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S. MILLEY.

Municipal Matters.

The Menace of the Tank.

Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Sir,—After what I described in my last letter it can easily be understood how much disease is brought into the dwellings of the poor by the buckets which convey the supply of water from the street tank to the houses. There yet remains to be considered the infection which must in very many instances be poured into these same buckets from the tap itself, or carried into the houses with the germ-infested dirt of the ground in the neighbourhood of the tank. Let us take the last case first. The situation of the ordinary street tank at the mouth of a sewer which is covered only by an iron grating, which grating in its turn is usually covered with putrefying filth, must be admitted by everybody to be insanitary and dangerous in a high degree. But perhaps the danger is not fully appreciated even by those who most heartily condemn the system under which such conditions can exist. The

neighbourhood of a tank must in the course of things be saturated with water to a great depth, and not with pure water, for the risings of the buckets must also pick up the filth of the drain and grating over a very considerable area. With the water there sinks into the ground the contamination of the sewer and of the drain, and there is at once provided another culture bed for the growth and propagation of the germs of all manner of foul and deadly diseases. The very mud which sticks to the feet of the women who visit the tank is saturated with active, living, growing bacteria, and a goodly number of these bacteria must be brought into the dwellings of the visitors to the tank after every trip to it. Once more we see the lamentable spectacle of the mother of the family innocently conveying disease and possible death to her household while in the very act of providing for its health and comfort. But this, even,

is not the whole story of the street tank as we know it. We employ a system of stop-cocks for the proper preservation of our water supply from waste, and everybody must admit that such a system, if properly designed and carried out, is most desirable. The trouble is that the system adopted has a vicious side. When the lever of the tap is raised and the water stops flowing from the mouth of the tank the pipe which supplies the tank from the main, I understand, automatically empties itself. This pipe passes, as I have pointed out, downwards through ground which is highly charged with the bacteria of disease. Assume now that the very smallest defect exists in that pipe or that the smallest corrosion of the metal takes place, and we see how the convenient opportunity is immediately offered to colonies of these germs of disease to enter the pipe itself, propagate there and thus infect every bucketful of water which is drawn from the tap. Once more I must insist that this is not a condition of things evolved from the terrified imagination of an alarmist, but a condition which facts have demonstrated to be in actual existence. Two years ago the gentleman whom I have quoted in previous letters, Dr. Tall, was impressed with the danger of all our illa; there was at his instance, I believe, that samples of water were taken from the tanks and sent for analysis. Furthermore, I believe that it was at his instance that a tank on Prince's Street, where the conditions I have been describing were prominently flaunting themselves, was chosen as the source of the sample of tank water supplied to Professor Starkey. We have already seen how this tank water contained bacteria whose colonies under cultivation were too numerous to count. And this was at a time when the water in the Pond was found by one analyst to show a marked decrease in the number of bacteria present, and by another to contain none at all. It must now be perfectly clear that these street tanks are a prolific source of disease amongst the very poor of the town; that class of our people who feel most bitterly the sufferings caused by infectious disease in their homes, and who live under such conditions as make recovery from illness difficult, tedious, and in many cases impossible. I think that no one will now quarrel with me for stigmatising the street tank as we have it here in St. John's as a deadly enemy to our health and welfare. Furthermore, when a state of affairs such as I have described exists amongst us, what earthly good is it to bring a pure supply of water into the town when you contaminate it as you distribute it?

Of course there must be a remedy for this state of affairs, and it is none too soon to put that remedy in operation. What we can do now can only be a poor atonement for the hundreds of lives which must have been lost and the thousands of constitutions

