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SMALL-POX STAMPED OUT BY DIS-INFECTION—A VALUABLE REPORT.

EIGHT years ago, the London Sanitary Record was severe on the CANADA HEALTH JOURNAL because the latter gave expression to views throwing doubt on the great value of vaccination as a preventive of small-pox to the exclusion of other important measures, such as the strictest isolation, disinfection etc. But this being a progressive world, and this a progressive age (this JOURNAL being sometimes only a little ahead of the times), the Sanitary Record, not now disposed to be far behind, gives in its last month's issue a paper by Conway Scott, C. E., of Belfast, showing how a small-pox epidemic was successfully and quickly suppressed by disinfection, as follows :

In the year 1881 a sailor landed in Belfast with small-pox; the disease spread over the city, although every effort was made to stamp it out; the patients were promptly removed to hospital, the infected bedding and clothing burned, the houses thoroughly disinfected and cleansed, and *re-vaccination was most extensively carried out*: but the epidemic spread and lasted for two years, with about one hundred and twenty deaths, and having caused great alarm and serious loss to trade and commerce.

In the year 1891 a sailor landed in Belfast with small-pox; the disease spread partially, but was promptly checked, and the entire epidemic was over in May, having lasted three months, with twenty-three cases and three deaths. The satisfactory difference in the results of these very similar epidemics was caused by two improvements in the methods of disinfecting. (1) In 1881 the disinfectant used was sulphurous acid vapour. In 1891 the disinfectant used was carbolic acid vapour.

(2) In 1881 personal disinfection was not used. In 1891 personal disinfection was carried out in every case on a most extensive scale.

Personal disinfection consists in disinfecting persons, who, although they may not have an epidemic disease, yet have been in contact with it, and whose clothing must have some disease organisms clinging to them, by means of which epidemic disease is only too often spread. It is best done by sealing up any small room or chamber, and then filling it with the strongest carbolic acid vapour. The person is then put into this room for ten or fifteen minutes, or until his entire clothing and system is saturated with carbolic vapour. The carbolic vapour is generated by pouring the liquid acid undiluted into a small iron vessel heated to near redness; by using several of these vessels, as much as a gallon of the acid can be vaporised in a few hours.

HISTORY OF THE CASES.

No. 1.—On February 4th, three young women were removed to the hospital with small-pox from the house where the sailor boarded; the house and everything in it was disinfected and cleansed and the bedding burned. The sailor and every other person known to have been in contact with the disease were thoroughly disinfected, and the houses where these people resided and everything in them were also disinfected, and although all these people went about their daily business as usual, no case of sickness occurred among them or at their homes, or in their vicinities, or in the works where they were employed. It was afterwards found, however, that a young man who had been in contact with the disease had escaped notice, and al-