

# The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

January 13, 1921

ADDRESS		BOOK REVIEWS	
REMARKS MADE AT THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE INTER-ALLIED SANITARY COMMISSION, PARIS. <i>By Richard P. Strong, M.D., Boston.</i> .....	27	The Johns Hopkins Hospital Reports, Vol. xix, Fasciculus iii. 48	
ORIGINAL ARTICLES		Lectures on Surgery to Nurses. By Alan H. Todd, B.Sc., M.S., Lond.; F.R.C.S., Eng. ....	48
SCOLIOSIS. <i>By Herman W. Marshall, M.D., Boston.</i> .....	31	Plymouth and the Pilgrims. By Arthur Lord, Boston. ....	48
THE NECESSITY FOR MAINTAINING PROPER STANDARDS OF NURSING CARE. <i>By Elisha H. Cohoon, M.D., Medfield, Mass.</i> ...	40	EDITORIAL	
CONDITIONS IN PALESTINE DURING THE WAR AND MEDICAL RELIEF AMONG THE CIVIL POPULATION AND REFUGEES. <i>By Izak Alcazar, M.D., Boston (continued).</i> .....	45	THE HARRISON LAW FROM THE ETHICAL POINT OF VIEW. ....	49
		MEDICAL NOTES. ....	50
		MISCELLANY	
		NOTICES, RECENT DEATHS, ETC. ....	52

### Address

#### REMARKS MADE AT THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE INTER-ALLIED SANITARY COMMISSION, PARIS.

BY RICHARD P. STRONG, M.D., BOSTON,

*General Medical Director, League of Red Cross Societies, Geneva; Professor of Tropical Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston.*

To an assembly of this nature, the statement will not appear startling (though it may, to some, superfluous), that without the knowledge which the science of preventive medicine has given us, and its application by our medical and sanitary services, the history of the efficiency of the armies of the governments which we represent would undoubtedly have been very different in our recent great war.

When modern scientific hygienic methods are properly carried out, epidemics of infectious diseases (in earlier years often referred to on account of their great severity, as pestilences), no longer decimate armies as they did formerly. Indeed, the glory of preventive medicine in modern times has been in its victories over communicable diseases. The war has given an unusual opportunity for the demonstration of the great progress which has taken place in recent years in the prevention of infectious dis-

eases, and of the excellent results to be obtained when modern sanitary precautions are carefully exercised.

During this recent great conflict, as the reports presented to this Inter-Allied Commission demonstrate, the supervision of water and food supplies and the disposal of refuse of armies was usually looked after with a high degree of efficiency. Gross overcrowding was also generally prevented and widespread and usually efficient action was taken in the allied armies against communicable diseases.

On the other hand, the war has also given some striking examples of the serious results which may follow when, through military exigencies or for other reasons, the enforcement of proper sanitary regulations cannot be carried out. I need only refer, as an example, to the disastrous results which occurred in the army in Serbia in 1915 in connection with the epidemic of typhus, or in the army in Mesopotamia in 1917 in connection with dysentery, typhoid and other preventable diseases.

While influenza during the war has taken its toll, and we cannot upon the whole congratulate ourselves either upon the general enforcement of sanitary measures believed to be of value in the prevention of this disease, or upon the results obtained by their attempted enforcement, it is frightful to contemplate the

loss of life which might have occurred had we been without even the preventive knowledge we already possess regarding this disease. Also, in spite of our successes generally in dealing with hygienic problems in armies, and notwithstanding our modern knowledge of preventive medicine, anyone familiar with the principles of public health, who consults for a moment the civil vital statistics of each of the countries we represent, cannot escape from the conclusion that in spite of the efforts of all existing health organizations, there remains in each country—and largely because proper hygienic measures are not taken—a very large and serious amount of preventable disease and of avoidable disablement, and misery, the result of disease; though obviously this amount is very much greater in some countries than in others. Hence at the conclusion of the war Mr. H. P. Davison and those whom he had associated with him in this movement, felt that the time had come for taking steps of greater magnitude against this great mass of preventable disease throughout the world, and of approaching the problem with a wider vision than had hitherto been done; and with the idea of enlisting the services of multitudes of people in many countries in the prevention of disease, and in securing a more unselfish devotion and more liberal sympathy of the people themselves towards public health in cities, as well as in rural communities, and in obtaining their greater coöperation with the national authorities in health activities.

