

of the patient as it can be made, and every effort should be carried out to prevent monotony. The furniture should be light, easily movable, and of a cheerful color; all dark hangings and sombre coverings, when there, should be replaced by white, or light blue, or gray-colored fabrics, and the walls should be of gray or light green color. Papers of flaring colors, and papers which have for a pattern a number of rings and circles of flowers of one design, are extremely bad. I remember an instance in which the paper of a wall had for its pattern a series of circles like so many sunflowers; that paper produced in a nervous patient a sense of giddiness which led to nausea, and had a very bad effect indeed. I thought at first that the complaint made against this paper by the patient was rather absurd, but when I tried for myself the experiment of looking for a few minutes at the rings of the pattern, I actually became, against my will, subject to giddiness also, and to a sense of nausea which was most unpleasant. The fact led me at once to tear up a prescription I had written as a sedative for stomachic disturbance, and to order instead a screen which should shut off the sight of the objectionable wall, and which proved, in fact, an effective remedy. I remember another instance in which the walls of the room were covered with a pattern of a "fleur-de-lis," the shading of which, by some curious twistings, caused each flower to resemble a death's head. The patient in the night detected this singular extravagance of art, half asleep and half awake, fancied himself in a sort of crypt of skulls, which caused him a sleeplessness that lasted until the morning, and led to a bad day. The walls of a sick-room should be quite plain, and of gray or light green color, but there is no objection to cheerful pictures if they are now and then changed in position, and are pleasant to the mind of the invalid without becoming wearisome. Flowers in the sick-room are always good so long as they are bright and fresh, but they should be frequently changed, and it is sound practice to remove them during the night. Flowers which have a sickly odor, lilies, for example, should be excluded, however charming they may be to the eye. As a rule, living flowers are better than dead. Dried leaves, like pot-pourri, are bad for the sick room; they gather dust and the stale odor they emit impairs the purity of the air.

BOOK INFECTION.—In many of the European cities, an exchange says, extensive investigations are being made to prove or disprove the infectiousness of books handled by the sick, such as must of necessity fre-

quently occur in large circulating libraries. The editor of the *Christiania* (Norway) *Sanitary Journal*, in commenting on the subject, remarks that it is the universal pastime of invalids and convalescents to read or look over books, which, if not procurable at home, are brought from some library. Even children are fond of looking at picture books, and the editor relates the following personal experience: "In 1846 an eight-year old brother of my wife was taken down with scarlet fever and died. During his illness he frequently amused himself by looking over a large picture book. This, together with several other of his useful playthings, was packed away in a trunk after his death. Twenty-six years afterward, in 1872, a sister-in-law of mine journeyed across the channel to England, where I was then residing, and with her came the chest and picture book. On the second day the chest was opened, and the book presented to my two-year old son. Within the next two weeks the little fellow was taken down with scarlet fever. The doctors who were called in consultation wondered how the disease was contracted, as there had been no scarlet fever in the town for years. The circumstances of the book were called to mind, and the indications were clearly that the twenty-six year old book had retained the poison and communicated it to the child." The process of disinfection now in use in Denmark and Norway, in many of the circulating libraries and book stores, is a good one, and it is claimed to disinfect the books without damaging them in the least. It consists in placing the books fully opened out in a suitable compartment, and subjecting them to dry hot steam at a temperature of over 100 deg. C. for several hours.

FOUR UNBROKEN GENERATIONS.—From the *Lewiston Journal* we learn that James Scribner, of Waterboro', Me., is now in his ninetieth year, and his wife is nearly of the same age. The couple have been married sixty-five years, and have three children living, the oldest of whom is upward of sixty years of age. These children have children and grandchildren, and the remarkable fact is that no death has ever yet occurred in the line of the descendants from Mr. and Mrs. Scribner to their great-grandchildren.