

impression that Montreal is a very healthy city is contradicted by the statistics. The total number of deaths is given as 7,351, a rate of 25.46 per 1,000 persons. Comparing these figures with those of large cities the rate is found to be enormously high, in fact with the exception of Savannah, Ga., it is the highest percentage in the country. The marriage rate fell from 8.12 per 1,000 in 1899 to 7.76 per 1,000 in 1900, and the birth rate from 34.45 per 1,000 in 1898 to 34.26 per 1,000 in 1900. The health board claims that the existing sanitary conditions are to blame for the excessive mortality, which is especially heavy among infants, there being as many as 125 deaths of infants reported for some weeks during the summer. The department contends that the existence of "privy pits" has much to do with the heavy death rate and that in spite of repeated warnings the obnoxious pits still exist. The statement is made that with proper sanitation the average mortality would not exceed 100 deaths per week.

**Illuminating Gas and the Public Health.**—When financial interests are involved, public health too often is less considered than profits. There has long been a demand from the consumer for lower

prices for illuminating gas, but but there has been no corresponding inclination on the part of stockholders for smaller dividends. But, several decades ago, it was found that by using a liberal admixture of water-gas, an illuminant of fair quality could be furnished at a price much lower than coal gas and yield greater dividends. This was sufficient motive for energetic work by lobbyists in different states to secure the repeal of laws limiting the proportion of carbon monoxid in illuminating gas to 10 per cent., practically prohibiting water-gas, which contains at least 30 per cent. of this lethal agent. Following the repeal of these laws in Massachusetts, there has been a most remarkable increase of deaths and of accidents attributable to illuminating agents. In the thirteen years prior to the introduction of water-gas the number of deaths registered as due to illuminating gas was only eight, all from the inhaling of gas as a suicidal agent. In the thirteen years following the introduction of water-gas the number of deaths due to this cause is stated to have been 459, and there have been a number of accidental asphyxiations with recovery.—*American Medicine.*

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## BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

To accommodate readers who may wish it, the publishers of THE CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY will send, postpaid, on receipt of the price, any Book reviewed in these columns.

The Scribner's Magazine for April is composed largely of fiction. Richard Harding Davis' serial, "Captain Macklin," is begun, and Hopkinson Smith's admirable

"Fortunes of Oliver Horn," is continued. Those contributing short stories are: Thomas Nelson Page, Josephine Dodge Daskam, and Mary R. S. Andrews.