

CAUSED BY BAD WATER

AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY DR. R. H. LEWIS.

The Secretary of the State Board of Health Gives a Full Statement of the Normal Sickness After a Personal Investigation—A Thorough Review of the Conditions and the Conclusions Drawn Therefrom—Not Responsible for the Bad Sewerage Connections—Every City and Town Should Have an Expert Inspector of Plumbing—Dr. Lewis Observes Institution Will Be Safer Than Ever Before.

The recent outbreak of fever at the Normal and Industrial College at Greensboro has excited in the hearts of the people of the whole State the deepest sympathy and concern. The greatest interest in the origin of the epidemic is naturally and properly felt by all. Rumors have been started, having no basis in fact. To correct any misapprehensions and for the information of the people of the State, the Board of Directors, at a meeting held at the college on November 30th, requested me, as Secretary of the State Board of Health, to prepare and give to the press an official statement of the facts as ascertained to date. I was instructed to be perfectly frank, concealing nothing. If, therefore, anything of importance should happen to be omitted from this statement the reader may rest assured that it was not intentional, but the result of a poor memory or the hurry that very busy men cannot always escape.

Learning Friday night, (Nov. 24th), that the Board of Directors of the College would meet on Monday, and knowing that the committee of the Board of Health which made an investigation early in the week would not be able to get in their formal report in time, I felt it to be my duty, as the Executive member of the Board of Health, to make a personal investigation and be prepared, as far as possible, to enlighten and advise the Directors if desired by them.

Accordingly I repaired to Greensboro early Saturday morning, and remained there until Tuesday morning, spending the whole time from breakfast to bedtime, except Sunday morning, at the college.

After talking over the whole matter with President McIver, my first inquiry was

"The Nature of the Fever."

Requesting an interview with the physicians in charge, it was promptly accorded, and I had a very full and satisfactory conference with Dr. Gove, the resident physician, and Dr. W. P. Beall, the chief consultant, which convinced me beyond doubt that the first cases, about sixty of the total number of one hundred cases, beginning about October 25th, were malarial in character. For the benefit of the medical reader, I state that this conclusion was based upon the description of the attack given by the doctors, the presence of the "pladostum malariae" in the blood, of all the eight cases whose blood was examined microscopically, (I verified this by a personal examination of two specimens that had been kept), and recovery in from 4 to 10 days under quinine. The remaining forty cases, in round numbers, were clearly typhoid fever. Of this number about ten seemed to have been the subjects of a double infection, with both malaria and typhoid, and the remainder uncomplicated typhoid typical in character. I was also informed that the sickness was strictly limited to students who ate and slept in the college.

Having satisfied myself as to the nature of the sickness, my next step was to ascertain, if possible, the cause or causes of both. We will first consider

The Malarial Fever.

The only thing about the premises I could find at all likely to produce malaria was a narrow, marshy valley, carrying a very small, sluggish stream—so small as to be scarcely perceptible in places—immediately in the rear of the row of buildings composed of the president's house, the midway dormitory, the infirmary and the horse-stable. Upon inquiry, I also learned that mosquitoes had been very abundant.

But in this connection it should be said that malaria diseases have been unusually prevalent this season in the hill country of the State. The reports from the County Superintendents of Health for September, published in the Monthly Bulletin of the State Board of Health for October, showed malarial fever present "in all parts" of Alamance, Cabarrus, Caswell, Davidson, Guilford, Mecklenburg and Rowan. It is fair, therefore, to assume that some of the students brought the malaria with them from home; but others, perhaps many, were unquestionably infected at Greensboro, as at least two girls from the mountains had malarial fever. It should not be forgotten that this has been an exceptional year for malaria in the middle section of the State, and not likely to be repeated, in the near future certainly.

The Typhoid Fever—Its Causes.

Typhoid fever is essentially a filth disease, the germ of which is known as the bacillus typhicus, a metile, water borne bacterium, which, once introduced into water or milk, or moist filth, reproduces itself with fearful rapidity by fission or splitting in half. The media of transmission of this germ are in the order of their importance, water, milk, insects (flies), and air (?). While many high authorities, chiefly English, believe in the aerial transmission, the weight of opinion is

against it. But all agree that in an immense majority of cases it is conveyed by contaminated water, or milk infected by such water used in adulterating it, or in washing the cans or the udder of the cow, or by the hands of a not over-cleanly milker, who either has a "walking" case of the disease himself, or has infected his hands in nursing a case.

Bearing these principles in mind, I made a personal inspection of the premises, but found nothing that had not already been discovered by the indefatigable president and his assistants. I will give my observations in the inverse order of their importance.

The Grounds.

Nothing was found that in any way, in my judgment, could have been in the least instrumental in causing typhoid fever.

The Dairy, Cow-Barn, Horse-Stables and Pig-Pens

were all in good condition. The last named was too far away to have had any effect even if its condition had been bad.

Sewerage and Plumbing.