which must have been permanently undermined by the long-continued existence of this system of polluting our water as we deliver it from the tank. But if we cannot make amends for the past, we can at least take some precautions for the future, and thus do something to bring this town up to a decent standard of wholesomeness. It is worth while trying to lower a death rate which is abnormal in ratio, and abnormal also for the reason that the hearty and strong contribute to its numbers as well as the puny and delicate. The first remedy to be applied obviously is to remove every tank from the neighbourhood of the mouth of a sewer. By this device you at least evade the germs of disease which the sewer continually belches forth and prevent them from contaminating the water and the buckets which hold it. By this device also you save the water in the pipes from the danger of contamination from the germ-infested area which surrounds the sewer-mouth. It is true that by so doing you prevent the easy and prompt escape of the drainage from the tap and the overflowings of the buckets into the sewer. But is not this rather an advantage than a defect? The washing of water through a drain will do something to cleanse it. And our drains stand in dire need of cleansing, as everybody knows. In winter time indeed under the system I advocate there will be a glib of ice in the surface drain in front of the tank, but that may be faced with equanimity. But perhaps you will say that every part of a drain in such filthy localities as I have been dealing with must necessarily be filthy. Even so, there must be some portion which is less noxious than others, and it is there that the tank should be placed, and not in the drain but beside it. The next thing to do is at any price to keep the drain near a tank fairly clean, and if you want to keep the drain clean you must concrete it; cobble-stone drains are vicious in any filthy neighbourhood, but they are deadly in the vicinity of a tank. And let your concrete be laid in mass and not in small sections as we see them in some parts of the town. But the main point, when once you establish your tank in a proper site, is to keep the drain well flushed and swept. The labour which is lost now by filth produced by water from tanks in dirty places would more than pay for the outlay in revising this system, to say nothing of the additional protection to the lives and health of the poor which you will thus gain. From what I have already said it must be obvious that from whatever point of view we look at the question of the public health of St. John's we come back by inevitable steps to the filth of the town itself. And this it is which arouses our indignation when we see the Council perpetually casting their eyes along the distant horizon to look for the causes of the mortality and disease always present with us when these causes lie right under their noses. Let us even at this last minute give up these trifling purposeless dickerings with Twenty Mile Pond and give our attention to the dirt which infests our streets wherever we bend our steps. There lies the source of all our illa; there let us apply the remedy. When we have cleaned the town we can innocently indulge in the creation of reserves around Windsor Lake, but until we have cleaned the town and made it fit for decent habitation we have no time or money for such schemes.

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MARSHALL BROTHERS.

SHANNAHAN ON THE PRESENTATION OF CUPS.

We never hear of any one in this country giving money to build hospitals, homes for the working girls or anything in that line, but we have big-hearted men who glory in presenting cups.

Of course we must be satisfied to make headway slowly, and maybe the generosity of the cup givers will expand as years roll on, and the man who just now feels satisfied with having a cup to his credit will later on present the city with something of a useful character.

"This cup giving is a very interesting business," said Delaney, "and if you watch it closely you'll find out that it pays well." Of course the man who gives a cup never hints at the personal gain. He gives the cup and doesn't pretend that he thinks anything more about it, but he is shrewd enough to know that there will be a lot of dead kicked up over it before 'tis handed over with great eclat to the winner.

First and foremost the announcement is made that Mr. Samuel Notoriety has kindly offered a cup for next year, and then the papers stop there. A little later on the papers announce that Mr. Notoriety has contemplated a visit to England and 'tis understood that he will purchase the cup while on his visit. A few weeks later Mr. Notoriety is heard from again. He has arrived in England and had a very pleasant passage, and we understand he has been fortunate in securing a very pretty cup, which will be "handed over" on his return.

Then in due course he arrives and tells the reporters that he has the cup with him and that it will be on exhibition in the window of Messrs. Show & Co. in a few days. By and by the cup is placed in view and the papers announce the pleasing intelligence to an interested public.

The donor after a week or so gives out the stipulations governing the contest for the cup, which usually says that the said cup must be won three years in succession. This will mean that we will hear a great deal in the future about Mr. Notoriety and his cup, for 'tis more than likely that it will be tussled for about a quarter of a century ere 'twill be captured for the last time.

On fine sunny evenings the cup giver strolls to his seat at the upper end of the grand stand, and as he glides along we point to him as the man who gave the cup, and a buzz of approval of his generosity goes forth and that match ends; some club has made a step on the long, long road of success. Next day the papers announce that the match for Mr. So-and-So's cup was won after a hard fight by the Glenary Club. And so the story goes on and the season, the first season of the contest for the cup, is closed by a dinner and a presentation of the cup, Mr. So-and-So's

cup, and the news is again heralded in the papers.

The winter comes and Mr. So-and-So's cup is placed on exhibition in the rooms of the successful club, and Mr. Notoriety on account of his presenting the cup is invited to attend all the social functions held in the rooms, and soon he is invited to every dinner that's held in town.

