

ipient forms of this disease. Even after the disease is established, it often for a while appears to increase the beauty of its victim. Percival has poetically and correctly alluded to this:

“O! there is a sweetness in beauty’s close,
Like the perfume scenting the withered rose;
For a nameless charm around her plays,
And her eyes are kindled with hallowed rays,
And a veil of spotless purity
Has mantled her cheek with its heavenly dye,
Like a cloud whereon the queen of night
Has poured her softest tint of light;
And there is a blending of white and blue
Where the purple blood is melting through
The snow of her pale and tender cheek;
And there are tones that sweetly speak
Of a spirit who longs for a purer day,
And is ready to wing her flight away.”

But though those predisposed to consumption are often as beautiful as the flowers of spring, they are as delicate and fragile. They usually have slender forms and narrow chests; their lungs are easily irritated; they take cold from slight exposure, and have frequent cough, which for a while is scarcely noticed, or readily yields to remedial measures. Such persons, I repeat, should avoid matrimony, especially in early life. If no exciting cause awakens into diseased action the apprehended predisposition before the age of twenty-five, and they are in good health, there will then be less danger, as reasonable hopes may be indulged that the disease will never be developed.

Secondly. Neither should those marry who are sickly, or whose constitutions are much impaired by disease, even if not consumptive. A late writer on consumpition, Dr. Clark, who speaks from great experience, considers dyspepsia in the parent the most fertile source of that vitiated system in the children which leads to this disease. An impaired state of health, however produced in the parent, is often manifested in the children by a tendency to scrofulous

and consumptive diseases. Thus we often find the younger children more disposed to disease than the elder, and on enquiry, find it may be attributed to a change in the health of one or both parents. Parents should remember that inattention to their own health, or living irregular, dissipated lives, not only impairs their own health, and causes themselves much suffering, but that the evils they experience from this source will be transmitted to their offspring. Like the fabled Laocoon, the ‘long-venomed chain’ that binds the father, also encircles and destroys the children.

Thirdly. Early marriages are likewise productive of consumption in this country. Causes that in Europe operate to prevent early marriages, do not exist here. Hence we observe very early marriages among all classes.

The stripling from college, and the girl from the boarding-school—the apprentice when he arrives at the age of twenty-one, and girls from the age of fifteen to twenty—enter into this state, and though in some instances no evils result, yet not unfrequently we notice the health of one or both parents decline, and if they do not die, their children are feeble, and often cut off before adult age. I speak from personal observation, when I say that early marriages are in this country often productive of consumptive diseases. Unless remarkably healthy, none of either sex should marry before the age of twenty-four, or not until two or three years after the system has acquired its full development. Those whose health has been much impaired from any cause had better delay a few years longer.

Still, some who are predisposed to