

were conducted by some of the physicians in connection with the William Pepler Clinical Laboratory of the University of Pennsylvania.

The experiments were entirely on tuberculin. This was employed in search of the reaction. The tuberculin was instilled into the eyes, was used as an ointment and rubbed on the skin, was injected under the skin, and was introduced through scarifications. We are informed that both bovine and human tuberculin was employed.

Following upon these investigations, three of the physicians published a report. Among other things we gather from the statements of these physicians as to the work that was done we take a few quotations:—

“Practically all our patients were under eight years of age, and all but 26 of them were inmates of St. Vincent’s Home.”

“Before beginning the application of the conjunctival test (the eye test) we had no knowledge of any serious results from its use.”

It is unquestionably much easier of application than the other tests, but it has the great disadvantage of producing a decidedly uncomfortable lesion, and it is not infrequently followed by serious inflammation of the eye, which not only produces great physical discomfort and requires weeks of active treatment, but which may permanently affect the vision, and even lead to its complete destruction.”

“These words would seem to indicate that a goodly number of eyes had been tried; for note the words “it is not unfrequently followed by serious inflammation of the eye.” Two of the eye cases were “severe and purulent.” “Two developed corneal ulcers.”

The physicians in their report state that “In fact we are strongly of the opinion that any diagnostic procedure which will so frequently result in serious lesions of the eye, irrespective of the way in which it produces them, has no justification in medicine.”

Dr. John M. Cruice, the medical superintendent of St. Vincent’s Home, contends that the experiments were justified at the time. Only one child had its eyesight permanently impaired. All the other recovered.

On experiments of this sort there should be the utmost caution. No well person should be subjected to an experiment, the effects of which may be so serious as to impair vision. An adult may voluntarily submit to certain experiments, but to subject infants, indeed, mere babies, to them is quite another matter.

We hope the physicians in this case may be able to show a good account of themselves. In the meantime such experiments as that of a noted French surgeon, who, on removing a cancerous breast inserted a small piece into the sound breast to watch the result of the implantation;