

*Mode of spread of the disease.*—Cerebro-spinal fever has a much more restricted direct infectivity than characterizes a disease like smallpox, which attacks the majority of persons exposed to infection who are unprotected by vaccination or previous smallpox. In most outbreaks of cerebro-spinal fever only one member of the invaded family develops definite symptoms of meningeal disease, though exceptions to this statement are not uncommon. The meningococcus is found in the mucous secretion of the nasopharynx in a considerable proportion of those suffering from the disease, especially in its earlier stages, and also in some apparently healthy persons who have been in contact with cases of the disease.

The memorandum continues by pointing to the probability of carriers of infection existing who are themselves unaffected, and while admitting that modes of infection as yet unrecognized possibly exist, concludes that cerebro-spinal fever generally spreads in association with overcrowding, lack of cleanliness and ventilation, inclement weather, and perhaps excessive fatigue.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.

The second part of the memorandum deals with administrative action, and commences by pointing to the necessity of careful diagnosis between cerebro-spinal fever and poliomyelitis, both of which diseases are compulsorily notifiable. The advisability also is mentioned of making inquiry into the circumstances of deaths recorded as tuberculous meningitis, meningitis, or convulsions (with no further definition) when these deaths occur in districts where cerebro-spinal fever is known to be present, while medical officers of health are recommended also to invite from practitioners details as to anomalous cases of sickness which might be cerebro-spinal fever.

The memorandum then points out the necessity of employing bacteriological aids to diagnosis.

In view of the difficulty of diagnosis of early cases of the disease the Board are prepared to undertake the examination in their pathological laboratory of cerebro-spinal fluid sent to them packed in accordance with the regulations of the post office. The parcel should be addressed to the Medical Officer, Local Government Board, Whitehall, and should be accompanied by a short statement of the circumstances of the case. The hour at which the specimen was collected should be stated, and delay in transmitting the material should be avoided. The patient is also to be strictly isolated, carefully nursed, and all precautions are