

## Occupational Anthrax in Germany in 1931 and 1932

According to statistics recently published by the German Federal Office of Health<sup>1</sup>, 118 cases of anthrax, 11 of which were fatal, were notified to that Office in 1931, and 82, 9 of which were fatal, in 1932.

The distribution by sex of these cases was as follows: 1931: males, 107 (11 fatal), females, 9, and 2 children; 1932: males, 75 (8 fatal), females, 6 (1 fatal), and 1 child.

In 1931, 1 case of internal anthrax (fatal) was notified, and 107 cases of cutaneous anthrax, with 10 deaths.

In 1931 the bacteriological examination was positive in 66 cases (55.9 per cent.). In 1932 it was positive in 52 cases (63 per cent.) and negative in 9, while no laboratory examination was effected in 21 cases.

Cases of anthrax have been steadily decreasing during recent years (252 in 1928, 185 in 1929, 145 in 1930), owing principally to the fall in the imports of animal products from abroad.

### DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY CAUSE

The cases were distributed by cause roughly as follows: 1931: agricultural anthrax, 87 cases (5 fatal); industrial anthrax, 27 cases (6 fatal); miscellaneous, 4; (115 of these cases, of which 11 were fatal, were definitely of occupational origin;) 1932: agricultural anthrax, 63 cases (6 fatal); industrial anthrax, 13; miscellaneous, 6 (3 fatal).

The cases of agricultural anthrax were distributed as follows for 1931 and 1932 respectively; contact with infected animals, 82 (5 fatal) and 62 (6 fatal); agricultural work, 5 and 1.

The cases of industrial anthrax were caused by transport of, commerce in, or working with hides and skins (19 cases, of which 4 were fatal, in 1931; 7 cases in 1932), or hair and bristles (8 cases, of which 2 were fatal, in 1931; 6 cases in 1932).

Of the 4 miscellaneous cases in 1931, 1 was of occupational origin and the remaining 3 of non-occupational origin; of the 6 similar cases in 1932, 1 (fatal) was of occupational origin and the remaining 5 (2 fatal) of non-occupational origin.

### *Contact with Infected Animals*

In 1931 and 1932 contact with living animals gave rise to 4 and 2 cases respectively; the urgent slaughtering of diseased animals, 57

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<sup>1</sup> "Ergebnis der Statistik über Milzbrandfälle unter Menschen im Deutschen Reiche für das Jahr 1931", and ditto for 1932, in *Reichsgesundheitsblatt*, Vol. VIII, No. 5, 1 Feb. 1933, pp. 95-97, and No. 21, 24 May 1933, pp. 389-391. For statistics for 1930, cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, July 1932, pp. 83-86.

cases (3 fatal) and 54 cases (4 fatal) ; the handling of carcasses, 21 cases (2 fatal) and 6 cases (2 fatal).

There were 5 other cases of agricultural anthrax in 1931 and 1 non-fatal case in 1932 (an agricultural labourer).

All the cases were of cutaneous anthrax, except 1 in 1931 (fatal case of pulmonary anthrax).

The seat of infection was as follows : 1931 : arms, 72 cases ; head, 11 ; elsewhere, 3 (the lung in 1 case) ; 1932 : arms, 54 cases ; head, neck, and nape of the neck, 8 ; elsewhere, 1.

The animals to which infection was due in 1931 and 1932 respectively were as follows : cattle, 71 and 55 cases ; sheep, 4 and 2 ; swine, 1 and 3 ; horses, 1 and 1. The origin of the disease was unknown in 5 and 2 cases respectively.

Of the cases of agricultural anthrax in 1931, 3 were due to infected foreign fodder ; no information is given for the other 2.

#### *Hides and Skins (Transport, Commerce, and Working)*

The 19 cases (4 fatal) reported in 1931 as due to transport of, commerce in, and working with hides and skins were distributed as follows : dock and transport workers, 9 cases, of which 3 were fatal (dockers 7, warehouse workers 2), all at Hamburg ; tannery workers, 10 (transport 3, of which 1 was fatal ; work with hairy skins and hides, 6 ; work with un haired skins, 1). The seat of infection was as follows : head, 5 cases ; neck and nape of the neck, 10 ; arms, 4. The cases among workers in docks and warehouses were distributed according to the materials handled as follows : dry hides, 6 cases ; salted hides, 2 ; wet hides, 1. The 10 cases in tanneries were due to foreign sheep and deer skins in 5 cases, foreign cattle skins in 3 cases, and skins of mixed origin in 2 cases.

The 7 cases reported in 1932, none of which was fatal, occurred among dock workers (1 case), warehouse workers (1 case) and tannery workers, 5 (transport, 2 ; working with hairy skins, 2 ; clearing of vats, 1). The seat of infection was the head, neck, and nape of the neck in 5 cases and the arms in 2. The case of the dock worker was caused by dry goat, calf, and sheep skins from Russia ; that of the warehouse worker by dry salted cattle skins from Central America ; and the 5 tannery cases by dry cattle skins from South America (3 cases) and from Serbia, Asia, and South America (2 cases).

#### *Hairs and Bristles (Transport, Commerce, and Working)*

The 8 cases of anthrax, 2 of which were fatal, reported in 1931 as due to the transport of, commerce in, or working with hairs and bristles occurred in the following industries and operations : warehouses, 2 cases, of which 1 was fatal ; preparation of horsehair, 1 fatal case ; manufacture of brushes and paint brushes, 1 case ; manufacture of carpets, 4 cases.

The seat of infection was the head in 5 cases, the neck and nape of the neck in 2, and the arms in 1.

The materials used came from miscellaneous animals in 4 cases, and horses (hair) in 2 ; for 2 cases no information is given.

Of the 6 cases reported in 1932, 5 occurred in the preparation of hair and 1 in a brush factory. In the cases occurring in the preparation of hair, the seat of infection was the head and nape of the neck in 3 cases, the arms in 1 case, and in 1 case elsewhere.

The source of infection was bristles of home and foreign origin in 2 cases, and foreign bristles in 3 cases ; in 3 cases the bristles had been disinfected and in 2 cases they had not. The bristles were from horses in 2 cases and from horses and cattle in 2 others ; in 1 case the origin of the bristles was unknown.

The case which occurred in a brush factory (seat of infection, the head) was caused by horsehair of foreign origin which had undergone disinfection.

### *Miscellaneous*

In 1931, the miscellaneous case of occupational origin, in which the seat of infection was the arm, was that of a woman bottle washer in a bacteriological research laboratory. The 3 cases of non-occupational origin were those of a woman and 2 children.

In 1932, the victim of the miscellaneous occupational case (fatal) was a woman employed in a laboratory who contracted internal anthrax through infection by an anthrax bacillus culture. Of the 5 non-occupational cases, 2 were men infected by shaving brushes and 1 a child who had played with an infected sheep. No details are given for the 2 remaining cases.

## **The Working of Social Insurance Schemes in Bulgaria**

There are two social insurance schemes in force in Bulgaria, one for compulsory accident, sickness, maternity, invalidity, and old-age insurance, governed by the Social Insurance Act of 6 March 1924 as amended by the Acts of 2 February 1929, 4 April 1931, and others, and the other for compulsory unemployment insurance, governed by the Act of 12 April 1925 concerning employment exchanges and unemployment insurance.

The management of both these schemes, which cover all workers and employees, is in the hands of a single insurance institution administered solely by the State. Except for the accident insurance branch, the funds necessary to defray the cost of benefits in cash and in kind are provided by contributions from the insured persons, the employers, and the public exchequer.

The working of Bulgarian social insurance is examined below under the following heads : scope, administration, financial resources, and benefits.