

reports be made monthly instead of fortnightly, as a commencement in the work.

The knowledge which the working of such a plan would give would be of immense value. It would then be known where any epidemics were prevailing, in any electoral district throughout the Dominion; and the extent, severity and duration of these and their course from one locality to another. It would also be known what districts were free from epidemics, and all this knowledge would be a strong inducement for the people every where to endeavor to keep free from such by using precautionary and preventive measures. The publication of monthly reports of the collected information, condensed and tabulated, along with sanitary information, would create a general interest in public health proceedings hitherto unknown. The returns from the reporters in electoral districts, though not giving the exact number of cases in any epidemic, would be otherwise definite, especially as regards locality.

It is a great mistake to try to suppress and prevent the spread of knowledge of the fact of an epidemic prevailing in a locality. The temporary check to 'business'—the slight interference with the 'trade' of the small dealers and tavern-keepers, would be a very insignificant matter compared with the great and serious losses through sickness and deaths which a knowledge of the fact of the prevailing epidemic might aid in preventing. And few indeed are there, we believe, who, on giving this question a little serious thought, would not be in favor of the diffusion of information relating to the prevalence of an epidemic in any locality or neighborhood. The question of dollars and cents should not be so far allowed to jeopardise the health and life of the people as to prevent the diffusion of such information.

Besides the interesting and practically useful information which disease reports as above indicated would give, they would afford most valuable accumulative knowledge which in time would show the course of epidemics, even of the lighter sort—of measles, scarlet fever and whoop-

ing cough, for example, what relation they may have to prevailing winds, or other meteorological conditions, or if there is any tendency in them to return at certain periods or to be as a rule more severe and extensive in certain localities or communities than in others, and much other useful information which might be mentioned. Besides, such knowledge would doubtless develop facts in connection with epidemics which have not yet been thought of.

Let all therefore who feel an interest in the progress of public health work endeavor to promote this movement for a system of disease reports from all parts of the Dominion.

HEALTH MATTERS.

We are pleased to see that the remarks made in our last issue are being well received by the press of the province. It augurs well for the future that the city of Toronto, as a centre of wealth, trade and intellect has taken the initiative in appointing a local board of health who are now fully organized. As a sketch of their work may be of use to other municipalities we may state briefly that they have determined to use the existing organizations of the city. The police and fire halls are used as stations where complaints are to be lodged, which are daily to be sent to the city hall to be attended to by the health commissioner or medical health officer as the case may be. Special printed forms are being got ready for distribution. The police commissioners have granted the use of one constable from each police division as a Sanitary Inspector to be under the control of the medical health officer, and they are to work as they did last summer. The medical health officer, Dr. Canniff, has had a number of forms printed as directed by the act, for reporting infectious diseases and deaths by them, which are now being sent out to all the medical practitioners in the city.

An important and influential meeting was held on the 26th ult., when the