It further appeared that the time was particularly opportune for the Red Cross societies whose war activities had been completed, to inaugurate this movement and to establish an organization which would devote itself to such public health problems.

"The time has more than come," wrote recently one of our distinguished public health administrators, Sir George Newman, "for taking further steps in the organization of a systematic and ordered attack on the strongholds of preventable disease—particularly that mass of crippling morbidity and invalidism which is undermining the capacity and efficiency of the people—an attack which will depend for its achievement upon a close partnership and coöperation between all branches of medicine, between the medical profession and the public, and between the governing authori-

ties and those who are governed. We cannot continue wisely to rely upon piecemeal effort, divided counsels, and conflicting authorities."

The securing of a closer coöperation between the medical profession and the public, and between the governing authorities and those who are governed by the enlistment of the services of millions of enlightened and responsive people in connection with the prevention of disease throughout the world, is one of the fundamental purposes of the organization which I represent, and it is upon the activities of this organization that I have been asked by our honorable President, Professor Santoliquido, to address you.

The League of Red Cross Societies was organized in May, 1919, following a medical conference held at Cannes, and attended by representatives from Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the United States. Thus while a number of our most eminent statesmen were engaged at the Peace Conference in Paris in attempting to formulate a plan for a League of Nations destined to bring about and maintain permanent international peace, a number of our most distinguished scientists were assembled at Cannes endeavoring to organize a league for the improvement of health throughout the world and I need not remind an assembly of this nature that health is also one of the prime necessities of life and must go hand in hand with peace in any country if there is to be contentment or prosperity or progress therein. The Cannes Conference heartily approved of the idea of extending the activities of the Red Cross in times of peace for the prevention of disease and the betterment of the health and general welfare of the people in all countries, and expressed the belief that no other organization was so well prepared to undertake these great responsibilities at the present time as the Red Cross.

The League of the Red Cross Societies is a non-political and non-governmental organization. Its objects are: (1) to encourage and promote in every country in the world the establishment and development of a duly authorized voluntary national Red Cross organization, having as purposes the improvement of health, the prevention of disease, and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world, and to secure the coöperation of such organizations for these purposes; (2) to promote the welfare of mankind by furnishing a medium for bring-

ing within the reach of all the peoples the benefits to be derived from present known facts and new contributions to science and medical knowledge and their application; (3) to furnish a medium for coördinating relief work in case of great national or international calamities.

The headquarters of the League are at present located in Geneva and in connection with its program for the improvement of public health and the prevention of disease, a General Medical Department with a director and a staff and an Inter-allied Advisory Council\* have been established as part of its headquarters in Geneva.

This Medical Department was originally planned to comprise the following divisions: Secretary's Office, Division of Medical Information and Publication, Demonstration Laboratory, Hygienic Museum and Library, as well as Divisions of Child Welfare, Nursing, Miscellaneous Communicable Diseases, Tuberculosis, Venereal Diseases, Malaria, Sanitary Engineering, Industrial Hygiene, and Vital Statistics.

The League has also established coöperative relationships with the Office International d'Hygiène Publique, the only governmental international health body in existence prior to the war, and in this connection our president, Professor Santoliquido, also for many years the president of the Office International d'Hygiène Publique itself, has been appointed as Counselor of International Health to the League, in order that the relationship between these two organizations may be as close as possible.

The League of the Red Cross Societies, however, being a voluntary agency, has quite different functions from the Office International d'Hygiène Publique, and obviously it will not attempt to supplant but will endeavor to aid and to coöperate with this and other Government health organizations and relief agencies.

Recognizing that the prevention of disease

and the protection of the health of the people is a primary responsibility and function of Government, it will nevertheless be the policy of the League to encourage wise public health legislation and efficient public health administration by all appropriate means. Thus by effectively mobilizing its millions of members of its constituent national organizations—now numbering thirty-one in various parts of the world—with the object of the prevention of unnecessary sickness, misery and death caused by preventable disease, incalculable results in the betterment of the health and general welfare of the people must be obtained. In this way, in which the education of the people is of great importance, the League of Red Cross Societies may also be extremely useful in obtaining better public support for the work of Government health officials.

In this connection the League has already taken steps to secure copies of all important existing laws and all laws which will be published in the future relating to public health in order that it may be thoroughly familiar with the legislation upon this subject in all of the different countries and be in a position to create public sentiment demanding proper health laws where they are most needed.

