

Editorials.

Promiscuous Expectoration by Phthysical Patients.

CONSIDERABLE attention has of late, and most deservedly, been drawn to the pernicious practice indulged in by many phthysical patients of expectorating in public places and in public conveyances.

A few days ago the Secretary of the Provincial Board of Health, in the lay press, drew the attention of the public to the indulgence in this practice by patients travelling in street cars in Toronto, and pointed out the great danger to the public from such a dissemination of the tubercle bacilli.

On a recent Sunday evening, we attended service in St. James' Cathedral. The building was crowded. We sat immediately next a young man who had recently been a patient in the consumptive ward of the general hospital, where he had been taught to exercise the utmost care as to where he should void his sputa; and from which place no doubt he had been discharged partially relieved. His distressing cough was accompanied by copious expectoration which he covertly dropped on the floor, plastering it around with the sole of his boot. Another medical man who sat just across the aisle, apprehensively shivered. The benefit of the impressive service to two men at least (who perhaps required it as much as anybody) was lost. One of them suggested in a quiet and kindly way to the young man that he should use his handkerchief, as being the less of two evils; whereupon the young man in a few minutes arose and left the cathedral.

The writer, while taking a night trip by train recently, before retiring at a late hour, went into a smoking car, where a number of men were smoking and expectorating freely. Large pools of dirty expectorated material nearly covered the floor between some of the seats. Near one end a man was doubled up trying to sleep. His appearance with his nasty cough accompanied by an abundant mucous and purulent expectoration, which he ejected in copious quantities on the floor, gave little doubt as to the malady from which he was suffering. The car was reeking with smoke; and this with its overheated condition, which was causing a rapid evaporation of the dirty pools, made of it a very filthy place.

During the summer of 1894, while passing through the countryside,