

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANNOTATIONS.

THE *Therapeutic Gazette*, of Philadelphia, had stated that the outbreak of variola in Canada had been allowed by "ignorant and careless municipal authorities" to assume alarming proportions. The chairman of the Montreal Board of Health, Mr. H. R. Gray, wrote to that journal that the authorities were neither ignorant nor careless, that unfortunately, one of the cases from Chicago found its way into a large hospital in which there was a number of orphan children unvaccinated. He then referred to the anti-vaccinating population and said: When the worst came, the sanitary authorities were not afraid to use force, where it would best produce a good moral effect. The officials were armed and their number largely increased, the doors of all infected houses were sealed up, and patrols mounted in front and rear. The services of the good nurse were invoked, and the municipal authorities supplied them with thousands of dollars to take provisions and medical comforts to the houses thus isolated. Every case not susceptible of perfect isolation at home was obliged to go to hospital, and, if the patient would not go peaceably, he was taken by force. Suffice it to say, by the most severe and stringent means one of the most fatal epidemics of modern times was cut short in midwinter."

A NEW health association, known as the "Association of Executive Health Officers of Ontario," was we are pleased to find organized in Toronto during the first week in October, inst. It should be capable of much good to the health interest of the province and probably will be. It is a pity that in the election of the president of the association there was not unanimity. The president elect, under the constitution adopted, is not eligible as a member of the association, not being a health officer, and we do not see how he can consistently or properly act as president. The other candidate, defeated by one vote only, it appears, is an active health officer in the chief city of the province, and if only the interest of the public health had been considered by all he would doubtless have been elected. The course pursued will we fear operate against the usefulness of the association.

The *Orillia Packet* is always vigorous in urging municipal attention to local sanitary needs and it would be well if there were more such local papers. In a late number we find, "The Board of Health should take immediate steps to have Orillia placed in a thoroughly sanitary condition, and the Council enforce their regulations with greater energy than has ever yet been done. Orillia possesses advantages which might bring her into the very front rank of Ontario summer resorts. . . . Summer visitors do not decide where to go without ascertaining whether there is disease in the locality, and of what nature it is. Let the fact that the town is not only advantage-

ously situated, but wholly objectionable from a sanitary point of view, be made known."

THE Tennessee Board of Health Bulletin says: The great sanitary want most felt in Tennessee, as every well-informed medical man who gives the subject a moment's thought must answer, is vital statistics—a perfect registration of every birth, marriage and death, occurring in the State; for aside from the great value in aiding often in the just distribution of property and the detection of crime, such a registration would supply a current history of disease, which not only affords a means of comparison by which the past becomes more instructive, but it indicates at short intervals of time the exact state of the public health and the recognized causes acting deleteriously upon it. We in Canada are in precisely the same state, suffer from the same sanitary want.

DR. RAVEN, L. R. C. P. etc., in a paper in the *British Medical Journal*, on infectiousness of certain diseases, writes that, the personal infection of diphtheria would seem to be actively exerted on those who are in close attendance upon the victims of the disease, whereas its influence does not commonly spread to others in the same certain way as does the infection of measles, small-pox and other infectious diseases.

At a meeting of the Academy of Sciences, Paris, not long ago, M. Marey presented a work by the chief engineer, Port of Marseilles. The facts collected by the author demonstrates that the cholera epidemics of 1854-55 were aggravated, and spread after violent storms. The epidemics were especially virulent in the localities near the old port. M. Marey's theory that cholera is spread by means of water is also confirmed by the facts exposed in the work.

## NOTES ON CURRENT LITERATURE.

HARPER'S MAGAZINE for October is quite up to the average, which is enough to write for all acquainted with its past excellence, and who is not, more or less? For over 30 years, near upon 400 months, we have looked forward with pleasure to receiving this regular monthly visitor, until it has become an essential and dear old friend. From the frontispiece, "Perico's Odi," a charming little piece, to the end of the "Editor's drawer," the October number is filled with sketches, poems and story. We find "Autumn in England," illustrated; "Indian Summer," a poem; and "The Story of Tanis," illustrated, which are worth more than the price of the magazine. The serial stories make satisfactory progress, and the editorial pages afford some food for reflection.