

undoubtedly of the first importance to educate, and so create an interest in the public mind in reference to health, after which any compulsory measures will be better received and attended to. In England, while much has been done in the last forty years to improve the public health, progress in this way has been very slow, chiefly because no special means were ever employed to educate the public in health matters; and sanitarians are but recently it seems becoming alive to the importance of this part of the work. In Prussia, it appears, and in many of the United States, the education of the public was the first object, and in some of the States much has been done in a short time.

It appears to be unusual for parliaments to do much in the way of legislating on important matters during their last session, just before an appeal to the country, and we cannot expect complete comprehensive public health measures, such as the province really requires, but which in truth it is hardly ready for, during this session. The fact is, however long measures of this kind, affecting the masses of the people, may be deferred, it requires years of time to get them in proper working order. Acts must be passed and amended, and added to and improved, as the people become prepared for such amendments and improvements, and as the wants and requirements of the people become known. It is, therefore, the more necessary that some commencement be made in legislation, without delay—some act passed upon which future work or enactments may be based or spring from.

If delays are ever dangerous they are certainly so in matters affecting health and life. Every day, on the average, in Ontario, from one cause or another, over 80 human beings yield up their lives and meet death. About 27 of these are little children under five years of age; 10 are between the ages of five and twenty; and 30 are between twenty and sixty,—in the prime of their manhood and womanhood, fathers and mothers, leaving much unfinished work and children fatherless and motherless. And thousands, at all ages, are languishing and suffering in sick-beds. One-third, at least, of these deaths and of these many cases of sickness are doubtless caused by diseases which may be prevented,—diseases arising through ignorance, or carelessness, or neglect. Who is responsible? Unquestionably legislation should aim at protecting the people, as well from the ravages of diphtheria, typhoid, scarlet fever, and the like, (often making raids upon them from their neighbors' premises,) as from foreign epidemics, or foreign hordes of murderers. And the people will soon learn not to respect that legislation which does not seek to aid them in preserving their health and lives.

Evidently something will be done now for the promotion of the public health, and there is reason to believe that whatever is done will be worthy of, and acceptable to, an intelligent and wealthy provincelike Ontario. It would be positive extravagance to delay, and a cry of economy in reference to it would be quite out of place.