

THE PROPOSED DOMINION HEALTH DEPARTMENT. ;

IT will be remembered by most intelligent Canadians that during the last session of Parliament, in the discussion of Dr. Roome's resolution in favor of a Dominion department or sub-department of Health, that the Prime Minister made the excellent suggestion that a conference be held "To which the Federal Government would ask the various Provincial Governments to send representatives, for the purpose of endeavoring to frame some united plan for exercising the various powers conferred upon them by the Constitution in such a manner that they could unite in one system and carry it out as efficiently and inexpensively as possible. It has occurred to me that the general feeling of the House is that that suggestion could well be carried out, and we might combine the Provincial and the Federal Governments in the adoption of some united system."

We believe Dr. Roome is endeavoring to have arrangements made to carry out this suggestion. The time for the next session of Parliament is near at hand, or but a few weeks hence, and it is to be hoped no time will be lost in completing such arrangement, so that the result of the honorable gentleman's suggestion may "come up" at this next session.

As we have before said, putting it practically, man, at least physically, is but a product of the soil,—Canadians, of Canadian soil—and as much attention and care should be given to mankind as to any other products of our land—cattle, grains, &c.; and a sub-department connected with the Department of Agriculture, or with another of the State Departments if more desirable, would be in a position to give to the people of our beloved Canada such attention and care as is now very wisely devoted to these other products of our Dominion's soil.

To briefly outline, for the better comprehension of our readers, what we think most desirable and necessary, if our Dominion is not to be behind other countries and is to make the best possible progress, we would suggest, similar to what we have

long urged, that: (1) The mortuary statistics should be greatly extended and efforts made to have them more perfect and returns of marriages and births included. (2) Provision should be made for obtaining reports, monthly, fortnightly or weekly, from at least 150 points in the Dominion, of the then existing condition of the public health at or near these points, more especially as relating to any epidemic or prevalency of infectious disease. These reports might include any disease of domestic animals also. (3) A first-class hygienic laboratory should be provided, with facilities for biological examinations, and for investigating causes and sources of disease. This might well we think be connected with the present analytical department, which would be best connected too with the department of Health. (4) Some provision should be made for obtaining, internationally, information relative to the sanitary condition of vessels leaving foreign ports; and this could be most naturally connected with the present quarantine management, and all associated likewise with the Health Department. (5) A bulletin, issued monthly, or better fortnightly or weekly, should be freely distributed throughout the Dominion—to all the local papers, health officers, &c., containing official information relative to the condition of the public health in all parts of the Dominion, with advice and suggestions for the promotion of the same.

GOFIO : Dr. C. F. Taylor in the Popular Science Monthly, Food, Home and Garden says, speaks of the superior development of the inhabitants of the Canary Islands which he attributes to the superior nutritive qualities of the farinaceous food used by them. This is called "*gofio*," and is simply flour made from grain of different kinds, which is parched or roasted before grinding. When it is to be eaten, it may be mixed with milk soup, or any suitable fluid. While on a visit to the Canariense Dr. Taylor adopted it as an article of food, and found it digestible and nutritious.