

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE INSTRUCTION OF THE PUBLIC in the ways of preventing disease and the preservation of health is, we still and ever maintain, the great chief sanitary want of the age. For over sixteen years we have devoted most of our time to this work of instruction and to urging its supreme importance upon the intelligent minority and upon those in authority over us. Gradually yet slowly—often most discouragingly slow—light has been let in and a few are seeing the value of all sanitary work, and especially of liberal public instruction in its behalf. We are much gratified that many of our contemporaries, leading daily and weekly local papers, are now showing a marked tendency to aid in the spread of this “New Gospel,” as it has been termed, although it is as old at least as the most ancient of history.

NEW SUGGESTIONS and wise, in the way of sanitary instruction, are now being made by a number of the medical officers of local health boards, as we have noted elsewhere in this number. These physicians suggest that their respective municipalities have health sheets or leaflets printed and freely distributed amongst the people. This way of arousing the apathetic rate-payers would be a most excellent one, and the small cost would be amply repaid, doubtless many fold. In many municipalities, however, the cost would come up as an obstacle—an obstacle insurmountable doubtless in many, probably in the majority of cases, with the, as yet, dim light on the question and the very general want of this very instruction. This, probably, might not be the case in these more advanced municipalities where the suggestions have been made, but it would be we fear in the great majority of them throughout the Dominion.

A BETTER WAY, on the whole, probably, for the entire public, would be for the Federal Government to make provision for the free distribution in every municipality of practical instruction in all sanitary subjects. This would be much less costly, too, on the whole, than for each locality to do it for their special community. Besides, all municipalities need it, and, it must be observed, those *need it most* which would be least disposed to incur the cost of it. Moreover, the township of Euphrasia might carry out the wise suggestion of Dr. Sproule, M.P., the

medical officer of the township board, and have health leaflets or pamphlets distributed there with great benefit to the people of Euphrasia, but the fact must not be overlooked that from the adjoining township, if the people were not instructed in like manner, infections of disease, through the want of this same instruction, might at any time be conveyed to their neighbours in Euphrasia, just in the manner of the case reported by Dr. McLellan, noted on another page: wherein the infection causing a number of fatal cases of diphtheria was conveyed directly, presumably from ignorance, by children living “twenty miles away.” So ALL must endeavour to work in harmony for each others and the general good. Whether we will or not, or whether disposed to or not, we must of necessity—for our own self-preservation—be in a measure our neighbour’s keeper.

THE SUGGESTIONS of these medical officers, as above noted, for the sanitary instruction of the people, affords evidence of the desirability of having carried out at least one of the suggestions in our last issue relative to the work for a Federal Sub-department of Health—that of the free distribution of a Health Bulletin, monthly or oftener. Such Bulletin, giving the mortuary statistics of the various localities, together with the localities in which epidemics were prevailing as well as specially instructive matter on disease prevention, would act as a powerful educator and also a powerful stimulant to municipalities to crush out, keep down and prevent all forms of epidemics.

PUBLIC BATHS such as are now in successful operation in the city of Vienna are proposed for New York. The object of the plan is to supply baths which can be kept clean and free from contagion. The great objections to the use of public baths such as are usually constructed is the want of frequent or constant change of water and the possibility of infection. In Vienna, in order to obviate this, shower baths only are used, the water being allowed to flow off into the sewer as fast as it is used. Hence the immense tanks are not required and the baths may be more easily constructed in central parts of cities.

OTTAWA is proposing to provide public baths. Here is a suggestion. In New York it is calculated that a building on an ordinary city lot