

the municipal returns, made to the Department of Agriculture for the year 1893, from two of our oldest and most prosperous counties: Oxford, 1893, townships 11, total \$481.00, varying from \$0 to \$97.00; towns and villages, from \$5.00 to \$481.00; Grey, 1893, townships 16, total \$286.00, varying from \$0 in four townships to \$75.00; towns and villages, \$6.00 to \$344.00.

Now, these figures mean either that almost no attention is given to public health in these districts, or that the amounts of money thus expended have not been returned under the proper heading. As a matter of fact, both causes exist. With regard to the returns I find in those for one of our largest villages, which I visited in 1884 on account of a serious outbreak of diphtheria, that the returns under local board was as \$24.00, while under poor relief were charged sums for diphtheria nurses, etc., amounting to \$121.95.

This will doubtless explain how, in many places, the amounts returned for public health work are so small.

When, however, I find \$5.00 for the Sanitary Inspector and \$5.00 for the Medical Health Officer, in examining details of expenditure, it must be concluded that the public health of such municipalities has been most satisfactory, or that local boards of health in many instances exist only in name. When I find such amounts set down, however, for townships where correspondence shows public funerals in cases of diphtheria took place, and where schools finally were closed on account of the disease, it would seem a fair inference that, from the public health standpoint,

improvements are not only possible but seem to be greatly needed.

At the instance of this Board the Legislature introduced a provision in the Act of 1890, whereby municipal authorities were empowered to forego their powers in health matters to a medical officer appointed by the County Council. Up to the present time I am not aware of advantage of this provision having been taken in any case; but the advantages of such a step in the interests of the public health of any county cannot, in my opinion, be over-estimated. In order to appreciate fully the advantages of such a step, it is necessary to recapitulate the principal work which boards of health are supposed to perform.

1. The first and most immediate duty is that of suppressing outbreaks of contagious diseases. During the past year some twenty outbreaks of small-pox occurred. These have had to be dealt with by the local health officers. From the figures already given it is made plain that a Medical Health Officer has not been expected to give medical attendance, and, as a consequence, special medical aid has had to be given at the rate of from \$10 to \$20 per diem, and this, in some instances, from two to three months. It is hardly necessary to say that such an expenditure for one or two cases of small-pox falls heavily on a single municipality. In an instance where the amount has been obtained, the total cost of the outbreak was \$1,600, and in another some \$600 for medical services alone.

This is, however, but one disease. With the numerous outbreaks of diphtheria which have occurred in every part of the Province we have