

BILLS BEFORE PARLIAMENT.

I.—*An Act for more adequately securing the health of localities in Upper Canada against risk from infection arising from the bodies of persons who die of malignant infectious diseases lying uninterred.*

This important measure was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by John Cameron, Esq., was received and read a first time on the 16th March 1860, since which period we have, although rather carefully watching the proceedings of the House, completely lost sight of it. We are afraid it has been consigned to the "tomb of all the Capulets," with other things good, bad and indifferent. But however much we may approve of this method of disposing of a host of Bills, whose object mainly would seem to be the exhibition of the industry and perhaps ingenuity of their authors, we sometimes meet with exceptions, of which the Bill before us is an example, which do not merit such a fate. For the information of those of our Upper Canadian subscribers who have not seen the Bill, but may take some interest in it, we will briefly recapitulate its chief provisions.

It enacts that the body of any person dying of Cholera, Typhus fever, Scarlet Fever, Small Pox, Erysipelas, Puerperal fever or other contagious disease, in any locality or district, in any city, county or municipality in Upper Canada in which there is a public cemetery, shall be removed from the dwelling or place where he may have died, within (to be) specified periods in summer or winter, and shall be deposited for interment without delay in the nearest cemetery. Clause 2 enacts that the trustees of such cemeteries shall make provision for the proper reception, &c., of such bodies. Clause 3 provides that notice of the decease shall be given by the occupant of the house in which it takes place, and if unable or unwilling to comply with the formality he must signify such. Clause 4 provides that in cases of such inability or unwillingness to remove or inter the body, such duty shall be performed by (a party not designated) at the expense of the county or municipality. In clause 5 it is provided that in cases where such bodies are not removed for interment within the specified time, the removal shall be performed by order of a Magistrate, Justice of the Peace or Coroner. Clause 6 attaches a penalty to persons not giving the notice or not burying the body as required by the act. The seventh clause provides for the payment of the necessary disbursements by the Treasurer of the municipality or county and the eighth clause provides that the expenses may be recovered from the relations in certain cases.

Although the principle involved in this Bill is based upon a point by no means yet positively determined, that the dead bodies of persons dying of infectious diseases are still capable of propagating those diseases, we think this Bill an essentially good one, as it gives the living the benefit of a doubt, and therefore cannot by any possibility be productive of injury to any one.

We can easily understand however, where its provisions might be productive of extreme annoyance, and we allude especially to the compulsory removal of the dead body within a limited time after death. In this country it is customary, as we believe it is almost every where in Christendom, to allow an interval of at least