

SUICIDES ARE INCREASING.

A Doctor of New York Gives the Following Information on the Subject.

The alarming rate at which suicides are increasing must make thoughtful people ponder and ask where it will all end.

The rate of suicide in this city has been for some time past abnormally high. The community has been passing through a long period of commercial depression, and many take their lives on account of absolute hunger or in despair of ever knowing prosperity again.

There was an average of four suicides a day in this city for a week recently. Men, as usual, committed suicide much more frequently than women, and during the period of abnormal suicidal tendencies the proportion among the males has been even larger than usual.

Suicides in New York are most numerous among persons between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. The average rate of suicide among men as compared with women is three to one.

The causes of suicide in the order of their importance may be given as follows:

- Domestic troubles. Reverses of fortune. Sorrow. Physical suffering. Insanity.

The weather. In New York City in 1880 there were 152 suicides, being 12.59 per 100,000. In Philadelphia the rate was 8.03; in Boston, 11.03; in San Francisco, 33.65.

The average yearly number of suicides for the past five years was 122. The increase of the last months is therefore very great. Although special causes contributed to this increase, it is probable that the proportionate number of suicides will steadily grow larger with the growth of the population.

Poisoning is the favorite method of suicide in this city, and Paris green and morphine are most frequently used. After poisoning, the commonest methods, in the order of their popularity, are shooting with a pistol, hanging, throat cutting, stabbing and drowning.

There are less suicides among the cheerful and religious Irishmen than among any other nationality. The German race, with its predisposition to melancholy and metaphysical speculation, furnishes the largest number of suicides.

Many curious cases of self-destruction have come under my notice. Among recent suicides the youngest was twelve years of age and the oldest ninety-two.

German maidens have not infrequently soaked matches in beer and left the world with a libation of Gambrinus. It takes two boxes of matches with plenty of phosphorus in them to supply sufficient poison, and the beer cannot retain a trace of its agreeable flavor.

Suicides in this city are frequently the result of alcoholism. Although poison is a favorite method of suicide among women, those who drown themselves and jump from windows are almost exclusively women.

The daily number of self-destroyers in France averages twenty. In the United States statistics show that the average of suicides committed daily far exceeds that number.

In France, from the year 1827, the annual average has risen from about 1,500 to upward of 6,000, the number in 1851 having been 3,636, or in the proportion of one suicide for every 9,833 inhabitants, while in the year 1879 there were 6,496 suicides, or one for every 5,681 inhabitants.

The proportion of suicides in the different countries of Europe is 80 per cent. of men to 20 per cent. of women. But Morcelli, in his work, "Il Suicidio," holds that more women proportionately commit self-murder in the country than in cities.

As to the mode of committing the act, the following figures show the proportion per 1,000 in five of the principal countries of Europe:

Table with 5 columns: Country, Hanging, Drowning, Firearms, Poisoning, Falling, Suffocating.

The percentage of the modes of committing suicide in France is as follows: By hanging, 45 per

cent.; by drowning, 29 per cent.; by shooting, 11 per cent.; 7 per cent. by suffocation and 3 per cent. by jumping from high altitudes.

To-day statistical reports confirm the fact that suicide is common at all periods of life, even in childhood. Without doubt the greater number of cases occur between the ages of twenty and thirty years, though the years preceding and immediately succeeding the age of puberty show a slight increase, as to the years immediately preceding the fiftieth.

Suicide is comparatively infrequent up to the age of fifteen, but there can be no doubt that the idea of self-destruction frequently enters the heads of the young. There are cases on record of children who have committed suicide because teachers have been inclined to censure or punish too severely.

A case is reported of a boy who committed suicide because his mother refused to buy him a squirrel to which he had taken a fancy. Another did so because he was sent supperless to bed for having broken his mother's watch.

The number of suicides is greater among educated than among illiterate people. This is a rule to which there is no exception anywhere. Self-murders are more prevalent among Protestants than Catholics or Hebrews, and Herr Wagner, whose researches in regard to the causes of suicide are considered the most reliable, states that in Prussia, out of a population of 1,000,000 people, there are 159.9 suicides of Protestants, as against 49 of Catholics and 45.9 of Hebrews; in Bavaria, 135.4 suicides of Protestants, as against 49.6 of Catholics and 42.9 of Hebrews, and so on.

Trashy novels and all kinds of unwholesome sentimental literature are a very important predisposing cause to suicide in the country. They produce a morbid condition of mind, which unfits people for realities. Facts are the wholesome food for the mind. The thought of impending illness from hereditary disease is also a common incentive to self-destruction.

Prohibition.

The Presbyterian general assembly has made the following deliverance on the question of prohibition.

RESOLVED, That this assembly gives thanks to God for the evidence furnished by the report of the encouraging progress in temperance sentiment and practice throughout the bounds of the Church, of the good work being done by a large majority of congregations on behalf of the young, either according to the assembly's plan of work or along similar lines, and urges ministers and other office bearers, members and adherents to continue every proper effort to deepen that sentiment and increase that practice and further recommends the "plan of work" especially to congregations that have not yet undertaken active temperance work among their children and youth.

2. That this assembly approves of the recommendation of the special committee appointed to act with the committee on temperance, viz: That of the balance of the fund raised in 1892-3, in re the Royal Commission on the liquor traffic, \$300 be handed to Dr. J. J. MacLaren, Q. C., Toronto, to aid the Dominion Temperance Alliance in paying for the labors of Mr. F. S. Spence in connection with that commission; and that the remainder be given to the committee on temperance for the purpose of publishing a small manual on temperance and of placing the assembly's plan of work on a self-sustained basis.

