

**SUCCESSFUL FIGHT AGAINST
INFANTILE PARALYSIS**

Infantile paralysis in the United States between 1881 and 1904 recorded only 309 distinctly recognized cases, but during 1905-9 their number exceeded 5,000, and in 1911 over 9,000 cases appeared. In European countries the disease registered corresponding increases. Medical science strove strenuously for nearly a generation to ascertain its cause and cure, but until within a few years the strenuous struggle proved unavailing.

About four years ago, however, Simon Flexner discovered that the disease is a germ disease, being caused by a microscopic organism, and through this discovery of the cause won the first step toward advance along the road toward discovery of the cure. But this microscopic germ long remained invisible even to the strongest microscopes, being an inference backward from effects and conditions to the cause, and was extremely difficult to cultivate outside of the human body. But the word "impossible" is not in the lexicon of science. Flexner was possessed by the passion for success and inspired with the holy desire to relieve the sufferings of humanity. He persisted unconquerably, and at last he won the reward he had so richly deserved. He grew the germ in test tubes and rendered it visible in masses through the microscope.

The announcement was made cautiously at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., to 700 health officials and doctors on September 17. Dr. Flexner was too wise and humane to claim that the cure has yet been found, but he permitted it to be understood that recent experiments with this minutest of germs will soon yield results of important character. His equally cautious hearers applauded his hopeful address, and the world rejoices in the new hope.

Poliomyelitis, the scientific and technical term for infantile paralysis, seems from Flexner's experiments to spread much as common colds do. The infection apparently starts in the nasal membranes of the well. The virus has a peculiar affinity for the nerve tissues. That its main line of entry lies through the short olfactory nerves leading from

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