

Our Curbstone Observer On Epidemics.

Since I began my column of observations, taken from the curbstone, I have ranged over a vast number and variety of subjects. Sometimes I may have trespassed upon domains that might be said to belong exclusively to others, but I have never done so with a view to encroaching upon privileged grounds. Although upon a physician nor an expert in matters pertaining to the public health, still I have a few ideas of my own upon the subject of epidemics, their origin, their spread, and the best preventatives. My ideas may be entirely erroneous; if so, no person is obliged to accept them, much less to act upon them. Yet, I feel a hint that could serve the purposes of all who have the health and well-being of our citizens at heart.

We have a large number of small-pox cases in Montreal at present. In the city hospital there were fifty cases last week, and about twenty-five houses were under surveillance. It is absolutely no use hiding the exact condition of things in this regard. We are no worse off than other places; Boston, Ottawa, and other cities, both in the United States and in Canada, are more infested than Montreal. But that does not change the situation; the fact remains that there are far more cases in the city than is desirable. I know, from personal experience, for my next-door neighbor has had two cases in his house, that the Health Department takes every possible precaution and must have done an immensely towards preventing the spread of the disease. In fact, I am aware that in the case of small-pox, within an hour from the nature of the disease being made known, civic guardians had possession of the place, the sick persons were removed, the family sent away, the house disinfected, and a sentinel put in front and one on duty night and day to prevent any person from approaching. All this is highly creditable to the Department, but it does not prevent the fact of the small-pox having originated in that house. The authorities may check the disease under control; but they cannot be expected to absolutely prevent its appearance. It is this point that interests me and on which I happen to have some private theories.

It is universally admitted that there is no purer, no healthier climate in the world than that of Canada. I refer in a special manner to the Canadian winter. Even during the most severe cold there is a something invigorating and purifying in the air that is not to be found elsewhere, except perhaps in Russia. We have no on of fine winter days, when the air is bracing, the atmosphere clear, the sky unclouded. The damp, or thawing periods are the exceptions between November and March. It stands to reason that the cold period of the winter is the most healthy of the four seasons. The vapors that poison, arising from refuse and other infectious matters, cannot exist during the winter months. The complaints which attend unclean lanes, unsavory alleys, and such like cannot be heard in the winter time; because everything, even the most repugnant objects, may be considered as non-existent; the frost and the snow have, for the time being, eradicated the injurious. In a word, epidemics, or contagious diseases should be absolutely unknown amongst us during the winter months. How comes it then that small-pox (for example) rarely makes an appearance in summer, or autumn, but selects the cold period of the winter for its ravages? Is the cause to be found in the streets, the lanes, or the yards? In my humble opinion such cannot be the case. Some may say that the disease is imported. Granted that some cases come from elsewhere, but the same rule applies in those localities whence the sickness is brought. They say that not a few cases come from country districts, villages and towns; that is quite possible, but in those places winter exists as it does in the city. In fact, the reason should be only the stronger why small-pox should not appear during the cold months in country districts. Still this does not do away, with the fact that every time we have been threatened with this fearful scourge, the trouble commenced in December, or January, and lasted until the spring.

Well! I have my own little idea on the subject. I have observed far more than can be seen from the curbstone on the street. I have made it my business to study the general domestic habits of our citizens, to note the evidences of such habits as they are exhibited to the public eye—whenever that eye feels inclined to take them in, and I have found that, with the vast majority of our households, the winter regime is entirely different from that which obtains in summer time. It is difficult for me to properly illustrate my idea by generalities; so I will have to explain myself by means of an example.

For over a year I have been accustomed to read and write near the window of a certain room. Through that window I can see the front and side of a house across the way, as well as the side and rear of another house. Both these houses are occupied by eminently respectable citizens;

in one there are three grown up people, (father, mother, servant) and three children; in the other there is an equal number of grown-up people, and four children. I have, without any special intention on my part, been in a position to observe the movements of both families. In both cases the very same remarks are applicable. All summer I noticed that the children were perpetually outside, if not on the street, at least on the balconies in front and behind. I also noticed that the windows of these houses, and frequently some of the doors, were nearly all the time wide open. I remarked that, in one case, every Monday, and in the other case every Tuesday and Friday, the lines were covered with washing. I could see that on days when no washing was done, each morning the bed-clothes, children's pads, sheets, etc., were hung out for a time on the lines to air. Finally, I could see that a weekly light cleaning, or dusting was done, while about every three or four weeks a regular great cleaning, sweeping, scrubbing and dusting took place.

