

OUR ICE SUPPLY.

In our last issue we referred to the very unsatisfactory state of affairs as regards our ice supply. In this matter we do not wish to limit our observations to Toronto, but would include, in the general principles involved, the great majority of cities and towns on this continent, where dependence is placed on a supply of natural ice. We are glad to learn from the city press that the medical men are aiding the Board of Health in Montreal to prohibit the introduction of impure ice into that city. Here, in Toronto, the Board of Health apparently is cognizant of the fact that much impure ice is being supplied to the citizens, not only from Ashbridge's Bay, but from outlying ponds, and the Medical Health officer has been, nominally at least, placed in a position to see that none but pure ice is supplied for food purposes. But, as we understand it, the law has been, so far, practically a dead letter, and indeed without some unheard of revolution of nature, and of the state of affairs in the body politic generally, it must always remain so.

Because we live in a climate where ice of a certain quality may be had for the harvesting, it appears visionary to unthinking minds that we shall be forced, by the onward march of science, to manufacture our ice, an article so necessary both for our health and comfort in this climate. It would appear that, according to law, ice for *cooling purposes* only may be taken from any portion of say Toronto Bay, polluted in a manner it is not necessary to describe. Now, we maintain that inasmuch as certain pathogenic organisms, the germs of typhoid, for example, are not rendered innocuous by freezing, that the sound principles of sanitation are violated by allowing such ice to be used in our midst for any purpose whatsoever.

We are supposed to have pure ice, that is, ice cut outside the 500 yards' limit in Toronto Bay, (where it is supposed to stand the test of purity), or from outlying places, such as Lake Simcoe, supplied at our doors for purposes of food. What are the facts of the case in the present season? We have figures and authority to show that, so far as the outlying places are concerned, not one-twentieth of the ice necessary for the food supply of Toronto was brought from Lake Simcoe. Regarding the amount cut in our own bay, it was practically impossible to get the remaining nine-

teen-twentieths necessary, owing to the thinness of the ice beyond the point named by law, during all but a very short time, and the whole bulk of the ice was taken within the 500 yards' limit, and near the foot of Simcoe street, and quite close in shore.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from a sensible consideration of the matter is that we shall be driven to adopt artificial means to secure at least a sufficient supply of ice for food. Now, if it can be shown that an ice, absolutely pure and durable, can be produced at a cost, triflingly, if at all, in advance of the usual rates quoted for our natural impure ice, then we hold that, in all common sense, steps should be taken to bring about this most desirable state of affairs.

We may yet be visited by an ice famine, and then we shall be wholly dependent upon an outside source of supply. Now we have it on authority that manufactured ice can be delivered to the citizens of Toronto at a fractional increase of cost on to-day's quotation.

When we say manufactured ice we mean *pure ice*, and, after all, purity is the great desideratum in the matter of food. We have abundant proof from the superintendents of hospitals and health officers of European cities that the manufactured ice is perfectly pure, and is consequently so desirable for patients that it is in constant use. It is indeed a matter patent to the most simple mind that an ice manufactured by, say the De La Vergne Ammonia system must be pure. By this system the water is converted into steam. This is cooled by being passed through a number of pipes, and, after cooling, it is put through an animal filter, which completely deodorizes it. This final process leaves the water perfectly pure. It is then run into cans, which are placed in a solution of salt and water, when, by the ammonia process, the temperature is reduced to any degree desired. Ice made in this way is as transparent as a pane of glass and is absolutely pure.

ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

We beg to call the attention of our readers to the advertisement on another page of this issue regarding the Ontario Medical Association which is to meet as usual in Toronto on Wednesday and Thursday, the 5th and 6th of June. The number