

Editorial

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INTER ALIA

There are two classes specially dangerous to the public health. The first of these are the faddists, who are always running after some new thing either in diet or in novel remedies for diseases and the other the fossils who cling tenaciously to antediluvian notions in sanitation and hygiene, and who look with suspicion and distrust on every advance suggested by science. Such organizations as the Canadian and American public health associations and the associations for the prevention of tuberculosis stand between the two. They discount the extravagances of the one and counteract the pernicious tendencies of the other. By lectures and training classes they are in position to spread physiological knowledge among the people and expound the laws of health. Action like this on the part of such organizations is greatly needed; we do not believe that faddism in medical matters was ever more rampant than at the present moment, and as far as we are able to judge, it is most prevalent among the fortunate and richer classes.

Reasonable embitterment has been engendered in England by the forcible feeding of imprisoned suffragettes, who, as a last resort against "tyrannical treatment," declared a hunger strike while in jail. This condition of affairs was reflected later in the House of Commons when George Lansbury, a socialist member, denounced Premier Asquith and the Government, and, again, when one of the imprisoned women threw herself down two flights of stairs: "A padded room," remarks a Toronto daily editorially, "is the place for this type of paranoiac."

Does it not seem strange that the spirit of British fair play lies largely dormant when legislative equality is sought by British womanhood, and, strange to-day that there is an editorial writer in Canada, him-

self so apparently paranoiac as to misapply the disease, with which he seems afflicted, to those advocates of a cause against the justice of which there is no argument—to those who have undoubtedly been bullied into the "objectionable measures," for which they have been jailed; measures which to one who reasons out the matter are as logical as they may be severe.

We hear much nowadays of occupational diseases and there are those who can recite lists of diseases peculiar to every calling, whether in open air, in factory, in mine, in office or in study. The inference unexpressed is that any activity whatsoever induces some disease and that if one would escape disease one should be able to eschew work.

There are occupational diseases, many of which can be ameliorated or eradicated by proper legislation in sanitation; and reform along this line should not abate. The great majority of us, however, are likely to die from diseases induced by the manner of our diversion rather than the manner in which we earn our livelihood. Indeed, in many of our lives the only ordered thing is the occupation, the only hours of proper functioning, save those passed in sleep, the hours passed in work. Yet the uses of leisure properly ordered, are manifold—retirement, social intercourse, amusement, even frivolity. In this respect man has been compared to a tree. If trees are too close to each other, their roots intertwining, their branches mingling, there is not a full harmonious development of any one of them. But if a tree stands too far apart from its brethren it suffers the disadvantages of isolation without the protection of companionship from sun, wind and rain.—The whole art of living, of health, of happiness, of self-culture, is contained in a proper balance, in equilibrium attained by judicious appropriation of opposite forces.