

THE HEALTH OF PHILADELPHIA

In a recent issue we drew the attention of our readers to some facts which were collected in Philadelphia, bearing on the health of that city, and we then showed by comparative statements that there had been a decided increase in typhoid, which is now believed to be largely influenced, if not actually produced, by imperfect sewerage or polluted water. The question is one which is not interesting to New Yorkers alone, but to the whole country, and we felt gratified in being able to make certain tolerably definite statements in regard to the actual facts in the case.

To many persons it may have appeared that in so doing we failed to show all the facts, for it is well known that a great deal of sickness, especially of a diarrhoeal nature, has attacked persons after they visited the Centennial Exhibition. Rumors have also been prevalent to the effect that many have died of typhoid after their return. Almost every physician in the country has cognizance of one or more such cases.

Probably the reports about them have been much exaggerated, but at the same time there is doubtless some truth in the matter.

In the article referred to we showed that both the sewerage is bad and the water is more or less polluted, and that at one time it contained a pretty large amount of sewage. We are not prepared to say now, any more than then, that these unhygienic conditions were related to typhoid as cause to effect, because it may still appear that the increase has been as great in other localities—in fact, that we have been suffering from a general epidemic of the disease all over the country.

The benefit of this possibility we are willing to give to our Philadelphia friends; but we are rather surprised to find it stated by our contemporary, the *Philadelphia Medical Times*, that the Quaker city, "this summer, has been extraordinarily healthy, and that the water supply and the general hygienic arrangements have stood the very severe test so well as to reflect credit upon the city authorities and to demonstrate the great value of the homestead method of living practised in this city."