

society may be said to live—might be considerably ameliorated, if they were better looked after as regards their sanitary surroundings.

The "seeds of dark disease," as Thompson poetically puts it, are sown in these classes when wet, cold weather sets in. Insufficient food, bad clothing, and defective house accommodation, each in their turn, and all collectively, help to swell the number of the sufferers from the many diseases prevalent at this season. When Death steps forth, with the barbs of his spear tipped with icicles, he deals out destruction as fatal and as certain as do the poisoned arrows of the savage warrior.

Winter, the season which many welcome on account of its being a period for friendly gatherings and hospitable enjoyment, is injurious to the old, the young, and the weakly, only the middle aged and the strong are proof against its attacks, and if they escape with impunity, without illness of any kind, the result is due rather to their ability to withstand the onslaughts of winter than to the innocuity of the season. Last winter, when similar weather occurred to that which we are now passing through, the death-rate rose rapidly, until in some localities it reached as high a point as 40, 50, and even 60 per 1,000 per annum. We may expect corresponding results at the present period. But we ought not, as many seem to do, to accept such matters with a kind of fatalist complacency. On the other hand, we should redouble our efforts to provide for the more pressing sanitary requirements of the poor and underpaid, and see that they are better housed, better clothed, and better fed than is their lot now.

Each of the lives lost through sanitary shortcomings is equally as valuable in the eyes of Providence as if it were that of a person in a higher social position; and it behoves us all, in our respective spheres, and to the extent of our respective powers, to diminish the sickness and mortality arising from the severity of winter, coupled with the absence of proper hygienic conditions, in the houses of a very large proportion of our poor. Employment upon public works should be given to all deserving applicants; and a systematic plan of relief should be established for the very large class placed, by force of circumstance, just above the level of pauperism, whose poverty should be regarded a misfortune, and not, as is now too often the case, treated as a crime.

—*Public Health.*