

How the Paris Municipality Fights Tuberculosis.

By EDWARD CONNER.

The Municipal Council of Paris, France, has taken up the question of tuberculosis, and having put its hand to the plough, does not intend to look back. It agrees with Professor Grancher that "tuberculosis is the most curable of chronic maladies"; the remedy is found and defined. It is at the school and at the domicile that the enemy must and will be attacked. Figures attest that the scourge afflicts more than one-third of the population of the capital, and kills off one-sixth of the inhabitants. The population of the city is 2,536,834, and the number of primary, communal, or municipal schools, 380. Doctor Bronardel has affirmed that no epidemic in the century, excepting the cholera of 1832 at Paris, has surpassed in murderous results tuberculosis; it is only exceeded by the cholera in Spain, which destroyed 200,000 persons within two years. The municipality will attack the evil at the hospitals by caring for the patient, protecting the personnel and aiding the affected at their own homes. These difficulties, the latter especially, are not underrated. Doctor Bertillon shows that 331,796 of the inhabitants of Paris reside in over-crowded dwellings, fatal alike to health and morality; 17,000 families of five members occupy but two rooms. But what rooms! Too frequently mere closets, devoid of light, deprived of aeration, too often humid, and the natural breeding centres of disease germs. When a family is badly lodged, the narrow ill-ventilated apartment is improperly kept; the afflicted can receive no suitable care, and the disease is propagated more surely if the breadwinner loses his salary, and misery enters and strikes husband and child. Even among the poor, owing to their prejudice to enter a hospital, the afflicted prefers to work on and earn a pittance to support his family. If the wife be vigorous, she can perhaps nurse husband and family, and gain a little money. However, that slavery must soon pull her down; hence, the not uncommon spectacle, when the husband is buried, the first to demand admittance to the hospital is the widow-mother.

If not able to cure tuberculosis, let the effort be made to prevent its being produced. That will at least spare future generations the decimations that ours experiences. The school is a fruitful source of contagion, hence the importance to instruct children about the danger that may result from the improper habit of expectorations. In all Paris omnibuses a police decree is posted up, enjoining passengers not to expectorate inside the vehicle. Let the managers of public schools and the teachers impress on the pupils the observance of strict hygienic rules. Why should not the official medi-

cal attendant be instructed to give public conferences on sanitation? Parents ought to assist in these betterment of health efforts. Further, all dispensaries, whether public or private, ought to be informed of any case of suspected tuberculosis among children, and urge immediate relief accordingly. A slight cough in the day time, a little fever in the evening, some perspirations at night ought to at once arouse the suspicions of any mother. That is the moment when to call in the doctor, and to execute faithfully his instructions. It is at the commencement, at its first stage, that phthisis can be stopped; the bacillus is destroyed, and the tubercle in place of ulcerating becomes hard; in other words, the terrible disease is conquered. Instead, the child coughs, trots about, eschews a doctor, goes to school and contaminates comrades. The cough still sticks, the child begins to feel weary, the cough has arrived at the racking stage, and the dreadful wheezing sound is heard. Months pass; the little afflicted has become worse, is conducted to the hospital by the mother, the physician examines, auscults, and finally breaks the terrible news to her: "Bring away your child, we cannot admit the young invalid, that would require too long a residence; later, perhaps, if not cured, come again, and we will endeavor to find a bed." But a bed on which to die. And the mother withdraws in tears; she has comprehended the situation when it is too late.

Since November, 1895, school dispensaries have been created in France. There are also several founded by private efforts, independent of those organized by the municipalities. They are all urged to extend their good work to "prevent," as well as to cure tuberculosis. It is recommended to serve out liberally cod liver oil and creosote, and provide for every dispensary supplies of medicaments from the central pharmacy, and so secure their being of first quality and at wholesale prices. It is also strongly recommended to obtain healthy and cheap milk for the poor children. Another form of precaution is to make sure that the teachers be not themselves phthisical; their work is fatiguing and their profession makes great demands on their respiratory organs, which expose them to be attacked by the disease, in addition to having to come in contact with infected pupils. So great is the number of teachers of both sexes, of the primary schools, suffering from tuberculosis, that no candidate for the two normal or training colleges of Paris will now be admitted till first medically examined by the official physician. In addition, the colleges are subjected to a severe hygienic surveillance. It is proposed that in the case of teachers who have become tuberclosed they should be pensioned or admitted to a special asylum. All schools are henceforth to be frequently disinfected.

(Concluded in October issue.)

The Dominion Franchise and Voters' Lists.

In the August number we referred to the adoption of the Provincial franchises for Dominion purposes and suggested that clerks of Ontario municipalities should supply the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery with copies of the corrected lists. Mr. W. J. Douglas, town clerk, North Toronto, acting on this suggestion, forwarded a copy of the completed list for his municipality and received the following reply:

Officers of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery for Canada.

Ottawa, August 12, 1898.

W. J. Douglas, Eglinton Post Office (North Toronto.)

DEAR SIR,—I enclose lists sent me as the Clerk of the Peace is to furnish the certified copies of the lists. Thanking you for sending the list. Enclosing Franchise Act as requested.

Yours truly,

(Signed) SAMUEL E. ST. O. CHAPLEAU,
Clerk Court in Chancery.

It will, no doubt, be more convenient for the Ottawa authorities to receive all the lists from the Clerks of the Peace, but there should be no objection to receiving those forwarded by the clerks of municipalities when properly authenticated. If clerks generally will make an effort to interest their representatives in the House of Commons in the matter they may succeed in securing the acceptance of their copies. They do all the work connected with the preparation of the lists and should not be deprived of the right to supply those required for Dominion franchise purposes.

That Clerks of the Peace are alive to their interests is shown by the following communication just received by a Lambton clerk:

To the Editor of the Municipal World.

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed find circular from Clerk of Peace, asking for copies of Voters Lists for 1898 to send to Ottawa under the new Dominion Franchise Act. In your August number, page 118, you gave clerks to understand they would be entitled to the fee for this service if attended to by them promptly. It seems though as if the Clerks of the Peace wish to forestall them. In my case lists are out, but there are a number of appeals that will not be disposed of for near a month yet. Surely the Clerks of the Peace will not require us to fix up lists complete after the appeals, so that they can draw the fees. The act should not have left who should send lists so indefinite.

Yours,

MUNICIPAL CLERK.

LETTER FROM CLERK OF THE PEACE.

Sarnia, August 23, 1898

RE VOTERS LISTS.

DEAR SIR,—The new Dominion Franchise Act requires me to forward to Ottawa a certified copy of each last revised voters lists. I shall therefore have to ask you to send me two additional copies of your voters lists for 1898. Please forward as soon as possible, and very much oblige.

Yours very truly etc.