

MORTALITY FROM CANCER.

The Prudential Insurance Company of America has in course of early publication a comprehensive work by Frederick L. Hoffman, statistician of the company, on "The Mortality from Cancer Throughout the World," in furtherance of the effort of the American Society for the Control of Cancer and kindred organizations to arouse a more active and practical interest on the part of the medical profession and the general public in the problem of cancer research and cancer control.

This work is the result of several years of extended consideration of all the important statistical aspects of the cancer problem; and makes available for general use a vast amount of new information heretofore practically out of the reach of the large majority of cancer specialists and students of the cancer question. The book will contain about 800 pages, and will be distributed with the compliments of The Prudential to medical libraries and, upon request, to members of the medical and surgical professions and to all others especially interested in the cancer cause and the problem of cancer control.

The preface states that the practical importance of cancer to life insurance companies is precisely shown in the statement that out of 5,529 deaths from all causes in the ordinary experience of The Prudential during 1914, 416 deaths, or 7.5 per cent. were from malignant disease or 6.4 per cent. of the mortality of males and 12.0 per cent. of the mortality of females. Limited to ages 45 and over, the ordinary experience of the company for the year 1914 shows that of the deaths of males 9.6 per cent. were from cancer, against 18.6 per cent. of the mortality of females. Cancer was the third most important cause of death among males at ages 45 and over, and the leading cause of death in the corresponding mortality of insured women.

The exceptional importance, therefore, of the cancer problem to life insurance companies will not be called into question by any one familiar with the general facts of the cancer situation and aware of the lamentable truth that there are now annually over 80,000 deaths from malignant disease in the Continental United States, and that the disease is increasing at the approximate rate of 2.5 per cent. per annum.

The main results of the investigation may be summed up in the brief but extremely suggestive statement that the actual frequency of malignant disease throughout the civilized world has been ascertained to be much more of a menace to the welfare of mankind than has generally been assumed to be the case, and that in contrast to a marked decline in the general death rate, cancer remains one of the few diseases actually and persistently on the increase in practically all of the countries and large cities for which trustworthy data are obtainable.

British Mother: "My son has just got his commission."

American Visitor: "Oh! What percentage was it?"—*Policyholder.*

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