So much for the summer months. That disease could scarcely find its way into these houses was no matter of surprise. But the seasons changed, the winter came on, and for with the winter came another change. Since the early part of November not one of these children, in either house, has spent one hour in the open air—unless it was an accidental outing with the parents. But as far as the balconies or the street are concerned the young ones never had an opportunity of breathing the atmosphere. The windows and doors have been hermetically closed, and in the twenty-four hours, not a breath of air from the outside has penetrated either house. Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays come and go, but scarcely any washing appears on the lines; nor is there a single piece hung out to air in all the week. It may be said that they do the washing, but dry the clothes in the house. That may be true, I say nothing to the contrary; but if such be the case, the sanitary condition of the atmosphere within must be infinitely worse, for the dampness of the washing is not conducive to healthfulness. Still more important, however, is the weekly cleaning, nor the monthly one; it has been done during the past seven or eight weeks. If there has been a sweeping, there certainly was no dusting, or airing of the rooms after that operation. I expect, unless some great change occurs, that from this till April the same system will be followed.

Of what benefit to these families the bright, clear, healthy atmosphere of winter? The fact is that they shut themselves up for five or six months, they so dread a particle of cold that they do not breathe air of heaven; they find it too inconvenient to continue the routine of cleanliness that marked the summer, and they oblige the children, like hot-house plants, to vegetate in close atmosphere, and dust that they breathe and a certain degree of unfreshness that they must experience. The germs of a vile disease are on the wing; like insects they creep in by every crevice, and once they penetrate that closed up abode they find no possible means of escape; they multiply by the very pressure of the congenial atmosphere in which they find themselves, and they very naturally become absorbed into the systems of those who have to inhale over and over, the same poisonous element. What is the result? The disease breaks out, the health authorities do their utmost to prevent its spread, the place is thoroughly disinfected; but, alas! nearly every other house in the neighborhood is in a like condition and fully prepared to give hospitality to the expelled germs that seek another abiding place.

Am I, or am I not right? If I am not, then, our so-called pure winter air must be more deadly and more poisonous than the fevered atmosphere of the plague-haunted south. If I am right, it must be concluded that the presence of contagious diseases in our city is due in great part to the lack of proper domestic precautions. I am not now speaking about the hotel, nor the den, nor the overcrowded flat or tenement. I refer simply to the ordinary citizen's habitation, where there are sufficient means to insure every comfort and sufficient room for large families to live at ease. I do not say that there is a real lack of cleanliness in these houses; possibly a stranger going into any one of them would find it very neat. I complain of the lack of fresh air, the fear of airing that seems to seize upon those who are over-anxious for warmth and comfort. What say the physicians of the Health Department?

LIFE IN HARIFORD SIXTY YEARS AGO.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO.)

and strong, in the efficacy of controversial sermons to the young. Boys and girls are not all so dull as we old fellows sometimes think they are. Nearly every family, however poor, possessed besides its prayer book, a copy of the "Spiritual Combat" and the debates of Pope and Maguire, and nearly every adult knew these books by heart. In our polemical contest with the

"Yankee boys" (and they were many) Pope and Maguire furnished us with the most effective controversial ordinance, while our opponents retorted with weapons from the arsenal of "Fox's Book of Martyrs." These theological skirmishes rarely resulted in the capture of converts by either side, but as confirmations of our own faith they were by no means ineffectual.

