





ATLANTA UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS,

No. 1.

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# MORTALITY AMONG NEGROES IN CITIES.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE FOR  
INVESTIGATIONS OF CITY PROBLEMS

HELD AT

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY, MAY 26-27, 1896.

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ATLANTA, GA.  
ATLANTA UNIVERSITY PRESS.  
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IN CITIES.**

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WITH COMPLIMENTS,

PRES. HORACE BUMSTEAD, D. D.

ATLANTA, GA.

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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Atlanta University always has drawn its students extensively from the cities and large towns, and a great proportion of its graduates are now holding positions at these centers of influence. From these workers information has come to the faculty and trustees of the University from time to time that has led them to believe that there exists a great need for a systematic and thorough investigation of the conditions of living among the Negro population of cities. So, at the annual meeting of the trustees, July 1, 1895, President Bumstead brought the subject before the Board, and it was decided to inaugurate such an investigation, and provision was made for holding the first of a series of conferences at the University. The plan at that time was to hold this conference in November, 1895, during the Atlanta Exposition. But upon further consideration, it was deemed wise to change the time to the Commencement in May, 1896.

It was not expected that much in the line of scientific reports based upon accurate data could be presented at this first conference, but it was believed that much information could be gathered from the ordinary experiences and observations of graduates and others, and that the subject could be considered in such a manner as to arouse interest and enthusiasm, and so pave the way for collecting and digesting extensive and accurate data. Such, it is believed, has been the result of the conference held.

Fortunately for the cause, there was elected as a trustee of the University, in 1895, Mr. George G. Bradford of Boston, a graduate of Harvard University, who for several years has been making the study of the Negro the occupation of his leisure time. He entered heartily into this plan of investigation, and has taken the lead in it by preparing blanks, opening up correspondence, and in other ways. In his efforts he has had the assistance of Mr. Edward Cummings, Professor of Sociology in Harvard University. It was thought best to begin with the topic of mortality among the Negro population in cities, and so most of the papers and discussions at the conference were upon that subject.

The conference was organized Tuesday evening, May 26, by the election of President Horace Bumstead as chairman, and George A. Towns ('94) and James W. Johnson ('94) as recording secretaries. The addresses, papers and resolutions in this pamphlet furnish a sufficiently detailed account of the proceedings at the two sessions of the conference. Provision for work during the coming year was made by the election of Mr. Geo. G. Bradford of Boston, as corresponding secretary, and an executive committee, consisting of Professor Thomas N. Chase of Atlanta, Butler R. Wilson, Esq. of Boston, Rev. Joseph E. Smith ('76) of Chattanooga, and S. P. Lloyd, M. D. ('89) of Savannah.

#### REMARKS OF PRESIDENT BUMSTEAD.

This conference has its origin in several striking facts. One of these is the large proportion of the Negro population of the land now found to be living in cities, viz: one-sixth, or a million and a quarter out of the whole number of seven and a half millions. Whatever we may think of the wisdom or unwisdom of this drift to the cities, the fact presents a condition that must be met and provided for. For we must remember that the condition and circumstances of Negroes living in cities differ widely from those of the plantation Negroes. They are thrown much more closely together in large masses on narrower areas of land and in more contracted tenements. Negro slums are already beginning to be found. The employ-

ments of city Negroes are different from those of the rural brethren, agriculture being replaced by the trades, or the various forms of personal service, and to some extent by mercantile and professional pursuits. Their social life is also different.

Very little attention, too, has yet been given to the specific problems arising out of the changed conditions under which this large proportion of Negro population is now sharing the city life of their white brethren. The Negro has been thought of chiefly as a tiller of the soil, as in fact he is; and much has been done, and very properly, for the improvement of his plantation life. But the problems connected with his life in the cities and larger towns need even more careful study and thorough treatment.

In view of these considerations, it is important to note another fact, and that is that nearly all the graduates of Atlanta University are living and working in the cities and larger towns of the South. This fact is very suggestive, for the problems of Negro city life must be settled largely by Negroes themselves, and the body of our alumni are in some respects specially fitted for this task. Not only are they familiar with the conditions of life in cities, but they have acquired, in their training in this Institution, some degree of accurate observation and careful reflection, some acquaintance with high standards of living, some familiarity with measures of reform and of social and economic improvement that are indispensable for dealing with such matters. Herein is the great opportunity of Atlanta University and of this conference of its alumni for the investigation of city problems which we inaugurate this evening.

Let us not forget that the general subject of this and succeeding conferences—the study of Negro city life—and the particular subject of this year—the mortality of Negroes in cities—constitute a human problem far more than a Negro problem. We shall use the words “Negro” and “colored,” not to emphasize distinctions of race, but as terms of convenience. We are simply to study human life under certain conditions—conditions which, if repeated with any other race, would have

practically the same result. Patient, painstaking and persistent work in gathering reliable statistics and other data will be necessary for our success. It is no gala day enterprise that we have begun. Courage and honesty in the search for real facts are called for, and we must be ready to face and deal with even the disagreeable facts and those which upset our previous theories, which our investigations may compel us to recognize as facts.

And let me remind you, as I close this brief introduction to the work of our conference, that the richest rewards await the result of our undertaking if we are successful. Dr. Parkhurst has said that it is in the great cities that the life of the nation beats and throbs itself out. What the cities are, that in large degree will the country that surrounds them be. The connection between the two is intimate. So the improvement of Negro life in cities will make itself felt in the improvement of Negro plantation life. And the improvement of Negro life anywhere will be a blessing to the life of the nation as a whole, regardless of race or color.

## OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE, AND AN OUTLINE OF THE PLAN OF WORK.

BY MR. GEORGE G. BRADFORD OF BOSTON.

The rapid growth of our great cities, within recent years, is one of the phases of modern life which brings with it problems whose solution calls for the best efforts of the leading men in the city communities, whether white or black. Special courses for the study of these problems have been established in the Northern colleges, and it is felt that the time has come when Atlanta University must take up the study of those problems of city life which its graduates are called upon to meet and solve. It is none too soon to begin this work, for each year a larger proportion of the colored race are concentrating in the cities.

In 1860, only 4.2 per cent of the colored population of the United States were living in the cities. By 1880, the number had increased to 8.4 per cent of the whole colored population, while by 1890, it had increased to 12 per cent. This process of concentration in the cities has been relatively much more rapid among the colored people than among the whites, the figures for whites during the same period being 10.9 per cent in 1860, and 15.7 per cent in 1890, or an increase of 4.8 per cent, as against 7.8 per cent for colored. How rapid this increase in the city population really is, may be illustrated by the growth of the colored population in the city of Atlanta, where the increase has been at a rate three times as great as for the country at large. For decade 1870-1880, the increase was 64 per cent; for 1880-1890, 72 per cent; while the average increase of colored population for the whole country during the same period was only 20 per cent in each decade.

In taking up the study of city problems, we feel that we cannot do better than begin by an inquiry into the physical and moral condition of the people. It is a line of inquiry which has not been previously pursued on any systematic or

extensive scale. Up to the present time, students and investigators of the problems confronting the colored race have confined themselves principally to the study of problems of country life or directed their attention towards economic or educational questions. Of the physical condition of the Negro under the trying conditions of city life, we have little accurate information. Many of the Southern cities have not had, until within a few years, any city boards of health, and, as a result, there has not been hitherto sufficient official data from which any broad generalizations could be drawn, and such data as have been obtainable have not yet been brought together into available form. We have, however, some few data that are sufficient to prove the necessity of the inquiry upon which we have begun.

From the United States census for 1890, we have the mortality for the white and colored population of five of our largest cities—Washington, Baltimore, New Orleans, Louisville and St. Louis—as given in a paper published by the trustees of the Slater Fund:

	—RATES PER 1,000.—	
	WHITE.	COLOR ED.
Washington .....	19	36
Baltimore.....	22	36
New Orleans.....	22	37
Louisville.....	18	32
St. Louis.....	17	35

The excess of colored over white is 100, 63.6, 68, 77 and 106 per cent.

By special report from Washington, these figures would appear to be for that city 19 whites, 34.7 colored; excess of colored over white, 83 per cent. The death-rate among the whites in these five cities ranged from 17 to 22 per thousand, and among the colored from 32 to 37 per thousand, or from 63 per cent to 106 per cent greater among the colored than among the whites. In the city of St. Louis, the death-rate among the colored was more than twice that among the whites.

