

tuberculous hips and knees over four years of age, a total of two hundred and five, and of this number, ninety, or practically one-half, give a history of injury. So that by excluding those cases that could not possibly give a history of trauma, we have increased our proportion from one-third to one-half. But it is also possible that many of these cases, over four years of age, from whom we have obtained no definite story of injury, may have met with some slight accident, such as a bruise or sprain, quite sufficient to start bacterial growth, but which the patient has never noticed at all. To prove that this is the case, let me return to my statistics again. Of those two hundred and five cases of tuberculous hips and knees, one hundred and twenty-one were on the right side and only seventy-eight were on the left. That is, practically two-thirds were rights and one-third lefts, or the number of rights was double the number of lefts. Now all children use the right side of the body more than the left. Among boys playing football it is considered a rare quality to be able to kick with the left foot as well as with the right. If you will notice boys playing hockey or racing on the ice, you will find that in making a turn they usually go to the left so as to use the right foot to better advantage as a means of propulsion, so that I think we are perfectly safe in stating that the right foot and leg are the ones most constantly subjected to work, and consequently to strain or injury. The fact, then, that we have twice as many rights as lefts is easily explained by the theory, that infection may be favored by the numerous little jars and strains, which, although they arouse no comment at the time, nevertheless result in injury to the tissues.

One more proof that injury is a very important factor in the onset of tuberculosis. We find that out of a total of one hundred and twenty-one cases of hips and knees, on the right side, only thirty-four give a definite history of injury; while out of a total of seventy-eight lefts, fifty date the onset of symptoms from some fall or blow. That is, only one-quarter of the rights, as compared with practically all the lefts, have a history of following trauma. Now, as we said above, the right side of the body is much more used than the left, so that it is much more prone to little additional jars or strains which may be entirely overlooked. On the other hand, the left side is not as much used, and injury to it is much more likely to be noticed than on the right, and as a result we find that practically all the lefts have a history of definite injury. So that, to summarize, we find that on the side where the proportion of injuries which are slight and liable to be overlooked is the greater, the number of injuries recorded is much less than on the side where minor injury is not so likely to occur. Reasoning backwards from