

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE DAILY WHIG (Kingston, Ont.), a paper which we have been much pleased to find has long shown a good deal of interest in public health progress, after quoting from this JOURNAL a portion of our article relating to infantile mortality in the January issue, says: The only omission in our article, "and it is a serious one, is the failure to give any idea how the people, and especially the parents, can be forced to give children that care and protection which is calculated to prolong life. *Clearly there is need of an education on this point.* Few parents deliberately injure life by premeditated and cruel conduct. Few neglect, wilfully, any action which is designed to deprive them of the little ones whose presence and growth is an inspiration to them. They may do mischief ignorantly, not criminally. Their faults may be faults not easily got at and certainly not easily corrected. What is to be accomplished by act of parliament is not apparent to every one." The words we have italicized state precisely what we have urged almost from the first issue of this JOURNAL; and the words following the italics give views relative to parental care which are fully in accord with those given herein on more than one occasion.

ACTS of Parliament it is true cannot force parents to take proper care of their little ones, but parliament can and should provide a system and means for educating the parents. In making sanitary progress, that part of sanitary action which requires coercion may best be in our system of government with the municipalities, under provincial control; while it is the duty of the federal powers to see that the provinces exercise this control or adopt some means for so doing. To collect statistics and statements relative to the condition of the public health, make investigations as to the causes of excessive disease or mortality, and to EDUCATE the people in the ways and means of preventing disease is also the duty of the federal authorities. The vital statistics, which should be collected more extensively and accurately in Canada than they are form a principal means and avenue as well as a guide for this education.

AT EVERY BIRTH in France, in which country provision is made as in most other countries for the registration of all births, a pamphlet of

instructions on the care of infants is given to the parents when the birth is registered. At the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association in Brooklyn a few months ago, the editor of this JOURNAL, in urging for a special committee to consider the question of the care of infants (which was afterward appointed), presented a sheet of instructions "To mothers," which was given in the last issue of this JOURNAL. Something like it, he suggested might be required to be sold with every nursing bottle sold. There are probably not less than 150,000 children born in Canada every year—over 400 every day. It appears that over half of these die before reaching the age of five years. Of the 18,234 deaths registered in 29 of our principal cities and towns last year, 9,495 were of those under five years. There are many ways in which the parents of these might be educated and many lives saved thereby. Proper food and pure air would save thousands of them.

WHO is to educate these parents and save the children? Only the Federal Government can carry out a proper system of health statistics and reports for the Dominion. It cannot be properly done in parts. And with one central system for investigating and educating, guided by the statistical returns, these functions can be performed in a much more economical and complete manner than by a system for each province. The abnormal mortality is not confined to any one province. Kingston is highly favored in this regard, but in Toronto, of the 2,359 deaths registered, 1,056 were of those under five years of age. In Ottawa the proportion of infantile mortality was about the average of the totals, over half. Every body knows that many children die from diphtheria, diarrhoea and other preventable diseases in villages and rural districts as well as in the cities. A federal system would cost some money. But if the same mortality prevailed among any of the domestic animals the money would be voted for making efforts to prevent it. The unanimous support of Dr. Roome's motion before parliament by the members of the House will show a general interest in the wellbeing of Canadian people such as no other note can.

THE TOTAL MORTALITY last year in the 29 principal cities and towns in Canada, as returned