

culars have been compiled from the best sources. In this way useful information concerning infectious diseases is diffused among the people. A family afflicted with a contagious malady is generally in a mood to receive such information and profit by it.

In dealing with small-pox, vaccination of all exposed persons is added to the procedure already described. In fact, there has not been a case of small-pox in Milwaukee since two years ago last July. When I took charge of the health office of the city, in the spring of 1878, I found small-pox in half a dozen different localities. It seemed determined to linger, till I made use of the extraordinary power conferred on the department by the Legislature of the State in the municipal charter, "to forbid and prevent all communication with any house or family infected with any contagious or pestilential diseases, except by means of physicians and nurses." By such a rigid system of domiciliary quarantine the foul disease was "stamped out," and has not returned.

The advantages of the system may be briefly stated—

1. It enables the health department, and the public through the health department, to know every day in the year the exact number of cases of infectious diseases in the city and their precise location. Rumor and sensational exaggeration in regard to the prevalence of contagious maladies, which are liable to alarm the people needlessly and to interfere with the pursuits of life, can then be corrected by facts. And the truth of a violent epidemic cannot be suppressed in the interest of commerce to the criminal endangering of the outside world.

2. The exact percentage of mortality is constantly known, reveal-

ing the severity or mildness of an epidemic.

3. The system affords especial means of studying the conditions under which contagious diseases flourish, or to what extent they are influenced by sanitary surroundings.

4. It diminishes the spread of contagious diseases by protecting large congregations of children in schools from the presence of those bearing infection in their persons or clothes; by preventing exposure of the living at public funerals; by revealing to all who can see and read the places where such diseases may be caught, and by destroying the lingering germs of contagion in sick rooms by means of thorough disinfection. My experience convinces me that a community will give a wide berth to small-pox, scarlet fever or diphtheria if you will only let them know where it is. I have frequently seen quite small children cross over to the other side of the street when approaching a house on the door of which was placed a placard revealing the existence of contagious disease within. It is wicked to conceal from God's little ones the fountains of infectious suffering and death.

The difficulties of carrying out the system are considerable, but not insuperable.

1. While the majority of educated physicians are ready to co-operate with the health authority in carrying out any reasonable system of protecting the public from contagious diseases, the negligence of many and the perversity of a few must be overcome by the unflinching execution of law. To the credit of the profession in Milwaukee it must be said that no one has raised the question of fees for reporting contagious diseases to the health office. An unseemly discussion of that question is now going on in Great Britain. The medical