Accurate and full registration of vital statistics will be especially urged in all countries as constituting a basis upon which definite and permanent improvement of health conditions may be accomplished. Efforts will be made to secure a standardization of the vital statistics of all those countries where adequate registration and notification are not in effect, so that comparable data on important subjects may be available, and standard tables prepared and submitted for modification and adoption by the authorities in such countries.

The League will endeavor to encourage scientific investigations in hygiene and sanitary science, since progress in the domain of public health depends upon the advancement of knowledge and the application of new principles. In this connection, however, it is not the intention of the League at the present time to organize an extensive laboratory force and to establish a large laboratory of its own exclusively for research purposes. Its attitude in general will be to organize and to encourage and stimulate research work in relation to preventive medicine and hygiene in those excellent scientific institutions already established in different parts of

\* The members of the Council are: Belgium, Dr. J. Bordet, Director, Pasteur Institute, Brussels; Denmark, Professor T. H. Madsen, State Serum Institute, Copenhagen; France, Professor Emile Roux, Director of the Pasteur Institute, Paris, Professor Albert Calmette, Sub-Director of the Pasteur Institute, Paris, Dr. Leon Bernard, Professor of Hygiene at the University of Paris; Great Britain, Colonel S. Lyle Cummins, C.M.G., C.B., Professor of Pathology, R.A.M.C. College, London, Sir Walter Fletcher, K.B.E., M.D., Sc.D., Secretary, Medical Research Committee, London, Sir George Newman, K.C.B., M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health; Italy, Professor Dr. Giuseppe Bastianelli, Physician and Pathologist, Polyclinic Hospital, Rome, Professor Aldo Castellani, C.M.G., Professor of Tropical Diseases at London School of Tropical Medicine; Japan, Professor Kinnosuke Miura, Imperial University of Tokio; South America, Dr. Carlos Chagas, Director of the Oswald Cruz Institute, Rio de Janeiro; United States, Dr. William H. Welch, Director of the School of Hygiene and Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Hermann M. Biggs, Commissioner of Health, New York State; Dr. Simon Flexner, Director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, Dr. George C. Shattuck is the General Medical Secretary of the League of Red Cross Societies.

the world, and also to attempt to coördinate national efforts in research, particularly with the idea of obtaining more uniform and correct results in medical investigations regarding which different and conflicting results have been obtained by different workers, or different groups of workers in different countries. It will also, where original investigations appear advisable and of an urgent character, appoint from time to time special commissions for such researches to be prosecuted either in permanent laboratories or in the field. Probably one of the greatest services which the League may render mankind will be accomplished by the undertaking of such investigations of a practicable character, the results of which may be applied later on a large scale by governmental health agencies for the benefit of the people at large.

The League also assumes that the establishment of public health laboratories or the provision for laboratory service for every community is an extremely important means of promoting efficient public health administration. Realizing, however, that special training of physicians, both administrative and technical, for public health laboratory work is essential, and that in many countries no provision for such training has been made, it is hoped that there will be established in Europe, preferably in connection with some already existing medical institution, such a laboratory in which a limited number of physicians coming from countries where no such facilities exist, may receive adequate training in public health laboratory work. It is the hope that a number of national Red Cross societies may be prevailed upon to establish a certain number of scholarships each year for physicians to be trained in this manner.

The League believes that the extension of the employment of public health nurses or health visitors should be furthered in every possible manner in all countries, and that standardized educational centers for training such nurses or visitors should be developed. It expects to undertake as soon as practicable efficient propaganda in those countries where trained sick nursing and public health nursing are not as yet developed, and to encourage the establishment of training schools for nurses in such countries. It believes that suitable personnel for instruction both in the care of the sick and public health nursing should be sought and trained, so that such personnel may return sub-

sequently to their own countries qualified to inaugurate and direct movements for the establishment of training schools for nurses. The League will also endeavor, in connection with its constituent societies, to establish a system of scholarships to make it possible for trained nurses to receive the necessary supplementary education to qualify them as public health nurses and as teachers.

With properly trained public health nurses and laboratory diagnosticians, a powerful contribution towards the advancement of public health work in a country will have been accomplished.

The League further believes that educational propaganda has been shown to be the most efficient means for forwarding all forms of health activities, and it therefore will especially urge the general adoption of scientific publicity methods, which include the intelligent use of cinema exhibits, illustrated lectures, and other similar methods of visualizing knowledge. In connection with its educational programme it will also publish a scientific medical journal as well as other scientific and popular literature.