He is generally a good or a fair talker, and of course on account of his giving a cup, he is given a round of applause. He gives the cup and then we get the papers telling us that Mr. Notoriety was among the guests at the dinner and made a capital speech.

Then glorious springtime, the days of sport arrive again, and we are informed through the Press that the first match for Mr. Notoriety's cup will come off on Monday evening, weather permitting. A repetition of last year's announcements are made, and Mr. Notoriety and his cup become as familiar to us as our breakfast. A half a dozen more dinners and endless speeches, the cup in the meantime being exhibited in every shop in town and is as well known to the people as the sprinkling car. Years pass by, and finally the public is relieved for the time being by the information that the Mimacs have carried off the prize for two years. The jaded public offer up a silent but fervent prayer that the Mimacs will carry off the prize for good next year, for they are sick and tired of hearing and reading of Mr. Notoriety and his bulged up cup. It is bulged, for no cup could hold getting bulged under such circumstances; but another club gets the bulge on the Mimacs next season, and of course the cup is free for another three years.

Backache Suffering

A wonderful medicine in this man's description of DR. CHASE'S KIDNEY-LIVER PILLS.

Mr. Fred Gummer, Lillies, Ont., writes: "I can honestly say that Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are a wonderful medicine. For six weeks last fall I could scarcely walk around for pains in the back and legs, and was almost completely unfit for work. No better. I saw Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills advertised and bought five boxes. After I had used three boxes, I had them all taken felt as well as I ever did. I would advise anyone suffering from Kidney disease to use Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills."

We have also used Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine for bad colds and sore throat and would not be without these medicines for anything. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, one pill a dose, 25 cents a box, at all dealers or Edmondson, Bates & Co., Toronto. Write for a free copy of Dr. Chase's Recipe Book.

Mr. Notoriety's wife now takes a hand. She tells him he is the most popular man in town. All the people whom she runs up against are talking about him. She urges him to go in for politics, and gets her friends to talk to the strong man in the running to take him on the ticket as third man. The "strong man" sizes Notoriety up a bit, and after giving the matter some consideration decides with his usual tact that Mr. Notoriety is not half as popular as his wife thinks; he knows the people are bored, from hearing of him and his mug, so comes to the conclusion that he won't take him in his own district but consigns him "this side up" to another, where he will be sure to get wiped out forever.

The wife is delighted and Mr. Cupology is charmed. He dreams, and his wife dreams, of his heading the poll. She can see him sitting on the Government side of the House, an hon. before his name. She can behold him addressing the gods of the gallery, and she can see herself supping Castoria at a dinner in Government House.

Later on she knows he'll be sent away on a mission to enquire into a new way of removing fog from the Banks, and he and she chuckles over the easy way they pushed themselves into prominence by that little cup.

Mr. Notoriety stumps the district. He is out late at night and comes home with wet feet to his wife. She doesn't growl but gives him dry socks and tells him to keep up the steam. A crowd of his committee men take full charge of him and his home and his wife sees little of him. The papers which support his side report his meetings as being filled to overflowing. The usual deafening peals of musketry and damp powder are brought in and the papers have every one hoarse from cheering for him. Torchlights and stage powder meet him on the outskirts of the town, and even the fair sex join the jubilation. But sooner than was expected the end is reached, and polling day, a quiet, muddy day, when people yawn for their beer, arrives. Mr. Notoriety looks busy, he tries to look prosperous. All day he drives from booth to booth getting the list of the illiterate votes. If he stops to speak to you, he looks with that far away look of the busy man, and his polling day drags on, and later on after talking himself almost to death he returns to his home and his kindred. The count commences next morning, goes on with the usual dragging gait. His intimate friends follow him into the counting room; everything is fine, but soon poor Mr. Notoriety finds he is fast falling behind. Later on he goes home to take a cup of coffee and forgets to come back. A jaded public is after getting supper, and poor Notoriety is a wiser and sadder man.

TIM SHANNAHAN.

LARACY'S have just got in Men's Work Shirts, all Black, Black and White Stripe, and Fanciful, from 60c. each. Blue Denim and White Duck Overalls, Men's Tweed Pants, from \$1.00 a pair. At LARACY'S, 345 & 347 Water Street, opposite the Post Office.—aug10,11.

Fellow Citizens!

Just a few words on
This momentous occasion.

Don't wait for an attack of the grippe to force you to buy your

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