

all reports from medical men in such districts are to be made in the first instance.

AS TO QUARANTINE GENERALLY.

The old notion, perhaps founded on the number of days of Lent, had in view the detention of vessels, etc., for forty days, as the word itself clearly expresses. This interval was probably fixed long before any notion had been formed of the period of incubation of various infectious diseases. In view of our present knowledge, and of the necessities of commerce and personal intercourse, no such detention could be sanctioned in any civilized communities. In 1891 there were 52,000 passengers landed at Victoria from steamers alone, exclusive of those who proceeded further, and exclusive of sealing vessels. In 1892 the steamers arriving here were seventy-five per month. Indeed, it may be said that there is nothing to justify the detention here (except for the purposes of inspection) of any vessel arriving from a port which has no epidemic, and where the vessel herself has been free from contagious sickness on the voyage, these matters being certified by the commander and medical officer (if any) of the vessel, and by the inspecting medical officers or health officers of the ports of arrival and departure respectively.

But it is to be remembered that disease may be developed at any time, immediately after as well as immediately before arrival, and inspection of a newly arrived ship should be repeated from day to day.

The disinfection of cargoes extending to several hundreds or thousands of tons presents great difficulty. Evidently, infection may be conveyed in the wrappings of a bale of goods as readily as in the clothes of a passenger. The newly provided dioxide blast would probably furnish a method of dealing with cargo far superior to any heretofore in use.

Where passenger steamers, such as the China and Japan lines, carry regular medical officers, it might be well that these should in some degree be recognized by and made responsible to the Department at Ottawa, just as much as the officers at the quarantine ports of the Dominion.

The inspection of a newly arrived ship should

take place in daylight, unless there are portable electric lights on board.

The real protection of the community lies, however, on shore. Every case of contagious disease should be at once carried to a contagious hospital and treated there—and all berths, bedding, etc., disinfected, or destroyed, where that is possible.

Seaports being the outposts of the whole Dominion, and the health of the whole Dominion to its centre, so far as imported contagious disease is concerned, being entirely dependent on the vigilance in detecting and treating such cases at the seaports, and the commerce of the whole Dominion being also concerned in seeing to it that such protection should offer as little inconvenience as may be compatible with effectiveness, the expense of isolation and disinfection of such cases at the port of entry, of separate hospitals, etc., should not be thrown entirely on the respective municipalities at such seaports; but a proportion, at least, of such expense should be borne by the Dominion. Not the whole expense: for such hospitals are also extremely necessary in these municipalities for dealing with non-imported cases: scarlet fever, diphtheria, etc. The Dominion, in return, should be invested with an authoritative voice in their management.

In the case of persons dying of contagious disease, cholera, etc., in an isolation hospital, there can be no doubt but that cremation is the only really correct and proper method of disposing of the body. The objections to this method seem to be of the purest sentimentality: for the process is in its ultimate results absolutely identical with that which goes on after earth to earth burial, but without its disgusting features. Cremation is a certain preventive against contagion from the body, especially against any contamination of water springs from the corruption of the corpse. If it were once properly understood that the results of combustion and of decay are, as to the products, precisely identical, and that only the phenomena vary: that after a lapse of (say) fifty years, a corpse is resolved into precisely the same gases as in a few minutes of combustion, but that in the one process a sensible heat is exhibited, not perceptible in decay—and that a decaying body exhibits odours and appearances not perceptible in combustion—perhaps the sentimental