

Prevention of Tuberculosis

We have just received the fourteenth annual report of the Canadian Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, which might be termed 300 pages of strong evidence of magnificent work nobly done in the elimination and the prevention of this scourge of humanity. Twelve years ago there was but one consumption sanatorium in the whole of Canada, now there are thirty. These institutions have been made possible by the donations of private citizens and the untiring efforts of the Association. When it was formed there was no legislation of any kind in regard to tuberculosis; to-day on the statute books of the Dominion and of all the Provinces are useful laws that have been the means, not only of preventing the disease from spreading but also of stamping out many of the causes through which it reaches the human being. The effectiveness of these precautions is well exemplified in the report from Ontario, which shows that ten years ago there were 148 deaths to each 100,000 of population. Last year (1914) this was reduced to 90 per 100,000 of population; and this proportion is fairly illustrative of the whole of Canada, though there are one or two bad exceptions.

But in the report there is one phase of this great war against tuberculosis which does not make good reading and that is in the showing of the comparative apathy of the municipalities, particularly the larger cities and towns. It is true that in the laying out of parks and open spaces the municipal councils are doing much towards the prevention of the disease, but as the chief danger is to the poorer classes, whose environments are not always conducive to health, the community has a direct responsibility in supplying, out of the public funds, the means that will stamp out consumption in every district. Means that, as already mentioned, are at present supplied by private charity.

This disease of the masses, as the great white plague has been aptly termed—is just as much a care on the State as any other infectious disease, or just

as much as insanity, and when we have it on the authority of Sir William Osler that 90 per cent. of our race had tuberculosis in some form, the responsibility of civic authorities in guarding at every point against its insidious growth is increased proportionately.

Realizing that milk from infected cows was one of the principal agents in spreading consumption amongst human beings the Association urged the Federal authorities to pass regulations preventing, as far as possible, the sale of infected milk, with the consequence that last May an Order-in-Council was passed to put into practice its recommendations. The association's report on the subject in part reads:—

The Federal Government is taking steps to prevent the spread of tuberculosis through milk from infected cows. "An Order-in-Council has been passed authorizing regulations providing for the co-operation of the Federal authorities, and cities and towns all over Canada, for the eradication of bovine tuberculosis from herds supplying milk to such municipalities. It is specified that the city or town must first provide for licensing all milk vendors for clean and sanitary dairies, for the prohibition of the milk sales within two years of the test of the cattle of any dairy unless a clean bill of health is shown, and for the appointment of a Municipal Inspector. On fulfilment of these conditions, and on application being made by the municipality to the Veterinary Director-General, Federal Inspectors will be sent to make tuberculosis tests. Any diseased cattle may be slaughtered, and compensation to the owners is to be allowed at the rate of one-half the appraised value of the cow in a case of open tuberculosis, and one-third the value if destroyed as a re-actor at the request of the owner. No compensation is to be made to the owner, unless, in the opinion of the Minister of Agriculture, he assists as far as possible in carrying out the instructions of the Inspector as to disinfection and other necessary precautions."

If the association had done nothing else than in bringing about these preventative regulations, it would deserve the gratitude of every citizen of Canada, and no municipality, whether urban or rural, dare let the opportunity pass of thus eradicating the chief cause of that awful disease that at present lies lurking in every community.

ROADS IN THE WESTERN FIGHTING AREA.

In a contribution from that acute observer "Eye-Witness," published recently, an interesting sidelight is thrown upon the road question as it affects the war in the actual fighting area. "It is difficult," says the writer, "for those who do not know something of the problem of maintaining an army in the field to realise what immense efforts and how great an amount of material are required to keep the roads in repair, especially under motor traffic. As has been already mentioned, one great difficulty of doing this in the part of France and Belgium in which we are operating lies in the fact that the paved portion of the roads is in most cases so narrow that vehicles cannot pass each other without going off it, and that the soft earth on each side is, in wet weather, soon churned up by the heavy lorries in use into a mass of mud upwards of 2 ft. in depth. It has been found necessary, therefore, to improvise some method of increasing the width of the hard surface of the roadway, so as to allow of traffic on each side. This is now being successfully done.

"Although the pave is one of the most ancient and durable forms of road, even it is broken up in time by the continual passage of heavy motor lorries. The stones get displaced, and water percolates into the foundation, which is often merely sand or chalk, and washes it away. Then, if there should be a frost after the surface is thus cracked, the moisture which has penetrated freezes and breaks it up still further. The consequence is that the pave itself needs continual attention."

CO-OPERATION IN CITIZEN MAKING.

Several weeks ago The Tribune commended and welcomed the evening classes in citizenship. They are to be a permanent feature of the city's school system, although the beginning this year is a very modest one. Only a few schools have such classes for the benefit of aliens seeking to fit themselves for naturalization, but it appears that more may be added in the immediate future. The demand for such instruction is likely—perhaps certain—to grow, for even the alien who comes at first merely in the hope of being helped to obtain "his papers" soon learns to appreciate the value and the interest of the classes. Much, of course, depends on the instructors—their skill, their enthusiasm, their knowledge of the various races and elements that are attracted by the classes.

A new development that deserves special approval is the announced readiness of the superintendent of the school system. Mrs. Young, to co-operate with voluntary instructors and sentiment classes in citizenship. Where, for example, a social settlement or other civic centre has pupils and teachers, but no suitable accommodation, the school building in the neighborhood is to be placed at their disposal in the evening once or twice a week. Since we owe the classes in citizenship to civic and voluntary enterprise and initiative, this recognition and this cheerful co-operation are as grateful as they are natural. There is plenty of room for such team work, and no better field for it is conceivable than the one in question. The assimilation and fitting of aliens for intelligent citizenship and better living—for living in America rather than underneath America, to use the striking expression of a naturalized Polish leader—is a task as difficult as it is important.—Chicago Tribune.