

EDITORIAL NOTES.

A MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH the Sanitarians of England are resolved to have. Now the President of the local Government Board there is almost the same thing. In Gladstone's Government this official was given a seat in the cabinet during two parliaments, we believe, although he was not accorded a vote in Council. At nearly all the meetings of Sanitary Societies there, members urge for a complete Department of Health with a Minister, as in the other Departments of State. In the Public Health Section, at the Annual meeting of the British Medical Association last month, Dr. J. Brindley James, M. R. C. S., said: What we need is a civil medical service of the Crown. We have Ministers of Commerce, of Public Works; the Post Office is represented in the Ministry, but no recognition of the sanitary claims of the nation or of the medical profession itself has ever existed officially in England. What is needed to constitute a proper medical administration—not necessarily a complex one—is the creation of two medical peers—one a distinguished consulting surgeon, the other an eminent physician—and a Cabinet Minister of Public Health—with the prospect of a similar distinction on retiring from his office, appointment thereto being based absolutely on his professional eminence and abilities alone; in no way on his political sympathies.

IN FRANCE, as a few months ago we noted they have now virtually a department and Minister of Health—the “Director of the Health service.” Hence England cannot now take precedence in this regard, although she might make provision for a somewhat more complete organization than they have in France, where another service—the “Assistance Publique,” is still associated with that of public health. In the United States, too, strong efforts are being put forth to secure a department of health in connection with the Federal Government. Why should not Canada take the lead in this, and next session adopt through her representatives in Parliament, the course which will be proposed by Dr. Roome M. P. It would undoubtedly do the Dominion much good in the estimation of other countries (for sanitary progress is now being very generally appreciated and recognized) while no other appropriation parliament could make would yield so good and valuable a return to the Canadian people.

THE UNITED STATES Government has recently inaugurated a sanitary movement of great importance and one that it is earnestly to be hoped will be pushed to realization. The Department of State has addressed a communication to all the European Governments asking their co-operation in measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. The proposal is made that well known plague centers, liable from their commercial relations with the world to diffuse the germs of cholera, yellow fever and similar pests, shall be declared obnoxious to humanity, and the government in whose territory they are situated shall be called upon to cleanse them to the satisfaction of an international commission appointed to regularly inspect them. Lord Salisbury it appears says that England will do everything in her power for the furtherance of such an object, in which she is especially interested. Semi-civilized countries may not take kindly to this scheme, but in that case, as an Exchange gives it, the strongest kind of *suasion* might be brought to bear upon them by those nations endowed with common sense.

THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT of Canada has done the country a good service by enlightening the public in relation to baking powders; to say nothing about previous like valuable services in reference to milk, infants' foods, &c. The practical service would have been perhaps greater and it would have been a guide to the public and at the same time but fair to the makers of powders classed as safest and best, to have given clearly and definitely the names of the various brands subjected to analysis. Unless the public are willing to be slowly poisoned, it is absolutely essential that they give more attention to the composition of the baking powders used.

THE BEST, THE SAFEST—The “Ideal baking powder,” the report states, is a mixture of good cream of tartar with proper proportion of bicarbonate of soda, and about 15 to 20 per cent of pure starch. “Not only was this mixture in popular use before the prepared mixture was in the market, but many persons now make the mixture for themselves instead of trusting to the baking powders offered for sale by grocers.” In the family of the editor of this JOURNAL, we may bear witness, they have done this for many years and found it altogether the most