

The Charlotte News

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Announcement: The attention of the public is respectfully invited to the following: In future, Obituary Notices, in Memorial Sketches, Cards of Thanks, communications exposing the cause of a private enterprise or a political candidate and like matter, will be charged for at the rate of five cents a line. There will be no deviation from this rule.

MONDAY, JUNE 26, 1911.

NEWSPAPERS CALLED DOWN.

This time it is the "American Academy of Medicine" which makes bold to chastise the newspapers of the land. The sin committed in this instance, as the doctors see it, is the publication of suicide news.

The doctors gravely assert that the newspapers which publish such reports are participating in the crime. Estimating the value of human life at \$3,000 the Academy figures that our country lost last year \$24,996,000.

Stressing the point that suicides are increased by newspaper publications, by reason of the power of suggestion, the Academy declares: "Your committee finds that alienists are practically unanimous in the opinion that the suggestive effect of the reading of details of suicides is a powerful factor in the causation of suicides among susceptible individuals."

If this statement be true it is perhaps the first case on record where alienists were ever unanimous on any subject under the sun.

But, coming back to the statement, the Academy further cites an instance where the publication of the story of a man jumping to death from a bridge in Chicago caused several similar attempts, and concludes by asking, "It is worth trying to save, even if one is not actuated by any higher motive of humanity?"

The report also scathingly chides the newspapers by asking them to publish such reports on yellow paper, if they must be published at all.

Let's take a glance at these charges and suggestions. In the first place it may be observed that the newspaper fraternity is composed of a band of men with as much humanity, charity and interest in the welfare of their fellowmen as will be found in the medical or other fraternity of men.

It is not uncommon for a bunch of highbrows to get together, and when subjects of interest are few, to launch forth on a campaign of gratuitous advice to newspapers.

If the statements made by these doctors were proven true we do not believe there is a reputable newspaper in the country which would publish reports of suicide. But the mere fact that an aggregation of alienists assigns as cause for the increase of suicide the publication of such reports, does not make it true. The newspaper men do a lot of flaring themselves. They do not relish stories of misfortune or sorrow. They prefer to carry their readers along the pleasant paths of happiness, but to be true to life, they must print news as it is found, the dark side as well as the bright. They do not gloat over blood curdling reports of crime. Instead they curtail, and trim the stories, giving only that part which is legitimate news. The doctors are the very men themselves who would criticize the newspaper which withheld the report of crime or suicide. They would chide it with the ing behind the times, and remind it that it did not print the news. And they, above all others, should be the ones to know that the mere reading of newspaper reports of suicide has not caused the enormous increase in cases of self-destruction. There were suicides before there were newspapers. A large per cent of the suicides reported are of men and women who do not read the newspapers. Nine times out of ten the suicide is a victim of shattered nerves. This is the cause. Did newspaper reading bring about this condition?

A proper solution of the subject would have been to assign the cause to too rapid and too strenuous living. We all go in a hurry, and by the time we reach middle age our nervous system is shattered. Kept to the very highest pitch of endurance, the system which would expel the battie power which would expel the suicide idea.

Suicides have increased as we as a people have changed our ways of living. Let's take a glance at the "power of suggestion" offered as cause for

suicides. There is no force more potent in the world today. It applies to all things. If the newspaper ceased to publish stories which suggested ideas to the reader, it would print nothing whatever.

They publish reports of revival meetings, and cause men to stop and think on a subject which perhaps they had forgotten. They publish lists of donations to good causes and the mere suggestion makes men remember their duty to their fellow men. Occasionally they publish reports of crime, and other similar crimes follow. In a few cases some one, resting on the fence of indecision, may have been led to the commission of some deed simply by seeing how it was done in the newspaper story. But there is another side. The report of a suicide is most likely to deter similar acts.

Perhaps the poor soul, nerves wrecked, money gone, in a moment of mental irresponsibility, ended his life. The newspaper tells of the inelible grief caused his wife and children from his self-destruction, and the very horror of the act is most likely to cause the man who had contemplated it, to realize his responsibility to himself, to his family and to his maker.

