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MANDERFIELD & TOOKER] "We hold these Truths to be self evident: that all Men are created Equal." [Publishers

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The Small-Pox in the Parish of Santa Fe.

The small-pox made its first appearance in Santa Fe, during the month of April, 1877; but one case proved fatal till the 27th of May, on which day its first victim was buried Since that date, we carefully kept an exact account of all the victims of the epidemic; an easy task in this parish of Santa Fe, where no one buries his dead without the knowledge of the parish priest. The following is therefore the record of those who died from the 27th of May to the 31st of December last:

City of Santa Fe,	93
Ranchos in the vicinity of Santa Fe,	26
Agua Fria,	15
Cienega,	8
Rio Tesuque,	7
Tesuque pueblo,	15
Total,	164

Of these, 83 were males, and 81 were females. Deaths were more numerous among the latter than among the former during the first months, but subsequently the proportion was equal between the two sexes. Not a single married man fell a victim. Boys over ten, only 5. Four married women died, belonging to four different nationalities—Mexican, American, French and Indian. The other victims of either sex had not reached their tenth year.

an villages prey to the epidemic have to mourn the loss of only 4 souls? And without going so far, why was the town of Cienega, adjoining Santa Fe, preserved from the scourge till last November? Can any of our honored men of Santa Fe give a satisfactory answer to all these questions? We doubt it.

But let us proceed still further, and to prove convincingly that dame smallpox is not contagious, let us now consider her amiable deportment towards individuals.

We shall not speak here of our parish priests and physicians who, in virtue of their ministry and office are frequently summoned to the bedside of persons stricken with the small pox, and are obliged to be in contact with them, exposed to the breath and effluvia exhaled from their fetid bodies. We do not catch the small pox, still say some philosophers of Santa Fe, because as foreigners, we have not the same constitution, the same blood as the Mexicans: our flesh is perchance that of the chicken and our blood that of the fish. It is true that when the small pox first appeared in Santa Fe, one of the physicians was slightly singed; but his case was not dangerous and he soon recovered. Therefore one example can not be adduced to prove that the small pox is contagious. Let us seek a more convincing argument:

There will be seen, in a Mexican family, three or four infants bedridden and

From the foregoing, we can easily perceive that the epidemic has not been so disastrous in its effects in this parish as in several other parts of the Territory. In the city of Santa Fe, several families—Mexicans as well as foreigners—have escaped the scourge, 93 deaths are recorded, that is a little more than one and one half per cent. (1½-100) in a population of 6,000 inhabitants. The same ratio is noticeable in other plazas, excepting in the Indian village of Tesuque where the small pox slew 15 out of a little more than 100 souls.

We shall now take the liberty to make some remarks which we present to the public who may give them whatever credit they may deserve, and ask in the first place whether the small pox is contagious. A contagious disease is one which is communicated by either immediate or mediate contact. If I touch a sick man's hand, that contact is immediate; if I touch his coat or hat, that contact is mediate. Well then, if the disease is contagious, by putting myself in any way in contact with the disease, I expose myself to contract it. Taking this for granted, I again inquire if the smallpox is contagious. Of course it is, unanimously respond our foreigners of Santa Fe. It is laughable to see the fear they entertain of it, and the more or less ridiculous means they resort to in order to free themselves from this epidemic; but often to no purpose; the more they dread it, the sooner are they caught.

covered with small pox; their mother, a young woman not over 20 or 25, and who has never had the small pox nor been vaccinated, watches day and night over her tender offspring, rendering them, during whole weeks, the most loathsome services; she lives with her children and in her children; she is one and the same thing as they; the same flesh, the same blood, the same bones; and notwithstanding, the children recover or die, and the unhappy mother will escape the danger unscathed. We have witnessed several cases of the kind. We have also seen in several Mexican households one single case of small pox, for instance, in the youngest of the family; and its brothers and sisters, playing, romping in the same room were not assailed with the small pox. And after these instances and others which we might quote, they wish to force us to believe that the small pox is contagious! Could it not be said, on the contrary, that it persists in not being so? And what consequence can be adduced from all this, if not that it is useless to endeavor to fly from the small pox, it is useless to avoid meeting a person or entering a house infected with the disease for two reasons: 1st. Not being contagious, the danger does not proceed thence. 2nd. Being epidemic, those means will not always act as a preventive.

An epidemic is a disease which affects simultaneously a great number of persons, such as the plague, yellow fever, vomito, typhus, cholera morbus, dysentery, &c., &c. Some of these diseases are contagious, others are not, as the cholera morbus. Well now, how is an epidemic not contagious propagated? By means of the air, and, under the influence of various modifications of the air or atmos-

As for us, our humble opinion is that the small pox is not contagious, at least in the strict sense of the word: to be convinced of this, suffice it to consider its course and its development with regard to localities and with regard to individuals.

It is a well known fact that the small pox entered New Mexico through El Paso del Norte, and ascended the valley of the Rio Grande, without deviating from its course till it came within the vicinity of Albuquerque. It stopped there, it did not enter that town, but yielding to one of its familiar freaks, it flew over the mountain as far as Manzano and the neighboring settlements, and we soon had the honor of receiving its visit. Here are then the facts: Dame small pox reigns in Santa Fe, leaving everywhere indelible marks of her amiable presence, and the town of Albuquerque which is on its pathway and lies 60 miles below us, is overlooked—and Albuquerque, the most central and important town of the Rio Abajo, is forgotten—and Albuquerque with its puddles and swamps envies the fate of Santa Fe, and three or four months elapse before she enjoys the pleasure of greeting dame small pox. Well, what had the people of that town done to excite the displeasure of that amiable dame, and prevent her entering their precincts? Did they place any obstacle to her march? Did they raise a parapet? Did they establish a quarantine on that side of the river? The thought did not even strike them, and even had they thought it, it would have been impossible. Now, if nothing was done to arrest its progress, and if the small pox is contagious, why is it not communicated uniformly to the settlements most exposed to its immediate influence? Why was it not communicated immediately to the town of Albuquerque, on its route up the Rio Grande, more especially as the Indians of La Isleta and the people of the neighboring settlements who were afflicted with the pestilence held daily intercourse with that town? If the small pox is contagious, why did it—till of late—spare Bernalillo? Why is the town of Pena Blanca, surrounded as it is by Indi-

phere, it is developed, it extends, it propagates, invading not only one but several provinces. Such is the small pox; and thus is the irregularity of its course accounted for: thus do we account for its windings, its leaping over mountains, leaving other localities in its direct route; its attacking with greater violence one settlement in preference to another, thus imitating hail and snow which travel and fall in whirlwinds. Thence likewise follows that no human means, no human power can control the small pox, or oppose a barrier against its devastating march. Thence also neither vaccination nor the most refined civilization suffices to banish it from the Territory, as Governor Axtell urged in his last message, attributing the ravages of the epidemic to the ignorance and stupidity of the Mexican people. Can His Excellency inform us why so few Mexican men caught the small pox while it assailed several foreigners in spite of their vaccination and civilization?

Still we do not mean to underrate the efficacy of the means generally employed as a preventive against this terrible epidemic; thorough vaccination joined to well being and cleanliness will aid not a little if not in checking the small pox altogether, at least in counteracting and mitigating its deplorable effects.

J. A. TRUCHARD,
Parish Priest of Santa Fe.