In 1842-1843, Hartford shared with the rest of the United States in the religious excitement and apprehensions consequent upon the prophecy of one Miller of Northern New York, that the world was to come to an end with a snap, whizz and bang in May, 1843. Scores of people now in Hartford were ardent believers in Miller, and made preparations for the predicted event, by divesting themselves of their earthly possessions, (and not a few by taking permanent leave of their senses.) Many men and women prepared their ascension robes and were arrayed in them on the appointed day, which came, and the world kept on whirling through space, in its track around the Sun. More than one of the ancient dames now living in Hartford, can tell (if she please) of having seen, and perhaps sewed upon, these celestial garments, that were worn by their grand-mothers, mothers and aunts as they waited for the coming of the Lord. Miller's followers, at first called "Millerites"—continued to exist as a distinct religious society for many years. Converts to that belief, were baptized usually on Sundays, in Little River at the foot of Trumbull street. Nothing like the sewage system, or the germ and bacillus theory, had then developed, nor was the semi-pellucid water of that stream, an object of dread because of its imperfect purity. Even the most fastidious Christian had never dreamed of individual communion cups.

Weddings at the old Talcott St. Church were celebrated usually after Vespers on Sunday, and the wedding parties, as a rule, marched to the Church, and the bride was regarded as putting on very airs as well as being extravagant. Father Brady was exacting in the rule that required the publication of the banns on three separate Sundays before the wedding ceremony, and he discouraged everything, that tended to extravagance. He encouraged by word and example, the maintenance of the rugged, sterling virtues of purity, temperance, industry and honesty. In those days a Catholic, who was an heir, drunkard or who failed to pay his debts, was a rarity. Father Brady founded a Temperance Society in 1842, and it embraced every adult male of his congregation and when on July 4th, 1844, his society was reorganized, the monster Washington Temperance procession of that kind that Hartford had ever seen,—with Charles Graham as marshal on horseback, every Catholic man, woman and child, able to walk was on Main street to admire the parade, and to help to pay the bills, was a rarity. Father Brady on that occasion, paraded the whole way down and up Main street, on his hind hoofs, his fore feet pawing the empty air.

THE AMERICAN DRINK EVIL.

The vast majority of thinking men outside the ranks of teetotalers admit the extent of the American drink evil. They readily admit that in a large percentage of cases the real secret of death is frequently buried in the silence of the grave. Medical practitioners are prone to leniency from a desire to spare the feelings of relatives and kindred. Secondary causes are returned on death certificates with the full knowledge that alcoholism is the primary cause. The hospital attendant, entering upon a course of study in professional nursing, is amazed to find bed after bed occupied by patients suffering primarily from indigestion in strong drink. The physician sits by the cot of a sufferer, watching in vain for result, and medicine in a system deranged by alcohol. He knows too well his skill is useless, his care is given in vain. Secrets more open are revealed in the statistics of the pauper list of every municipality, in every jail record, and on the books of the insane asylum. The physician and priest alone read between the lines the story of the burden of misery laid upon innocent shoulders. No statistics, however accurately tabulated, are capable of furnishing a proper estimate of sunken hopes, blighted ambition, broken homes and hearts, and ruined lives. The selfishness of a passing world glances upon them and quickly turns its gaze toward pleasanter objects. Forgetfulness is not a remedy. Cain's answer, "Am I my brother's keeper," does not satisfy the obligation of mutual charity.

To assist in the solution of this vexatious problem a committee of fifty was organized in 1893, to secure a body of facts which might serve as a basis for intelligent public and private action. It goes without saying that this committee is composed of distinguished personages. A summary of conclusions is awaited with greatest interest, and will merit the attention of every class of citizens. A volume, "The Liquor Problem in its Legislative Aspects," was published in 1897; a second volume, "Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem," in 1899. This present year a third, "Substitutes for the Saloon," compiled by the Rev. Raymond Calkins, has been issued, and a fourth, presenting the researches made by the physiological sub-committee, will soon follow. "Substitutes for the Saloon" comprises 397 pages. It is replete with useful information, and represents a deal of careful, painstaking labor. It may interest the

delegates to learn that in considering the preventive and corrective substitutes for the saloon five lines are devoted to the Catholic Total Abstinence Societies of America. Incidentally it may be remarked here, for the information of any Knights of Columbus present, that Mr. Calkins states the "Knights of Columbus states the 'Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal association, is, first of all, a temperance society.' It has some moral ballast, I believe, in the shape of restrictions that prohibit the admission of applicants engaged in the sale of intoxicants. In some localities these restrictions are rather elastic, yet they are worthy of our commendation, inasmuch as the influence of this large organization is thrown into the balance against Catholics who ought to follow the recommendations of a plenary council.

