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Can't Be Guilty of Both.

About every four years a spirit of sectarian intolerance breaks forth in this country, and designing persons play upon the ignorance and prejudices of people as upon flutes. The wave which has been running high for the last year is now subsiding.

One phase of it has been frequent attacks upon President Wilson for being "too friendly with the Catholics," and those persons who were lead to believe the silly rot, may find some satisfaction in knowing that no less a person than Theodore Roosevelt is striving to create prejudice against Mr. Wilson in the North by charging him with being responsible for outrages against the Catholic church in Mexico. Poor Mr. Wilson! Too friendly with the Catholics at home! Responsible for their murder in Mexico!

Theodore Roosevelt has just published a page in the newspapers attacking Mr. Wilson for not protecting the Catholics in Mexico. Here are some extracts from Mr. Roosevelt's article:

But this attitude is only one of the offenses committed. Catholic schools almost everywhere in Mexico have been closed, institutions of learning sacked and libraries and astronomical and other machinery destroyed, the priests and nuns expelled by hundreds, and some of the priests killed and some of the nuns outraged. Archbishop Blank of New Orleans; Father Tierney, editor of America; Father Kelly, president of the Catholic Church Extension Society; Mr. Peiry, one of the directors of the Catholic Church Extension Society, and a Mexican Bishop whose name I do not give because it might involve him in trouble, came to see me at my house, and in Chicago I saw other priests and refugees from Mexico, both nuns and lay brothers. The statements and affidavits, submitted to me in the original and copies of which I have before me as I write, set forth conditions which are literally appalling and for which, be it remembered, the actions of Messrs. Wilson and Bryan have made this country responsible.

For example, Archbishop Blank submitted to me an affidavit by the prioress of the Barefooted Carmelite Nuns of the Convent of Queretaro. This sets forth from the personal knowledge of the prioress how the churches have been profaned by soldiers entering them on horseback, breaking statues, trampling on relics and scattering on the floor the Sacred Hosts, and even throwing them into the horses' feed; how in some churches the revolutionaries have offered mock masses and have in other ways, some of them too repulsive and loathsome to mention, behaved precisely as the Red Terrorists of the French Revolution behaved in the churches of Paris; how for example, St. Anthony's Church, at Aguas Calientes, had been made into a legislative hall, and the Church of St. Joseph, at Queretaro, and the great convent of the Carmelites and the lyceum of the Christian brothers all have been confiscated; how the church property has been sequestered and the archives burned, and the men and women in the cloistered communities expelled without being allowed to take even an extra suit of clothes or a book of prayer.

The prioress states that she has herself seen in Mexico City nuns who have been "victims of the passions of the revolutionary soldiers," and some whom she found in their own homes, others in hospitals and maternity houses, who in consequence are about to be delivered of children. She deposes: "I have seen soldiers dressed up in chasubles, stoles, maniples and cinctures, with copes and altar linen, and their women dressed up in albs, surplices and corporals used as handkerchiefs." She has seen the sacred vessels profaned in a thousand ways. She describes meeting seven nuns who had been outraged, who she directed to a maternity house, and who had abandoned themselves to utter despair, saying "that they were already damned and abandoned by God and they curse the hour of their religious profession." She describes how she escaped from Queretaro with nuns who had been obliged to hide in private homes in order to escape being taken to the barracks by the soldiers. She describes how she had daily to beg food necessary to sustain the twenty-four sisters with whom she escaped.

In Chicago I saw a French priest, Father Dominic Fournier, of the Congregation of the Passion, who had just escaped from Mexico with two young Spanish students for the priesthood. He has escaped from the City of Toluca with nothing whatever, not even a rosary. He and the two novices described to me their experiences in Toluca. The churches and the religious houses were sacked and confiscated, and the soldiers and their women indulged in orgies before and around the altars. One of the lay brothers, named Mariano Gonzales,

tried to save some of the things from the church. The revolutionists seized him and accused him of robbing the State. He was shot by a file of soldiers on August 22 last, and his dead body was left all day long in the court in which Father Fournier and the other priests and the two novices who spoke to me and their associates were confined. They were kept in prison sixteen days and then allowed to go with nothing but what they had on.