The significance of this excessive mortality can be appreciated only when we come to study the causes of destitution in our great cities. There are some very valuable figures on this

point in a comprehensive treatise by Amos G. Warner, Ph.D., entitled "American Charities." (See table annexed.) In his analysis of causes of destitution among the colored people of Baltimore, we find 38 per cent of all cases of destitution are due to sickness. We have no official figures on this point for Washington or any other Southern city. But a similar report for New York shows 37 per cent from sickness, and for Boston 45.6 per cent. These are among cases of destitution of which there is official record. The result might be different, could we obtain the facts for all cases. Among the whites, also, sickness is one of the chief causes of destitution, but the percentage is much smaller, averaging about 20 per cent, while the average among the colored people is 39 per cent, or nearly twice as great. We see, therefore, that one of the first things we must do in improving the condition of the masses of the poorer colored people crowded together in the great cities is to try to lighten the heavy burden of sickness now weighing them down. This will involve an inquiry not only into physical or economic conditions, but into moral conditions as well. We feel, therefore, that in beginning our study of city problems by an inquiry into the causes of the excessive mortality among the colored people, we are striking right at the root of many of the evils that we have been trying to reach.

Important as is the industrial education of a state, it is evident that no rapid economic advance can be made by a race physically or morally weak. It is evident that both physical and moral as well as the economic conditions should be carefully studied, and we shall see later that they should be studied together, as each one acts upon the other. The task, then, which we have undertaken is the inquiry into the exact conditions, physical, moral and economic, affecting life in city communities. Later, when we have gathered sufficient information, we may be able to point out how those conditions may be improved. But at present our chief aim must be to make a thorough and searching investigation.

The method which has been adopted for making this investigation is as follows: In order to gather the necessary data, uniform sets of blanks have been prepared and put in the hands

of graduates of this University, and of educated colored men and women located in different cities. These sets consist of three different blanks, known as blanks Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Blank Nos. 1 and 2 are to serve the purpose of a permanent record by which to measure the progress of each city community from year to year. As in many cities the official records from which the data for these blanks must be gathered, have been in time past very incomplete, we shall be unable to review the past progress of those cities as we should like to, but these records are being made more complete each year, so that in the future we shall be able to measure progress made with some degree of accuracy. Blank No. 3, called the Family Budget blank, provides for a more intimate inquiry into the conditions of life existing in a particular community, and is intended to bring out the causes of results shown in blanks Nos. 1 and 2. The points of inquiry covered by this blank, No. 3 are :

First—General conditions of the home life, the size of the homes, their sanitary conditions, and the amount of sickness in the family.

Second—Economic conditions, occupations of family, the amount of income, etc.

Third—The expenditure of family for food, rent, intoxicants, etc., showing habits of life in the community.

The results of an investigation carried on along the above lines will be brought out in later papers.

In regard to the conferences: It is proposed each year to take up the discussion of certain phases of city life most deserving attention. Just what will be the subjects for these discussions will be determined by the results of investigations already begun, and announcements will be made later. The general plan of conference will be not unlike that of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, and some of the subjects taken up will be similar to those discussed there, such as home life, child saving, district nursing, scientific study of social problems, municipal and county charities; or economic questions, such as diversity of employment, co-operation, loan associations, savings institutions, mutual insur-

ance, etc. It will probably be found advisable to have at the conference next year section meetings where special topics can be discussed more freely and fully than in the general conference. This is, in general, an outline of the plan upon which the investigation and the conference will be conducted. As the work develops, and we gain more experience, the plan will be modified to meet the needs of the time.

The work of investigation will no doubt prove difficult, and will require not only patient and accurate work, but the willing co-operation of a large number of individuals. But we believe that there is no body of men and women so well able to do this important work for their communities as the graduates of Atlanta University and similar institutions. They are scattered through all the principal cities of Georgia and the neighboring States; they are all in positions where they have special facilities for the gathering of valuable data, and their zeal and industry will more than compensate for any lack of scientific statistical training. No one of these graduates can prosecute this work alone. His investigation would necessarily be too limited to produce any accurate results. It is only by comparing and compiling data from many different sources that accuracy can be insured. Co-operation, therefore, is essential. Though the results accomplished by each individual may seem to him incomplete and insignificant, the combined results of all will prove of the utmost value.

A word of caution: Some of the information brought out by this investigation may prove very unpleasant for us to contemplate. It may seem as if much of our work for the last twenty-five years had been of no avail. We may be tempted to shut our eyes to the real facts, or to doubt their existence. But if we are to make any progress, we must have the courage to look unpleasant facts in the face. We are not attempting to prove or disprove any theory, but we are trying to get at the most unfavorable conditions affecting our communities, in order that we may improve those conditions. Accuracy is the first essential in an investigation as important as that upon which we have begun. It is well for us all to keep this in mind, that we may not be tempted by our previous theories or

predilections to suppress or distort the information we are called upon to furnish. We need have no fear of the results. The past we cannot mend. It is the future we must look out for, and we need all the knowledge and information we can gather for the solution of the difficult problems before us.

[Table Annexed. See page 9.]

TABLE NO. IX, ON "CAUSES OF DESTITUTION," FROM  
"AMERICAN CHARITIES."

BY AMOS G. WARNER, PH. D.

COLORED.

Causes.	New York		Boston.		Baltimore.		New Haven.	
	NO.	PER CT.	NO.	PER CT.	NO.	PER CT.	NO.	PER CT.
Matters of								
Employment.....	19	35.18	24	17.39	96	29.62	9	30.00
Sickness.....	20	37.03	63	45.65	126	38.88	7	23.33
Drink .....	4	7.40	11	71.97	16	4.93	3	10.00
Shiftlessness and Inefficiency.....	3	5.55	6	4.34	21	6.48	1	3.33
All Causes.....	54	2.02	138	6.65	324	15.86	30	6.72

## REPORTS FROM THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.

BY MR. GEORGE G. BRADFORD.

The following is a summary of reports received from the City of Washington. We are indebted to Mr. L. M. Hershaw of the class of '86, for a very complete report for blanks Nos. 1 and 2, and to the courtesy of Dr. W. Bruce Evans of Howard University, who at very short notice made up for us a small group of family budgets. The results of the investigations made by these two gentlemen, in their own city, may prove helpful to workers in other cities, and may also serve to show how far the blanks serve the purpose for which they were intended. Blanks Nos. 1 and 2 were to serve as an index to mark the progress of the community. Let us see, therefore, what Mr. Hershaw's reports, in these two blanks, show as to the progress which has been made in Washington during the last ten or fifteen years:

Taking first the death-rate, we see by blank No. 1 that the average death-rate among the colored people for the two five-year periods, 1878-1882 and 1888-1892, were respectively 37.12 per thousand and 32.8 per thousand, showing a smaller death-rate for the second period.

	WHITE.	COLORED.
Average 1878-1882.....	18.61	37.12
Average 1888-1892.....	19.19	32.08

Turning to blank No. 2, where we have the death-rate for the years 1880, 1890 and 1895, as well as the causes of death, we find the same result, namely a constantly decreasing death-rate:

	WHITE.	COLORED.
1880.....	17.6	35.5
1890.....	12.3	34.7
1895.....	15.8	28.1

The excess of colored over white is 103, 83 and 78 per cent.

Comparing the number of deaths for the series of years in each of the four groups into which the blank is divided, we

see a steady decrease in each group without exception, and that in most instances it is a decrease both actually as to number of deaths, and relatively as compared with whites.

BLANK II. CAUSES OF DEATH. RATE PER THOUSAND.						
GROUP I.			GROUP II.			
White.	Colored.	Excess of Colored.	White.	Colored.	Excess of Colored.	
1880.....39.5	101.6	157 per ct.	1890.....21.6	65.7	204 per ct.	
1890.....33.4	86.3	158 per ct.	1895.....16.8	56.3	250 per ct.	
1895.....28.9	63.4	119 per ct.				
GROUP III.			GROUP IV.			
White.	Colored.	Excess of Colored.	White.	Colored.	Excess of Colored.	
1890.....17.04	33.6		1880.....117.88			
1895.....13.35	18.2	37 per ct.	1890.....117.00	161.5		
			1895.....100.06	143.6	43 per ct.	

The conclusion we should come to is that there has been a general and continued improvement in the condition among the colored people in Washington during the last fifteen years. The only exception to this shown by the blanks is found in blank No. 1, under heading "Illegitimate colored births." Comparing the averages for the two five-year periods given in 1878-1882 and 1888-1892, we find the number of illegitimate births per thousand inhabitants to be 5.1 and 5.9, and the percentage of total births to be 18.3 and 25, showing a slight increase for the second period in the actual number of such births per thousand inhabitants, and quite a considerable increase in the proportion of such births to the total number of births (colored), the figures being 18.3 per cent for the first period, and 25 per cent for the second period.

So much, then, for the two blanks as a record of the progress of the community. Let us see how far they give us any indication of the character of the population or of the causes of some of the results to be noticed.

One very striking fact is to be noted in blank No. 1, bringing out in a most graphic way the peculiar and abnormal character of the population of Washington, both white and colored. In comparing the death-rate and birth-rate, we find the death-rate actually larger than the birth-rate; that is, more persons die in Washington every year than are born there, and yet the

population is steadily increasing. This paradoxical state of things is due to the fact that Washington is our national capital and its population largely transient.

