

On admission, each patient is placed in a separate cubicle in one of the two observation wards, and there detained for a quarantine period of at least a fortnight. In this way, the spread of infectious disease is largely prevented. During the quarantine period, notes are carefully taken, treatment planned, splints made, X-ray examination performed, the educational standard of the child ascertained, and the patient may settle down quietly before being transferred to one of the general wards. Meanwhile, the patient is gradually accustomed to the open-air life which he will have to face when in the general wards. That ward is selected for each patient which will be most suitable for both medical and educational reasons.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that tubercular disease causes more crippling than all

The ideal at Alton is:—

(1) To so increase the patient's powers of resistance that he himself may be made to overcome the disease by which he is attacked and render it innocuous.

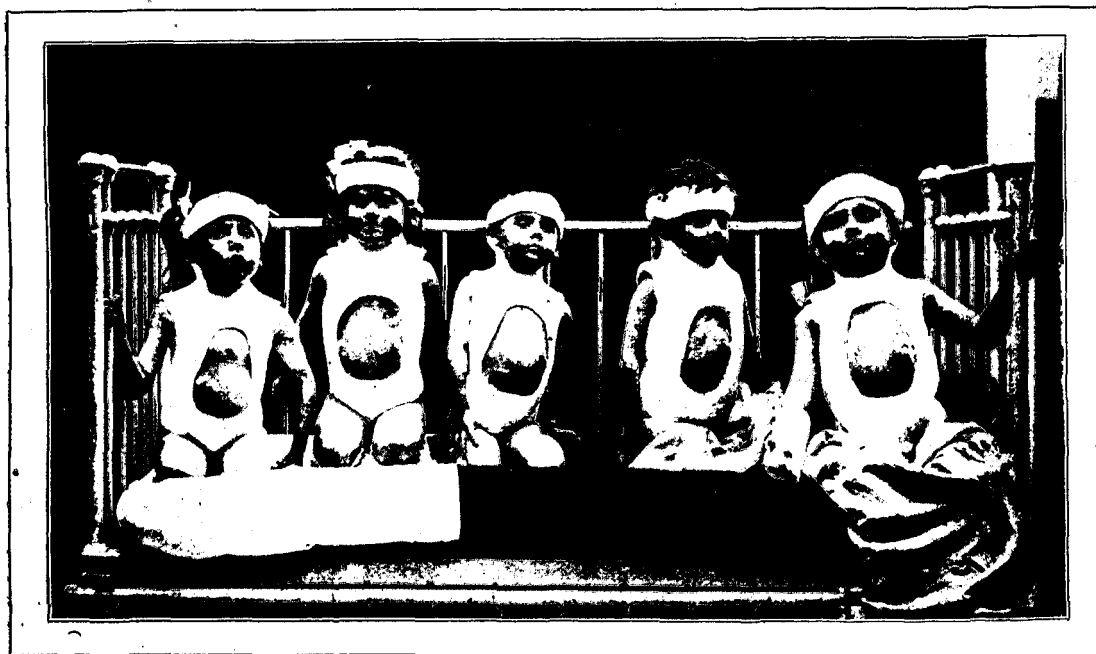
(2) To preserve and restore any particular bones or joints diseased.

(3) To prevent deformity or, if deformity already exists, to correct or reduce this deformity as much as is possible.

(4) To educate the patient while he is being treated, if his condition permits.

(5) To exercise, as far as possible, efficient after-care and guidance, when treatment in the hospital is completed, and the patient discharged.

The realisation of this ideal is not always possible, but is very frequently attained.



FIVE LITTLE PATIENTS

Suffering from tuberculous disease of the cervical spine immobilised in high plaster jackets. These patients have all been discharged without deformity and with disease apparently cured.

other diseases combined, and it is now recognised that surgical tuberculosis may be described as a general disease, in which the local lesion or lesions are special manifestations. This conception of surgical tuberculosis is of supreme importance, because on it is based the method of treatment so successfully adopted at Alton.

Conservative as opposed to radical treatment has been adopted, and by conservative treatment are meant all those measures which tend to improve the patient's general health, increase his powers of resistance, and preserve and restore the part attacked, in contradistinction to radical treatment, which aims at the cure of the disease by the removal of the local lesion.

Obviously the time when treatment should be undertaken is the moment when the disease is first detected, but the neglected condition in which the patients are frequently admitted is pathetically illustrated in the Report. Yet, owing to the care with which the mechanical problem presented by each patient is studied, and special apparatus designed for each individual condition, quite marvellous corrections of severe deformities have been made.

An example of a somewhat unusual deformity associated with spinal caries is illustrated (Figures 12 and 13). This patient remains well and robust, has little evidence of deformity, and is earning her living as a dressmaker.

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