

regarded as an open question. It is probable that, as in tuberculosis, with which leprosy presents certain analogies, a predisposition to the disease rather than the actual germ is transmitted from parent to offspring....

Do these facts portend the spread of leprosy in this country? The seeds of the disease are sufficiently abundant: the only question is whether the conditions of soil are suitable for their germination. Either we must admit that this danger exists, or we must assume that, owing to the better physical stamina of our people and the improved hygienic conditions under which we live, the soil is sterile and the seed will fail to propagate. We are not justified in the assumption that susceptibility to leprosy is extinguished by civilization, or that its potentiality for mischief is enfeebled or destroyed by improved modes of living. It is to be remembered that the spread of leprosy in the Sandwich Islands has been coincident with an advanced civilization of the natives. The average Hawaiian of to-day is more cleanly in his person, better fed, and better housed than the majority of the tenement house population in our large cities.

After all, the danger of the spread of leprosy in the United States resolves itself into a question of the contagiousness of the disease. If leprosy is a communicable disease, then it follows that every leper must be regarded as a possible source of danger to every one with whom he may come into intimate contact. The question to be decided is not the fact, but the degree of danger—whether it rises to the magnitude of a serious menace to the public health and demands State legislation for its suppression. My own personal belief is that its extensive spread in this country must be regarded as a possibility rather than a strong probability. Still in dealing with a disease with which medical science has shown its utter inability to cope, except by prophylactic measures, it becomes the manifest duty of the medical profession, in their capacity as guardians of the public health, to enlighten our legislative authorities as to this possible dan-

ger, and urge them to adopt measures for the isolation of every leper in our midst, and especially to prevent the immigration from foreign countries of those who bear in their systems the seed of this frightful malady.

The Canada Medical Record, Montreal, of last month, says: Although Father Damien died of leprosy we cannot understand how he acquired the disease. Canada has her leper lazaretto at Tracadie, New Brunswick, where we think there are some nineteen inmates who are looked after by several sisters from the Hotel Dieu, of Montreal, who volunteered to pass the remainder of their lives there. There is also a physician in attendance who is appointed by the Department of Emigration, under whose immediate supervision the establishment is placed. We have never heard of any one contracting the disease there, though we are personally acquainted with some of the physicians. Neither have any of the sisters who are residing there ever contracted the disease. We have always understood that the disease was altogether an hereditary one, and that the sole object of the quarantine was to prevent these lepers from cohabiting and leaving a leprous progeny.

MAD DOGS.—The Saturday Review raises the question—"How about Mad Dogs? Are they to be 'allowed their first bite,' or are muzzles to be much worn this summer?"

TOBACCO SMOKING, Dr. A. G. Auld, of Glasgow thinks (Lancet, April 20th, 1889), is responsible for a variety of functional derangements which there is no reason to aver cannot terminate in organic disease. He is convinced that the slightest trace of albumen in the urine is pathological, and that it is frequently induced by preventable causes, and one of these is chronic poisoning by nicotine. He thinks he has certainly traced the disorder in a few cases entirely, and in others partially, to the habit in question. Another derangement consists in localized fibrillary twitchings, something similar to what is observed in progressive muscular atrophy distinct from tremor. The twitchings are often excessive, and occur most frequently about the trunk and upper arms.