

AN ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF CANADA.

THE HIGH DEATH-RATE IN CANADIAN CITIES—TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT. GREATER THAN IN ENGLAND—THE IMMENSE MONEY LOSS IN CANADA THROUGH PREVENTABLE SICKNESS AND DEATHS—HOW THIS MAY BE PREVENTED—COSTS OF PREVENTION—WHAT HAS BEEN DONE—WHAT IS NEEDED.

IF any apology is needed for the following address to the legislators of the Dominion of Canada, I would ask permission to write, and also ask pardon for writing thus personally of myself, that, having now given over twelve years of the best part of my life almost solely to the consideration and study of public health subjects and proceedings, I have naturally learned in a greater degree than most others the value of practical public health work, and the extent of the loss yearly sustained by the people of this country from want of proper sanitary regulations—want of practical systematic means for the prevention of disease and premature deaths. And this has naturally given rise to a proportionally strong desire on my part to see more attention given everywhere to preventive measures. Hence my appeal herein to the legislators of Canada, and much more particularly the legislators of the Federal Parliament, in whose hands rest largely the health and life-interests as well as the other interests of the people of this Dominion.

THE STRENGTH OF A NATION

cannot be correctly estimated simply by numbering its inhabitants. The health, vigor and ages at death of the people must be taken into account. For example, we find that according to the Statistical Year Book of Austria, in examining recruits for the army, the proportion of "fit" to "unfit," or accepted to rejected, is as nearly as possible *three to seven* in that country; while a British Army's medical report shows the proportion of "fit" to "unfit" of recruits examined there as two to one. As to the causes of primary unfitness, "muscular tenuity and debility" in the

Austro-Hungarian conscripts prevailed to the extent of 281 per 1,000; while of English recruits only 56 per 1,000 were incapacitated thereby, even with the addition of impaired constitutions. In Austria "disease of joints" (probably of a scrofulous character) incapacitates 106 per 1,000, while less than 10 per 1,000 are refused in England from this cause.

Again, in Norway, a highly favored country in this regard, about 25 per cent. of those who are born die before reaching maturity, or the age of 20 years. In England and the United States about 35 per cent. die under 20 years of age. In Ontario, of the deaths registered in 1877, only a small fraction less than 50 per cent. were of those under 20 years of age at death; in 1878, 48.5 per cent. were under 20 years. So that the amount or numbers of people of a nation is not a measure of its strength and stamina.—(*Sanitary Journal*, Feb., 1881.)

WHO ARE INTERESTED.

Public health cannot be regarded as a subject which concerns the doctors only, but indeed the reverse of this: excepting inasmuch as it may concern them adversely to have their present means of living in a measure lessened. The doctors, however, invariably lead in all public health proceedings. As a class, they are benevolent and public-spirited, and they are the best judges of, and are hence impressed with the great value of, such proceedings. Public health concerns every individual, of every age and station, of every class and creed. Every case of preventable sickness is a direct loss to the country as well as to those directly concerned; every premature or preventable death is a still greater direct loss to the