

The interest aroused by the announcement of the discovery of a remedy for syphilis by Professor Ehrlich recalls the excitement which was caused by the publication of the discovery of tuberculin in 1891. When the preliminary reports regarding the discovery of this latter agent were made public we took occasion to caution the medical profession against taking too sanguine a view regarding its efficacy. Unfortunately that caution proved to have been most timely, for the brilliant hopes based on Dr. Koch's announcement were not fulfilled, as the action of tuberculin has proved to be protective and diagnostic rather than curative. Bearing in mind this disappointment, it is well to accept with some caution the prophecies which have been made regarding the complete annihilation of syphilis in the near future.

There is, however, much more substantial grounds for the hopes expressed regarding the effect of 606, than was the case with Koch's tuberculin, for the latter scientist was practically forced into publication before the therapeutic efficiency of tuberculin had been determined experimentally. Ehrlich on the other hand, has been able to test the effect of his remedy thoroughly on animals and in German, Austrian, and Russian clinics. It has been used in something like 2,500 cases of human syphilis with practically uniform good results. We have therefore much more substantial grounds for hope in this case than in the case of Koch's tuberculin.

The reports which reach us from Germany indicate that Dr. Ehrlich has been deluged with applications for supplies of his 606, but that he has uniformly declined to furnish the remedy save to a few physicians personally known to him who are in charge of government hospitals and who are in a position to have complete control of their patients and keep them under competent and constant observation. As a matter of fact no supplies have been furnished to hospitals outside of Germany and Austria, save to one in St. Petersburg. In view of the severe and unjust criticisms to which Dr. Koch was subjected in connection with the use of tuberculin, it would seem that Dr. Ehrlich has adopted a wise policy in