

EDITORIAL NOTES.

"GIVE US AIR" was the subject and title of a paper by Miss Muloch published in a monthly magazine nearly thirty years ago in which she made a passionate appeal on behalf of fresh air and set forth in sombre lines the evil effects of breathing foul air. Thirty years is a long time in which to learn a lesson, yet we find most people every where still prone as the cold weather comes on to shut themselves in air tight rooms with no means whatever for changing the breathed air within for the fresh air without. Now is the season in which every crack and crevice in walls, about doors and windows, are with list and rubber, hermetically closed and barred against the first essential of life. Is it any wonder that in four or five months from now, after nearly every body has half lived through the winter almost without fresh air, comes stalking in the season of penal retribution, running up the death-rate in March and April, as shown every year by statistics, to the highest point in the year? No, it is no wonder, but a wonder, a providential mercy, that more do not die.

NIGHT AIR, too, which has never been yet specially defined, we believe, strikes great terror into some people. Many persons—even, we are afraid, some members of the medical profession—The Sanitary Record says, have a strongly marked antipathy to "night air," as they call it, as if it were of an entirely different chemical composition from "day air." They will not believe that the pure cold air of the darkness outside is better to breathe than the de-oxygenized air of a stuffy bed-room, air which has been breathed over and over again by perhaps several pairs of lungs. We once heard a lady announce with proud temerity that she always slept with a "crack" of her window open! It was a bold thing to do, doubtless, but then it showed that she was advanced. So far as we know no human being ever suffered from sleeping even all night out in the open air with no other roof than the "canopy of heaven," even when lying upon only grass or boughs on the ground, where the air during the night probably does become less salubrious, but still vastly more wholesome for breathing than that already over breathed, and often over and over again over-breathed, in the average bed-room.

THE MILK SUPPLY, bad enough as a rule in

summer, will now soon be drawn (that part of it which is not water, probably foul water) from cows shut up in unventilated stables where with but a limited supply of oxygen they vegetate through the winter as little more than machines for "turning out" a fluid resembling milk. Having been for generations forceably developed and bred for milk supply only, regardless of those more vital functions which give to the animals pure blood and health and vigor, they have in them little or no protective force against the inroads of disease germs. And as the germs or microbes of tubercle and diphtheria and scarlet fever,—all of which, as well as the vaccine virus, it now appears clear, may come to us humans through the cow—are to be found almost everywhere, into the unresisting soil of the bovines they enter and find there a suitable nidus for rapid and abundant development, growth and multiplication, and are hence not infrequently disseminated amongst the people by the milk vendor. Blessed are they, children or adults, who have healthy vigorous organizations which can resist and repel or digest the germs imbibed with the milk.

AS DR. ÖSTERTAG (Berlin) at the late International Hygienic Congress in London said, up to the present time most countries have paid but slight attention to the sanitary question of the milk supply, and have contented themselves with forbidding the sale of adulterated milk or of milk from diseased animals, without taking proper steps to ensure obedience to their orders. "A praiseworthy exception to this was to be found in the Italian law passed in 1890. It was the undeniable duty of the State to see that only pure milk entered the market. The consumer was not in a position to guard himself against the manifold dangers which attended the consumption of milk. Milk might contain the most harmful ingredients in spite of a white colour and sweet taste. Such milk could only be banished from the market if the milk supply was controlled by the Government officials. Only milk obtained with the greatest cleanliness from healthy animals, and possessing normal physical qualities and a certain degree of strength—ought to be allowed to be sold.

AT THE seventeenth Annual Congress of the Sanitary Association of Scotland held last month