

## Danger in Books.

While moralists and preachers are calling attention to the danger to the morals of Canadian children by the yellow-covered literature, which they so easily manage to read, attention is also drawn to the danger of circulating libraries. We are told that the books often contain the deadly consumption bacillus on its dirty pages, as well as the microbes of other maladies. These books go into all sorts of places and are handled by all sorts of people, and, as the rat is said to carry the germs of the bubonic plague from place to place, so the library book may be the means of starting an epidemic. The filthy and nearly worn out bank note is also charged with the offence of carrying disease germs, and menacing individual and public safety. Whatever effect the report may have on the circulation of books, it is very doubtful if any fear of disease will deter the average man from accepting a bank note, however filthy it may look or however full of disease germs it may be.

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What ever truth there may be in the alleged danger of dirty books and filthy bank notes, there is enough in the suggestion itself to lead to further enquiry and also to the general question of battling with disease. In spite of the efforts of Boards of Health and legal penalties for violating municipal and hygienic regulations, it is an impressive fact that preventable diseases continue to spread. An epidemic of smallpox has established itself within a month or two both in Ontario and Quebec. The bubonic plague has actually reached New York, while typhoid fever, measles, diphtheria and other diseases are reported here and there, all over the country. No doubt much has been done of late years to lessen and confine to smaller areas, the maladies which scourge humanity, but neither medical advice, municipal regulations nor penal laws will succeed in banishing these diseases from the land. If ever this is accomplished it will be when every man and woman in the country has been drilled from childhood in all the conditions on which health depends, and brought to a consciousness of personal responsibility in honestly and continuously observing them. Not till that educative process has done its work will the land be freed from the factors of pain and death to which reference has been made. It will, no doubt, be useless to warn people against taking and holding on to money, however ragged and dirty it may be, a little more caution may be exercised in handling the dirty books of the circulating library.