

Very few of these people knew of the possibility of imparting their disorder, while those who did lived, with their families, in the constant fear of such a result, without in the least knowing how to prevent it. Excepting the Russians, whites and blacks alike, and almost universally, gratefully received advice and warning and tried to follow instructions. The "doctor lady," impressing always the fact that the sputum is the source of danger, has taught them to collect and destroy the sputum, scrub their floors, use disinfectant solutions, admit light and air, boil the patients' dishes and other articles, and follow what personal hygiene is possible; wisely, however, in houses where there was opposition or where the conditions made much improvement impracticable, she did not antagonize or discourage the family by insisting on too many reforms. Printed circulars from the dispensary containing simple instructions and directions on tuberculosis were often left with the patient. Always, when the dreaded name "consumption" had not already been attached to the disease, she has avoided giving it, if without it the patient thoroughly felt himself a menace to others.

Lack of time made it impossible to follow up these cases, but whenever revisiting of the homes was accomplished, some improvement of conditions and a definite effort to follow directions have nearly always been found. Houses are cleaner, sputum is being properly collected and destroyed, dishes are being boiled, and in an encouraging number of instances the patient has been moved to a lighter, better-ventilated room, and sleeps alone.

This year the work is undertaken with new courage and energy. Another student, also a woman, has begun the visits, while a doctor in the dispensary is charged with investigating the addresses given to avoid loss of time in finding the patients. It is hoped that Baltimore can soon favourably compare results with New York in the decreased death-rate from tuberculosis.

This house-to-house visiting by the students is only one, though certainly the most practical, manifestation of the work of medical men and women in Baltimore to control this enemy at our door. Many doctors are investigating the worst infected areas in the city, and the addresses made at the monthly meetings of the Society for the Study of Tuberculosis treat the subject from every point. The students' work, however, is of most interest to nurses, as being exactly what we ourselves might do, and what we believe many nurses would be glad to do if the opportunity were given them. Such an opportunity of any definite nature exists nowhere at present, so far as we know, though undoubtedly the district and visiting nurses are able in the course of their general duties to perform a large amount

of useful work in this direction. This, however, cannot be compared in usefulness with the work which might be accomplished were it possible to make provision for one or more nurses to carry on this special work regularly and systematically. In this day, while gifts for various philanthropic purposes are many, and while hospitals are not only built and maintained, but libraries and laboratories are added and costly apparatus supplied for the purpose of investigating disease in order to fight it more effectually, it seems reasonable to assume that some effort ought to be made to apply as fully and practically as possible that knowledge which we have already obtained.

If in Baltimore one young student, whose time was already nearly filled with exacting studies and duties, could accomplish so much, might not the results accomplished by another woman, equally earnest and conscientious, who could give her whole time, be proportionately greater? We think this idea might be carried out in various ways.

By a special fund providing for the maintenance of this particular work in connection with that of the visiting nurses, one or more nurses might be added to the regular staff, whose whole time would be devoted to this special object, that is, the prevention of the spread of tuberculosis by such measures as have been already outlined. This work might also be carried on in some instances through the regular nursing-staff of a hospital. The latter idea finds expression already in some institutions, as, for instance, in the Children's Hospital, Boston, where one nurse is set apart for visiting the homes of the recently discharged children, and giving them the necessary supervision, care, and instruction in their own homes as a continuation of the hospital treatment. Established not precisely for the same purpose, but somewhat similar in its effect, is the work of the outside obstetric nurse in the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

It is our belief, however, that by far the most effective method would be one which should place a nurse in this particular field of work under the auspices of the Board of Health. She might even be a member of that body (as is the case now in a few cities), and authorized to look after this part of its general work in safeguarding the health of the community. For many reasons we believe that a thoroughly well-trained, practical nurse would be a valuable addition to any Board of Health, but this especially important work can only be carried on efficiently when performed by someone who is able to utilize to the utmost existing powers and facilities for the prevention of the spread of disease, and who is supported by some recognized authority.

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