

vaccination affords immunity from the infection of chicken-pox as well as small-pox—a position not yet taken, and which if taken would contradict all experience.

Only one case of small-pox or varioloid, has been reported to the Board of Health for several weeks, and that one has occurred in a district very remote from those in which the disease heretofore appeared. A hope founded on experience is therefore entertained that this loathsome malady may be prevented from committing any serious ravages, and finally be exterminated. Only two cases have required the Board to provide for the patients in the Hospital, and hence but little expense has been devolved upon the department from that quarter. If any thing had been wanting to justify the arrangement made with the Professors of the Washington Medical College, it would be supplied by the experience of this year. But for this, the City would have been under the necessity of keeping up a Hospital establishment with all the necessary appertenances for two patients only, who under the present regulations have cost the City just twenty-six dollars.

The expense of vaccinating under the Health ordinance, has been kept strictly within the limits prescribed, and the Board have found no difficulty in procuring the professional services required for the compensation they were authorized to allow.

It will be recollected that I made a communication to the Mayor at a late period of the last session of the Council, recommending certain measures in relation to the deposits of Night-soil, and the scrapings of the streets; which being concurred in by my colleagues, was transmitted to the City Council, and was by that body referred to the next annual session. Nothing has occurred since that time to change my views on the subject. On the contrary they have been confirmed by reflection, and by a visit to New-York during the summer, where I had an opportunity to compare the plan proposed with a very different process lately instituted in that City; not indeed by the Corporation, but by an association of individuals for private emolument. The scheme requires great outlay, and is after all doubtful, as to its result. As to the regulations of the City itself, I cannot propose them even as an alternative. They consist simply in casting the contents of their privies into the River. It is absolutely necessary, however, that some action be had by the Council on this subject. The present ordinances are wholly impracticable, and have never been complied with in any known instance. To enforce them would leave the City destitute of night-men, and to continue the present practice contrary to law, will not be much longer tolerated by our citizens whom it grievously annoys. This whole subject is, however, so fully developed in the communication referred to above, as to render it unnecessary on the present occasion to do more than to recall it to the recollection of the Council.

My attention was very early attracted to the condition of the unimproved grounds bordering on the south-western limits of the City. The brick yards by which these grounds had been chiefly occupied for many years past, are for the most part transferred or discontinued;

but the ponds which formerly contained the rain water, until required for the purposes of the establishments, still remained. The whole space between the southern part of Hanover street and Columbia street, which is unimproved, was sprinkled over with pools of stagnant water, much more dangerous to health than when the purposes of the manufacture they supplied, required the frequent change of their contents. This district has been surveyed, and the streets, lanes, &c. are laid down on a plot, but as no designations mark their boundaries, on the ground itself, it was found very difficult to ascertain the owners of the lots severally, or which of the pestilential reservoirs were on high-ways, and should therefore be drained or filled up by the Corporation.

Such of the owners as were ascertained were notified to remove the nuisances, and they very generally and promptly complied with the requisition. I am happy to say that the neighbouring inhabitants have enjoyed during the past season an unusual exemption from intermittent and remittent bilious fever. A total exemption was not to be expected, for the remedial means were only partially applied. The investigations in progress, it is hoped, will enable the Board of Health to give the provisions of the Health ordinance a more efficient extension, and if this can be done, no reason is left to doubt the practicability of rendering the district referred to as healthy as any other portion of the City.

Ponds of stagnant water are, however, to be found elsewhere within the City limits, because the improvement of one lot often obstructs the course by which the water had heretofore passed from others, and the grading of new streets occasionally produces the same effect. Where the owners can be found this occasions little difficulty; but it sometimes happens that no owner can be found, or if known, resides at such a distance as to be inaccessible. Under such circumstances, the Commissioners of Health are authorised to have the nuisance removed at the expense of the corporation in the first instance; the owner to be held ultimately accountable. When such cases occur, requiring but a small expenditure, the Board of Health do not hesitate to have the work done; but it sometimes happens that the expenditure required would be so large as to exceed what could be safely spared from the appropriation placed at the disposal of the commissioners. I do not know, whether the corporation have a right to make the property liable as in case of Taxes: but the Council only can apply or originate the remedy.

I cannot close this report without congratulating the Mayor and City Council, on the success with which the ordinances for the preservation of the Health of the City, early enacted and gradually improved, have been ultimately crowned. Onerous, and even arbitrary as some of the provisions of these ordinance are, nothing but absolute necessity could have induced our predecessors to enact them; and nothing short of the general conviction that health and life can only be preserved upon such conditions, has reconciled our citizens to their continuance, and secured a general countenance and co-operation