3. That in view of the pronounced state of public opinion in favor of prohibition, as expressed by the recent plebiscite held in Manitoba, P. E. Island, Ontario and Nova Scotia, by the unanimous vote of the Legislature of New Brunswick and by the reports of sessions and presbyteries and in accordance with the request of the Synod of Hamilton and London this assembly instructs its committee on temperance to approach by memorial and petition the legislative body or bodies which shall be declared competent by the Privy Council, asking the immediate enactment and vigorous enforcement of legislation prohibiting the liquor traffic.

4. That the assembly notes with satisfaction the progress made in the teaching of temperance in the public schools; that, during 1893, improved text books have been adopted in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario; that in Ontario temperance has been placed upon the list of required subjects; and that the moral phase of the question is receiving increased attention; and that in accordance with orders of the hon. the minister of militia and defence, the sale of intoxicating liquors has been discontinued at all camps of instruction.

Senate Vacancies.

Two senatorial positions in Ontario, two in Quebec, two in New Brunswick, and one in Nova Scotia and one in Prince Edward Island are vacant. The unfilled places in New Brunswick are those of the late Senators Boyd and Botsford.

Here and There.

Man is creation's masterpiece! But who says so? Man.—Gavarni.

A dead bird never talks until it settles down on a fine bonnet.

Evidence of sun worship are found in the mythology of every land.

There are ten telegraphic cable lines between America and Europe.

The first of the great English Derby races was run on Thursday, May, 4, 1780.

The ships and other vessels that passed through the Suez Canal last year paid 14,000,000 francs in tolls.

The catalogue of the British Museum, which has been thirteen years in preparation will be, it is said the largest book in the world.

Teacher: Can any little boy tell me why St. Peter is always at the gate? Johnny Ferguson: I reckon he's a layin' fer dose fellies w'at robbed him ter pay Paul!

The Maharajah of Borada has a carpet only ten feet in length and six inches in width, which is valued at \$1,000,000. Diamonds and pearls are interwoven in it.

Mother (to runaway Tommy)—Is there any place I can put you and be sure of finding you there five minutes after? Tommy (meekly)—You might try the cupboard.

Every generous illusion of youth leaves a wrinkle as it departs. Experience is the successive disenchanting of the things of spoils; it is reason enriched with the heart's life.—J. Petit Senn.

Thompson (telling a story): And so when we lost our money I told Peters that I was a donkey and he was another. Listener: And what did he say to that? Thompson: He said: "Let us bray!"

The United States Presidents who were farmers were Washington, John and John Quincy Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe Jackson, Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, Tyler and Polk.

Maria, are you quite sure that the water is the right temperature for baby's bath? Maria: Oh, yes—sure—I always know, Ma'am. If it's too hot he'll turn red, and if it's too cold he'll turn blue.

It was only a slight mistake of printing the word "No" upside down, causing the sign to read "Post On Bills," but it made a large "difference" between the irate farmer and the bill-poster when they got down to business.

The cyclist picked himself up, brushed the dirt from his clothes and readjusted his cap. "I could wish," he said, rubbing the place where the carriage-pole struck him, "that the driver of that go-cart would keep a more civil tongue in it."—Chicago Tribune.

First Member of the Choir: But, Mr. Meanwell, the curate, said Hymn No. 149 for the end of the service. Rector: Oh, I don't agree with him at all. You smother him. Chorus: Oh, Mister—! (But all the Rector really suggested was to substitute some other hymn.)

The sure foundations of the state are laid in knowledge, not in ignorance; and every sneer at education, at culture, at book learning, which is the recorded wisdom of the experience of mankind, is the demagogue's sneer at intelligent liberty, inviting national degeneracy and ruin.—G. W. Curtis.

Sir John Macdonald, with his boldness, his dexterity, his daring experiments, his dazzling theatrical ways of catching the popular favour, was the very genius of innovation; cautious, conscientious Sir Oliver Mowat, who must be more than sure of his ground before he makes a forward step, whose every instinct is to conform, is a Conservative of Conservatives.—St. Lawrence News.

Olympia may not be the largest city on earth, but it is noted for the fidelity of its husbands to their wives. Not long ago one of the married ladies of the capital departed on a visit, and before leaving home she exacted a sacred promise from her devoted lord and master that he would send her a letter every day. He kept his promise for a few days, but he finally not only ran out of gossip, but his engagements with the boys made letter writing a decided bore.

It gives an impressive idea of what subterranean London is fast becoming, says the Daily News, to learn that on emerging from the river the new City and Waterloo line will, in its passage up Queen Victoria street, run for a part of the way underneath the low-level main sewer, which in its turn runs along beneath the District Underground Railway. So that at this point in the city we shall have first a busy main thoroughfare, below that a steam railway, then a huge metropolitan sewer, then an electric railway reaching its terminus at a depth of about sixty-three feet below the streets, and here it will communicate with another line—the Central London—which will lie at a depth of eighty feet.

Manitoba Lake which lies north-west of Fort Garry, and has given a title to the province formed out of the Red River region, derives its name from a small island from which, in the stillness of the night, issues a "mysterious voice." On no account will the Obijibways approach or land on this island, supposing it to be the home of the Manitoba—the "Speaking God." The cause of this curious sound is the beating of the waves on the shingles, or large pebbles lining the shores. Along the northern coast of the island there is a long, low cliff of fine grained, compact limestone, which, under the strike of the hammer, clicks like steel.

The waves beating on the sea shore at the foot of the cliff cause the fallen fragments to rub against each other, and to give out a sound resembling the chimes of distant church bells. This phenomenon occurs when the gales blow from the north, and then, as the wind subsides, low wailing sounds like whispering voices are heard in the air. Travelers assert that the effect is very impressive, and they have been awakened at night under the impression that they were listening to church bells.

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