When the first dormitory (brick) was built in 1892, a sewer pipe was laid, with which was connected one water-closet which was kept locked and used only in case of sickness. The bath tubs, the wash pipe from the kitchen sink and five down-spouts from the roof. In 1895 a system of sewers was put in and the old sewer abandoned, as was supposed, except as a drainage pipe for the roof water; but it turns out that the plumbers, when making a connection for the sink of the new kitchen made it with this, thinking it was the new sewer, which was of the same size, eight inches. When taken up (as has been done, the trench being disinfected), this old sewer, while very offensive to the nose from the decaying animal and vegetable matter from the kitchen sink, like the old-fashioned dung-hill at the back window of many a country kitchen, was said to have been tight and well scoured. It showed, however, one defect, which should be mentioned in this discussion, namely: a small opening at the top, due to a bad joint in the space under the butler's pantry adjacent to the butter-room.

The new sewers, as far as examined, were in good condition, except the stoppage of one near the president's house, about 100 yards below the Teague house, by the roots of a tree, an accident which is said to be practically unavoidable. This had been remedied at the time of my visit.

The Plumbing.

While mended plaster and stains on the wall under lavatories, and bath tubs in some instances indicated defective work at first, these defects had been remedied, and I should say that the interior plumbing was good. I regret to say that the same cannot be said of all the external plumbing, by which is meant the connections between the house fixtures and the sewer, for one notable exception was found in a leaking soil pipe connecting ten water-closets on the second floor of the main or brick dormitory with the main sewer. This pipe was not leaking at the time of my visit, for it had been torn out and replaced as soon as the leak was found, but all agree that it was leaking when examined—on the 18th, if I mistake not—and that the adjacent soil was wet. This pipe was 17 feet long. The first five feet from the down pipe being of iron, and the remaining 12 or six joints of terra cotta, which latter section, beginning not quite a foot under the surface of the ground, rapidly descended to the main sewer at a depth of 4 feet. It ran under the butler's pantry or serving room of the dining room, the floor of which is about 2½ feet above the ground, parallel to and 18 inches distance from one wall of a closet under the steps leading from the dining room to the dormitory above, in which closet, for the lack of any other approximately cool place, the butter was kept—only, however, for a few days at most, after being received from the dairies before being consumed, the cakes of butter, with very rare exceptions, being wrapped in impervious paraffin paper. In the wall of the butter closet adjacent to the soil pipe an opening 20 by 42 inches, the bottom being on the floor, which was practically on a level with the ground, had been cut for ventilation. Opposite this opening and in a line across the leaking soil pipe the saturated earth, and about 20 feet distant was the only opening in the foundation wall of that section of the building.

In this discussion of the sewerage, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Col. A. W. Shaffer, the sanitary engineer of the Board of Health, and to Mr. J. L. Ludlow, C. E., of Winston, an ex-engineer of the board, and now so well and favorably known in that capacity throughout our State and other Southern States, who was employed by the college to make an inspection.

The Flies.

Flies convey the germs by walking over the bowel discharges of a typhoid fever case and carrying them on their feet to food in the kitchen or dining room. I made careful inquiry as to the occurrence of typhoid in the neighborhood of the college. I could learn only of one case, in the person of the night watchman, who was sick in August. I sent for and questioned him as to the disposal of his dejections and was informed that they were invariably placed in a hole dug in his garden, disinfected and covered up with earth. Flies did not frequent the sewerage-wet earth around the leaking

[Continued on page 7.]

POLITICAL NOTES.

A movement is on foot to have ex-Governor Hogg, of Texas, nominated as Bryan's running mate on the Democratic ticket next year.

Mark Hanna's most intimate friends now state that he does not desire to continue as chairman of the Republican national executive committee.

Ex-Congressman Sibley, of Pennsylvania, who spoke in North Carolina for Bryan and the Democratic ticket in 1896, has renounced his free silver views.

A dispatch from Washington says that some of the Republican leaders are anxious to make the financial question the leading issue in the campaign next year, and that they will prevent the passage of a gold-standard bill at this session of congress.

Former Congressman W. C. Owens, of Kentucky, who defeated Col. W. C. P. Breckinridge in 1894, and who bolted Goebel this year, has been nominated by a fusion of bolting Democrats and Republicans to succeed Congressman Settle, deceased.

We are having another deluge of the nonsensical chatter about congress reducing the representation of the South in that body and in the electoral college on account of the course of the South in denying the ballot to a large number of citizens. Republican Congresses would have long ago done this if they could, but it ought not to be necessary to again point to the fact that congressional and electoral college representation is not based upon the voting strength of a State as shown by the election returns, but upon population as shown by the United States census.—Charlotte Observer.

GENERAL NEWS.

The business portion of Garland, Tex., was last week destroyed by fire.

Scarlet fever has been declared epidemic at Plymouth, W. Va., in the Kanawha Valley.

Salvation army work is to be inaugurated among the negroes of the South. Regular corps will be organized at once in all the principal Southern cities.

