

Infant Mortality.

THE HONOURABLE W. J. HANNA,
Registrar-General for Ontario.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit, in accordance with instructions, a Second Special Report on Infant Mortality, and to state in regard to the first Report, that as far as can be ascertained, it seems to have been the first instance in which such a report was issued by any Government. There have been special enquiries and reports *re* the Birth-Rate, and also articles on Infant Mortality incorporated in many reports, but this seems to be the first instance in which a Government ordered a Special Report to be made, which was intended mainly to arouse popular interest in this important subject. To this fact no doubt its success was largely due, the entire issue being very soon exhausted. It had a good circulation in Ontario, and also in the other Provinces. Requests for copies came from as far away as Victoria, B.C., and some went to Halifax.

A good many enquiries were also received from the United States, especially from libraries and from the Russell Sage Foundation (Department of Child Helping), as well as from the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality. The officers of the last named Association were especially friendly, and signified not only their own interest in the Report and approbation of it, but mentioned that the Press Clipping Bureau employed by them had sent them a number of press references to it. Officials of the United States Government at Washington also wrote to the Department with reference to the Report, especially Dr. Cressy L. Wilbur, Chief Statistician to the Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce and Labour, who refers in his letter to the statement made on page 34 of the Report—"Nothing can be done until we know where the babies are, and when they arrive," and adds "This the key to the situation, so far as the Vital Statistics side is concerned."

Members of the medical profession in Ontario have also written to the Department about the Report, and some of the medical journals, as well as the newspapers, have drawn special attention to it. Among the experts who have expressed approval of the efforts of the Department to draw attention to this subject, are Walter Kruesi, of Boston; Dr. Richard Cabot, of Boston, and Mr. Benjamin Broadbent, of Huddersfield, England, who made himself famous when he was Mayor of Huddersfield by cutting down the Infant Mortality rate from 184 per thousand to 97 per thousand.

A Canadian journalist living in Orillia, sent a copy of the Report to Mr. Broadbent, and Mr. Broadbent wrote from his home in Huddersfield to this Department saying, "Have read it with the greatest possible interest and delight."

A COMPLEX SUBJECT.

Infant Mortality is such a complex subject that it may be approached from many points of view. There is no part of Sanitary administration which does not bear a relation to it, and again, there are certain aspects of it that appear very simple.