

In a letter written on 14th October, 1733, by Beauharnois to Hocquart, it is stated that "the smallpox which has afflicted this country since the end of the Autumn of 1732, up till to-day, and which has carried off nearly 2,000 persons from this colony, has exhausted the resources of everyone, and the suspension of all work has necessarily followed. The working classes at Quebec are becoming from day to day more of a burden upon men of means, and more upon us than upon others by their too frequent importunities. We cannot find any other expedient than to find work for them to take them out of their misery."

"It spread on all sides throughout this Government (Province or country) and in that of Three Rivers where it is still prevalent. By the account which has been brought to me, about 900 persons have died from this disease in the environs of Montreal, as many men as women, girls and infants. At Quebec, 278. I have not yet had a list of the number in the environments of Quebec or Three Rivers, but the number may well be five or six hundred which this disease has carried off from the colony. It is true that the greater number are children, but there have been a great number of sick at Quebec, there being at one time more than 2,000 between those in the Hôtel Dieu and in private houses.

"This disease was commonly accompanied by a circumstance which was as annoying for the sick as for those who cared for them. This was the insupportable odor which accompanied the disease. I think it will not be necessary for me to go into details. I have seen several persons attacked with this disease in France, but it was far from being as virulent as it is in Canada."

A disease as dreadful in results as smallpox naturally incited the pioneers in medicine to try various