

EDITORIAL NOTES.

TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, in much of what we write below, we would particularly address ourselves, now during the recess and as the time of the next Session of the House draws near. The death-rate in Canada, especially in many of our cities and towns is persistently very high, as shown again below. Surely there is no subject so important for the members of the Parliament of Canada to consider as this one of the health and lives of their constituents. We are convinced that if members *will but consider it sufficiently* they will see the absolute necessity of action.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH question is one of such great and far reaching importance that we need not apologize for pressing it repeatedly and even constantly upon the notice of all members of Parliament and indeed every one who has any influence with the members. Every life in this young country is needed to help to fill up its many unoccupied places. Everybody now knows and need not be told that many lives are lost in Canada every year, in fact every day, through both ignorance and neglect of ordinary sanitary requirements, and that by the free and liberal distribution of knowledge of the simple rules of health and by proper sanitary oversight and administration, many of the lives now thus sacrificed to ignorance and neglect might be saved and prolonged to many years of useful citizenship. We do not ask for any interference whatever with Provincial health proceedings; but that the inactive Provinces shall be influenced to efficient action, and that all shall be assisted in the work of promoting, in every practical way, the health of the people.

THE MORTALITY for the first half of the current year in the twenty-nine large cities and towns in the Dominion making returns to the Department of Agriculture shows that many thousands of our Canadian people died in Canada in that period who would not have died had not the mortality been higher here than it was in London, Eng. Accepting as correct the population of the Canadian towns as estimated by the municipalities, which is much more likely to be placed too high than too low, the death-rate in these towns for the half year was 21 per 1,000 of population per annum, while in great London during the same period it was but 17.75; and for the whole of England and Wales

18.35, per 1,000. This proves clearly that the mortality in the Canadian towns is over 13 per cent. higher than it is in London. Therefore, as there were 8 518 deaths recorded in these 29 Canadian towns during the first six months of this year, 1,533 of these deaths would have been prevented had not the mortality here been higher than it was in London. This means that, if the mortality in Canada were reduced from 21 per 1,000 of population to 17.75 per 1,000, by proper sanitary administration, as it has been so reduced in London within the last decade, there would be a saving of 3,066 lives in a year in our principal cities and towns, or about 20,000 lives a year in the whole Dominion. Every year now for many years we have shown that about 20,000 lives a year are sacrificed in Canada to ignorance and neglect of sanitary rules, which might be and should be preserved. Can Canada afford such a yearly sacrifice?

A DEFINITE PLAN for a Dominion Sanitary organization has been before the leading Sanitarians of the Dominion on several occasions: yet it has been said, by those not having taken the trouble to inform themselves, that no plan has been brought forward. An outline of what is desirable and practicable has been yearly proposed in this JOURNAL for many years, but we may again briefly outline it now. As a basis, a system of health statistics and statements or reports is essential. There should be a record of births and deaths and monthly returns of the same. For all practical purposes and for some years to come, it would suffice to obtain these from 150 centres. Sufficient money would not yet be granted by parliament for a monthly record of these events in all the outlying rural districts of the Dominion, but once a year they might be obtained through the assessors from all districts. Besides these statistics—and what would be, to a more practical value, it is essential to provide for monthly, or better, fortnightly or weekly reports from these 150 centres of the general prevailing condition of the public health, especially as relating to any infectious or epidemic diseases in either mankind or the domestic animals. Returns of all these statistics and reports should be made to a Department, or a sub-department of one of the present Departments, of the Government at Ottawa. In this