

The Canadian Journal of Medicine and Surgery

A JOURNAL PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN THE INTEREST OF
MEDICINE AND SURGERY

VOL. XV.

TORONTO, MARCH, 1904.

NO. 3.

Original Contributions.

HOW TO PREVENT OUTBREAKS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES AMONGST SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THE BEST METHODS TO ADOPT TENDING TO LIMIT AND SUPPRESS THESE DISEASES.

BY CHARLES SHEARD, M.D.,
Medical Health Officer, Toronto.

BACTERIOLOGICAL investigations into the cause of diphtheria have contributed considerable to elucidate the methods by which infection may be brought about, and the nature of that infection *per se*. This disease, as most of you know, has been demonstrated by Professors Klebs and Loeffler to be due to a special micro-organism commonly called the Klebs-Loeffler bacillus. It is a low form of vegetable life capable of reproducing itself with great rapidity under favorable conditions, demanding, however, certain special forms of food for its sustenance and growing upon a soil or medium very similar in conditions to those favorable to low forms of vegetable life; and whilst the contagion in other infectious diseases has not been so exhaustively studied there are fairly good reasons for assuming that in the majority of instances they are governed by the same physiological laws.

As an introduction to the subject it would be important to consider some of the reasons which render children more susceptible to contagious diseases, such as scarlet fever and diphtheria, than adults. The conditions of child life and the habits of children largely account for this. It is certainly true that outbreaks of these contagious diseases are much more prevalent during school terms than during vacation, and seasonal influence, so

* Read at Conference on School Hygiene and Education, February 2nd, 1904.