

bered that if the prevalence of phthisis can be reduced, other forms of tuberculous disease will become less frequent also.

Against notification the argument has been advanced that it would divulge a medical secret and the public would protest. If the notification of phthisis would aid in stamping out the disease, this sentimental objection should be disregarded. Under a judicious system of notification, no undue publicity is given to the fact that any person is affected. Too much stress has been here laid upon heredity. The introduction of the tubercle bacilli or its spores are necessary to produce phthisis. The public has consented to the notification of other diseases and the idea of divulging a medical secret should not stand in the way.

Another argument which has been advanced is that phthisis differs in many ways from the acute infectious diseases, and that the notification of them is consequently unnecessary and undesirable.

The object of notification in phthisis is not to restrict the liberty of the patients, nor to isolate them, but to locate the cases, and so enable the authorities to take the necessary steps for preventing the spread of the disease. It is quite possible to arrange a system of compulsory notification that would be beneficial, that would be effective and work well in practice, and that would yield greater advantages than disadvantages.

To deal effectively with the disease, it would be necessary to have power to enforce preventive measures, and to remove to an hospital those phthisical patients who, in consequence of their inability or unwillingness to carry out the necessary preventive measures, are a source of danger to the community. These measures, if they could be carried out, would be of the greatest value in preventing the extension of the disease; they would entail a large expenditure, but the money would be well spent.

It has been argued by some that because the infection is in the sputum in most cases, there is no need for notification. The reverse is really the case. If cases of phthisis were reported, and proper means taken with these cases, it would be an easier task than in any other infectious disease to make preventive measures effective. So many of the poor who suffer most from phthisis will not carry out any preventive means, unless looked after by someone who has sufficient authority vested in him to enforce proper precautions.

Among the reforms that ought to be introduced to render compulsory notification of any value would be those of arranging for laboratories where the sputum could be tested; the correction of insanitary conditions, likely to cause phthisis; the diffusion of leaflets and suitable reading matter; the provision of proper spittoons for the poor, and necessary disinfectants; the regular inspection of the premises where consumptive patients are domiciled; the removal of poor cases to a