

WHAT is to be done? What is every body's business is, it is said, nobody's business. While every body must be in a measure on guard in order to avoid causes of disease as far as possible, there must be abundance of vigilant health or medical officers their sole duty being to look after the public health interests. Nearly every civilized country has provision of this kind—except Canada, in which only a few of the provinces have endeavored to meet the want. The British Medical Journal (of April 6-89) refers in terms of praise to the recent public health Legislation in Italy. The Italian Public Health Act, that journal says, though it will doubtless be amended, or amended from time to time, is no tentative or patchwork legislation, and in several of its main features might well serve as a model for English statesmen. The most important of these is the association with the administration of the public health of a number of cognate and collateral subjects which in this country are distributed among several independent departments; such as medical relief, the contagious diseases of animals, the practice of pharmacy, and adulteration of food.

IN Italy boards of health, composed exclusively of experts are to be appointed by the crown, in each of the sixty-nine provinces, the prefects presiding. Attached to the ministry of the interior will be a larger central or general board, similarly constituted, with which will be associated the heads of the medical departments of the army, navy, and mercantile marine, and the agricultural, statistical, and other offices. The provincial boards, nominated by the crown for three years, comprise three physicians, an engineer, a veterinary surgeon, an analytical and a pharmaceutical chemist, a lawyer, and a member selected for his administrative experience. Attached to each board, as its advertiser, will be the provincial medical officer appointed directly by the crown for life, and debarred from private practice; in every commune the provincial board will select one of the resident practitioners as local medical officers of health. The appointment will be for triennial periods, but the constitution of the boards affords a sufficient guarantee that the power of removal will not be abused as it is in England. The duties of the provincial medical officer will be administrative rather than executive. This scheme is diametrically opposed to the English notion that in any department, legal matters always excepted,

impartiality, efficiency, and economy, are best ensured by committing the control and administration to men who know absolutely nothing of it, and placing such executive officers as do, wholly in their power.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANNOTATIONS.

IN Montreal it costs, according to an exchange, \$43,000 to destroy by fire a year's miscellaneous refuse, by cremation and \$8,000 additional for the burning of its night-soil. The destruction of the latter costs 75 cents per ton.

IN Minneapolis it is estimated that 15 to 20 cents per ton of refuse pays for the labor employed and the fuel used.

IN Milwaukee, Wis., the cremation of garbage was to be stopped on May 1. A company has been formed, it is said, who will, by a new process, transform the refuse into marketable articles. The garbage is placed in mechanical dryers, where, in the course of about ten hours, it is reduced to a brown powder. The oil contained is then drawn off, while the powdered garbage will be used as a fertilizer.

A NEW WAY to put the "Penny Wise and Pound Foolish" saying is given in the Sanitary Era: Rather penny foolish and pound foolish both—people who stagger at two or three dollars per million gallons to purify a bad water supply for which they already pay fifty or a hundred dollars per million without thinking of it! It is said that the Croton water with all its regular impurities and worse occasional possibilities, costs the city of New York about \$98.50 per million gallons, while for the round hundred it could be delivered in a state of practically absolute purity. Boston pays \$60 for bad water, but would not pay \$63 for a perfect article. Hoboken pays \$75, and East Newark and Bayonne \$100, according to the same authority. But it seems to make no difference how much or how little a water supply costs: the smallest addition for the purpose of making it healthful arouses always the same niggardly resistance in influential quarters.

THE ANTI-VACCINATIONISTS have at length succeeded in obtaining a Royal Commission to investigate the whole question, pro and con, of vaccination. The following are the names of the Commission given by Mr. Ritchie in the House of Commons on Monday, May 27:—Lord Herschell, Chairman; Sir J. Paget; Sir C.