	—1880.—		—1890.—	
	WHITE.	COLORED.	WHITE.	COLORED.
Average death-rate.....	18.61	37.12	19.19	32.08
Average birth-rate .....	17.16	24.47	14.89	25.02
Excess in death-rate.....	1.45	9.65	4.30	7.06

But it is to be noticed that so far as these figures indicate, the colored population is becoming more permanent, while the white population is becoming more transient.

It would be interesting if that conclusion could be verified in any way.

For causes of the high mortality still prevailing among the colored people, we turn first to blank No. 2. Although considerable progress has been made in the last fifteen years, the death-rate among the colored people in 1895 was still 78 per cent greater than among the whites. Analyzing the causes of death, we see that the greatest excess is found in Group II, which includes the three causes of infant mortality. In 1895, the number of deaths from these three causes was 250 per cent greater among colored than among whites, and we find that there has been an increase in that respect since 1890, when the excess was only 204 per cent. We also find that the proportion of the whole number of deaths due to these three causes was greater in 1895 than in 1890, the figures being respectively 20 and 18.9 per cent.

We are able to show still more conclusively to what an extent the excessive death rate among the colored people is due to the great infant mortality, for we have for the five years 1888-1892 a report of the number of deaths under five years of age:

	—1888-1892.—		
	WHITE.	COLORED.	EXCESS COLORED.
Deaths under 5.....	5.7	15.0	163.0 per cent.
Deaths over 5.....	13.4	17.8	32.8 per cent.
Total deaths.....	19.1	32.8	

This shows that the rate of deaths of children under five years of age was 15 per thousand of population among colored, as against 5.7 among the whites, or nearly three times as many for the colored. This difference we may partly attribute to the more permanent character of the Negro population in Washington, and to the fact that there is consequently a larger proportion of children among them than among the whites, but there are other causes, some of which have to do with the social conditions prevailing in that community indicated by the exception to the general progress noted in an early part of this paper, viz: increase in illegitimate births.

Following the investigation made by Mr. Hershaw, through official records, we have that made by Dr. W. Bruce Evans, by the family budget method. This latter method is intended to give us an intimate knowledge of the conditions of life among the individual members of the community. Groups of families are selected representing a single neighborhood, trade or class in the community, and accurate information is obtained in regard to the families in each of these groups. By combining, comparing and classifying the information obtained from several groups, we are enabled to come to very accurate conclusions as to the most favorable as well as to the most unfavorable conditions affecting life in that community, and are thus able to determine on the most feasible measures of reform.

Dr. Evans has furnished us the information in regard to one group of twenty-one families, and although it is impossible for us to make from this one group any generalization in regard to the colored population of the City of Washington, a community of 86,000 persons, the information is very interesting as representing the generally well-to-do character of the twenty-one families represented.

The neighborhood in which they live is reported as being fair or good, and this is confirmed by the following figures deduced from the report, thus:

Thirteen of the twenty-one families own their own houses. The houses for the most part are supplied with modern conveniences, nineteen having city water, nine sewer connection,

etc. The average number of rooms occupied by a family is between five and six, the smallest number being four, while over half have from six to eight.

The average number of persons occupying the same sleeping room is two, although in four instances there are four to a room, and in one instance, five.

There are only four cases of sickness reported, while twelve families report no sickness at all.

Only ten families report as to income, but the average for the ten is high, being \$664 a year, and in seven families out of the ten the husband entirely supports the family by his sole labor. It is interesting to note the occupations of these seven men. The largest income is earned by a carpenter, who reports his earnings as \$780; next comes a barber, earning \$720 a year; a teacher, earning \$650; a janitor, \$560; a laborer, \$480; a steward, \$390; and laborer, \$250.

This matter of the occupations of city residents is one deserving a special line of inquiry, and it is hoped that some one will undertake to make a report on this subject at the next conference. The data obtained, by a continuation of the family budget investigation, will be found very useful for such a report.

The largest income of one family is that of a family of nine, the father and mother both dead, and the eldest brother and two sisters supporting the family. The brother is an expressman, earning \$500 a year; the two sisters are teachers, earning \$450 each, making a total of \$1,400 a year. This family owns its own house, having eight rooms, with city water, sewer connections and other conveniences. Five of the families report savings averaging \$123.52 per family.

In concluding this report for the City of Washington, I wish to express regret that the very limited time within which the investigation had  be made should have prevented its being carried through on a more extensive scale, and I wish also to acknowledge once more the valuable assistance rendered by Mr. Hershaw and Dr. Evans.

## REPORT FROM ATLANTA.

An attempt was made to fill out blank No. 2 from the records in Atlanta, but the data obtainable were not sufficiently full or accurate for an extended report.

The following are the returns for the year 1890, figured on the basis of the census population for that year. For purposes of comparison, the census figures for population are the only reliable ones to use :

	—1890.—	
	WHITE.	COLORED.
Population .....	37,416	28,117
GROUP I.—Consumption and pneumonia, total...	126.0	225.0
Rate per 10,000.....	33.7	80.0
Excess for colored.....		137.0 per cent.
GROUP II.—Cholera infantum, convulsions and still-born, total.....	123.0	230.0
Rate per 10,000.....	32.8	81.8
Excess for colored.....		149.0 per cent.
GROUP III.—Contagious diseases, total.....	90.0	78.0
Rate per 10,000.....	24.0	27.7
Excess for colored.....		15.0 per cent.
GROUP IV.—Other causes, total.....	369.0	374.0
Rate per 10,000.....	98.0	133.0
Excess for colored.....		35.0
Grand total.....	708.0	907.0
Rate per 10,000.....	189.0	322.0
Excess for colored.....		70.0 per cent.

In looking for causes for excessive death-rate among colored people, we see at a glance by this table that the cause is not to be found under heading of Group III, "Contagious diseases," as the excess there is only 15 per cent, as against 70 per cent excess for total death-rate. We see that it cannot be found under heading of Group IV, "Other causes," as excess there is only 35 per cent. It must be found, therefore, among the

five diseases included under Groups I and II. Looking there we find that 50 per cent of all deaths are due to those five diseases. From consumption and pneumonia there were 225 deaths, or 24.8 per cent of the whole number. From the three children's diseases there were 230 deaths, or 25.4 per cent of the whole number, making for the two groups 50.2 per cent of the whole.

We also see that the excess under Group I was 137 per cent, and under Group II it was 149 per cent. These figures are sufficiently startling, but they are still more so when compared with the figures for 1880. The death-rate for consumption and pneumonia that year among the colored people was 60 in 10,000, being 19 per cent. of the whole number of deaths, and 91 per cent in excess of rate among whites. Comparing these figures with those for 1890, we see that the latter year shows a greater actual and relative death-rate from those diseases. The conclusion to be drawn from this comparison would be that consumption and pneumonia were on the increase among the colored people for the decade 1880-1890. The causes for that increase are to be sought by such investigations as that planned in blank No. 3, the "Family Budget," which are being made, and will furnish data for the next annual conference.

## NEGLECTANCE A CAUSE OF MORTALITY.

BY H. R. BUTLER, M. D., ATLANTA.

For many years great questions have arisen concerning the colored people in this country, many of which, regardless of strong and powerful arguments to the contrary, have been beneficial to them.

It was once argued by some that the Negro had no soul, but after many hotly contested theological and anatomical discussions, it was finally agreed that since he resembled man so closely, he must therefore have something like a soul. Hence from that day, so far as man's admissions are concerned, we have had something like souls.

It was also declared that the Heavenly Father had made him to be forever a slave. But when England emancipated her slaves, and Toussaint L'Ouverture, by his own mighty arm, whipped the French and liberated his own people, and when the sainted and immortal Abraham Lincoln, by the stroke of his pen, gave freedom to the four millions of slaves then in this country, that proposition fell.

It was then announced that the Negroes were dying out and that soon the race would be gone. But only one generation has passed, and from four millions they number to-day nearly eight millions. It is therefore evident to us all that this proposition, too, has collapsed.

Now comes the charge that, while we are not dying out, we are dying faster than the white race. This proposition is true, and will stand until the conditions and causes which produce death more readily among us than among the whites are removed. I refer to those causes and conditions that have been so ably discussed here during this conference, such as poverty, ignorance, intemperance, etc., and among these negligence holds a prominent place.

We have already learned by this investigation what diseases cause more deaths among our people than among the whites.

We have found these to be pneumonia, convulsions, cholera infantum, and consumption. It has also been discovered that there are more still-born among our people than among the whites. But there are causes for these things—yes, more causes than the time allotted will allow me to discuss.

As convulsions and cholera infantum are largely caused by ignorance and poverty, and since these two diseases were discussed at some length under those causes, I will pass over them, pausing only long enough to say that it is true that hunger and the want of proper food, as well as the ignorance of how to prepare it, when to eat it and how to eat it, often cause convulsions, cholera infantum and other diseases of the alimentary canal.

