise rove the streets. In Bavaria, for example, the dog population was allowed to increase at its own sweet will from 1863 to 1876. During those 13 years an average of twenty-two persons annually died of hydrophobia. During the past seven years, while the licensed dog law has been in force, only three deaths from rabies have occurred. An observant lady suggests to me that the