

at a time of need. That it does so is proved by the falling off in the numbers who are seeking charity and free hospital care at such times. The steadily falling birth rate in France has given rise to a good deal of discussion in favor of similar aid.

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### THE PREVALENCY OF TUBERCULOSIS.

It has been known for many years that a large number of persons have been infected with tuberculosis, and have never shown any symptoms of the disease. One noted German authority stated that at least 95 per cent. of all who reach adult years have been infected.

At the Conference for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, held in Leeds a short time ago, Sir William Osler accentuated this truth in his well-known and forceful style. Among other things he said:

"Tuberculosis may be put into three groups. All of us who are here come in the first. If I had an instrument here with which I could look into the chest or the abdomen of each of you, the probability is that in 90 per cent. of you would be found somewhere a small area of tuberculosis. So widespread is the bacillus that practically all humans by the time they become adults harbor the germ of the disease.

"Why don't you die? Because we are not guinea pigs or rabbits, we have obtained a certain immunity. But the germ is in us, though negative, and with all of us there is the possibility of slipping into the two other groups.

"The second group comprises those in whom the disease is active enough to produce symptoms, but in whom there is the possibility of arrest or cure, with restoration to working health. Those in the third group are doomed, the disease progresses week by week, month by month, year by year, and from one year to five sees the end.

"When workers have living wages, when the house becomes the home, when the nation spends on food what it spends on drink, then, instead of hundreds of thousands, there will be millions in the first group, with practically immunity. The enemy has been traced to its very stronghold, which is defended by the three allies poverty, bad housing and drink."

Here we have in terse form the essentials of the case. But Sir William went on to emphasize the causes of the disease, and they reduce themselves to three main factors: Drink, bad housing, and poverty. This really comes to one, as drink is at the bottom of the other two. This does not reckon with the bacillus at all; but what was in the mind