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## Editorial.

### THE CONSUMPTION DISPENSARY.

A movement which is worthy of all support is the Special Coronation Appeal for £100,000 for a "Central Fund for the Promotion of the Dispensary System, for the Prevention of Consumption in London," by the establishment of local dispensaries for the treatment of the early stages of consumption.

The appeal—voiced in the press by Lord Glenconner, and Sir Alexander Henderson—commends itself because, in consumption, the hope of a cure lies in its early detection and treatment, and it is certain that sanatoria and hospitals can only deal with a small proportion of the cases. It is pointed out that consumption kills over 6,000 men, women, and children, in London every year, and preys on, and cripples, many more; so that it is a conservative estimate to say that at least 60,000 persons in London are devitalised by its seeds, and there is scientific reason to believe the germs of the disease are still more widespread through the community.

The promoters of the Consumption Dispensary scheme show that in the past the disease has been allowed to get too strong a hold of its victims. There comes a time when the hope of cure is gone. This must be anticipated, and the enemy met before he has gathered strength. "We must seek him out. We must oppose the first beginnings. We must raid the haunts of consumption."

It is here that the Consumption Dispensary comes in; in addition to treating the patients, as in an out-patient Department, the doctor and nurse attached to it visit them in their homes, investigate and correct faulty home conditions which breed the

disease, and, by examining the other members of the household, they make sure that not even the earliest case escapes detection.

The Consumption Dispensary, we are informed, cares for patients on the most modern lines of open-air treatment (which can be taught and practised in the majority of homes), of vaccine-therapy (tuberculin) and other methods. It "serves as the base of operations and the intelligence centre in the great campaign against consumption. The Dispensary also directs the impoverished consumptive to suitable channels of relief."

In London, within two years, such dispensaries have been opened in Paddington, North Kensington, Marylebone, Bermondsey and Stepney, and in other boroughs they are being formed. Only last week, the Duke of Argyll opened a school for tuberculous children at Kensal House, in the Harrow Road, when Mr. Edward White, Chairman of the London County Council, presided, and Dr. R. Dudfield, Chairman of the Dispensary Committee suggested that open-air schools should not be reserved for sick children, but should be adopted for purposes of general education.

It is estimated that to maintain an efficient Consumption Dispensary, about £1,000 per annum is needed, or, for collective boroughs, an outlay of £20,000. The purpose of the Central Fund is to stimulate local effort, and so far as is necessary to subsidise it. For this the Committee appeals for £100,000, confidently expecting that, given a Consumption Dispensary in every district, there will be a great drop in the mortality from consumption in ten years time, a vast mitigation of suffering and poverty, and the practical disappearance of the disease in a generation or two. "A splendid goal for effort in this Coronation Year."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)