

HOME INFECTION IN TUBERCULOSIS AND HOW TO NEUTRALIZE ITS DANGERS—(Cont. from page 17).

mon use of knives, forks, cups, saucers, etc., without thorough cleaning.

It seems to me that a still more intensive effort might be made to bring these points to the notice of persons leaving sanatoria or hospitals and of those infected patients with families attending at tuberculosis institutes and dispensaries for advice and direction; and that general practitioners might become, to a still greater extent than at present, apostles in a movement to diminish the risk of home infection as it bears on the infants and young children destined to be the citizens of to-morrow.

It is a mistake to frighten the general public by always dangling before their eyes the bogey of tuberculosis. To many of them the risk is non-existent, and constant "nagging" only leads to weariness and apathy. But in the case of infected persons actually capable of spreading the disease through their own carelessness or through the omission of precautions which may well be within their power, the campaign of education can hardly be too intense. At the same time it must be on practical lines, and it must take into account the actual circumstances of the particular home in question. Very little is likely to be accomplished by eloquent exhortation, but a great deal may be done by discussing in a friendly

and helpful spirit the exact circumstances of the patient during a visit to the home, and indicating tactfully what is possible under the circumstances. Judicious help of a material or financial kind may sometimes be necessary to give effort to the recommendations made, and here the funds of after-care organizations may be of great assistance; but much can be accomplished by tact and kindness, which cost nothing and are often of infinite value.

The opinions I have expressed may well be regarded as superfluous in many well-organized areas, where tuberculosis physicians, general practitioners, health visitors, and care committees are already accomplishing wonders on the lines suggested; but few will deny that there are many places where a great deal remains to be done.

Tuberculous persons are the one great source of danger in the spread of tuberculosis. What I advocate is that they may be converted into the front-line troops in our campaign, accepting, as soldiers should, the discipline, the self-abnegation, the constant vigilance exacted from them as the price of victory.

1. Godias J. Drolet: "The Inheritance Factor in Tuberculosis," *American Review of Tuberculosis*, vol. x., No. 3.
2. "Cambridgeshire Tuberculosis Colony: Report of the Executive Committee,"

"Reading time of papers in Diseases of the Chest, 5 to 15 minutes."



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