

fection of the baggage of immigrants from the "Independent," a vessel from a cholera-infected district. Dr. Smith had informed him that this baggage had been disinfected, but the immigrants informed him that their keys had not been out of their possession, and some of the valuables regarding which the immigrants gave directions were found undisturbed just as they had originally been packed.

One assurance I can give you as the result of my observations: health officers do not intend to be humbugged in this matter. It is too bad that the lives of a continent should be imperilled by political rottenness—the revenue derived from quarantine fees being used to buy people over to support a healthy (?) form of government!

The description of the efforts of Drs. Holt and Montizambert at two extreme points of the continent, and the results of these efforts, showed up in fine contrast with the state of affairs at New York.

I thought this a most opportune time to bring in the following resolution (alluded to in the last number of *MEDICAL SCIENCE*) which was referred to the Executive Committee and adopted:—

"That this association would press upon the attention of railroad, national, state, provincial and local health authorities the absolute necessity of abolishing the present system of scattering excreta along the railroad tracks and of substituting therefor some method whereby the excreta can be completely and frequently moved from the trains and tracks and safely and properly disposed of on sanitary principles." No advocacy of mine is required in regard to a resolution the necessity for which is so self-evident; and I merely refer to it in order to ask the readers of your journal to use their influence in forwarding its objects, by pointing out to others the danger now incurred by the probability of infection being carried in the dust of railway tracks or in streams of water crossed by them.

I had intended to tell you of an old-new system of medication which I saw in Memphis: the administration of "pills" to sewers in order to clean them out; also to have said a little about Pullman City and sewage farm, but I fear my article is already too long and rambling.

[We can only express our regret that Dr. Oldright did not give us the withheld information regarding *sewer treatment* and the *sewage farm*, as it possesses much local interest.—Ed.]

Contagious Diseases in Frontier Settlements.

(Correspondence.)

BY C. S. ELLIOTT, M.D., LATE MEDICAL HEALTH OFFICER, ORILLIA.

To the Editor of *MEDICAL SCIENCE*:

SIR: The advantages which we enjoy under the Public Health Act are often undervalued, and few of the citizens of the older portions of Ontario realize the security insured to them by our well organized Boards of Health, and well-informed health officers, armed and equipped with all the means which modern science has placed within our reach to arrest the spread of contagious diseases, in view of the possible outbreak of an epidemic at any time; but we are forcibly reminded of this, and our position of security is brought out in striking contrast with that of some of our less fortunate countrymen when we hear of the ravages of disease in the newly settled districts upon the confines of our civilization. It is at all times a painful thing to be obliged to record the presence of disease and death, but it is more particularly so when these make their appearance among those who are comparatively helpless to relieve the one or stay the other. In many of our frontier settlements, during the past season, both diphtheria and typhoid fever have been unusually prevalent, and in many instances fatal, and it is safe to say that in some of these instances, at least, had it been possible to carry out the requirements of the Health Act, lives would have been saved. It is impossible for those living in the older towns of this Province to understand the sufferings and hardships which the pioneer settler has to undergo. Situated many miles from medical aid, widely scattered neighbors, impassable roads, limited knowledge and limited stores, and with limited means, his condition, in the event of an outbreak of contagious disease in his family is, to say the least, pitiable. In the unorganized townships in the neighborhood of Lake Nipissing there have recently been two or three outbreaks of diphtheria, which, in the absence of medical aid, and any systematic means of preventing its spread, caused a general panic in the several communities in which it appeared. One or two of these outbreaks are interesting as showing the very marked contagious character of diphtheria, and the effect of isolation in preventing its spread. During the month of November a settler living near Powasson, a small village on the south side of Lake Nipissing, while working from home, became ill of diphtheria, and returning to his home, communi-