The League believes that the training by thoroughly qualified teachers of school children in all grades in the subjects of personal and general hygiene, and in the inculcation of proper health habits during school life, are essential measures for permanently improving the health and contributing to the welfare of the people.

It believes that special attention should be directed everywhere to the importance of town and city planning, and the proper housing for working men, and suggests that national Red Cross societies promote the erection of buildings to be used as health and community centers in their respective localities.

The League also thoroughly endorses the reports upon child welfare, the control of tuberculosis, malaria and venereal diseases, presented at the Cannes Medical Conference, and urges these programs for adoption in all countries. These reports have been printed by the League and widely circulated, and copies of them are available for any who are interested in these subjects.

Owing to the grave representations presented to the League regarding the wide prevalence of typhus fever in Poland and the danger of its spread westward across Europe, it was decided that the control of this disease should be at once undertaken as an emergency relief measure.

The medical director of the League, after consulting with the Office International d'Hygiène Publique and the British Ministry of Health, recommended that an inter-allied commission be appointed consisting of: General Hugh S. Cumming, U. S. Public Health Service; Dr. George S. Buchanan, British Ministry of Health, and Dr. Aldo Castellani, Italian Navy, all members of this Inter-allied Sanitary Commission; and Dr. Visbecq, Service de Santé, of France, all of whom proceeded to Poland for the purpose of making careful investigations of the medical and sanitary conditions in that country. This commission, upon its return, rendered a report to the League upon the entire sanitary situation, and made recommendations regarding the proper medical and sanitary measures which it considered most advisable to be undertaken.

The League has taken further action in connection with the report of its medical commission and has designated Mr. William C. Boyden (formerly a Harvard overseer) as its commissioner to Poland, and Colonel Henry A. Shaw, M. C., U. S. A., as its medical representative, who with a medical staff are prepared to carry on in connection with the Polish Commissioner an extensive campaign against typhus and other infectious diseases in that country. It is also arranged that Professor S. Burt Wolbach of Harvard University and a staff of seven members, which includes Dr. John L. Todd, Associate Professor of Parasitology at McGill University; Dr. A. Bacot, Entomologist of the Lister Institute, London, and Dr. Frank W. Paley, Instructor in Medicine at Harvard University, make thorough investigations regarding the etiology of typhus.

I have endeavored in this statement to point out to you very briefly the general purposes of the Bureau of Public Health of the League of Red Cross Societies, and to touch upon some of the most important lines of activity which it seems at the present time the League may wisely follow. I trust that in this program it will have the heartiest support, not only by the hygienists, but also by the physicians present in this assembly, for as Sir Clifford Allbutt has said recently, "Preventive and curative medicine are but the silver and gold of the two sides of one shield, and education in them is not only the instruction of the apprentice but also the nourishment of the practitioner and the equipment of the pioneer." With the aid of this shield thus welded together, will you

not, gentlemen, now that our war activities have ceased, take up this new inter-allied combat against disease throughout the world, and pledge your support to the furtherance of the purposes of this League for the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering in the countries you represent?

## Original Articles.

### SCOLIOSIS.

BY HERMAN W. MARSHALL, M.D., BOSTON.

ORTHOPEDISTS have studied scoliosis exhaustively during the past ten or fifteen years, and as each investigator has followed out special phases there have developed such diverging views that they appear contradictory now when each is considered independently.

According to some persons scoliosis should be considered caused by muscle weakness. Others insist on the essential importance of anatomical variations, wedge-shaped vertebrae, anomalies of intervertebral articular processes, and congenital bony peculiarities. A third group of investigators are inclined to lay greatest stress on remote causes that lead to muscular weakness. An appropriate time has arrived therefore perhaps to reconcile conflicting views.

The common type of acquired scoliosis that comes on gradually in normal appearing, rapidly growing individuals, usually during adolescence will be used to introduce desired topics. Lateral curvatures due to shortness of one leg, to empyema, to torticollis, and to primary lesions of the nervous system will be disregarded to large degree.

Characteristics of a typical case of the kind under consideration include lateral curving of the spine into S shaped form, rotation of the vertebrae, to greater or less extent, increased prominence of one shoulder blade, and one hip, and resultant deformities of bones of the chest and of the vertebrae if the process is protracted and severe enough.

Brief survey of established anatomical facts relating to the spine is necessary as a first step to clear understanding of the problem.

### ANATOMY.

The spinal column is made up of a series of vertebrae united into a single flexible support. This is strong enough to support the body, and