As to still-births: Why should we be surprised at the great number of still-births among our women, since they do most of the work that is liable to produce this state of things? They do the cooking, the sweeping, the lifting of heavy pots; they carry the coal, the wood, the water; they carry heavy burdens on their heads; they do heavy washing, make beds, turn heavy mattresses, and climb the stairs several times during the day, while their more favored white sister is seated in her big arm-chair, and not allowed to move, even if she wanted to. In these things, my friends, you have the causes of the excess in this trouble.

The average colored laborer is exceedingly neglectful. He will drive or walk all day in the rain or snow, come home and go to bed with his wet clothes on, with the belief firmly fixed in his mind that unless he lets these clothes dry on him he will contract a cold, and no argument we might use will convince him otherwise. Again, since the colored people here compose the majority of the laboring classes, it stands to reason that they are more exposed than the whites, and are therefore more susceptible to those diseases that may be caused by exposure. The colored man sweeps the streets and fills his lungs with the dust and dried bacteria expectorated on the streets a few hours since from the lungs of some consumptive; he drives the garbage carts, he digs the sewers, drives hacks and drays, and in fact does most of the work involving exposure

which naturally makes him more liable to contract such diseases as pleurisy, bronchitis, pneumonia and consumption.

It has been said by some that the Negro did not die with consumption until he became free, and that this new life brought also a new cause of death to him.

But this statement in itself is sufficient proof to me that in those dark days of slavery the colored people as a race, received little or no attention. Any case which calomel, blue-mass or castor oil could not reach, was left to take its own course, with few exceptions. The main cause of their sickness was often neglected, and when death came it was simply a Negro gone—that was all. No record was left to show what the cause of death was, and there the matter was dropped. I believe, reasoning from what I see to-day relative to the causes that produce consumption, that there were more graves filled with the victims of that disease thirty years before the war closed than there have been for a similar period of time since. The only difference is that now the deaths and their cause are recorded, and we know; then they were not recorded and we did not know.

Again, experience has taught me that most of the deaths due to consumption among our people were the result of consumption contracted, and not to congenital consumption, as our enemies invariably put it down.

The city has neglected and is still neglecting the colored people, and especially that class of them which is dependent upon its charity in times of sickness. It has millions to build prisons with, but not a dollar with which to build charitable institutions. It allows money grabbers to build small huts and crowd into them five times the number of people that should be allowed; it has no law by which the owners of this property can be made to keep it clean. The houses are never painted, the wells are filled with the filth of the neighborhood and the fences are never white-washed, and the city is powerless to interfere. Family after family move into these places, and often only one or two are left to tell the story. My friends, it is one thing to stand here in this clean, well-lighted hall and read papers on this subject, but it is altogether differ-

ent to go down into those dark, poor and humble homes and see death going through destroying the old and the young because of the negligence on the part of those in authority.

Some of the white physicians neglect the colored people. I wish it to be understood, however, that I mean some, not all, for there are some honorable exceptions to the statement just made. I say they neglect our people, and we cannot blame them. Doctors can no more afford to work for nothing than a teacher or any other person who is working for an honest living. Hence he refuses to go to these people; first, because they are not able to pay, and secondly, because the city has appointed physicians whose duty it is to attend the poor in their various wards. These physicians are paid from \$600 to \$800 a year to do that work, and then they neglect it, especially such cases as diphtheria.

While this city has furnished physicians, it has furnished no medicine. It has no free dispensaries, as it should, nor does it pay the physician money enough to furnish medicines applicable in every case, and at the same time care for himself and family. Hence, when he is called to see a patient, it matters not what the disease may be, it is either compound cathartic pills, calomel, Epsom salts, blue-mass or castor oil. Any case these remedies don't reach is left to get well if it can or die if it must. I ask, then, in all candor: Is it any wonder that we die so fast when we get such good attention, doctors, such excellent nursing, such fresh medicines applicable in every case of our diseases?

Here in this city of push, pluck and Christian progress, there is not a decent hospital where colored people can be cared for. At the Grady Hospital, which takes about \$20,000 of the city's money annually to run it, is a small wooden annex down by the kitchen, in which may be crowded fifty or sixty beds, and that is all the hospital advantages 40,000 colored citizens have. But, on the other hand, our white friends, with a population of about 70,000, have all the wards and private rooms in the entire brick building at this hospital, together with a very fine hospital here, known as St. Joseph's Infirmary. Hence, my friends, you can see that one of our greatest needs

is a first-class up-to-date hospital, where the colored people can not only get proper treatment, but can also have all necessary operations performed. However, this excessive death-rate among us may be best for us. God moves in mysterious ways. He purged us in the burning fires of slavery for more than two hundred and fifty years, preparing us for the great responsibilities of freedom, and now who knows but what He is cleansing us with His fan of death, ridding us of the worthless elements of the race, and thus fitting us for that higher brighter and nobler citizenship which is yet to come? All we can do is to work, watch, pray and wait.

Again, the educated and the more highly favored of our people often neglect their own race. They neglect the poor, they will not support race enterprises, they fail to support their own business and professional men, and yet they want to pose as big men and leaders of their people. But, as I see it, that is not carrying out the idea of a truly educated person. Education does not mean that we must stop work, but it rather means that we must go to work with greater energy to help elevate our people along all lines, and thereby make them better citizens and better Christians. Neither does to graduate and get a diploma mean to separate us from our people, but it rather means to bind us closer to our race, our country and our God. It matters not whether we be preachers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, or whether we are engaged in business, we should remember that God has made us the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to lead our people, which we cannot do unless we keep near to them. I speak of these things because they have much to do with the health of the people. If we patronize race enterprises, if we patronize our preachers, teachers, lawyers, dentists and business men, it will increase our wealth, with which we can help the poor of our race; it will open other avenues of labor for our people, we will be able to build health resorts and hospitals for them, and do many other things beneficial to their health that we are not able to do now because we fail to support each other.

Taking all things into consideration, I don't think the death-rate of the colored race is so far in excess of the whites. As it

any wonder that we die faster than our white brother when he gets the first and best attention, while we are neglected on all sides? They have the best wards and treatment at the hospital, while we must take it second-hand or not at all; they have all the homes for the poor and the friendless, we have none; they have a home for fallen women, we have none; they have the public libraries where they can get and read books on hygiene and other subjects pertaining to health, we have no such privileges; they have the gymnasiums where they can go and develop themselves physically, we have not; they have all the parks where they and their children can go in the hot summer days and breathe the pure, cool air, but for fear we might catch a breath of that air and live, they put up large signs, which read thus: "For white people only"; they live in the best homes, while we live in humble ones; they live in the cleanest and healthiest parts of the city, while we live in the sickliest and filthiest parts of the city; the streets on which they live are cleaned once and twice a day, the streets on which we live are not cleaned once a month, and *some* not at all; besides, they have plenty of money with which they can get any physician they wish, any medicine they need, and travel for their health when necessary; all of these blessings we are deprived of. Now, my friends, in the face of all these disadvantages do you not think we are doing well to stay here as long as we do?

In conclusion, I would say that even to remove all the causes of death due to negligence will take ages. We may remove ignorance, we may remove intemperance, we may remove poverty and negligence, but in order to decrease this mortality among our people we must have our own physicians and a plenty of them, we must have parks and public baths, we must have free dispensaries, and we must have good hospitals, and until these things are accomplished very little headway will be made in reducing this excessive death-rate. It is the duty of every Christian citizen to see that these things are done.

## INTEMPERANCE AS A CAUSE OF MORTALITY.

BY MRS. GEORGIA SWIFT KING ('74).

Alcohol sustains a double relation to disease and death, that of direct or immediate cause and that of indirect or remote cause, and the peculiar nature of this relation confines the writer on this subject to facts rather than to figures. To ascertain the truth concerning the relation of intemperance to mortality, it is necessary not only to enumerate the deaths due to acute alcoholism, such as delirium tremens and the various sudden congestions and paralyzes consequent upon the taking of excessive quantities of strong drink, together with the great majority of homicides, suicides and accidental deaths, which may be traced directly to the use of alcoholics; but it is necessary also to inquire into the real causes of the deaths ascribed to the ordinary acute and chronic diseases, the contagious and infectious diseases, indeed, the whole category of classified diseases. There is a condition known as fatty degeneration, which the medical scientist recognizes not only as a distinct and formidable disease of itself, but because it renders the tissues unable to resist the ravages of other diseases, and because of its general distribution throughout the body, it is known to furnish for all diseases a most fruitful soil. Says Dr. Monroe of England, in his lecture on "The Physiological Action of Alcohol": "Alcoholic narcotization appears to produce this peculiar condition more than any other agent with which the medical scientist is acquainted," and quotes from Dr. Lees as saying "that alcohol should produce in the drinker fatty degeneration of the blood follows as a matter of course, since we have an agent that retains waste matter by lowering the nutritive and excretory functions, and a direct poisoner of the vesicals of the vital stream." Dr. Monroe continues: "This devitalization of the nutritive fluid is probably the first step to the devitalization of the tissue which it feeds," and credits Dr.

