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MEDICAL CONVOCATION

INFECTIOUS DISEASES ARE DISCUSSED BY DR. WAITE.

DEATH LIST FROM THESE LARGE

TALKS ON METHODS OF PREVENTING TUBERCULOSIS.

Care Must Be Taken in Sanitation and Disinfection in This as Well as in Diphtheria and Typhoid Fever.

Dr. Herbert H. Waite of the university school of medicine addressed the medical convocation Friday evening upon the subject "How Infectious Diseases May Be Prevented." Dr. Waite said:

"Prevention is much more important than a cure. In order that we may best understand this we will consider one particular disease as an example—tuberculosis. In 1900 it was estimated than over one hundred and nine thousand human beings died of tuberculosis, or at least that many were reported, for there are large sections of the country which makes no report and again many die supposedly of some other cause, when it should be attributed to this cause. To know how to control we must know first how the body is infected. The most common means is by the spittle. The number of organisms in an expectoration is all the way from 500,000,000 to 3,000,000,000, so that the danger is quite great.

To Prevent Spread.

"The first thing to guard is to prevent the spittle from drying and then passing out into the air. It should be destroyed or else disinfected by means of carbolic acid or other agent. The best form of spittoon is an earthen one. Too much attention can not be paid to disinfection. Very specific and accurate instructions can be given to everyone affected with tuberculosis in respect to their sleep, food and care, and yet in the majority of cases this is not followed. Many physicians again give very unwise and poor advice so that the patient even increases the seriousness of his case. People should learn to care for themselves, and be instructed to this end. Often digestive troubles are found in connection with tuberculosis, in which case much care should be taken in the diet, for the person may be eating food which entirely disagrees with him.

"Expectorating is most dangerous indoors, where the association with other members of the family increases the danger. There must be a general effort made to dissuade all individuals who have gotten into this habit to overcome it as soon as possible. The handkerchief becomes a great disseminating means as it is used at present. The best handkerchief is the inexpensive Japanese paper napkin, which after use should be placed in stout manila paper bags and, within a few hours at most, be burned. In coughing and sneezing the napkin should be placed over the mouth to prevent the particles of moisture from carrying out numbers of the tubercle bacillus to endanger others.

Infection may occur along the alementary canal. Many cities have a severe ordinance regulating the milk supply, for often tuberculosis of cattle will reach the human being in this way. Much care also must be taken in the handling of the milk. The danger is not fully appreciated. Pennsylvania has one of the best health laws in the country, and yet milk has been found in Philadelphia which has great numbers of the baccilli in it. Such milk should not be used at all, and especially by human beings.

Care of Untensils.

"All glasses and other utensils used by the individual should receive most careful attention. In many cases the patient should be kept separated from others. In this way the disease is more easily controlled and kept from spreading. The patient should be given instruction for his care.

"In two other diseases attention must be closely paid. Diphtheria and typhoid fever. In the first all suspicious cases must be guarded, for those apparently well may spread the disease. Cases have been known where it was carried for three hundred and fifteen days after the patient's recovery. As a preventative antitoxin has been very successful and its use is strongly urged. The number of deaths has been reduced about fifty per cent by its use. There is no reason for typhoid fever and it exists because of carelessness or unsanitary conditions. The main source is the water, and by boiling and filtering the danger can be greatly reduced. By filtering, the number of deaths occurring in Vienna in one year were lowered from about four hundred to seven or eight."

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