

(CONTINUED FROM FOURTH PAGE.)

of times by Chauveau, Günther and Harms, Bollinger and others, who fed calves, swine and goats with tubercular material, one found animals that were fed with milk and pieces of lungs of tubercular cattle always fell ill of tuberculosis, whereas those that received human material with their food did not. Considering all the facts, he felt justified in maintaining that human tuberculosis differed from bovine, and could not be transmitted to cattle.

Now, how was it, with the susceptibility of man to bovine tuberculosis? Highly important as this question was, it was impossible to give a direct answer because experimental investigation of it with human beings was out of the question. Indirectly, however, we could try to approach it. It is well known that milk and butter consumed in great cities very often contained large quantities of the bacilli of bovine tuberculosis in living condition, as numerous infection experiments with such dairy products on animals had proved.

Most of the inhabitants of such cities consumed such living and perfectly virulent bacilli of bovine tuberculosis and unintentionally carried out the experiment which we were not at liberty to make. If the bacilli of bovine tuberculosis were able to infect human beings many cases of tuberculosis caused by the consumption of aliment containing tubercle bacilli could not help but occur among the inhabitants of great cities, especially children. Most medical men believe this was actually the case. In reality, however, it was not so. That a case of tuberculosis had been caused by aliment could be assumed with certainty only when the intestines suffered first, i.e., when so-called primary tuberculosis of the intestines was found, but such cases were extremely rare. Among the many cases of tuberculosis examined after death he himself remembered having seen primary tuberculosis of the intestines only twice among the great post-mortem material of the Charité Hospital in Berlin.

Ten cases of primary tuberculosis of the intestines occurred in five years among 933 cases of tuberculosis in children at Emperor and Empress Fredericks Hospital for Children. Baginsky never found tuberculosis of the intestines without a simultaneous affection of the lungs and bronchial glands. Among 3,104 post-mortem examinations of tubercular children Biedert observed only sixteen cases of primary tuberculosis of intestine. He could cite from the literature of the subject many more statistics of the same kind, all indubitably showing that primary tuberculosis of the intestine, especially among children, was a comparatively rare disease, and of these few cases that had been enumerated it was by no means certain they were due to infection by bovine tuberculosis. It was just as likely that they were caused by widely propagated bacilli of human tuberculosis which might have got into the digestive canal in some way or other—for instance, by swallowing saliva. Hitherto nobody could decide with certainty in such cases whether tuberculosis of the intestine was of human or animal origin. Now, however, we could diagnose them. All that was necessary was to cultivate in pure material tubercle bacilli found in tubercular material and to ascertain whether they belonged to bovine tuberculosis by inoculating cattle with them. For this purpose he recommended a subcutaneous injection which yielded quick, especially characteristic and convincing results. For half a year past he had occupied himself with such investigations, but owing to the rareness of the disease in question the number of cases he had been able to investigate was but small.

What had hitherto resulted from this investigation did not speak for the assumption that bovine tuberculosis occurred in man, though the important question whether man was susceptible to bovine tuberculosis at all was not yet absolutely decided, and would not admit of absolute decision to-day or to-morrow. One was nevertheless already at liberty to say that if such susceptibility really existed, infection of human beings was but a very rare occurrence.

He should estimate extent of infection by milk and flesh of tubercular cattle and butter made of their milk as hardly greater than that of hereditary transmission, and he therefore did not deem it advisable to take any measures against it. This was certainly true of many patients, especially in the first stages, and also of those who belonged to well-to-do classes, and were able to procure the necessary nursing. But how was it with people of very small means? Every medical man had often entered dwellings of the poor, and he could speak on this point from his own experience. He knew how sad was the lot of poor consumptives and their families.

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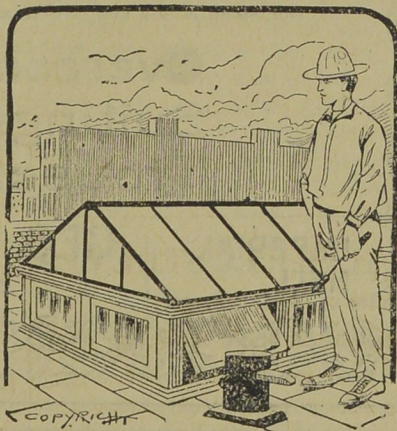
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