Chambers with the assertion: "Three-quarters of the chronic diseases which the medical man has to treat are occasioned by this disease." Fatty degeneration is evidently coextensive with the drink habit, whether excessive or moderate, appearing to follow as surely the glass of beer at dinner as the glass of strong drink three times a day. To this disease is due a very great majority of the sudden deaths of persons apparently in perfect health.

With reference to death from contagious and infectious diseases, it is the unanimous testimony of the leading authorities that during the scourges of cholera, yellow fever and small-pox, it is the drinker who falls victim, the moderate drinker being no exception to the rule, while the total abstainer is less liable to contract the disease, and if affected, is far more likely to survive. The fact holds good in such diseases as scarlet and typhoid fevers, when there is no known antidote to the specific poison, and the quality of the tissues is relied upon to resist or survive the disease.

Alcohol, as a remote cause of death, is none the less effective in cases in which the victim is not himself addicted to the use of strong drink, but inherits from drinking parents a weak constitution, which renders him an easy prey, an inviting field for disease. To inherited weakness is due a large per cent of the alarming rate of infant mortality resulting from cholera infantum, measles, scarlet fever, diphtheria, etc. Says our own Dr. Orme: "If it were possible to separate deaths due to alcohol, from the classified diseases to which they are ascribed, the facts would be astounding." Dr. Kellogg, at the head of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, the largest in the world, agrees with other great authorities that the brain, liver and kidneys are the organs having greatest affinity for alcohol, and that it is the disease of these organs and of the heart, of which alcohol is the most common cause; while in pneumonia, the ordinary febrile diseases, such as bilious and malarial fevers, as well as the infectious and contagious diseases, such as cholera, smallpox, yellow, scarlet and typhoid fevers, etc., the question often is, whether alcohol is the real cause, the occasion, or simply a great factor. Alcohol is mentioned among the causes of rheu-

matism and gout. It is one of the chief causes of insanity and idiocy. Alcohol and its twin evil, tobacco, are very generally responsible for paralysis and other diseases of the nervous system. If we accept the unanimous testimony of the leading medical scientists of the world, we can but conclude that intemperance is one of the chiefest, if not the chiefest, among causes of mortality. The great Gladstone declares that intemperance has more victims than the three great scourges—war, famine and pestilence—combined.

That intemperance is one of the principal factors in the terrible death-rate among the Negro population in the cities, there can be no question. It is in the cities that intemperance prevails. I believe that no one at all informed would hesitate to assert that ninety-nine per cent of the city population are addicted to some extent to the use of strong drink. No one will deny that the Negro is no exception to this rule. It is well known that that class of the Negro population which furnishes the excessive death-rate is that class most addicted to the use of whiskey and beer in their vilest forms. It is this ignorant, drunken class of Negroes which furnish ninety per cent of the criminals which crowd our jails and penitentiaries, and who, poorly clad and fed, exposed to great extremes of heat and cold, working rain or shine at most laborious tasks, while serving terms in the chain-gangs, contract diseases and die by hundreds annually. Those who live to be released flock to the cities to finish their remaining weeks or months, and add their quota to the death-rate. If this were the end alone of men and women, old and hardened criminals, it would not be so serious, but this is the end of hundreds of boys and girls arrested for misdemeanors.

How long shall our poor and untaught children, tempted on every corner by the cigarette seller, the beer shop and the brothel, be arrested and placed in the chain-gangs with hardened criminals, to be steeped in iniquity and schooled in crime, and hastened to death of body and soul? What can we do to lessen this enormous death-rate? I answer, remove the causes, chief among which is intemperance. And among the causes which lead to intemperance is the use of tobacco,

and innutritious and poorly cooked food. A volume might be written on the responsibility of the teacher, the preacher and the physician with relation to this subject. It is a fact that the conscientious up-to-date physician seldom or never prescribes alcoholics. The preacher or teacher who suffers himself or those whom he serves to be uninformed on this vital question is recreant to his highest trust. Let Georgia lessen the death-rate among the Negro population by establishing at once a reformatory for juvenile offenders.

I beg your aid in the attempt to secure the pledge of the representatives of the approaching legislature to enact a law providing a State reformatory.

## POVERTY AS A CAUSE OF MORTALITY.

BY MRS. ROSA MOREHEAD BASS ('80).

Slavery left the colored man the rich inheritance of a log cabin and patch of turnip greens. This log cabin is a piece of architecture that will soon be entirely relegated to the barbarous past. Peace be to its ashes! It has disappeared in the towns and cities, and is found only in the poverty-stricken rural districts. Cannot you recall the picture of that poor family who worked hard all day in the field while their little ones, almost nude, played around the door until the sun dropped behind that hill studded with beautiful trees? See the mother return and prepare her evening meal; the fire is lighted, the children, hungry and crying; behold the repast—fried bacon, poorly-cooked bread, and black molasses. A pine torch illumines the room that serves as a kitchen, dining-room, bed and bath-room. After supper the little ones are off to bed without being properly bathed and dressed, and after the usual chair-*nap*, the father and mother retire. There they are all in a row, and only one small window and door to let in nature's life-giving air that keeps them from suffocating. The out-door work, good water and a plenty of latitude curtail the rural death-rate, but the pine torch has ruined so many eyes. Now let us pass hastily the sparkling spring of cool water, the rosy-cheeked peach and apple, the browsing cow in meadows green and fair, the brawny-armed farmer, humming his mournful song, and visit an alley in our city whose church spires point heavenward, and whose inhabitants boast of being the most cultured people of the South. I say pause a moment and look down that alley, and near that branch of stagnant water, and see that long row of tenement houses, poorly built—out of old lumber, that has never been disinfected—and not even plastered. The inmates are poorly clad, poorly fed, and, strange to say, the poorer they are, the more filthy we find them. Disease and death are rivals. Whenever an epidemic of smallpox and fever

visit us, they find these unfortunates their favored victims. Their poverty maddens their brain, and they strew disease and death in their pathway.

Summer is their favorite season, and the death-rate is somewhat diminished, but when the autumn days come, "the saddest of the year," the wailing winds their open houses invade and the majestic king of winter carpets the earth, and the poor shiver from want of clothes, food and fire, and the grim monster claims them as his favorite subjects. Their poverty rendered them unable to prepare like the wise ant, and when they become ill they have neither friends nor money, and actually die from the want of attention, medical, physical and spiritual.

We find great mortality among the children of the poor. Even before they can make their wants known, the mother is compelled to leave them daily, and a surprising number are burned to death. The older children are taught to go out and pick up trash to burn, rags, bones and iron to sell, thereby inviting disease and death. It is a strange fact, yet true, that all work that is obnoxious, dangerous and laborious is given the poor Negro at pay that would kill some people even to think of having it to do for a living. These people in buying food, etc., always seek *quantity* and not *quality*; hence the butcher, fisherman, fruiterer, dairyman and merchant are careful to anticipate their wants. (The health officer is occasionally heard of when the rich are imposed upon.) The manner in which they live breeds discontent, hatred and envy, and consequently they fight, kill each other, and rob and murder the more fortunate. Their misery is one of the devil's workshops, and they are his tools.

The coffers of the landlord are being filled with the blood of his neighbor, and not until the crowded alleys are consigned to the log-cabin era will health and life take an onward march, and as the X rays of the Atlanta University are turned on, will cleanliness, thrift, industry, happiness and hygienic living add their quota to the life-rate; and last, but not least, not until the whole Christian world plays her part in the Samaritan drama, will the life-rate in Heaven be increased, and the death-rate on earth diminished!

## IGNORANCE AS A CAUSE OF MORTALITY.

BY PROF. W. B. MATTHEWS ('90).

Among the many causes which produce death in our large cities, it is by no means an easy matter to distinguish between ignorance, poverty and negligence. However, it is safe to assert that no few of the deaths which occur in our large cities are the result of ignorance, either directly or indirectly.

It will be seen from the outset that city life requires a more accurate observance of the laws of health than country or village life. With this fact in mind, all cities have established their boards of health to look after and remove any and all causes which in their minds might produce sickness or death. These boards are usually composed of the best informed physicians who, from time to time, make and publish rules which are to be observed and obeyed by all the citizens. These rules the ignorant classes do not obey, not because they are willfully disobedient, but because they are ignorant. They cannot read, they have no interest in public affairs; they know but little about the causes which bring sickness and disease among them, and hence are the easy prey of epidemics and contagions.

