

THE LANCET ON THE ART OF EATING.

There is little if any doubt that cooking has been employed by man in the preparation of food from the remotest ages. It is probable also that empirical ideas of what conduces to comfort in diet early formed the basis of a gastronomic art not without some relation to physiological truth. It has been reserved for later times, however, and for civilized man, to discover and formulate a regular method of dining. By a process of natural selection, the work of elaborating this system has in great measure passed into the hands of our French neighbors, who have thus been able to develop an art characteristically their own. Our simpler national customs relating to the table have, in common with those of most other peoples, attracted less attention, though it is not likely that they will ever disappear. It is needless here, however, to discuss in detail each local peculiarity. We should rather aim at understanding those common principles which underlie all rightly constituted systems, and give to each its value as an aid to wholesome nutrition. The time of eating is a matter of no small consequence. This is to some extent subject to individual convenience, but we may take it that as a general rule not less than five hours should separate one meal from another. The short interval of rest usual after meals will commend itself as being in strict accordance with physiological necessity. The quantity and quality of food taken also require careful attention, and these again must be regulated by reference to the work to be done by a given person. Some difference of opinion has always existed as to the proper daily allowance of meat. We shall probably do justice to the digestive powers of most persons, however, by advising that only one substantial meat meal be taken daily. More than this would tend, if continued, to overload the tissues with digestive products, and less would hardly suffice for full nutrition. Drink, if alcoholic, should be sparingly taken, or not used at all. Cookery has in these days been elaborated almost to excess. Variety and delicacy are carried to an extreme, and we should probably gain rather than lose if plainness combined with care were adopted as our

NOTES ON HEALTH REPORTS.

FROM ASHBURNHAM, Ont.—The Medical Officer, Dr. J. Clarke, of Peterborough, reports that no death from infectious disease has occurred during last year, and but two cases—one of typhoid fever and one of diphtheria—during that time. The amount of ordinary or non-infectious illness had also been very limited. There had been only 14 deaths throughout the year, making the death-rate for the village a fraction above $9\frac{1}{2}$ per thousand. In Peterborough, Dr. Clarke says, it has steadily decreased as sanitary work has become more general and more efficiently performed. "This is the rule everywhere. Even if neglect does not produce illness directly, a polluted air lowers the vitality of the human system so much as to make it the prey of any disease that comes along, as, for instance, the recent epidemic. A great deal of sanitary work has been done during the year." He continues, "I have made it my duty to take every opportunity of instructing householders as to cheap and efficient means of disinfection, not only in contagious disease, but for ordinary and every day use around the house. Earth closets, slop receptacles and anything containing the elements of putrefaction should be disinfected regularly, especially in the hot months."

THE BOSTON (Mass) Health Report for 1889, just received, is in size about like the Montreal and Toronto reports. For twelve years the inspection of live animals and dressed meat at the Boston abattoir had been done by officers of the health department, who were somewhat familiar with the disease among animals; and though not scientifically trained for the work, they had succeeded in detecting and condemning much unwholesome meat which, through the innocence of its owners or otherwise, would have forced its way upon the market. Believing, however, that this work should keep pace with the advanced knowledge of the diseases among domestic animals whose flesh is used for human food, and in the danger of communicating such diseases to man through animal food, the board instituted a new order of inspection on the 1st of October, and Dr. Alexander Burr, a recent graduate from the Harvard Veterinary School, was appointed as inspector. There are now about three hundred and fifty thousand loads of garbage, ashes, street sweepings, and other miscellaneous *debris* gathered up by the city teams annually and carted away to different places and for different uses. The annual cost to Boston in handling this, is about five hundred thousand dollars, about one hundred thousand of which is spent in collecting