After the bloody fight in Reno a great protest went up against the publication of details of pugilistic encounters. There were hundreds ready to tell the editor how to run his paper. He committed a grievous sin when he dwelt at length upon details. But disregarding all advice, he continued to print the news, bad or good, knowing that the very presentation of such affairs, with all of their dirty setting of crime and degradation, would be most likely to have the effect of stirring the public to break up such practices.

The newspaper which is true to its mission cannot present that phase of human life which it would prefer to offer. It gives the story as it finds it, and if the picture is dark it is because the photograph could not excel the object sketched.

OTHER DISEASES THE FLY CARRIES.

In the previous article of this fly-fighting campaign, The News showed how dangerous a carrier of typhoid fever the house fly is. If that were its only crime, even so it would be desirable to eradicate the fly, which, unlike bad air or water, is an evil that can be permanently removed, if we prevent the breeding of flies.

But typhoid carrying is not its only crime. It bears a great part of the diarrhea or "summer complaint" which kills thousands of children every summer. In 1908, 52,213 died of summer complaint of whom 44,521 were babes under two years of age. 44,521 children—many of whom were infected by disease-bearing flies.

Here are some of the scientists' investigations: Dr. Fraser found in Portsmouth, England, during the important diarrhea epidemic of 1902, that there was a perfect plague of flies at every house where there was diarrhea. Dr. Nash shows that there were twenty cases of diarrhea at Southend-on-Sea, in the summer of 1901, when there were plenty of flies; but none in the wet summer of 1902, when there were no flies. But September, 1902, was dry, the flies reappeared, and with them thirteen cases of diarrhea.

Flies and Poverty. Newsholme has declared that the food in the houses of the poor, can scarcely escape fecal infection. The sugar used in sweetening milk is often black with flies, which have come from a neighboring garbage deposit, or the liquid stools of a diarrheal patient. Flies have to be picked out of a can of condensed milk before it can be used.

Snell has shown that seventy per cent of the case of infantile diarrhea in his medical district, Coventry, England, occurred in the northeast part, near a large collection of refuse where flies swarmed.

Kill the fly; prevent his breeding; screen from his eager feeding—and disease germ-planting—the food of your children.

Consumption. The fly is one of the greatest bearers of this most devastating of diseases. Dr. Leland O. Howard, in "The House Fly—Disease Carrier" gives a terrible picture—so terrible that every reader of News should look at it, and make sure that such conditions are wiped out forever. Dr. Howard quotes one of his assistants to the effect that at a Colorado resort for consumptives he had often seen patients sitting on the porch, expectorating over the rail. Numerous flies congregated about the sputa—and then headed for the open windows of the kitchen, a few feet away.

Cobb, Haushalter, Hayward, Buchanan and dozens of others have shown that flies gather tubercular germs from tubercular sputa and carry them to the food of well persons—persons well, that is, unless the flies succeed in carrying out their mission of death.

Dr. Frederick T. Lord, after a series of long and careful laboratory investigations, reached the following conclusions, regarding the carrying of consumption by flies. 1. Flies may suck up tubercular sputum and excrete tubercle bacilli, the virulence of which may last for at

least fifteen days. 2. The danger of human infection from tubercular fly-specks is in swallowing the specks with food. What we must do:

1. Tubercular material (sputum, pus from discharging sinuses, fecal matter from patients, etc., must be carefully protected from flies, lest they get at it and carry the bacilli. 2. During the fly season, greater attention should be paid to the screening of rooms containing patients with tuberculosis. 3. As these precautions would not eliminate infection of flies by patients who are at their homes, all foodstuffs should be protected from flies.

Dysentery. English army surgeons have suspected for years that flies were the chief carriers of infection during dysentery epidemics, but no exact proof was found till last year, 1910, when Dr. Orton, of the Worcester State Hospital for the Insane, found that flies, breeding in huge numbers in piles of hops used as fertilizer near the hospital, were infesting the hospital, carrying the dysentery germs from patient to patient.

