

During the year 1864, without any known special predisposing cause, but apparently through the cumulative virulence of the deadly agencies *always at work*, the fearful scourge of mortal disease carried off 3,516 of our children, or 341 out of every myriad of our population, *which exceeded even the abnormal number of our births by 280*. It does not appear that the legal guardians of the public health took any steps to mitigate this frightful calamity; and again in 1865, the mortality of children (as well as of adults) was above even the high average of twelve years.

But in the spring of 1866, owing to a wholesome dread of cholera, a strong public opinion, an Order in Council, and the labours of the Sanitary Association (then first formed), the Corporation appointed two Health Officers *for three months*, and detailed police to act as inspectors. *Only a very partial surface cleansing of the yards was the result*; the streets remaining as before, the subsoil retaining all its pollutions, and the production of fresh poisons unchecked; and yet what was the result of this, aided probably by the unusually cold, wet, and windy season? *Four hundred and seventy lives of children were saved* as compared with the previous year; and June, which on the average is the most unhealthy month except July or August, *actually furnished the week of lowest deaths*. Yet, no sooner was the cleansing finished, and the July sun drew forth to the surface the substratum of miasmatic poison, than the death-rate of the children rose at once from 362 per myriad to 852; and the *deaths of adults in the whole year exceeded those of 1865 by fifty-five*.

But if this minute instalment of what ought to be done, produced at once such a marvellous benefit as the saving of 470 children's lives, what might not be expected, were councillors, owners of property and householders to perform their manifest duties? And if they are not willing, for the love of God and the good of their brethren, to obey the plain laws of health and remove the causes of disease and death, ought not the power of the law to protect the helpless, and prevent the selfish from robbing their neighbours of their happiness, and the very lives of themselves and their children?

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