

INFANT MORTALITY.

Six hundred and thirty deaths of children, less than one year old, in the city of Toronto in one year, 1875 ; or about 9 per 1,000 of population. Such is the record of the cemeteries of this city, as noticed in the *SANITARY JOURNAL* of last month. Last year was not an exceptional year ; and it is not probable that Toronto is an exceptionally unhealthy city. It is certainly appalling that considerably over one-third of the total number of deaths were of infants, infants at the breast, for but few comparatively are weaned at this age. It is certainly enough to awaken enquiry as to the cause of this destruction of infantile life, and to give rise to the question, cannot something be done to prevent such destruction ?

The immediate causes of death as given in the records are not of course satisfactory or reliable, and it is impossible from them to judge anything like accurately regarding the more remote causes or conditions. But as the principal causes appear to have been " debility," diarrhoea, and convulsions, it may be safely assumed that in improper food and foul air were the chief factors which gave rise to them. There is not much overcrowding in Toronto, nor indeed in any of the cities of Ontario ; though there are innumerable collections of filth in city and country, from which emanate poisonous gases that extinguish the life of numerous little children. Nevertheless, we are firmly convinced that to improper diet, bad nourishment, much more than to any other cause, must be attributed this sad waste of early human life. Give infants sufficient of the mother's milk of good quality, and pure air to breathe, keep the skin in good condition by frequent bathing, and the body warm by suitable clothing, and only a very small proportion of them will die.

Though too many infants are fed on prepared foods, more or less objectionable, or perhaps on impure cows milk, which give rise to much intestinal derangement, much the largest proportion of them receive their nourishment direct from the mother, especially during the first eight