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HALIFAX, N. S.

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LETTERS TO A COUNTRY FRIEND.

Dear Dick,—We have been expecting the pleasure of a visit from you for the past three or four weeks. Certainly your last letter warranted the anticipation. Miss Ruth, whom her father left with us when he went to Boston, is, I am happy to say, improving rapidly. The bacillus tuberculosis, about which, if you read at all, you must have read more or less, cannot be working much harm to her now, if indeed the microbe had found favoring nidus and physical conditions for its existence, development and increase. I am greatly obliged to you, as also is Miss Ruth, for the sure cures for Consumption which you sent. Seriously, Dick, don't you know that "sure cures" or any other kind of "cures" are illusions—in plain terms, humbugs. The physical ills we suffer are the result of disregard of physical laws, and our will depend upon strict conformity to those laws. There is no curative virtue in anything outside of the living system, all healing power residing in the vital organism. There is no law of cure, and the conditions essential to cure are the conditions essential for the preservation of health. With reference to medicated inhalations, a certain patented variety of which you strongly recommend, I am of the opinion that the atmosphere just as the all wise creator compounded it, or the purest and least vitiated air obtainable, is the very best medicine for the lung and all diseases of the lungs. Oxygen in excess, or nitrogen in excess, or anything in excess of or in addition to the normal atmosphere is injurious.

It is not I alone, or I as the representative of a heterodox or "irregular" school of medicine, who am opposed to drug medication, or who place reliance entirely upon the remedial power of Nature. The venerable Joseph M. Smith M. D., a professor in the New York College of physicians and surgeons, says "drugs do not cure disease, disease is always cured by the vis medicatrix nature. Another professor of the same college, Dr. Alex. Stevens, says "The older physicians grow the more skeptical they become of the virtues of medicines, and the more they are disposed to trust to the powers of Nature." Professor Alouza Clarke M. D. says "all of our curative agents are poisons, and, as a consequence, every dose diminishes the patient's vitality," and again, "Many different remedies have been tried for the cure of consumption. We must rely on hygiene."

Unfortunately for myself as a caterer for my correspondents, and for the few friends to whom I write, on my hobbies I am not entertaining, and off of them am scarcely any good at all. The papers are full of news of every description which you get as fresh almost as your breakfast rolls.

What most delights me here in the city is music, of which one can have their fill, if indeed it is possible for one who loves music to get enough of it. The bands are all good, and all dispense their goodness literally; but, while I have neither desire nor ability for critical comparisons, I am particularly pleased with the proficiency of the band of the 63rd Volunteer Rifles, which has, I think, greatly improved since last December, when I first heard it. This improvement is, I believe, generally attributed to the new bandmaster. I had the pleasure of listening to a choice selection of pieces played by the band in the Province Building ground, and thought that the rendering of these pieces could scarcely be improved. Of course every note was not perfectly rendered by every instrument, I have yet to hear this done, but my ear was delighted and the few imperfect notes scarce marred the general effect.

The singing in the city churches is in every respect different from what it was in my early days. I can well remember when the singing was largely congregational, when "the good old times," so admirably suited to the utterance of praise to the Deity, were the favorites. Choirs soon took the place everywhere of precentors, and gradually, as the choirs improved in execution, the congregations gave up singing, and were content to listen, and if they minded at all the injunction. "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord," they obeyed it elsewhere than at the Sabbath Services. Certainly what has been lost in power has been gained in speed; and if there has been loss in devotional effect, there has been great gain in musical effect, in cultured execution, and in harmony.

Our friend H—learned while in Boston that an infant boy had been brought to an orphan asylum in that city by its father, who stated that his wife, the mother of the child, had just died after but a few days' illness, that he intended to spend a year or two in California, and that he wished to have his son taken good care of until his return. The father left a sum of money to defray expenses of the child's care, also his wife's marriage and burial certificates, and some other papers, and a stock of clothing. A little more than a year afterwards intelligence of the father's death was received. About the same time a young woman, also said to have come from Halifax, died at one of the city hospitals, leaving an infant boy which was taken to the same orphanage, but alas, there was no marriage certificate. Five years afterwards both of these children were legally adopted, one by a lady and gentleman from this city—H—'s foster parents; the other by a lady residing in the neighborhood of the Hub, but H— could not learn whether he was the first or last mentioned child. You may imagine our friend's feelings. He returned home baffled. I suggested a thorough search among his guardian's effects, which resulted, just as despair was about to take the place of uncertainty, in finding the certificates above mentioned, and a memorandum giving certain birth marks by which H— was with certainty identified with the legitimate child. A few days afterwards H— received a letter from a Boston law firm, which has resulted in his establishing a legal claim to a small fortune, being money and accumulated interest left for his benefit by his father some twenty-five years ago. H— wrote that he has yielded to the importunities of an English gentleman, to whom he has sold his farm at a good advance on cost, and will probably return to this city. You could not do better than follow his example; then, instead of long letters we should have long talks

Good bye.

From your cousin,

S. C.