The measure of five lines within 391 pages, the estimate of the preventive value of the Catholic total abstinence societies' labor, ought to prove an unanswerable argument to those who isolate societies which fail to find the need of unified organization in this noble cause. In the make-up of reports from large cities, Philadelphia alone is given a creditable showing with 22,000 total abstainers, divided among 60 societies that make some provision for entertainments and social reunions to offset the attractive side of the saloon. The New York city report contains a study of Irish, German, Italian, and Hebrew saloons, and naively states "that the Irish, or stand-up saloon, is held in its own against the German saloon, with tables and chairs."

To Dr. Hodge, of Clark University, Worcester, Mass., the sub-committee entrusted a portion of the work of experiment upon the physiological influence of alcohol. The history in detail of a kennel of dogs—subjects for experiment—is a most interesting one. Cats were discovered to have a horror of alcohol. The kittens would claw and spit at a saucer of milk with the odor of alcohol, as though they saw spirits. During these five years sufficient data has been collected from the study of the effects of alcohol upon dogs to warrant the following assertions: Activity and energy are lessened, thereby increasing resistance to disease, diminished, and, possibly the most important, the vigor of the offspring vitally affected.

All scientific investigation of this kind presupposes from the start that new facts, subsequently obtained, may modify any determination arrived at from a number of experiments. A single unsuspected error may vitiate an apparent demonstration in cases where scrupulous examination seems to bring certitude. It is not strange, therefore, to find scientists who stoutly maintain that alcohol for the moderate drinker is a poison, while others with equal sincerity affirm that in small doses it slightly assists digestion. This affirmation is about the only testimony that can be adduced to counterbalance the veritable array of most damaging evidence regarding its destructive effects on mind and body. It may be justly questioned whether or not Professor Atwater, of Middletown, Conn., will be able to verify his first conclusions, which the liquor journals paraded as a proof positive of the food value of alcohol. Frequently it has been asserted that the children of emigrants do not possess the rugged health and robust constitutions of the parents; mortality among the first generation of the soil is greater than among the natives, and inability to resist such things as colds and influenza, there is a serious lesson for our Catholic home embodied in the results of Dr. Hodge's experiments? From a mistaken notion that the use of so-called stimulants is a help to a day's labor, tens of thousands of parents among our Catholic population are endangering the vigor of their offspring in a land where fierce competition usually gives the battle to the strongest and the race to the fittest. It seems to me we should glorify in such truths home, instead of glorifying the advantages of the licensed saloon in localities where the liquor element is not so much concerned how men vote as how the votes are counted.

Economic changes are fast shifting in our direction the commercial activity of the world, due to the energy and that peculiar American quality we denominate "go," possessed by the man behind the machine. A conservative calculation estimates one-tenth of the population of Europe engaged in the production of intoxicants, and if drunkenness is practically unknown, yet the most casual observer cannot fail to notice the hundreds of workmen dull and stupid and senseless over their beer in the cafes of Continental cities. Already badly handicapped by military burdens, France and Germany are alarmed to an extent that

promises, in the near future, the presence of a temperance problem in all manufacturing centres. In England the placing on the market of shares of stock in large brewing and distilling corporations at nominal rates, and their wide distribution, has increased the difficulties of the "irrepressible conflict." In America drunkenness is decreasing. Admitting this, the production of alcoholic beverages has gained ground altogether out of proportion with the increase in population. Competition in trade, an enterprising, hustling activity in finding and creating a market, advertising, scheming in politics, keep the producer busy twelve months in a year and seven days a week, while the average temperance man feels he has done his duty if he leads his presence to a weekly meeting or reads a sheet of temperance literature. A French professor at the Lille University suggests the necessity of utilizing the sign-boards. He would have us repeat and repeat again, after the fashion of patent medicine manufacturers, the danger lurking in alcohol. Certainly advertising has advantages. Has not a bewitching Milwaukee famous or notorious?

