

possible ills may be averted, still in our capacity as guardians of health, it seems to me that the time has come when we should impress upon the public mind the importance of prophylaxis, and teach those under our immediate supervision that after sixty a failure to recognize the changed condition of their vital powers, and a continuance in the business habits of earlier life, after this period, are often no better than suicide.

STATE MEDICINE.

BY C. W. COVERSTON, M.D., MEMBER PROVINCIAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

Grosse Isle Quarantine System.

To the Editor:

Sir,—It has occurred to me that, as the public mind is at present somewhat agitated on the subject of possible extension of yellow fever from Florida to our Maritime ports, a brief description of the night and day surveillance of all ships from British and foreign ports entering at this, the seagate of the Dominion, might prove reassuring. The statement is based on the opportunities for accurate knowledge that a fortnight's residence at this quarantine island has afforded.

There are provided two steamers, the *Challenger* and the *Hygeia*. On board the latter are the various arrangements for a thorough disinfection of the cabins that have been occupied by steerage passengers who, during the voyage, may be found to have been the subjects of infectious diseases. The said steamers are provided with small hospital cabins, in which the sick are placed, and on completion of the work of disinfection of the isolated hospital on board the ship are conveyed to the shore hospital, as also the attendants on them during the voyage, in whom the disease may be presumed to be incubating, the first to be there kept until recovery, the latter until the period of incubation of the particular disease has expired. In cases of emigrants who have not been re-vaccinated within seven years, if the ship surgeon during the voyage has neglected the work, the quarantine officer assumes the duty. Should the emigrants obstinately refuse, they are removed from the ship to the quarantine steamer, conveyed to the shore, there placed in a comfortable house, supplied with necessary rations and detained until fourteen days, counting from the time of embarkation, have elapsed. Passage is then provided for

them to Quebec, the port to which the vessel they had crossed in was bound.

Three instances of determined refusal to re-vaccination occurred on board the *S. S. Sarmatian*. No objection was offered to the alternative and the protestors are now enjoying themselves on this beautiful island until the expiration of the time for incubation of small-pox.

One of the steamers is to be found at the western wharf with banked fires night and day, a lookout man continually on the watch for in-coming ships, and, with the exception of coasters, immediately one is in sight, a signal for the medical officer is given. Quickly Dr. Montizambert or his assistant, Dr. Coote, is on board, and the quarantine steamer proceeds to the deep water channel, between three and four miles from the shore there awaiting the arrival of the ship or going down to meet it. For the night duty one or other of the medical officers sleeps on board the *Challenger*, the largest and best adapted boat for heavy weather.

From the foregoing abridged account of the work at this station it will be obvious to all that the chance of infection entering at this port is reduced to a minimum. Absolute immunity can only be secured by the Government at an early date supplying the long-experienced want of a deep-water wharf, such as other quarantine stations are fitted with; then not only the cabins in which the infected have been placed, but also the whole of an infected ship could be promptly disinfected at very little cost from demurrage to the owners of ships.

Of the great esteem in which our old friend, the quarantine officer, Dr. Montizambert, is held by the employees of the station, the following translation of an address accompanied by a superbly executed life-sized portrait of himself will sufficiently testify.

GROSSE ISLE, September 20th, 1888.

To Dr. F. Montizambert, M.D., Edin., F.R.C.S., Edin., D.C.L.:

DEAR SIR,—“Recognition is the coin of the heart.” For a long period we have recognized the truth of this axiom, and to-day more than ever we feel the desire of proving it to you.

In placing you in the important post of superintendent of the quarantine station at Grosse Isle, the Government displayed faith in your great aptitude. In truth, it was with reason. Never since you have taken the post in hand have you betrayed the confidence placed in you.