

to made upon the basis of a "cancer-census." Without going into detail, it may be said that the committee has instituted a card index in which the metropolitan hospitals record all their cases; this takes in all the cases that are determined absolutely to be cancer. A microscopical examination of these cases is essential, and it is felt that though the figures are as yet small, they are correct. Although many cases without microscopical examination can be undoubtedly diagnosed as cancer, yet without the use of the microscope, these must be classed as "examination not made."

Age is a great factor in malignant growth. In mice and cattle large series of cases show that cancer occurs with increasing frequency as age advances; in the dog, horse and cat fewer figures are to be had, but the indication is the same. The reports which seem to show that there is endemic distribution of cancer in certain areas, have constantly neglected the age incidence. The time at which malignant new growths appear in animals stands in direct relation to the absolute duration of life in long- and short-lived animals respectively. The same is borne out in human pathology: the chorion is a short lived tissue and chorion-epithelioma appears at an interval after fertilisation which corresponds to its senile stage of proliferation. The mamma and uterus are slow to arrive at function, are active for a long time, but carcinoma is commonest when these organs are undergoing involution. The skin remains functional long after middle life, and the age of epithelioma corresponds.

The maximum of normal growth is attained early in intra-uterine life and falls gradually to old age, reaching zero at death: fertilization renews this proliferative process; the proliferative power of cancer does not follow this rule, as is shown by cancer being transmitted continuously for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years after its transference from the mouse first affected.

In giving the recorded cancer death-rate, it is of interest that 275 cases appear from the Montreal General and the Royal Victoria Hospitals from a series of 3,275 autopsies; this is an incidence of one case in twelve. Guy's Hospital post-mortems show one in eight.

Obtaining data from uncivilized races has been attempted, and is progressing: specimens of cancer from tribes where intercourse with civilisation is at a minimum have been already obtained. The report states that there is no reason to suppose that any race is exempt.

Statistics must show age and sex-incidence, the incidence as to organs or primary sites, and the types of growth: these points have not received so full attention as have geographical distribution, diet, climate, and other external factors, which the authors think are of much less importance.