I have seen the original of and have in my possession a translation of a letter written on October 24 by a young girl of Toluca to her pastor, who had been exiled. She described how the bishop had been heavily fined and exiled. She describes how the club of boys and girls for whom she has been working had been broken up, but how some of the boys to whom they used to give breakfast on Sunday mornings still occasionally come to see them; and she asks advice how to keep these clubs of the poor together. But the dreadful and pathetic part of the letter is contained in the following sentence: "Now I will ask you a question. Suppose someone falls into the power of the Zapatists. Would it be better for her to take her own life rather than to allow them to do their will and what they are accustomed to do? As I never thought such a thing could happen, I did not ask you before about it, but now I see it quite possible. If we had not our God in whom we trust, I think we would give way to despair."

In other words, this girl, who had

been engaged in charitable works in connection with the church, asks her pastor whether she is permitted to commit suicide in order to avoid the outrages to which so many hundreds of Mexican women, so many scores of nuns, have been exposed in the past few months. I cannot imagine any man of whatever creed—or of no creed—reading this letter without his blood tingling with horror and anger; and we Americans should bear in mind the fact that the actions of Messrs. Bryan and Wilson in supporting the Villistas have made us partly responsible for such outrages.

Of course it is the merest absurdity to say that Mr. Wilson is responsible for any of these things in Mexico. Rev. Mr. Entzinger, who preached in Monroe last month, has made his home in Brazil for 23 years and has, in the same time, become acquainted with conditions largely throughout the whole continent of South America. He said that Mr. Wilson's policy toward Mexico has gained more good will in South America in the past two years than had ever existed there before.

But the point is that Mr. Wilson can't be "too friendly" with the Catholics and at the same time be guilty of what Fakir Roosevelt charges him with.

Take your choice. For us, we believe neither.

## THE PELLAGRA PROBLEM IN NORTH CAROLINA.

Notes on Its Importance, Prevalence, Distribution, Probable Causes and the Treatment.

Dr. Edward J. Wood, of Wilmington.

In N. C. Health Bulletin.

Since the appearance of pellagra in North Carolina in 1905, many remarkable developments have been crowded in a very few years. From a condition which was unrecognized because never before seen in this country to a scourge of first importance whose death rate even exceeds our lamentably high typhoid death rate, we have been forced to move in rapid stages. We have seen the remarkable transformation from an acute fulminating disease of a few weeks' duration, which was unknown out of Italy and which excited considerable speculation as to the correctness of the diagnosis to a chronic disease which now assumes the same character as that described in the Italian literature. The dread which was aroused in the early days of pellagra in North Carolina by the high death rate is being rapidly dispelled. In the beginning its fatality reached nearly 100 per cent, while today it is little above 20 per cent. In a recent report of the Health Department of the District of Columbia, twelve cases are reported with a fatality of 100 per cent. It is reasonable to presume that gradually this will be reduced until the average is struck. In 800 cases treated by the Thompson-McFadden Pellagra Commission in Spartanburg, the fatality was 28 per cent, and it is to be supposed that this rate will continue to fall until it reaches that of Italy, which is about 10 per cent. This geographical adaption is one of the most interesting features of the disease. In spite of the marked decline in the malignity of the disease, the death rate continues alarmingly high; so high, in fact, that it creates a problem of the first magnitude not only to the health authorities but to the people at large.

### Extent of the Disease.

The North Carolina State Board of Health has repeatedly called attention to the extent of pellagra, but it will not be amiss at this time to repeat the essential facts. In 1911 there were estimated 1,974 deaths; in 1912, 732 deaths; in 1913, 972 deaths. This makes the death rate per 100,000 48.2, 35.9 and 42.2 respectively. It will be noted that this is twice the average typhoid death rate for the United States. Attention has been called to the fact that the death rate fluctuates with the typhoid death rate, which is an argument in favor of its being a filth disease.

