

IMPURE WATER.

Reference was made during last autumn to the prevalence of typhoid fever in Summerside, P.E.I. The authorities of that place being aroused to action, sent samples of water taken from twenty wells in the town to an analytical chemist to be examined, in order to ascertain if they were to blame for the epidemic. His report was received last week, and the chairman of the town council has sent it to the *Journal* for publication:

About half the samples are found to contain a considerable percentage of chlorine and albuminoid ammonia, which would indicate that they are more or less contaminated by sewage or drainage from closets, sinks or cesspools. Nine of them are pronounced quite unfit for drinking purposes. The examiner adds, "every sample of this series should be boiled before being used for drinking purposes, while Nos. 13, 7 and 17 would be unfit for internal use even after they had been boiled, on account of the large amount of dissolved and suspended filth which they contain. If a case of typhoid or similar disease should occur in a house situated near any of the wells mentioned, it is probable that persons who drank the water would contract the disease, on account of the germs having penetrated to the well. If the samples of water examined by me are average well waters of your town, it is extremely necessary that some source of water supply should be sought which would not be in danger of contamination from town drainage, etc."

There are many places whose inhabitants rely for their water supply on wells, which would do well to take to heart the advice here given. It is time that municipal officers had their minds open to learn the causes of disease and the remedies.

"DO AS YOU WOULD BE DONE BY."

It is a common thing with life assurance canvassers, in their anxiety to get business for the companies they represent, to belittle and abuse their competitors. We have heard one sound company sneered at by a certain agent as "small"; another decried because "foreign," and therefore it was unpatriotic to deal with it; an English company, whose strength he dared not impugn, called "slow and unable to cope," while every one of these companies was sound. Reproving this sort of thing, an address was given recently at Ipswich, England, by Mr. D. C. Haldeman, the manager of the Mutual Life Company for Great Britain, before a meeting of the agents. After dwelling at some length on the magnitude of the company's operations, Mr. Haldeman is reported as follows:

"I ask every one connected with the company never to run down another life insurance company, and, furthermore, never to approach a man and tell him to surrender his policy in another company and take out a policy in the Mutual. It is a fact that no policy of long standing—and by long standing I mean a reasonable number of years—can be surrendered with advantage to the insured. You can never create business for your own company by first of all creating distrust in a client's mind as to life insurance companies generally. You have your own goods to sell, and you are able to do it without disparaging any other policy."

THE OSGOODBY FIRE TRIAL.

After a lengthy trial William McMillan has been found guilty of setting fire to the Osgoodby building in this city in January, 1895, and was sentenced by Judge McDougall on Saturday last to ten years in the penitentiary. A warning, this, that the crime of arson will not be treated lightly in this community. Application has been made by the solicitor of the man Rosenthal, one of the principal witnesses against McMillan in the case, to the Board of Fire Underwriters, for payment of \$1,000 reward offered by that body

for the discovery and apprehension of the incendiary. The city of Toronto having besides offered a reward of \$500, the same man applies, through his solicitor, for this. There are other applicants—one of them, by the way, does not give his name, as if any anonymous claimant could be dealt with in a case of the kind. The nature of the pretensions of these various claimants for the reward will doubtless be carefully considered by the civic officials and the underwriters. The claims of Rosenthal will be, we should think, sifted with especial care, having regard to the nature of his own views and habits as they came out in his evidence.

A RETROSPECT IN HIDES.

The hide market has had during the year 1895 a strangely varied course. To gather all the links in the remarkable chain of events that constitute the hide record for the year now passing away, the market statistician must review several months in 1894. The prices of hides ruled low from January, 1894, until August, when a slight advance was made upon the market's standard quotations of butchers', 3 cents, and cured $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents per lb. For the remainder of the year hides were in normal supply, prices were normal and the market attracted no special attention. The year 1895 opened with green cow hides quoted 4 cents and cured and inspected 5 cents per lb.; at these prices the market remained steady during January and February. During these two first months of the year tanners found an excellent request for their goods. A number of houses reported having made large sales, while others preferred to hold their output and await an advance in the leather market. While hides had advanced 30 to 50 per cent. over midsummer prices, leather had gained little more than 5 per cent. during the same time. In March cured hides advanced from 5 to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The industrial conditions of the country were reviving but slowly, and the improvement was certainly not sufficient to warrant so marked an advance in the price of any raw material. The consumer absolutely refused to bear the advance; the retailer, jobber and shoe manufacturer alike declined to carry it, and the heavy burden rested in its entirety on the shoulders of the tanner. During the Lenten season, with the usual decrease in take-off, prices again advanced. April prices for cured and Toronto inspected hides averaged $6\frac{1}{2}$ cents. In May the Chicago bulls broke away from all restraint, and Canadian markets quickly responded to the American centre. In May, 1894, the butchers received 3 cents for cow hides, while cured wens sold as low as $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents; in May, 1895, green hides were bought for 6 cents, and cured sold at $6\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound. The hide market had developed peculiar strength, and shoe manufacturers began to acknowledge the situation. Price lists were advanced, and the conditions of the hide market were discussed in every retail store in the Dominion. The market had risen because of its own inherent strength. Hides were indisputably in short supply. The receipts to May 31st were 1,929,909 as compared with deliveries during the same period in previous years, as follows:—1894, 2,302,443; 1893, 2,364,286; 1892, 2,169,734 head.

Speculators have been known to "bull" a market without any apparent justification save their own necessities, and in this instance their task was made the easier by a visible shortage in supply. Toronto inspected hides were quoted at 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and at this figure were beyond the reach of tanners for purposes of manufacture. Tanners, it is true, had secured advanced prices for leather, but the advance was in nowise equivalent to the increased cost of production. Manufacturers of leather who had secured hides previous to their extravagant rise in price used them sparingly, while those who had no supplies on hand preferred to curtail production, rather than fill their vats with over-priced hides. But there was no "let up" in Chicago, where brokers were talking of 15-cent hides. The United States Leather Company gave strength to the situation by entering the market as a purchaser, even though the buying operations at this juncture were of a limited character. The less conservative merchants were carried away with extravagant ideas, while the wise men unloaded their stocks.

The inevitable reaction began in August, and in September Toronto inspected cured hides were sold at $8\frac{1}{2}$ cents the pound. With the first sign of a break in the hide market leather buyers predicted demoralization in leather values. But if cost of production be a determinant of value then leather prices should have fallen and not declined. The tanner was just beginning at this time to offer in the market product made from dear hides. Leather declined in price and tanners who refused to part with their stock, save at prices admitting a reasonable margin of profit, have been compelled to hold their leather. But there has been no demoralization of values and holders of leather have reasonable hopes of an active movement beginning with the New Year. Hides declined to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents in November and 6 cents in December, or almost within the limit of the