

mass of materials showing what smallpox as an epidemic disease was, and would be to-day were its prevalence as great and our defences against it as limited as they were before 1796. One of the most pertinent questions which we may ask ourselves, however, is: "Granted all these facts, is it not true that in the Province of Quebec fatal epidemics of smallpox have not appeared since 1885, and that in Ontario the total deaths since 1882 have not much exceeded 200; and yet systematic vaccination has not been carried out by the people or the municipalities during the past fifteen years?"

The question has been posited thus clearly so that those doctrinaires who, in the matter of smallpox, would preach the expediency of a policy of *laissez faire* and of allowing outbreaks of the disease to be dealt with simply as ordinary diseases are by practising physicians, leaving the matter of quarantine and vaccination to the individual intelligence and sense of duty to the public, must accept the position either that such a course of action within their own experience or from the accredited evidence of history has suppressed outbreaks, has prevented an increase of the death-rate, has not produced destructive effects upon health as disfigurement of features or loss of eyesight, has not been disturbing to the public comfort and sense of security and has not been injurious to their own or the general commercial prosperity of any community. Are such prepared to accept and occupy such a position? But while they may not do this they may fall back upon another and say: "No, we are not prepared to go so far, since we admit that common municipal and governmental action has at times been necessary to suppress severe and fatal epidemics; but, nevertheless, there are diseases, and at present smallpox in America is such an one, which are so mild in their effects, so little fatal, and yet so difficult to control without great inconvenience and expense to the public that it were better to simply leave their management to the individual citizen and his physician. For the moment let us accept the position. It has been estimated that during a single year, 1900, there were in the United States at least 100,000 cases of smallpox; while in Ontario alone during a single year there were some 2,500 cases. The deaths in all were not greater than one per cent. in Ontario, and probably no more than this in the United States.

Taking that in Ontario as a type of the outbreaks it may be stated that not much less, probably, than \$500,000 has been spent by the municipalities and government in preventing the spread of the disease. With regard to the number of persons liable to the disease, owing to their not being protected by vaccination,—assuming, of course, for the moment, that successful vaccination in infancy is a protection up to ten years and very largely so up to twenty years—we may roughly estimate that of the population