

## MONTREAL'S HEALTH REPORT.

The report of the indefatigable Medical Health Officer of Montreal, Dr. LaRocque, for 1883, is as usual a volume of considerable size, containing much useful information. The doctor very properly gives a brief review of the efforts made in Montreal to promote public health measures in the Province of Quebec and the Dominion, especially as relating to a Dominion Health Bureau.

In alluding to the high death rate of Montreal he claims it is due to the high death rate—perhaps, we judge, too, to the large number of deaths, rather than to the unusual proportion—amongst the French Canadian children, this being due to the high birth rate amongst the French Canadians. And he suggests that, in justice to Montreal, when the mortality of the city is published, the high birth rate should be made known. The following are interesting extracts from the report:—

“The diseases that caused most deaths under the age of five years were dysentery, diphtheria and scarlatina. The proportion of deaths by zymotic diseases last year formed 28.80 per cent. of the total mortality. Hygienists agree that the principal cause of infantile diseases is improper feeding, especially the substitution of food that tends to deteriorate the feeble organs of young children for the mother's milk. The Board of Health has had a card printed giving advice to families regarding drainage, ventilation, cleanliness of dwellings and especially the care of children.

“Next to the diseases just mentioned that which caused the largest mortality was consumption. There were 427 deaths from this cause, most of which occurred between the ages of 20 and 30. More than one-half were women, who are known to take less exercise in the air than men. It cannot be said that the air of Montreal is favorable to the development of consumption. The proportion of deaths from this cause was 15.26 per cent. of the total mortality, while in Philadelphia it was 34.22, in Naples 34.22, Toronto 19.24, New York 29.29, Glasgow 30.31. Our climate is a comparatively dry one. The mean temperature last year was 41°, the mean humidity 72°. In London, England, the temperature was 48°, and the mean humidity 82°.

“Last year the city was comparatively free from contagious diseases. We are happy to say that there has not been a single case

of small-pox since July, 1881. The mortality from diphtheria and typhoid fever was less than that of the previous year. In every case of death from diphtheria, scarlatina and typhoid fever the dwellings and surroundings were visited in order to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the disease. In a large number of cases the drains were found defective, and the cellars and surroundings of the dwellings in bad sanitary condition. On the other hand, in many cases, these were found in excellent order. Certainly defective drains should be put in order; but, even were every attention possible given them, it would be impossible ever to succeed in stamping out contagious diseases without endeavoring to diminish, as far as possible, the quantity of the germs by isolation, disinfection, &c., and, above all, take care not to allow any animal or vegetable matter to be left either in the streets or cellars or anywhere in the vicinity of dwellings. Such matters in a state of decomposition serve as food (pabulum) to those minute organisms called germs of contagion, and so soon as they come in contact with this matter they propagate in an astonishing manner. It cannot, therefore, be too much insisted upon that the city should be kept scrupulously clean, which can only be done by a system of scavenging as perfect as possible, under a strict surveillance.

“I must observe that the entire mortality of the foundlings should not be added to that of Montreal. A large number of those children come from other municipalities. The question of foundlings is not only a question of humanity, but also one of state. In Europe Governments take measures to prolong their lives. The eminent Dr. Brochard, who for a number of years interested himself in this question in France, reports that in the departments in which a medical service is established the proportion of deaths is only 20 to 25 per cent. of the total received, and where such service does not exist the proportion is from 80 to 95 per cent.”

## REPORT ON SCHOOL HYGIENE.

The Chairman of the Committee on “School Hygiene,” Dr. Youmans, of Mount Forest, of the Provincial Board of Health, presented at this month's meeting of the board an exhaustive report upon the above subject. Information, upon which the report was based, was obtained from the teachers of the schools throughout the Province. The Com-