It is notable that the death rate in Asheville is 5.1 while in Raleigh it reaches 122.0. Charlotte's rate was 91.0 and Durham's 55.4. It has been apparent for several years that in the high mountainous section of the State pellagra is relatively infrequent. On the coast the same condition is noted though not so markedly as in the mountains. From personal investigation it has been determined that in Watauga, Jackson, Transylvania and Avery counties pellagra is most infrequent if not entirely absent, and it is probable that the same may be said of several other mountainous counties. For several years on the coast Onslow county escaped, but recently the disease has begun to show itself there much more frequently. The same may be said of Bladen, Pender, Duplin and some of the northeast counties. The question arises, Is there really a geographical distribution peculiar to the disease, or is it merely a question of extension, or, again, can it be that an intermediate host is necessary and the host has a limited habitat? Certainly for the present it must be admitted that pellagra has never made the headway in Asheville and Wilmington as in Raleigh, Charlotte and Durham. Can it be that the question of mill settlements plays a part? It is well known that no class suffers so much as the mill worker and his family.

One of the most important problems to be solved is the effect on the coming generations of pellagra in our children. As a rule in children pellagra is very mild during the first decade. It remains to be seen what the effect will be in adult life of

this disease, which is now being found in a most trivial form or being overlooked entirely. These children are not made sick by it, and at most suffer only the mildest disturbance. The mouth and intestinal symptoms are altogether wanting, and the symmetrical skin lesions are appearing usually on the feet and legs. It is probable that only a small percentage are coming to the attention of the medical profession, as it causes comparatively no inconvenience. According to the view of Lombroso, it would be reasonable to expect degeneracy to follow in the wake of even this mild condition. It is surely our duty to expect the worst and to throw about our children all possible protection from the disease which has caused 10 per cent of all Italian insanity.

### Probable Cause.

When pellagra was recognized in the Southern States, the classical theory of damaged corn as the cause, which was generally accepted by the Italians, was given first place. It was soon found to be insufficient to say the least, and today has been generally discarded. Sambon's hypothesis that pellagra was an animal parasitic disease transmitted by the fly, *Simulium*, met with a cordial reception in this country. While it seems probable that the distribution of the simulum or sand fly does not always coincide with the outbreaks of pellagra, we are still impressed with many points which suggest that we are dealing with a close relative of such diseases as the sleeping sickness of Africa and syphilis. This is best shown in the seasonal variations and in the pathologic changes. Sambon's hypothesis opened up a new line of thought and at this time students of the disease are nearly in accord in suspecting an animal parasitic cause.

The work of Harris of New Orleans, and others, suggests the probability that the disease germ is ultra-microscopic (too small to be seen by the highest power of the microscope), and this is proven by filtering the blood of a victim through a filter of fine calibre and inoculating the monkey with the filtrate. The resulting condition in the monkey is thought to be pellagra, and the conclusion seems justified. Since, then, it is reasonable to assume that the disease germ is too small to be studied, a solution of the problem must be directed at determining the source of the infection.

### Most Frequent in Women and Children.

It can be proven that pellagra attacks women and children three or even four times to one man, and when a child reaches the school age the incidence of the disease assumes practically the same proportion as in the man. The man is away from home from eight to twelve hours of the twenty-four, but otherwise is in no way removed from a source of infection common to the family. It would, therefore, be reasonable to suspect, at least, that the source of the infection is some home pest. A consideration of all home pests has been carefully gone into by a number of competent observers interested in a solution of the pellagra problem. Several have suggested the flea as the intermediate host and advocate a most careful study of such diseases in dogs as mange. Some have suspected lice, though it must be admitted that the distribution of pellagra is much more general than the occurrence of this rather unusual indication of filth. In these instances above recorded, it must be admitted that there is a failure in establishing sufficient connection. Some still believe it to be a disease of intestinal origin like typhoid fever, which is transmitted in the same manner, namely by the fly from human excreta of the infected. This view is somewhat strengthened by the fact that in years with high typhoid death rate there is a corresponding high death rate from pellagra. It might be well, then, to note that the usual methods of typhoid prevention—destruction and prevention of flies, screening,

