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PRESS CENSORSHIP.

THERE is proverbially more than one way of killing a cat. Some people in the United States are much agitated over two clauses in the new Postal Act, which they regard as the thin end of the wedge of government press censorship. One clause calls for "a sworn statement, twice a year, setting forth the names and post office addresses of the editor and managing editor, publisher, business managers, and owners, and, in addition, the stockholders, if the publication be owned by a corporation; and also the names of known bondholders, mortgagees, or other security holders, and also in the case of daily newspapers, there shall be included in such statement the average of the number of copies of each issue of such publication sold or distributed to paid subscribers during the preceding six months."

While this class of information would be interesting to the public as well as being in the public interest (which is not quite the same thing) it has nothing to do with the Post Office.

Another clause provides "that all editorial or other reading matter published in any such newspaper, magazine, or periodical for the publication of which money or other valuable consideration is paid, accepted, or promised shall be plainly marked "advertisement." Any editor or publisher printing editorial or other reading matter for which compensation is paid, accepted, or promised, without so marking the same, shall upon conviction in any court having jurisdiction be fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than five hundred dollars."

This information also has nothing to do with the Post Office, although both interesting and in the public interest. It is open, however, to the more serious objection that it would in most cases fail to achieve its object. The most mischievous wild-cat booming being done in the editorial and news columns, is seldom paid for over the counter; and the owners of the papers do not in every case get the cash (although of course they get the credit of getting the cash), but it is paid for every time. Not all the dead cats have been choked with butter.

FRENCH MORTALITY STATISTICS.

THE mortality statistics of France just issued show a number of interesting features. During the last five years there has been a remarkable falling off in the death rate, the number of deaths annually being reduced from 778,000 to 704,000. That this is

not due to the reduction in the birth rate is shown by the fact that the death rate among children under one year old has been reduced 22 per cent. The falling off in the mortality would be much greater but for the scourge of consumption, which still carries off nearly 90,000 victims a year, or, according to population, 30 per cent. more than in any other European country. Tuberculosis is shown to cause the greatest havoc among young persons, 12 per cent. of those dying between the ages of 20 and 39 being carried away by this disease. The report also shows that the alarming prevalence of consumption is a direct consequence of alcoholism, those departments the most ravaged being just those where the drink traffic is greatest.

All over the western world the ravages of tuberculosis have become so serious as to force themselves upon the attention of governments, municipal authorities and all who are interested in the public welfare. Sufficient has been learned of tuberculosis to convince the most sceptical that while many individual cases are hopeless, the disease as it affects the community as a whole, is largely controllable. Unfortunately the control involves great expense, sacrifice, energy and patience, but the lives saved are worth much more than the cost. Good work is being done in Canada but not yet upon a sufficiently large scale. Unfortunately, public health, except in the matter of quarantine, is one of the subjects assigned to the provincial legislatures and parliaments under the British North America Act. The best plan would seem to be to hold a conference between the Dominion and Provincial governments to devise some scheme of united action, aided by both federal and provincial finances. Under the present system less is being done officially for the preservation of human life than is done to prevent the spread of diseases among cattle.

SIR THOMAS SHAUGH-SATISFIED FARMERS.

SIR THOMAS SHAUGHNESSY, returning from his annual trip, states that everybody in the West seemed to be satisfied and there is no reason why they should not be. The Western Canada farmer, we imagine, would never know that he had any reason for dissatisfaction if there were no kindly politicians to point out his troubles to him. He is in the position of the unhappy litigant who wept at the conclusion of his lawyer's speech to the jury. Asked what caused his sudden woe he replied: "I never realized until now how much I have suffered."