

accounted for by syphilitic changes in the aorta alone. The value of a negative reaction has been studied and its reliability confirmed by the negative reactions obtained in nonsyphilitic affections of the skin. In a series of necropsies in which it was demonstrated pathologically that the aorta was free from syphilitic disease, negative reactions were obtained in 91 per cent. The conclusions of Dr. Symmers and his co-workers are shown to be fallacious and a misrepresentation of facts owing to: 1. The apparent disregard of the different results obtained by various serologic methods and the employment of a questionable technic. 2. The careless survey of pathologic material."

A PLEA FOR SICKNESS PREVENTION.

Conference Board presents a research report under the title of "Sickness Insurance or Sickness Prevention?"

In these days of conservation, it is high time the public was made to realize the extent to which sickness and physical disability sap the energies and impair the efficiency of the nation. It is time we answered the question "If it costs a billion dollars to insure the health of the United States, why not prevent disease?"

Under the heading "How Far are Diseases and Physical Defects Preventable?" the report states:

"The diseases most frequent in the industrial population, other than strictly 'occupational diseases,' are those of the degenerative type, such as Bright's disease, *cancer*, apoplexy, cirrhosis of the liver, and arterial diseases. These are particularly frequent causes of disability and death after the age of 45 years, although they often exert a detrimental effect on the efficiency of workers at earlier ages. Predisposing factors which contribute to the occurrence of those diseases often exist in the very early periods of life. While opportunity for prevention of these diseases may be less promising than in the case of communicable diseases, there is undoubtedly a large field for successful preventive work if undertaken in time." . . .

"Preventive work in the case of such communicable diseases as typhoid fever, tuberculosis, pneumonia, and diphtheria has been brilliantly successful. That in less than a generation the mortality rate for tuberculosis per 100,000 population has fallen from over 200 to less than 150 and that for typhoid fever from 35.9 to 12.4 is a tribute to the efficiency of prevention, since in the main these results have been accomplished by preventive agencies. The results already attained with a comparatively modest expenditure in this field are an earnest of the possibilities of still greater progress in the future and of broad success in the field of non-communicable diseases as well, if these are attacked