

Disease would be unknown to us if each and every one of us—not alone the profession, but also the laity—would understand that the principle of good health depends upon perfect metabolism; and the subject of metabolism not alone includes the knowledge of proper hygiene and dietetics, but also teaches us pre-eminently the proper steps of prophylaxis.

One of the first steps towards perfect metabolism appears to be potent and prompt purgation; strict regard for the activity of all eliminative organs; intellectual understanding and attention to nutritive demands; control of body temperature—that is to say, the proper understanding and differentiation between thermolysis, thermogenesis, and thermotaxis.

Where in the world will we look for an explanation of these physiological phenomena, excepting in the blood? The force or depression in the circulation of the blood to certain vital parts of the organism increases or decreases temperature, and the ancient teaching of medicine has invariably led to deleterious consequences when, through faulty teaching, various coal-tar products, antipyretics, etc., had been administered to a patient owing to a rise of temperature. It is due to the elevations of the body's temperature so characteristic in pulmonary tuberculosis, that headache is not an infrequent symptom of phthisical patients. As a rule we have resorted to remedies which exerted a weakening action upon the heart and circulation, hence causing a depressing effect upon the vasomotor centres.

Little, if any, attention, did we give to the physiological properties of these products regarding their diuretic value. It is my opinion, based upon years of research work, that these vaso-motor disturbances are not of a real character, but rather traumatic. Hence, we find that coal-tar derivatives are never to be employed in tubercular conditions, no matter how high a temperature we might note.

More or less, these neuroses are due to the digestive disturbances; and again, the effect of such digestive disturbances may be noted and demonstrated through the examination of the blood, which will exhibit a profound digestive leucocytosis.

Returning to the features of metabolism, it is my belief that one of the principal factors to produce perfect metabolism in cases where it has been disturbed, is explained in the words of Sancho Panza, who states: "Blessed be the man who invented sleep."

I do not wish to convey the idea that in order to obtain sleep, hypnotics should be resorted to. The best hypnotic we know of is one of self-coercion—that is to say, when the tissues have performed a certain amount of function, they convey to the entire system a want of sleep. This expression exhibits itself in the normal organism throughout the entire cerebro-spinal column, and