

Montreal, most of which had occurred before active municipal measures for its suppression were adopted, illustrate the fact that, were a contagious disease present the average good sense of any community does not serve to prevent its spread, unless when crystallized into organized and systematic methods.

It has been, we think, fully demonstrated to what an extent the present epidemic of smallpox of a benign character, beginning in 1899 would have prevailed in Ontario had the views of the *laissez faire* school and of anti-vaccinationists been accepted; and when they turn to statistics and point to the low mortality after all our trouble, we ask them are they prepared with us to adopt drastic measures of every necessary kind when the disease with a high death-rate does really make its appearance? If they do—and this is the position of many believers in vaccination, both amongst physicians and municipal officers—they will have to explain by what conceivable means they are going to discover when an epidemic, like that from Japan in 1900, which killed nearly 50 per cent. of its victims, is going to appear, though even its first case in Port Arthur was so mild that it was not diagnosed, or at what moment virulent smallpox may arrive in Toronto from some hidden source in the slums of New York or Boston.* Perhaps it is natural that we, viewing these matters from the official standpoint, should seem to disregard personal inconveniences and even municipal expenditures; but it would seem that there can be no *via media*, no position which, as with some other diseases, can be adopted without the assumption of a responsibility as regards loss of life, family misfortune and commercial disaster, which none who recognize what an epidemic of smallpox means would care to assume. Probably by none must the mental perspective be more accurately maintained than by the physician; and this can only be obtained by the frequent readjustment of the instrument to a proper focus from time to time. Our memories are proverbially short and mental pictures grow dim with surprising rapidity, but we do well to remember that Nature is ever the same in her methods and her results, and if she seems at times to present herself in tranquil mood, as where the whole woodland is perfectly mirrored in the placid bosom of some northern lake, yet the time will speedily come when her rugged work must be done. He is, indeed, the wise mariner who looks well to staysails and masts, to keep his vessel afloat and return unscathed to the desired haven.

*In May, 1900, an outbreak of smallpox occurred infecting many persons at different points between Winnipeg and Montreal, caused from exposure to a passenger from Australia via Japan to Vancouver, thence by C. P. R. The gentleman sickened on the train west of Winnipeg, was taken to the Winnipeg Hospital and died, as at first thought from purpura hemorrhagica. It proved to have been smallpox, and caused twenty-two cases and deaths in Winnipeg. Persons exposed on the train carried the disease to Eastern points. The first case at Port Arthur was mild and was not diagnosed, and resulted in the infection at that point and Fort William of fourteen persons and six deaths, at Arnprior of one person and one death, in Carleton-Place of six persons and two deaths, in Montreal of six persons and two deaths, at Seine River of one case, at Sault Ste. Marie of one case and one death and at Wolfe Station of one person and one death.