

PUBLIC HEALTH

6,000,000 Persons in U. S. Are Sick Every Day in Winter

Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia, and Related Diseases Responsible for 25 Per Cent of Total Disabilities

EVERY day throughout the winter 6,000,000 persons in the United States are too sick to work, attend school or pursue their other usual activities. This estimate of the amount of illness in the country is based on results of the National Health Survey which the U. S. Public Health Service has been making.

About 2,500,000 of the 6,000,000 on the nation's daily sick list are suffering from chronic disease such as rheumatism, diseases of the heart and blood vessels, hardening of the arteries, nephritis, cancer and non-malignant tumors, diabetes, asthma, tuberculosis, ulcer of the stomach, gall bladder diseases, nervous diseases and permanent impairments resulting from previous illness or accident.

Colds, influenza, pneumonia and like diseases were the cause of illness in 1,500,000 of the 6,000,000. This is because the survey was made in winter when these diseases are most prevalent.

About half a million were on the sick list because of accidents and another half million suffered from acute infectious illnesses or other acute illnesses such as appendicitis.

The Healthiest Age

From 15 to 24 years is the healthiest age, according to this survey, the proportion of the sick in this age group being only 1 in 40. The highest proportion of sick was in the oldest age group, from 65 years and up. In this group 1 in every 8 were disabled on the day of the survey. Children and adults between 25 and 65 years had about the same proportion of illness.

Illness occurs most often in the lowest income groups, the National Health Survey also shows. During the year of the survey, chronic illness of a week's duration or longer disabled two persons on relief for every one person in the middle and highest income brackets. Families just above the relief level but with incomes less than \$1,000 had less sickness than the relief population but illness rate in this group was 17 per

cent. higher than for the highest income group. Most of this excess was due to the greater frequency of chronic illness.

Illness plays a big part in causing dependency, it appears from that part of the survey which showed how disabling illness incapacitates the wage-earner. In relief families 1 in every 20 family heads was unable to seek work because of disability. In non-relief families with incomes under \$1,000 the number of family heads unable to seek work because of illness was 1 in 33. This figure was 1 in 250 for families in the comfortable income group.

The relief and low-income families not only have more illness but have longer-lasting illnesses. They also get less medical and nursing care than high or comfortable income families.

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Health Fight in Future Must Be Against Adult Ills

THE FIGHT to protect and improve the nation's health must be extended to include attacks on the chronic diseases of adults, such as cancer and heart disease, on poor housing, inadequate nutrition and stream pollution, Surgeon General Thomas Parran, U. S. Public Health Service, indicated in his annual report to Congress.

These four lines of attack plus extension of the health provisions of the Social Security Act, enlargement of the Public Health Service staff and extension of its physical facilities are the recommendations made by Surgeon General Parran to Congress.

The Social Security Act should be extended, he believes, to provide further "cooperation with the states in dealing more effectively with such important problems as syphilis, tuberculosis, cancer, pneumonia and mental disease."

The problem of nutrition involves not only the size of the family income and the amount of food that can be purchased but also the education of the public to select the essentials in food. While

these aspects of the problem may appear largely economic and educational, there is still need for scientific studies to establish better standards for judging how well or ill nourished a person is. At present it is only possible to detect gross deviations from the normal.

Accomplishments of the Public Health Service during the past year were many and varied. The attack on syphilis and gonorrhea continued with increasing momentum. There was no let-up in the fight on other infectious diseases, and new quarantine regulations were put into effect to guard against imported diseases. Distribution of nearly \$8,000,000 to the states under the Social Security Act resulted not only in a vast expansion of local and state health services but in stimulation of states and communities to appropriate almost equal sums of their own for health work.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

12-Foot Wall Surrounded First City of Troy

A 12-FOOT wall, that surrounded the very first city of Troy, has been discovered by a University of Cincinnati expedition, proving that Trojans—even 2,000 years before the Helen episode—never did trust the neighbors.

The high stone wall, with towers at



AN EARLIER HELEN?

Conventionalized outline of a woman's face, found in the ruins of the oldest city of Troy.