Cholera and the Plague. Dr. J. Trunki of the Japanese army Medical Service, made a pecl study of the terrible cholera in North China, and, isolating flies, found that burg, also found conclusive proof by brios. The great Russian physician Sawtchenko, and Simmonds of Hamburg, also found conclusive proof by study and examination of the flies that they bore cholera germs.

As to the dread plague, whose very name makes nations blanch, flea-bearing rats are worse than flies as carriers, but the great investigator Yersin, who fearlessly stayed in his laboratory at Hong Kong during the plague of 1894, found that the flies carried decidedly virulent plague bacilli. Nuttall, the highest English authority on the house fly, found by experiment that flies harbor plague germs for more than forty-eight hours after feeding on diseased animals.

Smallpox and Diphtheria. There is far less evidence regarding the carriage of these two diseases by flies; though Nuttall and Jepson have found that there have been cases of such carriage. One important doctor, at least, LaFogues the Frenchman, believes, after his experience with a serious smallpox epidemic, that flies played a most important part in the carriage of the disease.

Other Diseases. Dr. Leland O. Howard discovered in an epidemic of pink eye among Florida school children, flies settling about the eyes of children with the disease, promptly carried it to others. In the same way, flies settle in swarms on the eyes of Egyptians with ophthalmia, a terrible eye disease, and carry off the infection.

In the cases of parasitic worms, which often trouble children, flies carry the eggs of the worms from the discharge of afflicted children to the food of others.

With yaws—a tropical disease—anthrax and others, the case against the fly has been proven also. We are only beginning to find out in just how many diseases flies are the chief carriers of infection. But enough has been discovered to indict the fly as the most dangerous to man of all creatures.

It is up to us, up to every reader of The News to do something. The next article of this series will be on the necessity and means of organization. Meanwhile, are your houses screened to keep out the flies? Are your outhouses screened to keep the flies away from refuse in which they can breed, and from disease-containing material on which to feed. It is up to you.

Kill all the flies. Cause For Manlaughter. This story is blamed on Scamp Montgomery at the Friars' Club. Mr. Montgomery alleges that the story, as he relates it, actually happened. Mr. Montgomery's statement is offered without prejudice.

"A man had just been released from the penitentiary," said Mr. Montgomery, "and the first place he headed for was a barber shop. He wanted to get the traces of his prison-made haircut rubbed down smooth. The barber spotted him in a minute.

"Just out, hey?" said the barber. "Yes," said the customer. "And I'm in a hurry, and do it quick." "How long have you been in?" "Four years," said the ex-prisoner. Hurry!

"How did you like it?" "Pretty good. Hurry." "Have to work hard?" "Never mind. Hurry." "Four years," said the barber, pausing to look romantically out of the window. "And me at liberty every blame minute, goin' hither an' yon, as you might say, and stayin' all night if I wanted to, and runnin' down town to take in a show. Gee! Four years, that's sure tough luck. What was you in for?" "For killing a jackass of a barber," howled the customer. "And I'm on my way back."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Scotch Humor. David R. Forgan, the Chicago banker, has a dry Scotch humor. Speaking of the danger of being puffed up by sudden honors, Mr. Forgan told this story of Simpson, the great Scotch physician: "Dr. Simpson had been absent from his class for some time, and on his return he announced that a great professional honor had been conferred upon him," said Mr. Forgan. "The great discoverer of chloroform looked over his glasses as if he expected his class to be quite taken away by the great news. Instead he was shocked to hear those Scotch boys burst into the national anthem, 'God Save the Queen!'" "And still they say the Scotch have no sense of humor," added Mr. Forgan.—Milwaukee Free Press.

Explained. "A Harvard professor says that the turtle is more of a bird than a fish." "That accounts for it." "For what?" "So many of these autos turning turtle when they are trying to fly."—Houston Post.

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