As to the laws of hygiene, they are generally ignored because they are unknown, but this does not excuse. The laws of nature and of health are as unvarying in the case of the ignorant as in the case of the intelligent. The violation of certain rules governing the health of our bodies brings the same results to all men alike. Our aim will be to show that the ignorant violate the rules of health, and are therefore more frequently the victims of disease and death.

Many suffer on account of improper ventilation, not knowing that impure air is the parent of every lung trouble known to the human family. Pure air is one of the freest and best gifts bestowed upon man by our beneficent Father; but alas! how many thousands in our large cities die every year from

failing to use this gift! Men and women, through ignorance, shut the doors and windows to their houses, thus barring out God's life-giving atmosphere, and inviting consumption and death. Pure air gives life, foul air brings death.

Thousands of men, women and children are sick and dying in the slums of our large cities from liver and kidney troubles. These troubles have come to them because the proper care has not been taken of the skin. Would it be true to say that through ignorance of the true functions of the pores in our bodies, and their relation to good health, certain classes of people fail to keep their bodies clean and the pores of the skin open? Whoever closes these millions of doors, the inlets of life and outlets of death, will sooner or later succumb to the pangs of disease, for by so doing they shut out life and let in death.

But what of appetite, and what people are less liable to control their appetites? Are not the most ignorant? The glutton, through ignorance of the evil result of his intemperate habit, overloads his stomach and impairs its capacity to properly discharge its functions, thereby inducing many diseases which shorten life.

With the light that we have on the evil effects of alcohol upon the system, it would scarcely be permissible to say that men who take it are ignorant of its destructive elements. Yet I venture the assertion that there are many among the ignorant classes of our large cities who are entirely unconscious of the fact that the indulgence of the appetite for strong drink shortens life and cuts off the days of their posterity.

Thus we see, looking at the matter briefly from a hygienic point of view, that the body may be kept in a healthy state by obedience to the laws of health, but when they are neglected, the inevitable result is disease and death. Can men ignorant of such laws live in accordance therewith, or avoid the consequences of their disobedience?

Turning from the persons to the locality in which they live, we may find many things which will have the same effect upon health as the failure to obey hygienic laws. It must be admitted that a filthy home, unclean bedding and wearing ap-

parel, not changed at proper intervals, are as productive of disease and death as any other cause. As a general rule, ignorant people live together in very thickly populated communities. Such communities are usually freighted with impure air, and the germs of disease are in the very water which they drink. Not knowing how much damage filth and impure water can do to health and life, the ignorant flock to these communities, sicken and die, and never inquire into the cause. In such places, water containing foreign matter from soiled clothes, slops, etc., is thrown indiscriminately at the back door, front door or under the bed-room window, and nothing more is thought of it. People who know the results of such acts of indiscretion do not often commit them. Disobedience to the laws of hygiene brings a curse with every broken law. The body is weakened, the human system impaired, and finally death seizes its victims. No person can live in accordance with laws of which he is ignorant. Knowing that many all around us are ignorant of the proper care and use of their bodies, is it a matter at which we should wonder when we note the daily deaths that are caused from impure air, unclean bodies, unwholesome food, excessive appetites and ungoverned passions? These are the fruits of ignorance which are to be found in our large cities, and they bring death to no small number. A filthy house, an unclean yard, a soiled bed, all invite disease; they are harbingers of death. Those persons who keep such homes cannot themselves keep well; their children cannot be well born, and all who accept such surroundings do so because they are ignorant of the effect upon themselves and their posterity. To learn and obey the laws of health, to understand and observe the rules of sanitation, men must be intelligent.

## GENERAL CONDITIONS OF MORTALITY.

BY MISS LUCY LANEY ('73).

“Birds of a feather flock together.” In Augusta, as in most cities of America, there are parts of the city occupied exclusively by Negroes, except a few whites, usually German or Irish, keepers of small stores, who live among the Negroes for the sake of their trade. Although some do not believe it, yet it is true that there are grades of society among Negroes, as among other races, and the lines of distinction are drawn for as wise and as silly reasons as are those among the more favored people. As in other things, this grading is seen in the choosing of a locality for a home. The poorest, most untidy and the most ignorant seek each other. They always find homes in the same neighborhood, if not in adjoining houses. As each city has its Negro settlements, and as the great rank and file of the race belong to the grade or class called the poorest and most ignorant, of this kind are the largest settlements. These people have small wages, many with nothing to do a great part of the year, and the majority have no steady employment. For food, rent, fuel and clothing they are dependent upon the odd jobs that pay not more than fifty cents per day for two or three days in a week. To eke out a living on such an income requires, they know, the strictest economy, but how to economize they know not, yet thinking they know, in their way they set about it. The first step is to cut down the expense of living by taking no more house room than barely enough in which to turn around. A small family, parents and two or three children, take one room. The landlord will not agree to have this cleaned before they move in, although it has not been cleaned or repaired in a score of years, and during that time as many different families, with each a different disease, have lived in it. The tenant can't afford to have it cleaned, so he contents himself by sweeping the floor before his household goods are brought in. The truth is, he does not see the importance of having the house thoroughly cleaned before oc-

copying it, and if the rent is cheap he does not parley, but pays the installment and takes possession.

In this room, 15x15, sometimes smaller space, are placed a bedstead, a three-quarters bed, sometimes two (but in these days of cheap furniture and installment sales, a folding lounge very often takes the place of the second bedstead), one or two tables, a trunk, bureau, not less than four chairs, tubs, boards, etc. for laundrying, cooking utensils, and a lot of odds and ends. These, with the family, give breathing space scarcely sufficient for one, yet by some means it is hoped to get enough for the whole family. It is not long before hypostatic pneumonia or tuberculosis visits them, and finding the atmosphere congenial, abides with the family.

It may be that the work of the mother of the family requires that she be away from the home all day. Leaving at 6 a. m., without giving any care to the house or children, she returns at 8 or 9 o'clock at night. The children are asleep, in the street, or at some neighbor's, where they have been all day. The tired mother, after a few words, goes to bed. She awakes next day only to carry out the same program. Perhaps there are no children; then the uncleaned house is securely fastened. Perhaps once in several months, time is spared for house cleaning, or it may be put off till moving day.

A family in which the father has steady employment at fifty or seventy-five cents per day, and the mother and girls are doing the washing of one or two families, numbering six or seven persons each, bed and table linen included, for 75 cents to \$1.25 per week, furnishing the soap, starch and fuel for the same, rents a house of two or three rooms. Yet the above wages will give but scanty living for parents, five or six children and grandmother. Rent, fuel, food, clothing, books for the children if they are in school, the minister's salary, and the assessment for the new church building, and during the summer an excursion—all of these must be paid for out of the wages of the family. Inferior material for clothing, if stores that deal in second-hand apparel are not patronized, most inferior food, the most dilapidated houses must be used.

Another class, there is, some of whom from choice are idle,

others, from inability to obtain work, have no visible means of support. These manage, by living in groups something after the Italian manner, to exist. Four to six occupy one room, in which there is little or no furniture. One or two meals a week, with a little food here and there, serve to sustain life and nourish disease, moral and physical. There is another class more noble than those mentioned. It is composed of persons anxious to own a home, and although they receive but scanty wages, they are not easily discouraged and go to work determined to own some land. Of course, they must buy the cheapest land and on the easiest terms—the low places surrounded by ponds outside the city limits, in the city beyond the extension of the sewers and other sanitary arrangements, places where you can see the miasma rise and touch it, as it were, with your hands. The houses put up are but apologies for houses. The people of these localities spend a good portion of the fall fighting the chills and the fever, till alas! poor, earnest, honest, simple folk, when they think their systems are enured to exposure and malaria, disease has laid fast hold upon them.

Another class, who have learned something of cleanliness and hygiene, are forced by their poverty, for the sake of cheap rents, to live in most sickly and unclean neighborhoods, with but scanty food and no money for medicines or nourishment when they are sick, which is quite often.

There is yet another class who, by their perseverance, intelligence and economy, have made for themselves better houses, comfortable homes in healthy localities; these see hearts ache with alarm at the devastation that is being made, but how to stop it is to them the unsolved problem of their race.

College settlements they cannot have, for the mighty lever of modern civilization, money, is wanting to them. The planting of factories, shops, etc., to furnish employment is for the same cause, at this time, to them an impossibility.

That the moving spirit of these meetings may be a Moses come to lead out of the wilderness is greatly to be hoped. That from these meetings may be evolved plans that will bring some relief, is the prayer and aim of all concerned.

## INFANT MORTALITY.

BY FRANK S. CHURCHILL, M. D., CHICAGO.

The late Oliver Wendell Holmes said that the treatment of a patient ought to begin with the treatment of his ancestors three generations preceding, and the practicing physician is constantly and daily reminded of the truth of this observation, so often does he see the influence of heredity, and in many instances, alas! the sins of the fathers visited upon the children of the third and fourth generations.