A large concern at Wilmington, Del., has closed a contract to build one hundred trolley cars to be used on the roads under construction in and around the Paris Exposition grounds.

James Eads How, of St. Louis, who attracted attention some time ago by refusing to accept a fortune estimated to be worth \$1,000,000 because he had not earned it with his own labors, has given \$2,000 to be expended for the poor in that city.

Col. Cadwallader Jones, a colonel in the Confederate army and once a prominent South Carolina politician, died at his home in Columbia, S. C., last Friday. Col. Jones graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1832 and married a daughter of Governor Iredell.

On Christmas day Admiral Dewey will reach the age when ordinarily he would be retired from active service, but the law advancing him to his present rank makes no provision for his retirement, therefore, he will continue on the active list of the navy, in all probability, until his death. Admiral Dewey has nothing to lose by applying for retirement. His pay would be the same on the retired as the active list, and he would be entitled to the same number of aides and a private secretary with the rank of lieutenant.

Small Pox Notice.

North Carolina, }
Guilford County. }

WHEREAS, It has come to the knowledge of the authorities of Guilford County that there is an epidemic of small pox at Terra Cotta Works in said county, and

WHEREAS, It is made the duty of said authorities to warn all citizens of the county and persons generally of the existence of said epidemic and to urge upon all persons the importance of immediate vaccination in order that a scourge of the disease may be averted.

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the Board of County Commissioners and County Superintendent of Health of said county, most earnestly urge upon all persons the wisdom and duty of being vaccinated at once. Should the disease spread and the people neglect this warning and request, it may become necessary for us, in compliance with law, and in order to prevent a devastating epidemic of this terrible disease, to order compulsory vaccination.

All persons who are unable to pay the expenses of vaccination will be vaccinated free by the county.

B. W. BEST,
Superintendent Public Health.
W. C. BOREN,
W. H. RAGAN,
W. C. MICHAEL,
Board County Commissioners.

SPORTING GOODS!

Single Barrel Guns, \$5 to \$10.

Double Barrel, \$8.50 to \$50; Rifles, \$2 to \$20



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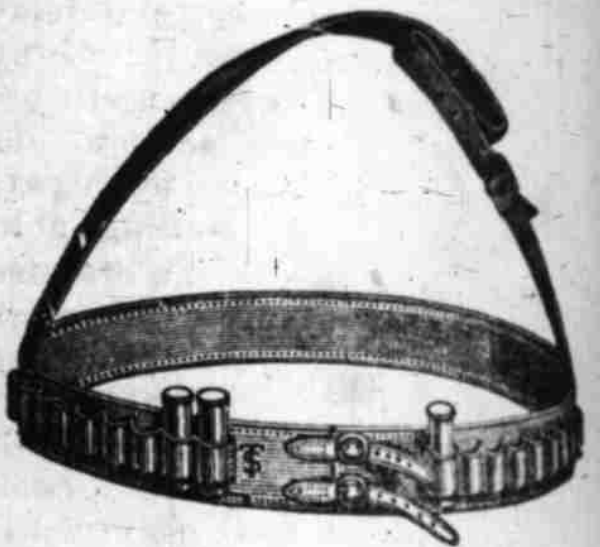
Shell Belts,
25 Cents to \$1.50

Implement Sets,
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Hunting Coats,
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WADS, RECOIL PADS.



An Open Letter to Hunters:

GENTLEMEN:--Allow us to call your attention to the fact that we have one of the completest stocks of "Sporting Goods" ever shown in Greensboro, and we want, if you will let us, to supply your needs in that direction. Highness of Quality and Lowness of Price are two strong recommendations for our goods. Your especial attention is directed to our line of Guns and Loaded Shells. These are makes on which you can depend, and no disappointment comes from using them. We hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in our store.

WAKEFIELD HARDWARE COMPANY,

GREENSBORO, N. C.

The Salisbury Truth says: The three negroes in this city who were discovered to have smallpox last Wednesday and were taken to the pest-house, are each nursing a well developed case of the disease. The negroes are strangers here and refuse to give any account of themselves. There is also a case of smallpox, a white woman, near the north limits of the city. Rigid quarantine is being enforced.

Dr. T. F. Nixon, resident physician at the state farm at Castle Hayne, near Wilmington, was found dead by the side of the railroad track Saturday morning. It is thought that he was struck by a passing train.

M. Wingate Simons,

SPECIAL AGENT

FOR THE

Provident Savings Life Insurance Society.

See him, for he can save you money.



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G. W. WARD.

An Invitation.

You are cordially invited to visit my store and inspect my large and well selected stock of Furniture. Now is a good time to buy that Parlor or Bedroom Suit which is needed to make the furnishing of your house complete, and if you will see me the buying will not be a burden.

Select a Christmas present from my handsome line of Rockers, Lounges, Picture Frames, &c.

W. J. Ridge,

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We can sell you these articles—good goods in first-class condition—at from ½ to ¾ off dealers' prices, and sometimes at less price.

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ARE TROUBLESOME IF THEY ARE NOT SERIOUS.

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