

before they had lived a week. There were only 26 deaths between the ages of 1 and 5 years, or  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per year; and only 1 (or one-seventh per year) between 5 and 12.

That this extreme mortality is due to parental neglect, and not to city influences, is shown by the fact that only a small percentage of these infants died in Montreal. Whenever there is a chance of life, the Sisters place them under the care of country nurses. The record of similar institutions in Europe often tells a more frightful tale; shewing that those who thus dispose of their "unwelcome children" are guilty of the reality of child-murder, though they may escape the name. At the Hospital on Ward Island, N.Y.,\* it was found that while of infants suckled by their own mothers, 20 per cent died within the year; and of those bottle-fed by their mothers, 30 per cent; the foundlings, even if suckled by nurses, died at the rate of 72 per cent; and those bottle-fed on milk by nurses, at the rate of 89 per cent. The latter is within a fraction of the proportion at the *Sœurs Grises*.

But of this heavy death-rate, about two-thirds is fairly chargeable on the city itself; rather more than one-third being of children received from other parts of Canada, and even from the United States. On the average of 4 years, 415 of the foundlings are born in the city, and 256 elsewhere. The latter number alone has to be deducted from the city death-rate, amounting to rather less than 2 per 1000 inhabitants. It remains to be seen whether the average of 415 city foundlings will be reduced by the removal of the garrison.

On comparing the 583 deaths of foundlings, and also the 1420 of ordinary children, in 1867, with the number baptized, it appears that while the foundlings die in the first year, at the rate of 89 per cent, the other city children perish at the rate of 30 per cent. In the manufacturing city of Providence only 17 per cent die at the same age.

If, of legitimate infants under 1 year, nearly 2 die in Montreal to 1 in Providence, there must surely be some fatal influence at work, either in the sanitary conditions of the city, or in the habits of its inhabitants, or both. The former of these is brought out, with a clearness that cannot be gainsaid, by an analysis of the deaths according to the months of the year. In each one of sixteen years—the returns of which have been carefully examined—it is found that while the adults and older children die with tolerable regularity at the different months of the year, young children are killed-off at a frightful rate in July and August; while the winter rate of dying is the lowest in the year. In 1867, while the weekly average death-rate of all children from 5 to 12 years of age, only varies in the different months from 2 to 7—i. e. only one for each year of life in the most unhealthy month (in spite of unripe fruit, and other assigned causes for the summer mortality); these between 1 and 5 die at the rate of from 6 to 36—i. e. nine for each year of life in July. When we come to infants under a year, we find 19 dying in each December week, and actually 101 each week in July.

On the average of the year, therefore, the child of 5 years old has, in Montreal, 100 chances of life as compared with his infant brother lately born. But, estimating according to seasons, the older child has 42 chances of life in winter; 64 in spring and autumn; and 91 in summer; as compared with one only, permitted to the infant.

Many causes have been assigned for this frightfully excessive mortality of Montreal infants; all of them, perhaps, contributing to swell, more or less, the melancholy list. The very great disproportion between the death-rates of the Protestant and Irish Catholic, and French Canadian portions of the population, lately pointed out by Dr. A. Larocque, (one of the city health officers,) has led to the supposition that one race more than another is either ignorant or neglectful in the nursing of children. This is probably the case; but that alone might be supposed to carry-off the unfortunates most rapidly in the months of special poverty and cold. In all ordinary cities of the old world, it is the winter which kills-off the largest number of victims: in Montreal it is exactly the reverse. Our infants can stand the extreme severity of the external cold; they seem not to be injuriously affected by being taken to church shortly after birth, with the thermometer below zero; for then nature has mercifully frozen up, and covered with snow, the deadly corruptions of our yards and streets. But when the spring thaws commence, the babes begin to die in larger numbers; and as soon as the summer sun draws forth into gas the poisons of our soil, and limestone mud or dust, saturated with house slops, night soil, percolations from bad sewers or rotten box-drains, and various other abominations, the infants breathe the poison, and are compelled to die. When it is remembered that no small proportion of the poorer inhabitants live in houses built round unpaved yards, with porous soil sponging up the refuse, from which there is often neither natural nor artificial drainage, without back-door or windows, and often without currents of air to carry-off the air-poisons constantly being generated, the marvel is, not that so many infants die, but that so many struggle into life.

An analysis of the cemetery returns, for 1867, gives the following table, representing the deaths, at different ages, for an average week, under the three climatal conditions. In Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., and March, most of the stenches are frozen up. In April, May, Sept., and Oct., they operate with more or less feebleness. In June, July, and Aug., they are virulent.

1867.—Average Weekly Deaths of Montreal.			
	In Frost-bound months.	In Open months.	In Air-poisoning months.
Children under 1 year .....	25	32	73
“ between 1 and 5 years .....	10	17	30
“ between 5 and 12 years .....	4	4	6
Children of all ages under 12 years .....	39	53	109
“ above 12, and adults of all ages .....	23	25	28†
Average week for 10 years, of all ages .....	34	39	62

\* *Vide* Fifth Annual Report of the Board of State Charities of Mass., pp. 35, 37, 38, 45.

† NOTE.—Without the 30 deaths of adults from sunstroke in a single week, the deaths of adults in July would have been unusually low, and the quarter's average only 26.