

in this way. Eleven applications from cities and towns for advice concerning water supplies were received; eleven for advice concerning sewerage; two soliciting action to prevent the contamination of particular water supplies; and one from a manufacturer for advice concerning the disposal of drainage from certain works which he purposed establishing. The important question of a water supply for the cities of Boston, Chelsea, and Somerville, and the town of Everett, was one of those that came before the board. There are 123 sources of public water supply in the State; but over 200 samples are investigated chemically and biologically every month, the samples being from rivers, ponds, and other sources that may be utilized in the future. Experiments are also in progress on methods of sewage disposal, which will add considerably to our knowledge of the results which may be obtained in that direction.

With the aid of the State, the local authorities in their efforts to obtain and preserve a wholesome water supply would experience no difficulty that could not be overcome by the expenditure of the necessary funds. The twenty-mile limit will in progress of time be blotted out, and the waters of the State be sharply divided into those which may be used as sources of domestic supply and those which carry off the waste water. The water-supply and sewerage systems of the State—of the country—should be as distinct as these of every household, and the sooner this is accomplished the sooner will the rates of sickness and death be decreased among our people.

Your committee, therefore, urge a livelier interest in this important matter on the part of State boards of health, an interest which is not satisfied with discussing and subscribing to sanitary views on the subject, but which will leave nothing undone that will tend to invest them with power to act for the preservation of the public health. With all our boards operating, each with its domain, there would be no need of a committee of this Association to investigate the subject of water pollution. In concluding, we submit the following resolution:

Resolved, That it is the well-considered belief of this Association that it is an imperative necessity, especially in the more populous States, that State Legislatures should give their boards of health that financial support which would enable them to act intelligently on all questions pertaining to the public water supplies, investing them at the same time with the supervision of the said supplies, and with power to preserve these waters from contamination by sewage or other injurious matters.

Signed:—

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WHAT IS NEEDED FOR PROMOTING THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

IT is universally conceded that a statement of all births and deaths which take place, as well as of marriages, in a country is an essential of nationality. Almost every civilized country has provision for the collection of statistics of this kind. In a new and constantly developing country like Canada, with many outlying jutting of scattered settlements, it would be next to impossible to obtain them sufficiently approximating accuracy to be of much practical use.

Recently we have given this subject a great deal of thought and have arrived at the conclusion that, for the most useful and practical purposes of public health promotion throughout the Dominion, it would be sufficient if accurate, comprehen-

sive mortuary statistics could be obtained, monthly or weekly, from a large number of defined centres of population—say 100, or better, 150 centres—along with a reliable report from each relating to any prevailing epidemic or endemic infectious disease, either of man or animals, and a statement at least once a year of the population of each centre. It would also be desirable, but not particularly essential, to get for comparison an accurate statement, say quarterly or yearly, of the number of births in these centres.

The reports relating to prevailing diseases should embrace or relate to intervening sections of country as well as to the special centres. Any health officer of a centre, as a city or town, would usually