

A Consumption Catechism

What is Being Done to Teach the Children and the Parents Through the Children.

THE agitation to get the tuberculosis problem into the schools is taking shape. Canadian educators and physicians are taking up the question seriously. A regular reader of

CANADIAN OUT-DOOR LIFE, noting the lead we have been giving the question in these columns, sends us a newspaper clipping telling of active work along these lines in New York. We again raise the question: Should not the educational authorities in Canada commence to do something? Here is the suggestion from New York:—

A Consumption Catechism for School Children is the subject of a pamphlet being printed by the Department of Health of New York city for distribution in the schools of the city. Through the help which has been promised by the Department of Education it is expected to get this catechism into the hands of every one of the 600,000 and more children attending the public schools. Another large group of children will be secured it is expected from parochial and private schools. As these cards will bear the imprint—"Take this card home and show it to your family and friends," and as it is planned to have the teachers give this same advice to their pupils, this will prove the most widespread and thorough distribution yet attempted in this country of printed instructions on the subject of consumption.

In a series of 32 questions and answers the catechism briefly and simply tells what consumption is, how it is conveyed from person to person, "how you can keep from getting it," "how you can keep others from giving it to you," and how it is cured. Added to the catechism is a list of the associated special tuberculosis dispensaries and a map of the city showing the district allotted to each one of these.

Although the pamphlet is primarily designed for school children it contains much material which will be of help to their parents and older brothers. Such an answer as that given to the question, "What are the first signs of the disease?" will warn many an unsuspecting person that an examination by a competent physician should not be put off. "Loss of strength, cough, fever in the afternoon, and loss of weight, sometimes bleeding or hemorrhage of the lungs, and

coughing up of sputum or phlegm" are the first signs that the unwary are now told to look for. After describing how one person infects another through the germs which are contained in the spit of the consumptive or in the invisible droplets sprayed out when the consumptives cough or sneeze it is stated that those who are sickly or run down from disease, overwork or intemperance and whose systems cannot fight the bacilla are those most likely to get consumption, just as the ordinary cold or cough is neglected in the most common sickness and develops into consumption. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of houses or rooms newly moved into are urged as one essential safeguard against the consumption germs which a careless consumptive may have left in rooms occupied by him.

"Even if the tubercle bacilli get into the lungs of a healthy person they are usually killed there," it is stated, and so the lesson is plain that the first great rule to keep from getting consumption, is simply "keep as well as possible." To do this four things are recommended, fresh air, proper food, cleanliness and temperance in all things. If a cough lasts more than two weeks an examination of the lungs by a competent doctor or at a special tuberculosis dispensary is advised. A minimum program for cleanliness is set forth in two warm baths a week and in cleaning house with damp brooms while for air it is stated that every study and living room should be aired several times a day and one window in the bed room kept full half open all night.

The catechism in answer to the question, "Is it dangerous to live or work with a consumptive?" answers, "no, not if he is careful and clean; careful to destroy all the sputum he coughs up and never to spit on the floor or streets." It is said that consumption can be cured if treatment is begun early by good food, fresh air and rest and such medicines as the doctor may prescribe. If a consumptive cannot go to a country sanatorium, he is advised to go to a doctor or a dispensary, to keep out in the fresh air and sunlight as much as possible, to keep his windows open day and night and not to waste time and money on patent medicines and advertised cures.

READER, WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Money is urgently needed to help in the pressing calls for accommodation at the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives. Contributions have fallen off very largely since the opening of summer, and it is difficult for the management to meet the heavy bills that come before them each month. Contributions may be sent to Sir Wm. R. Meredith, Kt., Chief Justice, Osgoode Hall, Toronto, or W. J. Gage, Esq., 84 Spadina Ave., Toronto.