

diseases of childhood has been constantly brought under my clinical observation. The increase is largely ascribable to the faulty dietetic and hygienic management of early childhood, and to the general substitution of artificial, and in many instances very unsuitable, prepared or tinned preparations, for that natural or fresh milk which, in my opinion, is essential for the healthy nutrition of children." In Paris, on the registration of every birth of a child, the parents are presented with a leaflet of instructions as to how best to manage the child with a view to preserving its health. Such a practice in Canada would save many lives.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE in Canada for the prevention of disease? Comparatively very little, and that little by the two principal provinces;—almost forced into it by the persistent efforts of this JOURNAL and the personal efforts of its editor. The work has gone on chiefly in a routine, perfunctory way, with little practical good. Quebec (where, to be sure, it is most needed) has more recently stuck out and is leading in the work, especially in respect to the education of the people of the province by statistical reports and other means. Local sanitation at best is but very imperfect, partial sanitation; and we cannot judge in any degree of hygienic progress by counting the number of organized local boards of health, much the larger proportion of which are quite inactive. As Dr. Sanborn, an eminent continental sanitarian, says (Lancet, Lond., Eng.): "It is not enough to improve the sanitary conditions of a town; the principles of hygiene should be impressed on the minds and consciences of people. In all cases, whatever may be done, one thing is absolutely necessary, and that is that all states shall agree on the same points, and that all shall understand equally the high importance of the old aphorism, *Salus populi suprema lex*." Much more necessary it is that all provinces shall "agree."

PURE WATER SUPPLIES, next in importance to pure air, are, we are glad to see, attracting considerable attention in some localities in Canada; owing largely, we have no doubt, to the many articles on this subject in this JOURNAL during recent years. Some towns are experimenting in respect to Artesian well supplies. If properly protected, Artesian wells afford the safest possible supply as relates to contamination by the germs of disease, but sometimes the water is not good chemically. It must ever be borne in mind that public supplies demand the most careful protection and supervision with constant vigilance. If a well becomes contaminated only a family or two probably suffer from it; but if a town's supply be poisoned in any way it may seriously effect almost the entire population of the town. With the present vile and disgusting methods of disposal of sewage and other refuse it is almost impossible to obtain pure water without filtration, while no filtration now known can be relied upon. The Hyatt system is perhaps the best, but there is room and need for great improvement.

MOST SINGULAR it is that people will continue to depend on chemical analysis as a guide to the safe condition of the water supply. The chief engineer of London, Eng. (Brit. Med. Jr., Oct. 31 last, on the London water supply), says: "Analysis without the previous history of the water is taken into account cannot be accepted as a guarantee of purity;" while a writer in the British Medical Journal of Nov. 7 says: "The person who was bold enough to assert the safety of a water upon negative bacteriological results would be an enthusiast of the most dangerous character." Last month we gave the words of the president of the Massachusetts State Board of Health, Prof. Walcott, of Cambridge University,—that board having made most extensive and costly experiments and investigations during the last few years in relation to water supply. Dr. Walcott said (at the annual meeting in October of the Association of American Physicians): "Chemical analysis has failed to distinctly indicate the waters which may produce disease; for of two waters, one