

Health Notes

BIRTHS AND DEATHS TO BE REGISTERED.

House and Senate Introduce Bills to This End—Some of the Provisions.

The Model Statistics Law has just been introduced in the Legislature. Representative Williams, of Buncombe, introduced it in the House, and Senator Hobgood, of Guilford, introduced it in the Senate. Within recent years a number of States have adopted substantially the same law on vital statistics. Each year improvements are made in this law until very recently it has become known as the Model Law. The bills now before the Legislature represent the 1913 edition of this Model Law, so, if passed, North Carolina can boast of the best vital statistics law in the country.

Some of the provisions of the bill are that all births and deaths occurring in the State shall be registered. In the case of deaths the name, age, sex, color, conjugal condition, occupation, cause of death, educational attainments, etc., are required. This information will enable State and local health officers to combat disease; it will settle many legal questions, point out the healthy and unhealthy places, prevent crimes, etc. In the case of births, the name, sex, color, etc., are required, besides valuable statistical data about the parents. Such records will soon be invaluable for legal purposes; they will prevent violation of child labor laws and school laws and do much to prevent child marriages besides directly putting an end to much needless blindness, and furnishing information of inestimable value for workers and students of race questions, social reforms, etc. In fact, if this bill is passed it will doubtless prove one of the most important and far-reaching laws enacted by this session of the Legislature.

ROLLER TOWELS MUST GO.

A few years ago, Kansas banished roller towels. Many of us laughed at the idea then, but now other States, inter-State transportation companies, many hotels and other institutions have followed suit. Not long ago some scientists made an examination of some of the ordinary roller towels, such as are found in cheap hotels, railroad stations and other public places. These tests showed a bacterial count in some instances as high as one and one-third million bacteria to an area one-third of a square inch in extent. The tests further showed that in 25 per cent of the towels examined bacillus coli was found. This is the germ which shows that water or milk has been contaminated with excreta, and whenever found it serves as warning that typhoid fever is lurking near. Thousands of skin scales were found on each towel, showing how the skin rubs off in minute particles whenever the face and hands are wiped thoroughly. While no actual disease germs were found in the scales, it is easily seen how skin diseases might be carried in this manner. One man in Kansas has lost one eye and another has been permanently impaired on account of infection traced directly to the roller towel in hotels. A case of small-pox has been traced to a towel of this kind in a hotel. The small-pox germs were found on the towel. It demonstrated how serious sores might result if a cut finger was rubbed on the towels. They might cause light cases of blood poisoning.

Colds are not caught from fresh air, but from stuffy air.

FRESH AIR INDOORS.

It is important that indoor workers have good air. Outdoor workers can get it without trouble, but indoor workers are compelled to rely upon ventilation. By ventilation we mean some arrangement or device whereby fresh outdoor air is admitted into the room and the bad air taken out. The best ventilation cannot make the indoor conditions quite as good as they are in the big outdoors, for the reason that indoors your air supply is limited to the size of the room.

The important thing in a work-room is to have a constant supply of fresh air coming in and the bad air going out. This will keep up a good circulation, and should give you a good, safe room in which to work.

There is this difference between food and air, and that is, the air we breathe is invisible, so that we cannot use our eyes to tell whether it is good or bad; with food we can tell, usually, by looking at it, whether it is clean and wholesome.

Unfortunately, we cannot see dirty air as we can dirty food. And because this is true, most people are unmindful of the kind of air they breathe, though they may be ever so nice and particular as to the kind of food they eat.

We may, and many of us do, overeat, but very few persons ever overbreathe. In other words, we may get more food than is good for us, but it would be difficult for any of us to get too much good air.

When examinations of little patches of common roller towels less than a half-inch square show the presence of colon bacilli in one-fourth of the examinations, in all probability a man never escapes rubbing some more or less sewage-laden toweling over his face and hands every time he uses one of these relics of false economy. Colon bacilli, as the name implies, are bacteria from the colon or intestinal tract. It is easy to see the frequent and easy mode of infection. This pollution goes from closets to hands and then to towels.

It really seems that there are some good grounds for much of the complaint arising all over the State against the deplorable conditions of some of our less carefully managed hotels, restaurants and lodging-houses. The public has gotten past the roller towel stage of civilization, and now they demand some really good hotel inspection throughout the State.

A few people freeze to death; many more die in over-heated rooms.

OAKLEY, LOCAL (TENNESSEE).

Mr. Editor:—I will write a few words in regard to our Local. We are in a very progressive state; take in members at almost every meeting. We set a free public dinner Saturday, December 14, which gave our local a starter. Took in seven that day. Will have another supper next Saturday night. These dinners don't cost us very much and they are worth a great deal. What we need to do is to get up all the enthusiasm possible and let outsiders know we mean business.

We have a warehouse at Livingston, this county, (Overton), and we mean to have branch houses over the county soon. Please send me sample copies of your paper.

I would like to hear from other secretaries and if I see this in print I may come again. So for fear this reaches the waste basket, I will ring off.

W. M. PRYOR,

Secretary Oakley Local, No. 1441, Oakley, Tenn., Jan. 15.

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