

At the present time, the medical student after being forced to learn a smattering of physiology is trained to pathology. The health administrator should be trained to physiology and taught pathology as an addition. Is it unreasonable to hold that a D.Sc. graduated in biology is more qualified to administer health than an M.D. graduated in pathology?

The significant item of interest here is the growing appreciation of the fact that public health is a distinct profession. Great Britain has gone much farther than America in placing clinical activities under governmental health authorities. For many of her public health administrators a training in medicine would seem to be both desirable and necessary. In the United States there is a tendency to leave clinical matters in the hands of private practitioners, hospitals and relief agencies, but in both places there is a growing recognition of the distinction between public health administration and the practice of clinical medicine.

In America we have both non-medical and medical administrators and sanitarians of outstanding ability. Experience has proved the value of both and no assumed omniscience is likely to direct the course of public health training arbitrarily in either direction. Further study and an understanding of our experience to date will lead us most safely.

The important need of the present is to extend the appreciation of the fact that public health is a distinct profession to which both special training and experience contribute. This idea must grow until it is reflected in the public appreciation of health departments, in the selection of public health personnel by government officials and in the higher salaries and improved tenure of office for the able men who are already in this branch of the public service.

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### THE LAST OF SPAHLINGER

IF any excuse is needed for giving more space\* to the Spahlinger treatment, it will be found in the intense interest which has been aroused in some countries, particularly England, by the remarkable results alleged to have been obtained. Once in a while the Spahlinger treatment gets into American papers, and it has been considered of sufficient importance to warrant some investigation by our Public Health Service. The excitement in England has exceeded that of any other country, we believe, and large sums of money have been made available for tests of the treatment under expert supervision and some other conditions involving what Spahlinger does not seem willing to grant: namely, full information concerning his methods and products.

The *Daily Express* of London sent a special correspondent to Geneva<sup>1</sup> to investigate Spahlinger and some of his alleged cures. Spahlinger and an English architect, R. G. Lovell, who has apparently invested a considerable amount of money in the enterprise, and who has written a book defending Spahlinger and his methods, are the chief personalities in Spahlinger's institute. Stanley Bishop, the special investigator for the *Daily Express*, finds that the cure for tuberculosis is not the only one in which Spahlinger has been interested. He once pushed an antityphoid "serum" which was claimed to be infallible, and later made anti-tetanic serum for the Russian army, much of which it is said may still be found in his laboratory as the result of a disagreement over the price. Mr. Bishop investi-

\* Editorial, *A. J. P. H.*, Mar., 1927, p. 256.

gated some of the alleged cures and found that, in spite of the glowing reports, they were either dead or dying. One case was that of an ex-army officer, whose death required investigation by the British Ministry of Pensions, which became satisfied that his death was due to tuberculosis.

*The Journal de Genève*,<sup>2</sup> January 18, 1927, denies authoritatively that Spahlinger's work in regard to cattle tuberculosis had been done under the supervision of M. Bron, President of the Geneva government and Chief of the Department of Commerce and Industry, as claimed. It refers to an article published March 5, 1921, warning the public to be cautious, and pointing out that Spahlinger's work had never been submitted to any learned society for control or estimation of its value.

Professor Sahli,<sup>3</sup> of the University of Berne, has stated that it is not employed by Swiss doctors, as none of them think that it has any value. A number of cases treated by Spahlinger have come under his care, concerning which he says that no benefit, but considerable damage, has been observed.

In England we have the report by Dr. Nelson<sup>4</sup> of cases treated under the direction of Spahlinger himself, none of which was cured, or even markedly improved. The most positive evidence, however, comes from the president and secretary of the Central Committee of the Federation of Swiss Physicians, who have sent a letter to the *British Medical Journal*,<sup>5</sup> in which they state that on account of the number of inquiries from British physicians concerning the Spahlinger treatment, they have decided to make their statement. They point out that Spahlinger holds no medical degree; that his serums and vaccines have been applied only in exceptional cases; that no communication has appeared in the medical press from Spahlinger or anyone else which gives the composition of his cures, the means by which they may be prepared or the results obtained, in consequence of which no control or study has been possible. They quote the Geneva Medical Society as saying that no published statement exists which gives a sufficiently clear account of Spahlinger's methods as will permit of serious examination. In March, 1927, Spahlinger made his first statement to the society, which was however, inconclusive and did not give the ground plans of his work; consequently his claims were purely theoretical and have not been subjected to scientific investigation.

We have commented upon Spahlinger's secrecy and his unwillingness to divulge his methods to others, in spite of the fact that large sums of money are available as soon as he reveals them and allows an impartial trial to be made of them, yet he has complained bitterly of his poverty and inability to carry on his experiments on a large scale. We are compelled to believe that he has not given proof of his humanitarian motives about which so much has been said.

Several investigators from the United States have felt that Spahlinger was honest, but that his feet were not on the ground. Material promised to our Public Health Service in 1923 has not yet been delivered, as far as we are aware. We are forced to believe that his "cure" must be classed with the general run of consumption cures, and trust that false hopes will not be raised by articles in the lay press.

1. *J. A. M. A.*, Mar. 5, 1927.

2. *J. A. M. A.*, Mar. 19, 1927.

3. *J. A. M. A.*, Mar. 26, 1927.

4. *Lancet*, Jan. 1, 1927.

5. *Brit. Med. J.*, Mar. 19, 1927.