

## SHOCKING CONDITIONS FOUND AT THE OAK FOREST SANITARIUM

Is Cook county criminally careless in its treatment of the victims of the white plague who are too poor to pay for treatment and therefore must go to county institutions?

The report of the special committee which investigated the tuberculosis ward of the County Hospital and the Oak Forest Tuberculosis Hospital would indicate that this is the case.

Both hospitals are accused of feeding the tubercular patients the same quality of food that is given to the county poor, regardless of the absolute necessity of a diet.

The conditions at Oak Forest are especially deplorable according to this report, which was placed in the hands of McCormick, president of the County Board, on November 28, 1913.

There is only one physician for 327 patients. No physician can possibly care for more than fifty patients. Consequently, if 50 are taken care of properly, 277 must be neglected absolutely, or the entire number of patients must be given about one-seventh the attention they require.

The physician calls at the hospital once a month to examine the patients.

The hospital has no medical equipment for the ordinary treatment and study of the cases.

It has no laboratory.

It has no facilities for the treatment of the tuberculous diseases of the nose and throat.

Consequently, it does not possess reliable records of the condition of the patients, and has no system of treatment having for its aim the cure of the disease.

The nursing service is absolutely inadequate. On November 28, 1913, there were sixteen nurses for 327 patients. After allowing for two night nurses and for the weekly half day leave to each nurse, there remains only ten nurses for daily duty; furthermore, a part of the time of

these ten nurses is taken up by menial labor which should be performed by domestics.

The hospital lacks a sufficient number of male and female employes for the domestic service and patients are compelled to make good this shortage.

There is a rule that a patient with a temperature over 100 must be put to bed.

The nurses do not have time to take the temperatures, and, if they had the time, there are not sufficient thermometers.

Therefore many of the patients who should be in bed are scrubbing floors, cleaning windows and doing other menial labor that cannot help but quicken the progress of their disease.

Owing to the fact that the food supplied is harmful in many cases, the Jewish Tuberculosis Relief Society has been giving Jewish patients an allowance of \$1 a week to buy proper food. Other patients must eat what they can get.

In view of the function of the Oak Forest Tuberculosis Hospital, it should have its own medical and nursing staff, especially trained and exclusively given to the treatment and nursing of tuberculosis patients. It should have one physician for every fifty patients.

It should increase its force of domestics so that patients who are too weak and too sick to be out of bed are not forced to do scrubbing and cleaning.

It should have a trained dietitian.

It should have a greatly increased nursing force.

But because of deficient medical supervision, deficient nursing, unsuitable diet improperly served in crowded diningrooms, and other criminal conditions, it becomes a menace not only to the patients in the hospital, but to those who fear to enter and