

The Scavenging Contract. Referring again to the intention of some members of the Montreal City Council to make a retrograde movement by reverting to the contract system of providing for the city scavenging, we reiterate opinions already expressed thereon in this paper.

In the year 1893, the city decided that it could do its own scavenging at a less cost, and in a far more satisfactory manner, than it had been done under the contract system. The citizens remember the constant complaints which were made concerning the unsatisfactory way in which the work was previously executed. After its transfer to the city, and up to quite a recent period, the work was decidedly carried out more satisfactorily than previously, but chaos seems to reign in 1898. The scavenging should never have been placed under the control of the Health department, and as a matter of fact, at the beginning of 1898 it was taken away from it, and put under the Road department, to which it properly belongs. The Health Committee, however, made strenuous efforts to regain control, and succeeded, and not only succeeded in getting the control, but in displaying its utter inability to carry out the work properly.

Is it possible to advance any plea which more clearly demonstrates the necessity for placing the administration of the city under Commissioners than the proposed action of the City Council and Health department? For, we regret to say that the former body has approved of the recommendation of the latter to go back to the contract system. Just imagine a body of business men expending within a few years \$145,000 for the acquisition of stables, workshops, incinerators, horses and other requisites in connection with the scavenging of the city, and now, like a lot of children, coming forward and saying: This little play has lasted long enough—we are tired of it—we will go back again to the former game. Of course, the expenditure, or practically the throwing away of \$145,000, is a mere bagatelle to a city like Montreal, and a contractor can do this work much cheaper than if executed under our control. At least, the recent action of the aldermen implies this. This question might well be asked—By what magic can a contractor do better than a competent civic official? But why should we lose time in discussing this matter any further. We think it must be apparent to all business men that the city can do its own scavenging cheaper and in a more satisfactory manner than any contractor; that the health of the city is too important to be played with, and the city's hands should not be tied in a matter which so largely affects the welfare of the citizens.

An Instructive Historical Sketch. Under the regulations of the Royal Society of Canada, it is the duty of the president of each section to propose an address for the annual meeting. As president of the section embracing all the branches included under the title "Geological and Biological Sciences,"

Mr. T. J. W. Burgess, M.B., selected a subject relating to the science to which most of his life's work has been dedicated, and the paper thus prepared and read at the Society's meeting in May last, "A Historical Sketch of our Canadian Institutions for the Insane," has just been published, and forms a most instructive and interesting pamphlet. The application of the healing art to mental diseases is a study of the utmost importance to scientists, social economists, actuaries, and all who are interested in the welfare of the human race; and Canadians owe a debt of gratitude to the author of this more than sketch of the development of our institutions for the insane.

To New Brunswick belongs the honour of having been the first of the old British North America provinces to make special provision for its insane, and the description of the earliest asylum, as of those of the other provinces, is very complete. One of the surprising pages in this pamphlet is the well-grounded complaint of Dr. Bodington, of British Columbia, of "a practice too much in vogue in Great Britain, of shipping off to the colonies weak-minded young persons who are unmanageable at home, and unable to make a career for themselves, or earn a livelihood there. 'He has continued his wild and reckless conduct, and has now been shipped off to the colonies,' is a phrase made use of in the 'Journal of Mental Science,' in the description of a case of the kind now in question."

The doctor very properly regards weak-minded young men of the type known as "Monson's victims," as typical examples of the most undesirable class of immigrants it is possible to conceive. We recommend this excellent sketch by an excellent and painstaking member of the Royal Society of Canada to scientific men, actuaries, and all who, sympathizing with suffering, desire to know something of the provision made in Canada for the insane, "the wards of the State."

The Greatest City. Men almost universally prefer their native country before every other, on account of what they consider to be its singular beauty or superior natural advantages. But the people of the United States in addition to this love of country are almost universally filled with a strong belief in the destiny of the great continent to which they belong, and a recent illustration of what at least one citizen of New York thinks of the future of that undeniably great city was given at the annual banquet of Group Eight of the New York State Bankers' Association, on Friday last, at the Manhattan Hotel. Lieutenant-Governor Woodruff, in responding to the toast "The State of New York" said:—

"Great as our financial prosperity has been in the past, great as it is in the present, it is but a shadow to the substance compared with what it will be in a few years to come when the vast improvements already planned have been carried into effect, when the