

OBSERVATIONS AND ANNOTATIONS.

THE Sanitary Convention, in connection with the first Annual Meeting of the Ontario Association of Health Officers, held in Woodstock on the 17th and 18th of this month, was attended by a fair number of able medical officers who ought to have drawn a better attendance of those for whose benefit chiefly the convention was held, namely the people of Woodstock. Among the health officers present were, Drs. Elliot, of Orillia, Coventry, Windsor, Griffin, Brantford, Daniel Clark, Toronto, Yeomans, Mount Forest, Burrows, Lindsay and McLellan, Trenton. In the absence of the President of the Association, Dr. Sweetland of Ottawa, owing to sickness in his family, we understand, the first Vice-President, Dr. Coventry of Windsor, read the annual address. A number of valuable papers were read and discussed, a synopsis of some of which we hope to give in the next issue of the JOURNAL. Dr. Coventry was elected President for the ensuing year.

THE attendance of the public at the Woodstock Convention, we are sorry to learn, was on the whole not large, indeed a local organ states that it was small, and "anything but a success," although at the evening session it was fair, with "quite a number of ladies." The apathy of the people in matters of this kind is marvellous. The only way is to "keep at them." The general interest however in subjects relating to health is certainly on the increase, especially in some of the cities and towns where they have active health officers. Health conventions in Michigan have been numerous and largely attended. There they have an active and popular State Board of Health which is continually, in various practical ways, awakening an interest amongst the people.

THE Toronto Local Board of Health's Report for last year is by far the most respectable volume that has been issued by the City Health Department for many years. The Board "forbade the public in future placing privy vaults on their premises," but should have gone further and prevented the use of such entirely. There is no reason why some of the inhabitants should be permitted to use them and not

others. The Medical Health Officer's Report contains much useful information, on the outbreak of small-pox during the early part of the year, on vaccination and on the work of inspection. The health of the city ought to improve, but very much yet remains to be done. A better water supply and a purified bay are indispensable to the city's health.

THE contagiousness of consumption which we strongly favour, and the fact that physicians and others are so frequently exposed to the infection and yet do not contract the disease, may be explained in the following way, as shown by recent experiments. The bacillus of consumption is a slowly developed organism, requiring about ten days when cultivated artificially before it begins to grow. If applied to an open wound it will be almost certain to be removed by washing or otherwise before it has time to establish itself; but if injected under the skin, local tuberculosis develops itself, and this is followed, later, by a general infection. In like manner it may be in the case of the lungs. "When a healthy individual inspires the materies morbi, it is removed by expectoration, before it has time to establish itself and grow. But when a portion of the lung remains consolidated for a length of time, as after a catarrhal pneumonia, then the tubercle bacillus finds a suitable nidus, and time to grow, and foci of infection are thus established." So likewise, persons who respire but imperfectly and do not expand and use the apex of the lungs, the organism may chance to remain almost undisturbed in that locality until it develops and multiplies. Thus, as we have long contended, "it would appear," as the *Canada Lancet* says, "that the disease is not *per se* hereditary, but the pre-disposition to such conditions of the lungs as favor the reception and growth of the cause of the disease, is hereditary."

THE CENTURY has added another to the list of services it has done its readers. In its issue for May it publishes the first of a series of papers by Prof. W. O. Atwater, of the Wesleyan University, Middleton, Conn., on the Chemistry of Foods and Nutrition. Prof. Atwater makes an exhaustive study of the chemistry of foods,