

EDITORIAL NOTES.

BATHING is slowly becoming a more general practice in "civilized" countries. In Central Asia, Northern Africa and Eastern and Northern Europe—among the Persians, Hindoos, Turks, Egyptians, Russian, Finns and Japanese it has "always," it appears, been an universal practice. But very crude ideas yet prevail regarding the bath. Some bathe "for the fun of the thing," in hot weather, and never bathe again till the hot season comes around once more. The bath for promoting cleanliness and an active vigorous skin is more necessary in cold than in warm weather—all through the nine or ten cooler months than in only the two or three warm ones. Hence in making provision for public baths, arrangements should be made for cold as well as for warm weather bathing. It is better to bathe once a year than never at all, but hot weather baths are but a poor substitute for none, and "hardly worth the candle."

IN PROVIDING for public baths therefore,—and we are much pleased to note that the capital is likely to take action in this behalf, Alderman Henderson pushing on the movement commenced last year—it would be most desirable that provision be made for bathing in all seasons. For this, the first outlay need not be much increased, or only for the purposes of warming, and with a small charge (perhaps of 2c., 5c. or 10c. a bath) the after working expenses would be met probably as well in cold as in warm weather. In this case the rink could not be utilized, of course. But we would suggest the erection of at least three or four plain, neat but inexpensive buildings in as many suitable convenient localities in the city, to be supplied with a constant flow of water. Provisions would be required for warming water, when required, and for both shower and plunge baths, warm, cold, and medium. These would be for cleanliness and health. A great deal of water would not be necessary. The charge made for them should be but 2c., 3c. or 5c. each. Swimming baths are quite another thing. They are a non-essential luxury, require a great deal of water, which requires to be changed often, as probably not many persons care to swim in even a thousand or two cubic yards of water in which many others have washed, and if provided, the charge should be 15c. to 25c.

EVERY TOWN with public water works could provide such baths, as indicated, shower and plunge baths, warm and cold, for cleanliness and health at very little comparative cost. The outlay would yield a hundred fold, directly, in the prevention of sickness, to say nothing of the comforts of a clean public skin. The reduction in the sickness rate,—as shown by less absentees, &c., in the public schools of London and Germany, and also in the Prussian and French armies, where provision has been made for general bathing, has been enormous. Many of the smaller towns in Canada are providing for a public water supply. We entreat them on behalf of the suffering citizens everywhere to take public baths into consideration and provide for this essential of health. It would be a very nice thing for Canadians to set a leading example in this regard every where in their towns, to be pointed to as being especially a *clean* people. Clean people are, as a rule, the more intellectual and honest. The washed pupils in the public schools make greater progress in learning. We would here mention that it should not be necessary to obtain Legislative consent to raise money for such purpose. Health boards can raise money surely for health purposes as the law now stands.

PUBLIC LAUNDRIES, under inspection, in which the public underclothing could be repeatedly and cheaply washed, would be a boon too, and a profitable investment in respect to the public health. There are many fields open for political economists but none would prove more fruitful by cultivation than those which concern the public health. The skin cannot be kept clean and healthy, no matter how often it be washed, unless the covering near it be kept constantly clean also. Entrance into almost any public school, anywhere, will at once suggest, through the sense of smell, the great need of greater facilities for laundering, as well as for bathing. The frequent change of underclothing is included in the measures recommended for promoting beauty, especially, of course, of complexion. Indeed such changes are as essential to the beauty, as to the healthfulness of the skin.

THE SPECIAL committee appointed by the Association of Executive Health Officers of Ontario met early this month and made some