

TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT.

In last year's report the Board expressed a very strong hope that the grant of \$1,000 would be increased to \$1,500 by the civic authorities, but that hope was blighted, and this season we received no addition to the former one. But hope may be blighted and yet not killed, so ours survives as we look forward to next season.

Notwithstanding the visible decrease in the number of applicants this winter, the finances would have been totally inadequate to cope with the needs of those we helped, had they not been augmented by most kind and most liberal unsolicited subscriptions.

Each season the Board has a difficult corner to turn. This occurs in January. The City grant has been disposed of in stocking the fourteen Depositories, in the purchase of coal, in special grants of rent and passage money, etc. The collectors have begun to canvass for subscriptions, but returns have not yet come in. Midwinter and poverty are stern realities to those who visit the poor. Realities that forced the Board this year to send an appeal through the Press, which was most kindly responded to by the generous-hearted.

The Superintendents report more illness in their divisions than in any previous year, and more deaths have occurred in the poorer districts than ever before recorded. A number of poor incurables, who will not be persuaded to go into the Home for Incurables, also require constant attention. We have been forced to look after several families in the greatest destitution, living just across the C. P. R. track. In one family the man was dying of consumption, the woman a confirmed inebriate, and several starving children in rags. The Superintendent described the home (if such it could be called) as one of the most wretched she had ever visited. In another case the house had been burned down and the family found without an article of bedding. These people live beyond the City limits, and are therefore beyond our lawful boundary.

The proper authorities have been notified and requested to look after them, but no action has been taken.

We have helped a number of deserving and, in some cases, educated and refined people, who have not applied, but have been discovered in great trouble, as a rule, over the rent they have been unable to meet. This indebtedness is a heavy load to carry, accompanied by the threat of the landlord or the presence of the bailiff. We have been able to relieve several of the presence of the last-named individual, by the only means which appeal to him. However, we must say that we have always found him most reasonable and humane.