

‘Kernels of the Health Congress.

The sectional meetings of the fourteenth annual Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health took place at the Polytechnic and King's College, London, and opened on the 19th inst. As there were in all eight sections, in which numerous papers were read, no doubt to be printed later, we have but space for a few kernels of wisdom.

THE INSTITUTE.

Sir James Orichton-Browne: "He was glad to see eminent ecclesiastics taking part in the congress. A large number of the clergy could do much better by devoting attention to these matters than by preparing silly sermons. They should remember that, in the words of a great statesman who recently died—

'To succour a little child and bring it to its own
Is a durnd sight better business than loafing round
the Throne.'

Professor Smith: "He was convinced that the great work which was required to-day in public health was in the homes of the poor. If they impressed upon the poor the necessity for open windows and cleanliness of person, of food, of drink, and of life they would be doing a great deal for the country."

Lord Londonderry: "Without health they could not hope to have brains. We were holding our own, whether it were in health or brains, with all other countries in the world. But we should never forget that we ought always to be ready to take advice and realise that, if we were to hold our own in the great competition among the nations of the world, health and brains must go together."

"Diplomas of Public Health were now registerable, and therefore standardised, by the General Medical Council, mainly through the action of that institute. A scheme was now nearing completion by which the institute would provide a course of training for duly qualified medical men who sought to enter the service of the public authorities, and in connection with it a bacteriological laboratory was to be established where those authorities would be able to have analyses conducted by highly-skilled experimenters who were specialists in that work."

"The question of training teachers in hygiene was also important. It was most desirable that women teachers should learn how a typical artisan household should be conducted in respect of food, clothing, and cleanliness. This instruction should be practical, and the women who took the course, at present optional, should be able to give the scholars that kind of knowledge which would be immediately useful in their own homes. On many questions arising in connection with the hygiene of education it was desirable to have the advice of skilled women, and the Board had organised last year a staff of specially-selected women inspectors to investigate and advise on the education of very young children and of girls. Most important was the training of girls for home duties, and the kind of instruction now given should be improved. We ought to aim at the general diffusion of a knowledge of these matters which it was for women themselves to consider and promote. Much degeneracy was due to ignorance of the proper method of rearing children up to the age of

three. Something then had been and was being done to introduce that training in social duty without which much of our intellectual education might be wasted. The labours of the Board of Education were constructive, those of the Public Health authorities mainly defensive or preservative, but the two were complementary and mutually dependent. The closer the understanding the more surely would the common object—the improvement of the national health—be advanced."

INFANT MORTALITY.

Mr. S. G. Moore pointed out that the infant death rate had not participated in the reduction of mortality. In the worst parts of some great cities only three, out of four, children born lived for twelve months. The true wealth of a country was not in its mineral or agricultural resources, but in its population, and this was therefore a serious matter, and it was the plain duty of the State to take all reasonable means in its own interests to protect the life of every infant. In at least 95 per cent. of the births, disease was absent, and if weakness was present, with proper care it would disappear.

The Mayor of Huddersfield declared that there was much talk, but without legislation a good deal could be done. An ounce of mother was worth a ton of nurse, and the mothers were quite willing to receive instruction about their babies. He had found that by experience, for in the last nine months he had become acquainted with seventy-four babies. Children only wanted a chance and they would live.

SANATORIA FOR TUBERCULOSIS.

Dr. Kelynack read a paper on "Sanatoria for Consumptives." He declared that the treatment of tuberculosis was one of the most profound medico-social problems of the day. The so-called sanatorium treatment or hygienic management of consumption gave a rational means of coping with the malady. Sixty thousand people died from it every year in England and Wales, and putting those lives at a value of £300 each, that meant a loss to the country annually of £18,000,000. In the metropolis alone, it was estimated that 40,000 persons were affected by pulmonary tuberculosis and as many more by other forms of the disease. The majority of the cases came from the industrial classes, and a third of the deaths from this disease in London occurred in Poor Law institutions. Philanthropic effort was inadequate to cope with the situation. Sanatoria was springing up in all parts of the country—there were about seventy in the United Kingdom, with accommodation for 2,760 patients—but very few of the beds were open to the poor. There was, he urged, greater need for co-operation in the working of existing institutions, for by our muddling methods we were developing a large mass of "consumptive vagabonds," who went from one institution to another. Sanatoria having proved a disappointment to many, there was now talk of industrial colonies for consumptives. The idea was excellent, but it must be understood that these colonies could not be self-supporting. It had been advocated that the Metropolitan Asylums Board should be the consumption authority for the Metropolis. Much could be said in favour of that suggestion, but what was wanted was a directing and controlling body which could deal with cases throughout the country, for at present, true to our national char-

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