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proper disposal of human excreta, protection of the water supply and uncooked food such as milk and green vegetables—may at the same time protect from pellagra. Certainly the justification for these elementary measures is all the more emphasized by this suspicion. It must be admitted, however, that the writer feels that this is not the solution of the problem, though agreeing that in the light of the possibility of the diarrheal feces of pellagrins containing the disease germ all of these measures should be earnestly advocated.

A number of careful observers (among whom is one of the members of the Pellagra Commission of this Board) have for a long time had the bug under suspicion. It would appear that this theory comes much nearer answering all requirements than any hitherto suggested. The incidence of pellagra and the bedbug much more nearly coincide. It is a fact that both pellagra and bedbugs decrease in the same proportion as we ascend the scale of social conditions. It is still possible to account by this theory for those cases in the best social conditions and it should be specially noted that when pellagra appears in such surroundings it does not spread. This is well illustrated in the case of the James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington, which had been admitting these cases since 1905 without any isolation into the open wards. During this period seven hundred cases have been admitted without the occurrence of a single extension to another patient or hospital attendant. It is a well recognized fact, however, that in the usual home of pellagra the disease will spread through the household indicating that there is something in these homes essential for the spread of the disease which is left behind when the patient is removed to the hospital. So far as our present knowledge of the habits of the bedbug goes, this does not explain the greater incidence of pellagra among women and children, for it is taught that the bedbug works at night in darkness and remains inactive during the hours of light. There is right here a splendid opportunity for original investigation.

### Preventive Measures.

With this evidence before us, we feel justified in advising our patients with pellagra to have a general cleaning of the home, ridding it of all forms of vermin but most especially of bedbugs. The authorities claim that for this purpose acetic acid is much more effective than the popular gasoline and kerosene oil, but on this point there is a difference of opinion calling for further study. Surely nothing but good can result from destroying these pests even though the pellagra problem may not

be materially altered. Again, there is justification for being on the safe side and profiting by an unproven theory. The gravity of the situation calls for the removal of even the suspicious things, provided in so doing direct harm is not done to the people, as in the exclusion of our valuable corn from the dietary.

### Treatment.

As in so many of the diseases of animal parasitic origin, arsenic, especially in the form of arsarsolates, is the best remedy. Ehrlich's salvarsan, as well as neosalvarsan, has been used extensively in Wilmington, but better results have been accorded from the use of the less expensive preparations, especially atoxyl and soamin. Of these latter we have finally settled on atoxyl. After using it in several hundred cases, we are convinced that its use will greatly decrease the death rate and the length of the disease period. In our hands we have never seen any toxic effects though we have watched carefully for all mentioned in the literature. It was claimed that atoxyl would cause blindness, and this

should be mentioned in recommending it. It is probable that some of the untoward effects resulted from faulty technique of administration. It should be remembered that atoxyl is decomposed by heat and light. It should be given in cooled, sterile, distilled water. The water should be freshly distilled. An antitoxin syringe of about 10 c. capacity is best suited for this purpose. The solution is injected into the muscle at intervals varying from four to seven days, and in the adult dose of about five grains. Five grain and three grain tablets are now prepared for this purpose by Sharp and Dohme in Baltimore. The tablet may be dropped into the barrel of the syringe without touching it, thereby maintaining aseptic technique. In about one thousand injections, no abscess has yet resulted.

One month prior to the anniversary of the original outbreak for several years vigorous anticipatory treatment should be carried out, and by this means many outbreaks will be prevented, and in many other cases recovery will be more firmly cemented.

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