

connection between bad ventilation and diphtheria, to which, from time to time, reference has been made in this JOURNAL. Most schoolhouses in both city and country places are in a deplorable state as regards ventilation, and parents would act wisely in looking after the condition of the school rooms in which their children spend a large part of the most susceptible period of their life.

SANITARY REPORTS.

THE REPORT ON MORTUARY STATISTICS.

We have received "abstracts of the returns of mortuary statistics for the last six months of the year 1883," of the cities which availed themselves of the system inaugurated about two years ago by the Minister of Agriculture for the collection of such statistics, the returns for the first six months of that year having been issued, and noticed in this JOURNAL, in the early part of last year. It contains a continuation of the tables of the first volume, for the last six months of the year, completing the work of the former report, with which this should be read.

This is quite a large volume and has involved a great deal of work, which has evidently been very carefully done. As the Deputy Minister, Dr. Tache, writes in the introduction, "it is quite generally imagined that the tables recapitulating the compilation of such statistics can be printed and published within the first few weeks after the year to which they relate; it is a mistake. The question is not merely one of expense and work; it is, moreover, a matter of counter reckoning, collating and exactness. With time and system it may be possible to publish promptly bulletins containing a certain portion of the information collected, when it seems useful and requisite to do so; but the returns, as a whole, involve delays which it is exceedingly difficult, if not utterly impossible to avoid, without sacrificing the principal point, which is accuracy."

Eleven cities were invited to avail themselves of this system of statistics, namely, Montreal, Toronto, Quebec, Hamilton, Halifax, St. John, N.B., Ottawa, Winnipeg, Charlottetown, Fredericton and Victoria, B.C.; all the capitals of the Canadian Confederation, and all the cities having, in 1881, a population of 25,000 inhabitants and over. Of these, six furnished information covering the whole year, 1883, namely, Montreal,

Toronto, Hamilton, Halifax, Ottawa and St. John, N.B. Charlottetown furnished information covering the last seven months of the year; Winnipeg six months, and Fredericton the last three months. Two cities, Quebec and Victoria, did not take action in time to follow up with the others, and these have therefore furnished nothing for the year 1883.

"It would be both premature and dangerous," as stated in the introduction, "to attempt to draw conclusions from these returns, which apply to but one year and constitute merely the inauguration of the practical operation of a new system. In official statistics there is no other alternative but that of publishing the information just as it is collected, without correction as to figures and without supplement as to omissions." Nevertheless, on another occasion we hope to be able to note some interesting features which the compiled tables bring out.

As to the working and value of the system, we will let some of the health and statistical officers of the various cities bear witness. In his report to the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Trenaman, the officer in Halifax, states that, "the system adopted has worked fairly well." Dr. Daniel, of St. John, writes, "the system adopted has the merit of simplicity, works well now that it is in good running order, and I believe insures a very high degree of accuracy." Dr. Robillard of Ottawa, writes, "the practical results of the system inaugurated by the Government, aiding preventive medicine and Sanitary Science, generally, must be of great value, not only so far as the correct records of deaths, but also, as regards the causes of deaths, which in a sanitary point of view is at least of equal importance."

REPORT OF THE HEALTH OFFICE OF ORILLIA

Dr. Elliot, medical health officer of Orillia, on presenting his report for last year received a cordial vote of thanks from the council of that town for "his very valuable and elaborate report." The doctor states:—"It gives me much pleasure to be able to report a remarkably healthy condition of the town during the past season. We have been entirely free from epidemics of any sort. There has been no scarlet fever; no measles, and no whooping cough. . . . I think I may truly say there has been more practical