

garbage. The board of health recommend that the Mayor be authorized to appoint a board of three sanitary experts, who shall consider and report, within six months from their appointment, the best method and specifications for ventilating the school-houses and of disposing of the excreta therefrom. The chairman of the Board of Boston is a physician, Dr. Durgin, who has now occupied the position many years. Besides him there are five high class physicians connected with the board, a city physician, an assistant physician, a port physician, and an assistant, and a medical inspector. Fifteen inspectors are constantly employed and more are called for, especially for inspecting the 8,000 tenement houses of the city.

FROM ST. PANCRAZ (Eng.), with a population of over 244,000, the medical officer, Dr. John Sykes, reports the mortality, for the first time down to 19 per 1,000. Dr. Sykes seems inclined to regard school-closing in the prevention of measles as of doubtful value, as an epidemic of measles rapidly expends itself, and by the time it has been found necessary to close the schools, is generally on the wane. An important point to decide is whether the children are any the less likely to come into contact while playing together promiscuously out of school, than they are in the class rooms or school ground. It was found that the very young children not attending school were a fertile source of the disease. Dr. Sykes considers that some earlier action than the crude method of closing schools appears to be necessary, since to close a school is to admit that it has been allowed to become generally infected to a dangerous extent.

IN THE LECK (Eng.) Sanitary district report, by Dr. Parsons, Medical officer, it is said that, diphtheria, from which the Leck District had been free for three years, had during the past twelve months broken out in several distinct localities. It was limited to a small number of households, but the members of these households have suffered severely, children being especially attacked. In all the households attacked the inmates were living exposed to the influence of grave sanitary conditions, and in almost all the localities the first case was a person who had possibly been exposed to the infection of scarlet fever or measles. At all the houses gross and dangerous nuisances were found, such as a damp, dilapidated, and ill-ventilated condition of the house, defective drains, some in direct connection with the interior of the house; faultily-placed privies, and water supplies exposed to contamination.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

### THE PUBLIC HEALTH DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT.

WE DEVOTE a good deal of this number of the JOURNAL to a full report from Hansard of the discussion in the House of Commons here, on Monday, March 10 inst., of Dr. Roome's motion for the establishment of a Federal Health Department for the Dominion. Dr. Roome, we may state, did not desire a full department with a Minister at its head, at the present time, but a sort of sub-department, with a deputy or commissioner as its head, in connection with the Department of Agriculture. We give this space the more particularly (and with two extra pages of reading matter) because no other publication (except Hansard) has given anything approaching a full report of the discussion.

THE EFFECT of the discussion upon the House and upon the Country cannot but be very favorable and highly promotive of the public health interests; and Dr. Roome's action may be regarded as by far the most important and decisive that had ever before been taken in Parliament on behalf of the public health. It was not expected that any special action would be taken by Government this year. The First Minister's suggestion to have a conference of representatives of the Federal and the different Provincial governments, in order to settle upon some satisfactory scheme for carrying out the proposal, was probably the best that could be devised. We have no doubt that by such a conference a satisfactory plan could be agreed upon by which the objects of Dr. Roome's motion would be attained, and the establishment of a Central Bureau or Department of health, such as has long been advocated by this JOURNAL and the leading sanitarians of the Dominion, would follow in reasonable or due time.

SIR JOHN MACDONALD, we believe, intends to provide during this year for the conference. Dr. Roome we think is not one to allow the matter at this stage to have a rest, but will push it on until something practical results. It may be reasonably expected that at the next session of parliament a still more important advance will be made by members of the House on be-