Possibly Rev. Mr. Calkins and his associates are correct in their valuation of the efficient potential energy against the saloon of a Catholic organization numbering 85,000 members. There are others who yet believe the eyes of the Catholic Church lay over the ridgepole of the saloon, although an Ireland, a Keane, and a Conaty have thundered from the housetops, telling in no uncertain tones the attitude of plenary conciliar, voluntary prohibition, and bishops, towards the saloon. Could we gather into the ranks of the National Union the scattered societies whose banners dot the hill-sides and vales of every diocese this side of the Rocky Mountains, and strengthen the largest and strongest Catholic organization in America, Greater united effort and stronger bonds of federation would insure a higher appreciation from those outside the Church who know little of the influence that goes out from an individual society. The day is gone when a temperance society was labeled the topmost pitch of human folly.

We have advised men to fight the demon of drink, as the Divine Master counseled his disciples a certain class of devils should be driven out by prayer and fasting. We have not sown all the seed on barren ground, as many a household where peace and plenty entered with the total abstinence pledge can testify. The trend of modern thought is getting back to our logical position of the proper solution of the problem, examining the question of sobriety in the light of the American middle class in favor of total abstinence. As total abstainers we do not stand alone. Let us, therefore, consecrate ourselves to the noble cause, in the name of God and humanity, and be conscious that in this work we have the sympathy of the best elements in every community. Let us add our share to the prosperity of the nation which, in the past, has found its best support in sobriety and industry. If the God of nations has blessed America with unrivaled successes, the reason is not far to seek. The middle class has been and is to-day a sober, law-abiding people. This is the lesson our children should learn as they are marshalled into our ranks. We can know the future only by the past. We know that every good work to which woman has lent her kindly influence has prospered in the end, before the prayer of a mother or a sister to assist it. We cannot afford to lose the assistance of the better half of humanity.—Rev. D. F. McGullicuddy, in Temperance Truth.

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CARDINAL VAUGHAN has been ordered by his medical advisers to abstain from all functions of a public nature, and to take a complete rest for a couple of months. His Eminence has, in consequence, cancelled his engagements for Christmas and the New Year.

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, District of Montreal. Notice is hereby given that the Estate Leon Benoit Alfred Charlebois, of Laurier, will make application to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec at the next session, to be authorized to sell its immovable properties and to make a division of the assets of the said Estate.

Montreal, November 21, 1901. LOUIS MASSON, Testamentary Executor.

W. G. KENNEDY ..Dentist..

No. 758 PALACE STREET. Tel. Main 830.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

The undersigned, Leonidas Villeneuve, lumber merchant, of the town of St. Louis, in the district of Montreal, Pierre Terrault, notary, of the city of Montreal, and Hilaire Corbeil, grocer, of the said town of St. Louis, in their capacity of testamentary executors and administrators, appointed by the late Honorable Joseph Octave Villeneuve, in his lifetime Senator of Canada, for the execution of his testament done at Montreal, before Joseph P. Landry, notary, on the 16th October, 1900, give notice that they will apply to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec, at its next session, for the passing of a law for the following purposes: 1. To define the powers of the testamentary executors and administrators appointed under the said testament, especially to declare that they will have the powers given to fiduciaries by the civil code of this province. 2. To replace of the testamentary executors and administrators, and their remuneration. 3. To prolong the term during which the succession may continue between the said Joseph Octave Villeneuve and Leonidas Villeneuve; such term shall not exceed five years from the testator's death. 4. To give to the testamentary executors and administrators the necessary powers to dispose of the assets, movable and immovable, of the partnership so as to protect as far as can be done the interest of the partners; and 5. Also of the share of the testator in the immovables which he possessed in joint-tenancy with said Leonidas Villeneuve and Edouard Roy. 6. To authorize the testamentary executors and administrators to dispose of certain immovables of the succession in urgent cases. 7. To authorize the testamentary executors and administrators to grant aid to the children and grandchildren of the testator.

Montreal, 5 December, 1901. L. VILLENEUVE. P. TERRAULT. H. CORBEIL.

Montreal City and District Savings Bank.

Notice is hereby given that a Dividend of Eight Dollars and a Bonus of Two Dollars per share on the Capital Stock of this Institution has been declared, and the same will be payable at its Banking House in this city on and after THURSDAY, THE 2nd DAY OF JANUARY NEXT. The transfer books will be closed from the 15th to the 31st December next, both days inclusive. By order of the Board, A. P. LESPERANCE, Manager. Montreal, 30th Nov., 1901.