

Queen's Subjects in a Quandary. The British holders of mining claims in the land of Oom Paul are in a state of much perplexity as to the protection of their rights. If the license fees are not paid, the claims are likely to be confiscated; but, on the other hand, the remittance of money to the Pretoria Government would, they think, lay them open to a charge of disregarding the proclamation which forbids any British subject extending assistance to the Queen's enemies. Altogether, these mine owners are in much the same sort of difficulty as the inebriated Scotchman who, being found clinging to a lamp-post outside Euston square station, said: "I'm in sic a predecament. If I let go (hic), I'll fall down, (hic) an', if I hold on, I'll miss ma train."

We note that London financial papers recommend the mining companies holding claims in the Transvaal to do nothing; for, if Mr. Kruger finds it advantageous, he will confiscate the claims under any circumstances. This advice seems sound. The bellicose Boer, not having hesitated to appropriate the profits of gold mining, is probably quite capable of so modifying the mining laws of the Republic as to make confiscation possible. But let us hope these puzzled subjects of Her Majesty may soon be lifted out of their quandary by General Buller's arrival at Pretoria. Perhaps he will persuade Mr. Kruger to consider many useful reforms in Transvaal law-making.

The present war is forcing a number of companies and individuals having interests in South Africa to adopt the "do nothing" policy, pending the dawn of peace. We note that at a recent extraordinary general meeting of the British South Africa Company in London, the chairman remarked that the meeting was "merely a formal one," and the shareholders would not have the opportunity of listening to a speech from Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who, unfortunately, was now "locked-up in Kimberley."

Small-Pox and Vaccination. In a series of articles published in January and February of last year we presented valuable statistics for the purpose of illustrating the vital importance of vaccination. The occasion for said articles arose from the attempts of the "conscientious objectors" in England to hinder the law regarding vaccination. On February 17th we furnished statistics published by the Government of Germany, showing the remarkable immunity of vaccinated people from small-pox. In the course of comment upon the experience of the German Imperial Health Office we said:—

"Now that the dread disease has appeared in a score of places in the United States, and some cases are known to exist within a short distance of Montreal, it is to be hoped our health authorities will not wait for an outbreak in the Canadian metropolis before taking into consideration the necessity of a very general vaccination. Otherwise the proposed census may find Montreal with a reduced population, a

crippled trade and an additional burden of debt as the price of our neglect."

We return again to this unpleasant subject, because of the gradual spread of the loathsome disease. With cases reported in Campbellton and Moncton, fortunately of a mild type, it is high time that a note of warning should arouse every municipality to the importance of vaccination.

Personal Liberty and Compulsory Vaccination. Small-pox is not by any means an unknown disease in Montreal, and the virtue of vaccination has been thoroughly exemplified in our midst. And yet, despite the testimony obtainable here, there are thousands of present-day people, and among them physicians, who deride the practice of vaccination not only as useless but injurious.

The objections to State vaccination were dealt with very fully in the German Government report above referred to. Its opponents sometimes assert in public meetings—for men will say what they would be ashamed to write—that the medical profession is prejudiced in favour of vaccination owing to the fees attached to it. History shows that medical men were slow in adopting vaccination. In dealing with this thoughtless assertion of the objectors to vaccination, the German Health Office makes the following sensible remarks upon the subject of personal liberty:—

"The answer to this objection is that the law, framed by the community through its representatives, implies—not direct physical compulsion; this is never contemplated, but—an obligation on the part of every individual to be vaccinated for the benefit of the community, and penalties are imposed if this obligation be neglected. The law offers choice of doctor, choice of place, and even free vaccination, under the strictest regulations as to care in the operation, the purity of the lymph, and the health, comfort and propriety of all concerned. The liberty of the individual is curtailed in every community in a thousand ways. He may object conscientiously to paying taxes, but physical force would be applied if he did not. School compulsion is infinitely more severe than a solitary compulsion to vaccination and revaccination. The individual must be subordinated to the good of the whole community, and universal vaccination is absolutely necessary to ensure the advantages of vaccination to the whole community. No other effective means of combating small-pox is known, a disease as fatal now as ever it was to the unprotected. Instruction and persuasion are no good without the legal obligation, for people get careless."

To ensure the advantages of vaccination to the whole community, "universal vaccination is absolutely necessary." Are the Public Health officials of Montreal, and of the municipalities in Quebec and New Brunswick having cases of small pox in their midst, fully alive to the significance of this statement, based as it is upon the experience of the German nation.