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CONSUMPTION.

Pulmonary Consumption and Means of Prevention.

(Concluded.)

The causes of consumption may with propriety be divided into the *predisposing* and the *exciting*.—Among the first, and probably the most frequent, is the inheritance from one or both parents of a morbid constitution, or tendency to this disease. Scrofulous affections also predispose to this complaint, and these are often inherited, though they are as frequently caused by improper diet, impure air, deficient clothing, or by whatever weakens the system, or prevents its full and healthy development.

By *exciting* causes are meant those that awaken into diseased action this predisposition to the disease, such as colds, inflammation, and other affections of the lungs, which in those not at all predisposed to consumption seldom produce it, though they sometimes do, when neglected or improperly treated. But such instances are not common, and it is certain if the predisposition did not exist, there would be but little of the disease. It is therefore by preventing the transmission from one generation to another of this predisposition, or morbid constitution, that

we must look for much diminution of the disease in this country.

But how can this be effected? In answer to this enquiry, I submit the following observations:

First. Those strongly predisposed to consumption, should conscientiously abstain from matrimony. Duty to themselves and their country requires this. It is criminal in those in whom this disease is lurking, to connect themselves by marriage, and inflict upon themselves and those with whom they are connected unspeakable misery. On this subject more correct views should be entertained, and religiously acted upon. If young people, in the indiscretion peculiar to their age, incline to form such alliances, parents and friends should guard them against it. Hitherto they have been reprehensibly neglectful in this respect. For young persons, there is much excuse. Females in whom this disease exists in a latent form, are in early life the most interesting of their sex. Their minds are usually precocious and brilliant—their countenances fair and animated—and to a careless observer, appear blooming with health. But in truth, this precocity and brilliancy are symptoms of impending danger. This has been stated by most writers on consumption, and must have been observed by all who have given much attention to the in-