But while it is of course impossible for us wholly to undo what has been done, wholly to eradicate from ourselves what of evil has come down to us from our ancestors, yet we can do much, by careful and temperate living, to counteract any such weaknesses, and thereby contribute, in a considerable degree, to the health and happiness of our offspring. It is the future of humanity that we must attempt to benefit, and this we can best do by regulating our own lives and those of our children, recognizing the weak points which we must combat, and cultivating to a still higher degree the traits of virtue which, fortunately, have also come down to us through the ages. And I propose to suggest briefly in this paper a few of the, to me, important points in the treatment and management of our children, careful observance of which will, I believe, tend to reduce the mortality among them, to promote in them a physical condition of good health, and thus render the task of a higher moral, mental and social life more easy of accomplishment.

In considering the subject, I shall ask your attention to a discussion of the child from the moment of birth; for, while we might well begin with a consideration of the management of a pregnant woman, yet that is a subject too vast to be considered in a paper of this length and kind. Suffice it to say, that from the earliest moment pregnancy is suspected, a wo-

man should place herself at once under the charge of a competent physician, placing upon him the responsibility of directing fully the period of gestation. The child, once launched into what is for most of us a life of struggle and work, is at the point where we may discuss his career. What are we to do with him? How guide him and fit him for the battle of life, that he may make the most of himself, and contribute his mite towards the improvement of the world and the evolution of the race?

The first point upon which I would insist is that his entry into the world shall be accomplished with all the care possible, exerted by a careful, conscientious and thoroughly-trained doctor. It is a most unfortunate and common practice among the poor and ignorant to employ midwives to attend their women in labor; they seem not to realize the great danger to themselves and their children, of having for attendance at such a time women wholly ignorant of human anatomy and physiology, totally untrained in habits of care and cleanliness, utterly unfit for the work they presume to do. I cannot too strongly insist upon the great danger arising from this practice of employing midwives, and would urge upon each and every one of you, whose work leads you in any way among the poor and ignorant, to warn them against this practice, and urge them to seek proper medical aid and assistance. By so doing you will do much towards decreasing the mortality among the new-born and insuring a better state of health and vigor among the mothers.

Improvement in this direction is the more easily accomplished on account of the numerous hospitals and dispensaries now found in all cities. It is safe to say that, as a general thing, the best physicians of the city will be found on the staffs of these hospitals; medical aid and advice are invariably free; with one or more of them is generally connected an obstetrical department, and by merely applying at these institutions, a woman can be attended, either at the hospital or at her home, during labor and convalescence, by a physician properly prepared, by a long course of study, to do thoroughly scientific obstetrical work.

I would then suggest to you that in all cases possible you urge these people to seek such institutions, and thus free themselves from the great dangers inevitably arising from attendance by a midwife. It seems to me a practicable way of saving life among the new-born and preserving health and strength among mothers.

The high rate of mortality among infants is a subject well worthy the consideration of all thoughtful men and women, and naturally leads one to enquire as to causes and possible remedies. Prominent among the causes of this high rate must be mentioned bad heredity and injudicious and harmful management of these little ones by their parents. As a result of these two causes, many children are ill-prepared to meet and battle with the acute diseases almost inevitably before them; they are more apt to contract disease than a healthier child; they are more apt to die from it, when once contracted, as their resisting power is weakened by their heredity and their management since birth.

Now what is the remedy? What can we do to counteract hereditary weakness? How manage our children so as to give them the best health and greatest resisting power possible? While the most successful solution of these problems necessitates the assistance of a trained physician, yet much aid can be furnished by the parents, and indeed without their constant and hearty co-operation, little can be done by their medical adviser. The general directions as to details must be given by the doctor; the patient, daily, hourly, minutely execution of these details must devolve upon the parents. What, then, are the practical steps to be taken? you will ask. First, as to the question of heredity. Humanity is not perfect; we all of us, even though we do not admit it, are conscious of certain defects in our own characters—physical, mental or moral. The tendency towards these defects we transmit to our own children, and though by care and wise management the growth of these defects may be held in check, or they may not even be apparent, or may exist only as a blemish, yet let us not blind ourselves to the fact that the *seed* is there, and that without keen watchfulness on our part it may grow and develop into

the glaring defect which we seek to avoid. Tell your physician of the weakness there may be in yourself, of the hereditary taint which may exist, actively or passively, that you may have his help in the training of your child, his assistance in fighting the weak points, and developing the strong traits which fortunately also exist, hereditary and self-developed.

For example, to particularize, take the well-known disease of consumption. You yourself may be free from it, your parents or some members of your family may have been or may now be afflicted with it. Tell your doctor of this fact, show him your infant or child, that he may examine him thoroughly, that in the future, in illness or in health, he may be constantly on the lookout for signs which may escape your notice, not through carelessness on your part, but merely because it is not the business of your life to be looking for these signs. Consumption is not, of course, the only disease or defect which may exist in us; there may be a weak heart, a weak stomach, weak bowels, weak kidneys, weak brain, weak nerves. By frankly facing such facts, and by care and watchfulness such as I have mentioned, we may do much either to strengthen the weak point, or often to crush out the bad seed altogether.

Nor do I hesitate to speak thus to you who must be considered the van guard of humanity, when you may think that this paper has to do with mortality among the infants of our less fortunate brethren.

There is so much in these thoughts that you and I, each and every one of us, can take home to himself and herself; we are all human, and though in the course of ages, by the process of evolution, we have arrived at the top of the animal scale, we are not yet perfect, and *must* transmit to our descendants our vices as well as our virtues. And I would suggest that you urge upon those needing your help, as I have sought to urge upon you, the importance of early and constant attention to the points mentioned above. Do not be discouraged by thinking that these poor helpless infants cannot have the medical aid and advice which I suggest. *They can.* It is in the cities that the most of this work can be done. And as I have already

said, it is in the cities that such advice and aid can be had at the hospitals and dispensaries. So, if the necessity arise, if their children be not thriving, urge them to seek these institutions where, I am sure, much good will be done them.

Much that has been said in the discussion of heredity of course applies in speaking of the management and training of infants, but a few more points seem to me to be of importance. When shall we begin the active training of infants? To this question I would answer most emphatically, at the moment of birth. This, perchance, will cause you to smile. What, discipline a baby just born! How? The whole question is summed up in a nut-shell in the three words, regularity of habit. Come with me on my daily rounds, and see how quickly and easily that small bundle of humanity becomes the tyrant of the household; many of you, perchance, realize this in your own families. It is all the more lamentable, because it can be prevented. Fortunately, the moral and physical are so intimately blended in the young human animal that the training of the one unconsciously involves the training of the other. The new-born babe does nothing but eat, sleep and cry; at least manage it that he shall eat with regularity, at stated times, as you do yourselves, but of course oftener, and his other occupations will regulate themselves; he will sleep properly and regularly, and if healthy will cry but little. Fixed, regular habits of thought and action in our own daily lives are of an importance too well known to need more than a passing mention. They are of equal importance in infancy and childhood, but unfortunately this fact is rarely appreciated, and we cannot begin too early to start the young life in habits of regularity, which once applied in the first weeks, in the only way possible, *i. e.* in the matter of food and sleep, will gradually extend themselves in other directions with the growth and development of the child, and will do much to strengthen and bring out a well-rounded and well-disciplined character.

The quality and character of an infant's food has, of course, much to do with his physical, and therefore with his nervous condition, and though this question is one to be settled by the

doctor, yet a few words on the subject may be of interest. The natural and best food for an infant during its first year of life is, of course, its own mother's milk, if that be a good milk. If for any reason the infant cannot have such, what he shall have must be determined by a doctor. But I cannot refrain from warning all of you, and would urge you in turn to warn all others, mothers especially, against all the well-known patent baby foods. They have all been examined by educated men, and it has been found that none are good food for babies; some are too rich and make the baby sick; most are not rich enough, and so the baby's bones and flesh do not grow hard enough. No well-educated doctor will to-day advise you to use them. But he will show you how to make cows' milk just like mothers' milk, and that is the food which infants should have when they can't have mother's milk.

One more point on the food question, one which you do not need yourselves, but one as to a common practice among the ignorant, viz., tea and coffee. No infant, no child till he is eighteen years old ought to touch tea and coffee; they are bad for the stomach, bad for the nerves, and make infants and children cross and fretful. You will have opportunity to do much good by discouraging their use among the young. The same is true about beer and all forms of alcoholic drinks.

All that I have hitherto said has been in the way of suggestions to *prevent* sickness, to keep the infant strong and healthy. When an acute sickness, like scarlet fever, measles, or "summer complaint," actually comes, the infant must, of course, be carefully treated by a doctor. Much help in these cases is derived from a trained nurse, if one is to be had. As is well known, in many of our large cities there are charitable organizations, which will send to the sick poor, nurses who have by hard and long study fitted themselves to do this scientific work. In my practice in Chicago, these nurses have been of the greatest help, and many lives have been saved by their devotion and careful work. They can generally be had by going to some hospital or dispensary.

