

OUR CITY FATHERS.

When diphtheria still stalks abroad thereby imposing on compositors extra work in putting into type newspaper correspondence as to why we in Halifax are so blind to our interests as not to provide accommodation for patients suffering from infectious diseases, more especially when one of these becomes in a manner epidemic, it is indeed time for us to inquire whose province it is to see to a matter such as this. Sometime since, when diphtheria made its first appearance noticeable amongst us, by continual letters written by the outside public and leaders which appeared in press, it dawned upon the city Council—the continual dropping will eventually make an impression even on a stone—that the members composing it had been elected by the voters of the several wards for certain purposes tending towards the good of the city, they at a white heat not feeling competent to deal with the question themselves, put themselves into the hands of certain medical men,—thereby showing a little more sense than is generally attributed to them—by this action there is no doubt but that the city benefitted, though the public cannot be said to have been unanimous in agreeing with some of the rules laid down by these gentlemen. Still we breathed, moved, and had our being in an atmosphere of greater security, and with an idea that after all our city Fathers were not only ornaments but really were of use in our city. Things seemed very satisfactory for some time, but still the disease did not disappear, until to-day I venture to say it is as bad as ever. When the correspondence as to the best means to be adopted to stamp out the disease was being carried on it occurred to the proprietors of the hotels and boarding houses in the city, what a financial loss would accrue to them under the regime laid down by the medical advisers of the city Council, if a case should show itself on their premises, and finally it was pointed out in a letter written to the papers, and signed by the Messrs. Hesslein of the Halifax Hotel and Mr. Sheraton of the Queen, the necessity of having an hospital for infectious diseases. To this letter there was no satisfactory reply, but it was casually remarked by the council that Rockhead was at their service. Again did our representatives show sagacity amounting even to wisdom, but that belongs to the following tale. The building at Rockhead, now used as a hospital, was originally built as an hospital for small-pox patients, and therefore should be fully adapted for the use it is now put to. There is no doubt but that this building in itself, is eminently satisfactory, which can be proved by independent medical authorities. So far as I can glean this hospital never had a small-pox patient within its walls, so about six years ago when diphtheria was raging, it was proposed that the patients should be sent there, but the enlightened body of men, who then, by their deeds threw a halo of glory around matters civic, pronounced that “Diphtheria is *not catching*, therefore, we cannot allow the use of the small-pox Hospital.”

This, then allowed the patients the chance of being received into the City Hospital, but on application they were pronounced ineligible, as “Diphtheria was an infectious disease!” When doctors disagree &c., &c. It reminds me very forcibly of the last lines of “the Execution” in the Ingoldsby legends:

“What was to be done,
What could be said,
Naught could be done,
Naught could be said,
So my Lord Tomnoddy
Went home to bed.”

So with the City Council, only they remained there as regards this matter for about five years. Prevailed upon by their medical advisers, they were induced to awake from their slumbers, and grant the use of the building for diphtheria patients, rooms being fitted up under the surveillance of the above mentioned doctors.

Good! This scores one on the credit side of the much maligned body!—Unfortunately however, during the Rip Van Winkle-like sleep of our Council, it had been thought by someone, that it would greatly enhance the value of this building as an hospital, if the entrance to it was converted into a common or garden cesspool for the reception of the night soil of the whole of Halifax. Grand idea, a man or body of men whose brain power is capable of conceiving such an idea, and moreover carrying it into effect, indeed, deserves a niche in the walls of fame. Now verily, on being apprised of this—by their metaphorical wet nurses—did our own city council show again its sagacity, by giving orders that this filthy accumulation of years, added to week by week, should be continually kept covered with a layer of mother earth. Oh, ye gods!

Fancy the mighty deodorising effect of a sprinkling of mould over such a mass of all that is nasty. What in the name of common sense is the good of trying to “drive a tenpenny nail with a twopenny hammer?” No doubt, but that residing collectively in a politically vitiated atmosphere, the members of our city council have olfactory nerves that are fairly smell proof, but if each one personally were to visit this harbour of refuge for patients suffering from contagious diseases, I venture to say that even their nostrils would be tickled—more especially if some one on the morning of their visit had with the bland and lamb-like smile—of the heathen Chinese, tried the effects of the contents of this cesspool for manuring purposes. If such a state of affairs is necessary, why not turn the whole place into a sewage farm at once? UNIQUE

EXCHANGES continue to roll in, we beg to acknowledge receipt of *Colonial Standard of Pictou, Yarmouth Herald, and Berwick News.*

OUR VOLUNTEERS.—Shooting at Bedford on Saturday had to be abandoned when the 500 yards range was reached on account of the weather. It is hoped that the teams may be able to fire to-morrow or on Monday

The 66th. P. L. F. paraded for the Commandant's Inspection on Tuesday evening. There was a good muster, and Col. Humphrey expressed himself pleased with the appearance of his command. The Fusiliers will parade for Divine service on Sunday (Her Majesty's Birthday) at St. Georges and St. Patrick's churches.

Capt. C. Mackinlay and Lieutenant H. W. Stairs of the 66th. will shortly proceed to Royal school of Infantry at Fredrickton for a fortnights course. Lieutenant Guy Mott of the same regiment is at present up at the school going through the three months course.

Col. Walsh of the 63rd. will not resign his command at present.

Major Weston (66th. Regt.) will be the commandant of the Canadian Bisley team this year.

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