

PROPHYLAXIS IN TUBERCULOSIS.*

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Mr. President and Gentlemen,— Remembering that it was only in 1882 that Professor Koch gave the world the results of his investigations into the cause of tuberculosis, and that for several years his conclusions were submitted to the keenest scrutiny of the scientific and medical world before their general acceptance by the profession, it must be a cause for sincere pleasure and congratulation that we see within ten years of his discovery the attention of the medical profession and the general and philanthropic public turned in every direction, searching for measures by which consumption, a disease, having thousands of years of a history, and holding in modern days a pre-eminence amongst its fellows as marked as Milton's historic Satan amongst his fellow-ministers of evil, and which has proved so refractory to hitherto known therapeutic agents, may be in some measure shorn of its annual harvest of human lives, and society saved from an economic loss, compared with which any other cause, excepting perhaps alcohol, sinks into insignificance. I do not purpose to enter either into the history of the disease or to present even a *resumé* of the condensed statistics, which are yearly being collected in England, Germany and France, telling both of the mortality of tuberculosis under its various forms, and of the multiplied evidences of its contagious character; but shall only, before referring to the special subject of my paper, give the condensed results of a brief study of tuberculosis, taken from the mortality returns of the Registrar-General's Department of Ontario.

As a matter of interest, I have had collated the number of deaths from tuberculosis proper, or consumption as it has been called, in three old settled counties, during the eleven successive years from 1881 to 1891, and have arranged these so as to show the number of deaths occurring in persons of the same family name and the specific year in which each death occurred:—

* Read before the Canadian Medical Association, London, September, 1893.

Deaths from Consumption during Eleven years in three Ontario Counties.

Countries.	Total number of deaths.	Total names.	Total names repeated.	Per cent. of whole deaths occurring of names repeated.	Average number of times each name is repeated.	Total names occurring in the same year.	Percentage of total number of deaths from all causes during 11 years.
Welland.....	404	285	71	25	2.67	In 1 case four occurred.	10.21
Prince Edward.....	330	198	86	43	2.53	In 3 cases three " "	11.3
Lincoln.....	450	330	195	43	2.6	In 23 cases two " "	9.9
						In 22 " " " "	
						In 2 " " three " "	
						In 30 " " two " "	
						In 1 case three	

In case this table does not bear sufficient evidence to convince everyone of the real contagiousness of consumption where common residence is prolonged, I have prepared from the total mortality returns of the Ontario Institutions for the Insane for 1892, giving the total deaths in a population of 4,231, the following table, showing the years of Asylum residence and the proportion of deaths from consumption amongst all patients so domiciled and having been confined during the same number of years.

By reference to the Annual Report of the Inspector of Public Charities for 1892, it is found that there were returned from the various hospitals in Ontario 11,404 cases as admitted, and that of these there were 11,008 suffering from