

THE PUBLIC HEALTH FOR MARCH.

MORTUARY RETURNS FROM 26 CANADIAN CITIES AND TOWNS.

THE total number of deaths in the month of March in the twenty-six chief cities and towns of the Dominion which make monthly returns to the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa was 1,337. This number is greater by 182 than the record of mortality in the same cities in the previous month. As March is three days longer than February, the increase in the mortality in March however, it must be observed, was not so great as the figures make apparent. There were 13 more deaths in March than in January. March in this climate is a month in which the mortality, more especially from lung diseases, usually much exceeds that of either of the few previous months. This year seems to be somewhat exceptional in this regard, whatever the cause may have been. The winter has been unusually severe; the late appearance of spring may throw the usual increase more into April. The total mortality for the month of March was at the rate 23.5 per 1,000 of estimated population per annum.

In Montreal, the mortality increased from 27 per 1,000 in February to 29 in March; and in Toronto from less than 20 in February to 22 in March. The mortality in Hamilton increased to 26 per 1,000; and in Halifax, to 23 per 1,000. In Ottawa the mortality was somewhat lower in March than in February. In Quebec it fell to 21 per 1,000; it having been 26 and 24 in January and February respectively. This is highly satisfactory, and unusual of late years for that city. The average there for last year, 1886, was 31 per 1,000. There is no reason why the mortality should not be kept down to this point and many valuable lives

thus saved. In Kingston the mortality still further declined, as low as to 18 per 1,000; having been nearly 30 per 1,000 in January and 25 in February. In London there was an increase in the mortality in March of nearly 50 per cent as compared with that of February.

From zymotic diseases the rate of mortality in the twenty-six cities and towns was about the same in March as it was in February.

In the mortality from diphtheria there was considerable of a decline; with an increase in that from measles and scarlet fever. Of the total deaths from measles, 26 in number, 16 were in Montreal, 5 in Hamilton and 5 in Sorel.

THE MORTALITY FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE YEAR

During the first quarter of the present year the Dominion appears to have been exceptionably free from epidemics of a severe or general character, if we except the few local epidemics of measles. The total mortality during the quarter in the twenty-six chief cities and towns was at the rate of 22.5 per 1,000 of population per annum. During the first quarter of 1886, the mortality in twenty-two of these cities and towns was at the rate of 24.5 per 1,000; but small-pox was then still prevalent in two or three centres. The mortality for the quarter was in Montreal 28 per 1,000; in Toronto and Hamilton 20; Quebec 23; and in Ottawa 21. per 1,000.

The greatest mortality from scarlet fever is during the third and fourth years of life, from diphtheria during the second and third years. The majority of children dying of these diseases in the first five years are boys, while the majority dying during the second five years are girls.