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## TUBERCULOSIS

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### ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

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#### IMPRESSIONS OF THE ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TUBERCULOSIS.

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THE Eleventh International Conference on Tuberculosis was held in Berlin from October 22 to 26, 1913, and was attended by delegates and other distinguished workers from all countries in the civilized world. As a preliminary to the Conference in Berlin, two interesting "Voyages of Information" were arranged; one of them included a visit to Düsseldorf, Hamburg, and intervening towns, whilst the other embraced a more lengthy tour, which included Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Bonn, Strassburg, and Leipsic. In each town visited great care and trouble were taken by the local doctors to make the stay as interesting as possible. The Hospitals, Sanatoria, and other Institutions were all visited and carefully inspected, and everything which had a bearing on the subject of tuberculosis was most carefully inquired into and explained on the spot. In addition to the purely technical character of the visit, receptions and entertainments were very kindly arranged by the civic authorities, and everything was done which could in any way make the visit of the delegates as happy as possible.

The great Conference itself was opened in the Prussian House of

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Berlin on Wednesday morning, and Her Imperial Majesty the Empress of Germany gave the greatest pleasure to the delegates by her lengthy visit to the opening ceremony; previous to the ceremony she honoured twelve of the delegates, representing their various countries, by a lengthy conversation on the work which was being done to eradicate tuberculosis. Her Majesty seemed quite at ease in speaking to the delegates in any language, and showed a marvellous grasp and knowledge of the social side of the tuberculosis problem. Professor Leon Bourgeois, the President of the Conference, was, unfortunately, prevented by illness from attending, and his speech was read by Professor Landouzy of Paris.

Some very interesting figures were given by Dr. Bumm, the President of the Imperial Bureau of Public Health, in his opening address. There are now in Germany 147 public sanatoria, with about 16,000 beds, 27 institutions for children with pulmonary phthisis, 22 for those suffering from tuberculous osteitis and arthritis, 103 for scrofulous children, 17 "forest" schools, 222 special hospital departments, and 1,500 tuberculosis departments. He went on to give credit to England for the first efforts made to constitute compulsory notification of the disease—a procedure which aided every anti-tuberculosis measure throughout the civilized world, so that it was computed that the death-rate from the disease in England, Germany, France, Belgium, and America had been diminished during the last fifteen years by about a third. He announced that the precepts of Koch with regard to the high infectivity of advanced pulmonary cases were now generally appreciated in Berlin, and that an institute was about to be erected near that city for the segregation of such cases, and that accommodation for 500 patients—to be increased eventually to 1,000—was to be provided at an estimated cost to the metropolis of £425 per bed.

A very interesting paper was given by Dr. Theodore Shennan of Edinburgh, in which he contrasted the death-rate from tuberculosis in Scotland with other countries. He found that the highest death-rate in Scotland was during the age periods 25 to 35, whilst in England it was highest between 35 to 45. He also made special reference to the unusual amount of tuberculosis which occurred in children in Scotland, and he attributed this in a very large degree to the amount of tuberculosis which was conveyed from animals to man in the form of milk and food. Unfortunately, in Scotland, there is a very serious amount of tuberculosis amongst dairy cows, with the result that young children when fed on their milk are very easily infected with tuberculosis of the glands, bones, and joints.

Dr. Much of Hamburg gave an interesting description of the conditions in Jerusalem, and he announced that an expedition would shortly take place for the purpose of studying tuberculosis in the Arab

and the European in the East, and he hoped that much useful information would result.

Dr. Brauer described his method of dealing with lungs by surgical means, especially where the disease was confined to one lung. Many of his results were shown by lantern slides, and made a great impression on the members of the Conference.

#### **National Insurance and Tuberculosis.**

The third discussion was opened by Dr. Kaufmann, the President of the Imperial Insurance Board, who said that the first State sanatorium was opened in 1895; towards the end of 1912 there were 39 such institutions, with 3,512 beds for men and 1,358 for women. In that year alone over 50,000 cases of pulmonary phthisis were treated at a cost to the State of about a million sterling. Of this large number of patients, 92 per cent. were so much improved that permanent invalidity was not to be feared for them; of the cases treated successfully in 1907, 57 per cent. were still in a position to earn their own living at the end of 1912. The practical benefits, such as the great saving of expense to the invalidity funds, and the return to health of the patients themselves, were not the only ones, for it was to be remembered that patients who left these sanatoria to return to their homes carried with them a sound knowledge of hygiene and prophylaxis, which the majority of them could be relied upon to practise and impart to their families. In addition to the institutions for patients with obvious tuberculosis, there were others for those in the first stage, in whom tubercle bacilli had never been found—these were conducted by the insurance authorities under the name of "Forest Homes for Convalescence." Besides the sanatoria and forest homes, there were the dispensaries, spread like a net over the Empire; it was their duty to alleviate the hopeless and incurable cases, and to supervise the sanitary conditions of the homes of such patients, and through the Insurance Boards supply what might be necessary in the way of bedding, contributions to rent, etc. At the present time particular attention was being given to such patients as were infectious to their relatives and too advanced for any hope of improvement by sanatorium treatment. It had not been considered advisable to segregate them in special institutions, and, for the present, they were being tended in the special departments of general hospitals, or in hospitals for consumption where these existed. Tuberculous children were placed in special homes and asylums by the insurance organizations, and those suffering from lupus also came in for a share of insurance benefits, of which the special lupus institute, recently built and opened at Giessen in Hesse, was an earnest of more to come.

**Tuberculosis and Milk.**

Dr. Heymanns gave a very interesting paper on the relation of tuberculosis in cattle and in man; he specially drew attention to the fact that cows with tuberculosis of the udder always yield an infectious milk, which was by far the most prolific source of bovine tuberculous infection in man, and he advocated that every cow suffering from tuberculosis should be excluded from the milk-supply.

Dr. Nathan Raw of Liverpool emphasized the great importance of removing all tuberculous dairy cows from the milking herd; he was convinced that a very large amount of tuberculosis is conveyed from cattle to children by means of tuberculous milk, and as a result of his own observations was of the opinion that disease of the glands, bones, skin, and joints in children, were, in the great majority of cases, the result of infection by tuberculous milk, but that consumption which was so invariably seen in the adult was caused by infection from person to person, and had little or no relation to the milk-supply.

At the conclusion of the Conference the delegates were entertained by the authorities of Berlin to a great banquet, over 350 members being present. The following countries were officially represented at the banquet: France, Landouzy; Germany, Bumm; Austria, von Schrotter; Russia, Vladimiroff; Sweden, Medin; Italy, Maragliano; Japan, Mido; Brazil, Ferreira; Spain, Espina di Capo; and England, Nathan Raw. The usual loyal toast having been honoured, eulogistic speeches were made regarding the progress of the attack on tuberculosis. Dr. Schrotter, in replying on behalf of Austria, spoke of the great progress which was being made in Austria with regard to the prevention of the disease in children; and Dr. Nathan Raw, on behalf of England, referred to the debt of gratitude which all workers in England owed to the splendid example set by German scientists, for the initiative and stimulus which German workers had given to the world in the fight against tuberculosis.

The Conference having concluded, a day was devoted to a visit to the beautiful homes for children affected with tuberculosis, and also for those who were threatened with the disease. These homes have been established at Hohenlychen by a committee of ladies, and afterwards assisted by the Red Cross Society in Germany. A very pleasant day was spent in inspecting the homes where the children are taught trades and handicraft whilst being tided over the critical period of their lives.

In all respects the International Conference in Berlin was a huge success, the scientific part was excellent, whilst every possible effort was made by the committee of ladies to make the visit a social success.