

NEGROES APPEAL FOR SEPARATE HOSPITAL

ATTENTION IS CALLED TO IN-
CREASE IN DEATH RATE DUE
TO TUBERCULOSIS.

The Negro Welfare Board of the city of Dallas filed a petition with the County Commissioners' Court yesterday in which they asked for the erection and maintenance of a separate hospital unit at Woodlawn Hospital for the cure of tubercular patients. A similar request will be filed with the City Commission upon the return of Mayor Lawther. The petitions were signed by negro residents of Dallas and were presented by Dr. R. T. Hamilton, president, and Dr. A. H. Dyson, secretary, of the Negro Welfare Board.

Negroes Need Hospital.

The document reads in part as follows:

"A study of vital statistics of the city of Dallas shows at a glance that our race above all races stands much in need of such an institution as Woodlawn Hospital. Ninety-one whites died in the city during the year of tuberculosis in some form and seventy-one negroes.

"Estimating the white population of the city of Dallas to be 110,000 and the negro population to be 25,000, the death rate for whites from this disease for the year 1917 was .82 per 1,000 (less than one), while the death rate for negroes was 2.84 per 1,000. It is seen then that the negro death rate is nearly three and one-half times greater in Dallas from tuberculosis than the white, while the white population is more than four times greater than the negro. Had the white death rate from this disease been as large as the negro death rate, 302 whites would have died with tuberculosis during 1917, which would have been alarming, and very properly called for immediate attention at your hands. As to the causes for this great difference in the death rate of the two races in this city from tuberculosis and other preventable diseases, we will not at this time trouble you, but hope to do so in a subsequent communication, as they can largely be removed, by the city, and relate to the health of the entire community. Our purpose now is to show that our race, above all others in Dallas, needs the facilities provided at Woodlawn at the public expense for indigent tuberculosis patients.

Would Help White People.

"The white people have reduced their death rate from tuberculosis wonderfully during the last few years, by better sanitation, improved housing for the poor and through the instrumentality of such institutions at Woodlawn Hospital. The white people can further reduce their death rate here from this disease by helping us to reduce ours; because by doing so they will be removing one of the sources of which members of their race are liable to become infected. Diseases and germs that produce disease are not respecters of persons. If the cook, the nurse, the maid, the chauffeur, the porter, the laundress, are from homes in which the communicable diseases exist, the employer is liable to be infected, and, as every doctor knows, are not infrequently contaminated from this source. So as a matter of self interest alone it would be to the advantage of the white people and to the good of the entire community to assist us in this matter as prayed for in this position.

"We understand that when Woodlawn Hospital was opened for patients in 1913, during the first few months indigent tuberculous negroes were admitted for treatment. We do not know just why the practice was discontinued, but we have been informed, unofficially, that it was a question of nurses; that it was repugnant to white nurses and attendants to give to negro patients the close care and attention such cases demand. We readily understand the position the nurses took and we have no complaint or criticism to make on that score. But in order to overcome this objection, as well as for the best interest of all concerned, we respectfully ask that trained colored nurses and attendants who are available be employed to care for negro patients in this hospital."