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THE WHITE PERIL.

Consumption Must Be Prevented
Rather Than Cured.

STAMP OUT THE INFECTION.

Unless the Germs of the Disease in the Habitation, Whether It Be House or Tent, Are Utterly Destroyed Fresh Air and "Cures" Avail Little.

There is no cure for tuberculosis, and probably never will be, accepting the word "cure" in the sense of some special medicine. A disease prevented is better than cured, for no one is so well off physically or financially after any illness, and particularly does this truth apply to tuberculosis. The successful prevention of a disease does away with any need for its "cure." This is well exemplified in the case of yellow fever. We have never succeeded in finding a cure for that former scourge of the south, but we have done far better. We have wiped out the disease bodily, bag and baggage, by simple preventive methods.

So writes Dr. F. C. Walsh in the Technical World Magazine, and he declares that notwithstanding the "optimists," the disease is on the increase. He singles out and lays great stress on the fact that consumption is a contagious disease and on the contention that it is not contracted to any great extent through infected milk or even by the using the drinking cups that consumptives use or through the "spitting nuisance." Its spread is through the infection of the habitation. Here is one of his parables:

Brown had moved in the month of May into a house in another part of the town where he had always lived. By fall he had contracted tuberculosis. It was discovered later that several different families who had occupied this same house in succession had lost several members from tuberculosis. No attempt had ever been made to disinfect the house. Brown went to a far western state, pitched his tent on a certain spot, and never made any change from that one spot until his death. Note that fact. As a result the soil over which he slept night after night became saturated with the accumulated germs which he expelled in coughing, so that he was continually at night rebreathing into his system the very "seeds" which cause the disease. He was re-poisoning himself nightly and didn't know it. His system would have been able to throw off the original "germ poison" which it contracted, but it was not strong enough to withstand a new dose of the poison every night. Had he changed the location of his tent daily he could have slept each night in an atmosphere practically germ free.

Jones is another victim. He goes to the same state. He has an idea that he can get along without any tent and sleeps with only the stars above, rolled up in his blanket. He naturally moves from place to place, each day sleeping on new and different ground each night. He ends by being cured.

Smith has the disease and goes to the west. He feels and looks in perfect health long before a year is gone. He returns home, satisfied that he is cured. In less than four months he is again in the tenacious clutches of the disease.

There is a lesson in this. The open air treatment is all right, but it must be carried out by right methods. All early cases of consumption which have failed to recover by outdoor treatment must lay the blame to faulty treatment. Jones, who recover-

ed, you will remember, did change his location every day, having no tent to bother him, and in doing so avoided the fatal mistake of Brown.

How about Smith? The case of Smith is of the greatest importance. He had recovered, you will remember, and returned to his home feeling fine—back to what? To the very same plague ridden room in which he had first contracted the disease—a room reeking with tubercular germ life and which had been occupied, it was learned later, by five different consumptives at various times. The disease got a hold on him a second time for the simple reason that he came back to the original source of his disease. He should have sought new quarters, or else the house, and particularly the room he occupied, should have been disinfected before being occupied by him or any one else. These three cases cited are but typical instances. There are thousands upon thousands of Browns, Joneses and Smiths living and dying this very day whose story, if told in its true light, would match exactly the simple but pathetic history of these three men.

The thing that the doctor brings out is that consumption must be prevented rather than cured; that prevention is easy and cheap and lies in disinfection. This, in the case of the consumptive's quarters, he insists, should be at least once a week. The formula is simple: "Fumigate every room in the house with a vapor given off by heating formaldehyde; wash all the floors, windows and woodwork with mild solutions of corrosive sublimate and water." Fresh air, either at home or elsewhere, he establishes, is in itself insufficient.

He reaches the conclusion that the very existence of the hope of a "cure" has been responsible for increase of the disease. He urges people to flee from consumption by killing it in the germ that lurks in house or ground.

Think all you speak, but speak not all you think.—Delaune.

FRONT DOOR NIGHT BELLS.

Doctors Are Not the Only Ones Who Have Use For Them.

At 1 o'clock in the morning a man who was looking for a doctor found a door plate on which he distinguished the words, "Night bell," and rang the bell. When the door opened and a figure appeared in the semidarkness of the hall he said:

"Hurry up, please. There is a sick woman at No. 132."

The man inside said "All right," and in a few seconds both men were racing down the street to No. 132. In the top floor front room lay a very sick woman. The newcomer pulled a small table to the bedside and took from his pocket a sheet of paper and a fountain pen.

"What on earth are you doing with that?" said the man who had summoned him. "You're a nice doctor, you are."

"Doctor?" echoed the man. "I'm not a doctor; I'm a lawyer. Didn't you read the sign, 'Lawyer's night bell?'"

"But what does a lawyer need of a night bell?" the other man asked.

"To enable the people who want to make wills in the dead of night to find him readily," was the reply.

"Once in a while I'm called up to straighten out more serious entanglements, but most of the legal papers I write after 10 p. m. are wills. A lot of people who take sick suddenly recollect that they have never made a will and they want to repair the omission while there is time. When you said there was a sick woman here I naturally thought of wills, not medicine. There is a doctor in the corner house."

—New York Times.