

giving a slight preponderance to the males. The number of twin births has increased this year from 349 to 411. Of triplets there were five cases, one in each of the counties of Lanark, Prescott, Russell and York, and two in Lincoln. In two cases the parents received the Queen's bounty of £3 sterling. Notwithstanding the hard times there appears to have been a large increase in the number of illegitimate births, a circumstance greatly to be deplored. The number of children born out of wedlock registered during 1877 was 529, as against 392 in 1876.

In regard to marriages 25,154 were solemnized during the year; of these 34.89 per cent. were Methodists, 20.96 Presbyterians, 18.30 Episcopalians, 12.27 Roman Catholics, 5.59 Baptists, etc., and 345 were returned by the officiating clergyman without mentioning the denomination. Marriage by license instead of by banns still seems to be the favorite mode, 88.34 per cent. having been by license. The favorite months in the year for coupling still continue to be December and October. Among males the majority were married between the ages of 20 and 30; 134 were minors and 41 were over 70. Among females, 48 per cent. were married between the ages of 20 and 25; 22 per cent. were under 20, and 3½ per cent. over 40. A few instances of marriages at an advanced age are given. The age of the oldest man married was 88, and the oldest woman 68; the former married a blushing maid of 48 years, and the latter an old gentleman of 71 years. Two youths were joined in the holy bonds of wedlock at the early age of 17, and 32 girls were married at fifteen.

In considering that portion of the Report that relates to the deaths, we were struck with the want of definiteness which is painfully apparent in regard to the cause of death. For example, Lung Disease is given as a cause, without a word as to the true nature of the disease, whether tubercular or inflammatory, acute or chronic. Dropsy is also given, without one word as to whether it was due to disease of the heart or kidney. Convulsions are also given without any reference to the cause, real or supposed. From the last mentioned cause alone 573 deaths are given, and it can hardly be possible that in so many cases the physicians have been unable to make out the cause. We trust that in future reports, this matter of registering more correctly the

cause of death will be more carefully attended to by physicians.

The total number of deaths registered in 1877 is 20,053. The highest on the list are, phthisis 2,157, old age 1661, infantile debility 1164, pneumonia 1050, diphtheria 964, scarlatina 717, heart disease 697, diarrhoea 666, convulsions 573, enteritis 497, &c. The months of March and June show the highest and the lowest number of deaths respectively. The curve, or death wave commences to rise in December, ascends rapidly in January, more slowly in February, and reaches the highest point in March. It then recedes until June, the lowest point. In July it again rises and also in August, nearly to the level of March. It then sinks through September, October and November, when it is only a little above the level in June. The two highest points in the death wave are in March and August, and the two lowest are in June and November. These fluctuations are in all probability due to vicissitudes of temperature, and the existence of sanitary or insanitary conditions.

Among the causes of death, phthisis still heads the list, carrying off nearly twice as many as any other specific disease, not including old age, and is likely to maintain its position on the list, unless some malignant epidemic should outstrip it in the race for victims. More females die of this disease than males. The report shows an increased mortality among children under one year of age, and also from one to five, the total number under five being 7,541. While the number of deaths under five years in Ontario compares favorably with other countries, yet the appalling fact remains that nearly one-fourth of all the children born die before they reach the age of one year, one-third die before the end of their fifth year, and nearly one-half before they arrive at the age of 20 years. The report says, "This reflects but little credit upon the manner in which the resources of medical science are applied in the nineteenth century, and the method in which the sanitary regulations are enforced." We cannot allow the former part of this statement to pass unchallenged. It is impossible to expect under present circumstances, that medical science can do more than it is doing, while there is so much "masterly inactivity" in regard to sanitation, and the improper nursing and feeding of children. Medical men are, as a rule, the only members of the community that seem to take a lively