I have, ladies and gentlemen, thus very briefly attempted to suggest to you some of the actual practical steps which it

is possible for you, even though not physicians, to take to reduce the mortality among and improve the physical condition of our infants and children. The work of elevating and ennobling the human race is a grand and inspiring one. Much has already been and is constantly being done among adults and youths; much, it seems to me, can be done by careful and intelligent work in infancy and early childhood. It is then that mind and body are in the most pliable and receptive condition, and that good seed, carefully sown, is most apt to bear fruit, and while I am far from deprecating the good and noble work done among adults, and would bid those engaged in it God-speed, yet I cannot help thinking that even greater good and greater strides forward will be made by the race, if we begin at the earliest possible moment to train the young human animal in the way he should go. His moral condition is greatly influenced by his nervous condition, which in turn is dependent on his general physical well-being. Hence, I have thought it important to dwell on those points which will tend to promote a condition of good health, believing that thereby the moral and social elevation of the individual and so of the race will be the more easily accomplished.

What I have said applies with equal force to the poor and ignorant of all kinds and conditions of men. I make no distinction as to race or color. But each of us is more apt to be influenced by those of his own race and kindred, and who better than yourselves, graduates of Atlanta University, are better fitted to help in the elevation of the poor and ignorant of your own race? I know of none, and would urge upon each and every one of you the duty you owe to your race and to humanity, and bid you do what you may in the common evolution and elevation of the human family. Especially to those of you who purpose taking up the "City Problem Investigation," now the subject of discussion before this conference, will there be a rare opportunity to do much for the physical improvement of the helpless infants coming in contact with your own lives.

## REMARKS OF BISHOP L. H. HOLSEY.

I did not expect to say anything to-night, but came to hear what was going to be said. I am intensely a race man, and I am intensely humanitarian. I am a race man because I believe our race needs attention; I am a humanitarian because I want to do good to all people. I am a part of the old and the new, and I know about both.

There is one idea that strikes me strongly. It is how the colored man is dying out. One of the chief causes is that he is in a state of transition. He has passed out of one state into another. He must get adapted to a climate which he is not used to. In olden times the men lived in barn houses, and they always had air. The colored man also slept out of doors, with the ground for his bed and the heavens for his cover, and hence he had fresh air. Take this colored race, keep them in close houses. They do not know anything about hygiene; they crowd and pack things under the beds and hang things behind the doors, and if nothing disturbs them they will stay there from generation to generation. What is the remedy? You will say that this is the remedy and that is the remedy, but there is but one great remedy—that of education. They do not need any of these fashion fandanglers. These people knew nothing of the study of science, but they had religion, because they didn't have time and sense enough to have anything else.

Some one said to-night that they did not keep any record of the death of slaves. But my master kept a good record. A physician was paid annually to see the slaves. There are a great many people now that die for want of something to eat. The doctor says he must not touch this thing and must not touch the other thing, but if he get anything to eat he will get up and work. Many of the colored people die of starvation. They say the colored people are dying with consump-

tion. I have seen black men die of consumption, but when I traced them down, I have found that there was white blood in them. I have never known of a full-blooded Negro dying of consumption. I, however, heard of a white man who had consumption, and he had a Negro boy, and the boy died with consumption. He afterwards hired another Negro boy, and the man and this boy also died with consumption. Both boys' grandmothers had white blood in their veins.

It has been said that there is not as much intemperance in the country as there is in the city. In the city they drink every night, but in the country they drink all day Saturday and all day Sunday. They drink more in these two days than the others drink all the week. The father, mother and all the children drink. Once while I was in the country the preacher was too drunk to preach the sermon. They wanted me to read the sermon, but I said I would not. I really believe that there is as much intemperance in the country as in the city.

I want to say that my heart is in this work. I hope that you will find out remedies for these evils. We must teach our people to begin to think about these things, and to learn the laws of hygiene.

## LETTER FROM PROFESSOR EDWD. CUMMINGS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

Permit me to express my interest in the contributions which graduates of Atlanta University are making to the vital statistics of city life. Such inquiries are everywhere commanding the attention of sociological students, and it is a gratifying tribute to the spirit of your University that her students are so prompt in entering this field. It is in cities that the great problems of life and labor press most earnestly for solution, and anything which throws light upon the commonplace but obscure conditions of every-day life, must help us better to understand the progress which has been made and the evils which have still to be overcome. The home is the unit of our civilization; it is the nursery of social virtues, the source from which must flow those regenerating moral influences which help society at large to realize that ideal of fraternity which has always been the goal of civilization. Whatever strikes at the integrity of the home, strikes at the integrity of our civilization. Whatever ministers to the health and beauty of family life, tends to sweeten the fountains of our social life. Sound economic and sanitary conditions are the only environment in which social virtues may thrive. Industry, economy, cleanliness, plain living and high thinking are the source no less of individual happiness than of social welfare.

It is especially gratifying to observe the promptness with which the recent call for information has been met in the city of Atlanta. If the same spirit of enterprise and co-operation can be relied upon to carry on the work in other places, there is every reason to hope that these investigations may prove not only a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the progress which has been made, but an incentive and a guide to future effort. All who are interested in our common welfare will await with interest the results of these investigations by men and women who are so well acquainted with the conditions and so well equipped for the work. I shall consider it a privilege to be of assistance in any way I that can.

LETTER FROM MR. R. R. WRIGHT, PRESIDENT  
OF GEORGIA STATE INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE.

I am unable to express to you my regret at not being able to be present with you and those interested in the "City Problem Investigation" in your first conference at Atlanta University. \* \* \* \* \*

For a number of years I have thought that the greatest danger to the real progress of the colored people lies in this sociological condition in the large cities. It is difficult, however, to get the facts. There is very little attention given in the South to the vital statistics of Negroes. In fact the census is neither full nor altogether reliable. The facts, if gotten at all, must be searched out by conscientious persons specially interested in this kind of work. Nevertheless, any one who will give the least observation to this matter will see that the cities are the hot beds of crime, misery and death among the colored people. Here the people are huddled together, with often two or three families in one room. Without employment for more than half the time, they are consequently insufficiently fed and poorly clothed. When sick they are unable either to employ a physician or to buy medicine. At least twenty-five per cent of them die without medical aid. In the city of Savannah, during the year 1894, 251 colored persons died without medical attention. This is 33½ per cent of the total number of deaths among these people for that year. About 60 per cent of this number of deaths were children under the age of ten. Twenty-four thousand of the 52,000 population of Savannah are Negroes. Hence it will be seen that whatever affects these people, affects at least nearly half the population of our chief seaport. What is true of Savannah, I judge to be approximately true of all the cities of Georgia and of most of the cities of the South.

The city colored people drift into crime because they are idle and hungry far oftener than because they are purposely vicious. All cities furnish far too large a proportion of crime, ignorance and misery of the colored people.

Any movement, therefore, that will bring to light the facts, lay bare the causes, and suggest the remedies in relation to this crime, misery and death which affects our people in the cities, will merit universal applause.

LETTER FROM GEORGE W. CABLE TO BUTLER  
R. WILSON, ESQ.

Your letter of May 8, which has gone long unanswered for reasons too tedious to recount to you, reminds me pleasantly of our earlier acquaintance.

The blanks and circulars of which it speaks, and which are now before me, did not reach me promptly. I think very highly of your undertaking to get accurate information of the sociological conditions of the Negro race in America. I hope you may gather a strong body of men so selected as to guarantee by their personal reputation the authenticity of whatever is put forth. It seems to me, from the highest, broadest, most patriotic and cosmopolitan point of view, to be one of the best enterprises that could be undertaken at this time.

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE.

*Resolved*, That the papers presented by the graduates of the Atlanta University and others show an alarming increase in the death-rate of the Negro population of cities and large towns, from such diseases as consumption and pneumonia, due in a great degree to ignorance, poverty, negligence and intemperance.

*Resolved*, That the investigations thus far made show the necessity for continuing the search for exact data on a larger scale, with a view to ascertaining more definitely the causes and seeking out and applying remedies for existing conditions.

*Resolved*, That the corresponding secretary and executive committee of this conference be and are hereby instructed to continue the investigations on these and other lines pertaining to the welfare of the Negro population in cities, and invite the hearty co-operation of all the graduates of the Atlanta University, and of others interested in the investigation and solution of city problems.

*The following also participated in the general discussions : Butler R. Wilson, Esq. ('81) of Boston, Mass.; Mr. F. H. Henderson ('79) of Cuthbert; Rev. G. W. F. Phillips ('76) of Marshallville; Mr. George A. Towns ('94) of Atlanta; Professor Thomas N. Chase of Atlanta; and Rev. T. G. Hazel of Charleston, S. C.*





