

their residence. The special type of the disease, in the great majority of these cases, was a peculiar one. There was little emaciation until shortly before death, and rational signs were largely absent or not so marked as cases outside the institution. Attention was generally first called to these cases by the elevation of the temperature, general weakness, and sweating.

The course of the disease was often greatly prolonged, and even after the patient had taken to his bed he might continue a merely vegetative existence for months or even a year. The condition of the lung; on *post-mortem* was also peculiar; the cavities were few and small, the lung heavy, its tissue dense, the basis often only a mass of dense fibrous tissue, and the only normal-appearing portions were found in the middle and anterior regions of the lungs. Dr. Tomlinson calls attention to the close resemblance existing between these conditions and those of bovine tuberculosis, except that in the latter, the animals having been killed, the stages are not so advanced. Undoubtedly the conditions must have existed for a long time before attention was called to them.

The doctor recapitulates his paper by stating that phthisis in an old institution like St. Peter's is relatively more common than in the general population; for the last year covered by the paper, the percentage of deaths was forty-six. It is most common among degenerates, in whom the lungs and kidneys are both likely to be affected with the connective-tissue degeneration described. He considers this tendency to connective-tissue degeneration to be especially a manifestation of inherent defect; in other words, a symptom of degeneracy. In seventy-two *post-mortems* made during the period, he found all more or less involved as to the lungs and kidneys. In no case was there a perfectly healthy condition found. He therefore accounts for the relative frequency of tuberculosis in the insane to this original defective tendency of the organism, rendering them the more liable to infection and morbid conditions favored by the overcrowding, etc., in such institutions. —*Louisville Journal of Surgery and Medicine.*

A HOUSE EPIDEMIC OF SYPHILIS.

BY WILLIAM S. GOTTHEIL, M.D.

THANKS to a better knowledge of the dangers and modes of transmission of syphilis, and to superior habits of cleanliness, epidemics of the disease are rare in America; yet they occur among the lower classes of our population with greater frequency than is generally supposed. In the *New York Medical Journal* of March 26th, the writer records one in which the disease was introduced into the family, according to history, by vaccination, and in which