

The Fight on Tuberculosis

THE third annual report of the Henry Phipps Institute for the study, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, has just been issued and is of great value to all who are interested in resisting the ravages of the great white plague. Perhaps not all our readers know that this institute was founded four years ago by Henry Phipps, a wealthy business man and manufacturer of Philadelphia. Without any ostentation or exploiting of his personality he did many public-spirited acts, culminating in the endowment of this worthy institution. Its purpose includes scientific investigations as well as charitable treatment. It provides for a number of paid fellowships, open to any member of the staff, and honorary fellowships open to any one throughout the world who has done distinguished work in the warfare on tuberculosis. Probably no other institution ever did more during the same length of time toward relieving human suffering and promoting the study of the prevention of disease than this institute has done.

As now organized, its faculty embraces a medical director, an assistant doctor and bacteriologist, twenty-one physicians, four laryngologists, a dermatologist, a neurologist, a pathologist, an ophthalmologist, a surgeon and three honorary fellows. The institute is not yet thoroughly equipped with mechanical appliances, but it has made a record that is attracting world-wide attention. During the three years of its existence it has admitted 3,886 cases for treatment, of which 2,999 were strictly tuberculous. These included persons of all nationalities, the greatest number in the

order of sequence being of American, Russian, Irish, German, English, Italian, Austrian and Scotch birth or parentage. The statistics of this institution show that foreign-born citizens furnish nearly 50 per cent. of the tuberculosis sufferers in our cities. This proves that consumption is not distinctly an American disease, as has sometimes been asserted. The statistics show further that in respect of immunity or freedom from tuberculosis the Celtic race leads, with the Teutonic next. The report says:

One of the striking features which comes out in this table is the prevalence of tuberculosis in the Hebrew race. It would be difficult to determine accurately, at the present time, what percentage of the population of Philadelphia is of the Hebrew race, as the Hebrew element of our population is a growing one. Some allowance must also be made for the poverty of the Russian Hebrews on account of their persecutions and down-trodden condition before coming to this country. With all these points in mind, however, the percentage of tuberculosis among the Hebrews seems to be very large. Though tuberculosis is more prevalent among the Hebrews than among other peoples, it does not take a fatal form among them as often as it does among other peoples. If this conclusion is not final, it should stimulate further investigation on the same line. The report contains more than a dozen papers on different phases of tuberculosis by as many different medical experts, and is a mine of information on the subject. It can be had by application to Dr. Lawrence F. Flick or Dr. Joseph Walsh, Philadelphia.

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