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**Editorial.**

**THE WHITE PLAGUE AND THE BLACK.**

The Prince of Wales made an earnest appeal at the banquet last week at the Hotel Cecil in aid of the funds of the National Association for the Establishment and Maintenance of Sanatoria for workers suffering from tuberculosis. His Royal Highness pointed out that although something had been done to meet the needs of workers, by the erection of the Benenden Sanatorium additional accommodation was already urgently needed. Cases had occurred in which payment was guaranteed for patients, but for whom no beds were available, and who had already died.

At present, while friendly societies can maintain beds in sanatoria, they cannot legally draw on their capital to build sanatoria, but if the Benenden Sanatorium can be proved to be financially successful it is hoped that the affiliated society may consider itself justified in applying for powers to build sanatoria out of its invested funds. Thus, not only will the working man be paying for his own cure, and so rendering himself independent of charity, but by the establishment of these institutions existing charity will be relieved, as hitherto many working men have had recourse to sanatoria or hospitals supported by voluntary contributions. This scheme for helping those who are willing to help themselves, is, said the Prince, an ideal form of benevolence but, if the Great White Plague is to be grappled with, the funds must be vastly increased. While the mortality among the fifteen millions who are members of the friendly societies and trade unions is upwards of 28,500 lives a year, the beds in the country for the open-air treatment of the working classes number only 1,000. No one understands better than nurses the importance of adequate measures for deal-

ing with tuberculosis, and of removing the sufferer into a sanatorium in the early stage of the disease both to afford him the best chance of recovery, and also in removing a centre of infection from his surroundings, and they will follow this movement with the deepest interest.

But, though the ravages of the White Plague are appalling, those caused by what is commonly known as the Black Plague are even more terrible, and its strongest hold is to be found in the secrecy with which it is surrounded. It is a false modesty which shrinks from speaking of this evil thing in our midst, while thousands of innocent persons are infected by a loathsome and incapacitating disease which spares neither innocent women nor little children, which ravages our army, and sends the unborn babe prematurely into the world, handicapped with ill-health from the start. Too often persons suffering from the disease in an acute stage are to be seen pursuing their ordinary vocations, handling the clothes worn, and even the food eaten by healthy persons, and though the danger of infection is great, yet every one shrinks from enlightening the public as to the risks they run, and as to the need for the notification of this infectious disease if it is to be stamped out.

A nurse horrified at the risk entailed to others recently told us that on entering a large London drapery store, where the employees "live in," she noticed one of the shop walkers suffering from terrible discharging sores of the neck, evidently of a virulently infectious nature, no attempt whatever being made to cover them up. When will the nation arise and demand the enactment of legislation requiring the disclosure of this disease when contracted, so that it may receive early treatment, and due precautions may be taken to protect healthy persons from infection.

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