

the disease has become so wide-spread as to threaten their extermination. This is a striking contrast, only to be explained, he thinks, by the importation of a new and specific morbid germ. The late Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, who made accurate inquiries, satisfied himself that there was no phthisis among the American Indians when America was discovered, whereas now it is very common and very fatal among them.

"Furthermore, in Africa, everywhere along the seaboard, where the blacks have come into constant and intimate relations with the whites, there has been a large mortality from the disease; but in the interior, where there has been only occasional contact with a few great travellers; the disease has not been found. Of this fact Dr. Livingston and other African travellers have given Dr. Budd positive assurance." ("Is Consumption Contagious," by H. C. Clapp, A. M., M. D., Boston.)

Dr. Bowditch, late chairman of the state board of health of Massachusetts, a number of years ago made some investigations relating to the cause of consumption, by sending a list of questions to prominent physicians in active practice in several of the States and in London and Germany (Fourth annual report of the state board of health, Mass., 1872). Of 210 physicians who replied, 28 did not answer the question on contagion. Of the remainder, 110 answered in the affirmative; 45 in the negative; and 27 were doubtful. Many besides answering "yes" or "no" wrote something like the following: "I am a firm believer that consumption is a contagious disease, much more so than is generally believed. I have in my mind several cases where there was almost positive evidence of contagion." "In very many cases, I have the opin-

ion, from my own observation, that consumption is communicable by contagion or infection." "I am more inclined than I was at one time to attach importance to the influence of contagion." "I am thoroughly convinced that phthisis is frequently caused by contagion and deserves to be classed with typhoid fever in this respect. I have seen unmistakable evidence where a healthy wife contracted this disease, and *vice versa*."

In 1878, Dr. Holden, of New Jersey, made some similar investigations. Out of 250 answers to a list of questions, 126 physicians answered "yes" in reply to the question on contagion, 73 of whom were emphatic, and gave cases in confirmation; 74 answered "no" and 50 were doubtful or could not form an opinion.

Dr. Holden himself commenced practice, it is stated, with the idea that consumption was communicable only from parent to offspring, but at length wrote as follows: "I can enumerate at least a score of cases which have been watched with this very object in view, and in which the result has been the same. Wives after husbands, husbands after wives, intimate companions and faithful nurses, who slept in the same bed, or wore the same clothing, have fallen victims. Of course, it is not to be intimated that all, or even a majority, can be affected by contagion any more than in those diseases now indisputably contagious. Malignant scarlet fever, diphtheria, and cerebro-spinal meningitis are braved by faithful nurses and friends, who escape in more than a majority of instances. To prove contagion now, is no easier than when the non-contagiousness of erysipelas had its defenders, and the records of the surgical wards of the hospitals of Paris, and Berlin, and London, had accumu-