

sympathetic nervous system is rehabilitated, and the most marvelous effects are often produced. The apathetic condition of the intestinal track is dissipated, the liver pours out its bile, and life seems to move on again. Alkalies taken before meals stimulate the flow of the gastric juices. Slight fatigue often spoils the appetite, and lowers the digestive power. Nothing so securely revives this as a glass of wine before meals. While small quantities of alcohol aid digestion, larger quantities retard it and encourage gastric catarrh. The quantity of wine or brandy must be small when taken for this purpose.

#### HYGIENE IN RELATION TO THE PRIVATE FAMILY.

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Should I tell you that consumption was largely a preventable disease, it would come as a startling announcement; for it has been accepted as an hereditary disease the world over. Yet of every one hundred who die of it in the city of New York, only twenty-six per cent. of it can be traced to hereditary influences. *Seventy-four* per cent. are charged to damp air, insufficient food, poverty and filth. It is an admitted fact, abundantly proved by statistics, "that dampness of soil is an important cause of tuberculosis, to the population living on that soil, and that the improvement produced by draining the subsoil, in lessening the amount of consumption is marked." Are we not individually responsible for the drainage of our locations?

But however developed, it acquires a capacity for further transmission, and thus in a geometrical ratio adds annually to the ever increasing harvest of suffering and death. I would like to impress upon the public the great fact that tubercle is not a new formation, dependent upon hereditary taint. It is merely an alteration of normal nutrition; a degraded and degenerated tissue, frequently resulting from neglect of trivial complaints in connection with a disregard of ordinary sanitation.

Since living in Fauquier, four members out of five in an Irish family have died of consumption in rapid succession. As fast as one died another fell a victim to it. I am assured that in Ireland this disease was unknown to this family. The poor old mother asked me in the saddest possible

manner to examine her premises and tell her whether the house had killed her poor children. All had slept in a garret room with an end window only, and without a fire-place. The staircase to this room, which was tightly plastered, led from the room below, in which the family congregated and lived, along which had ascended all the foul air that had served the purpose of respiration to pollute the supply of those who slept in this low-pitched and ill-ventilated room. To aggravate the matter, the house was located in a bottom, on a cold, damp, clay soil. The old man, having considerable means, by my advice changed his location to a hill, on which he built a comfortable house and carried with him his son, the only remaining child, and, according to advice, put him in a comfortable and well ventilated room, with a fire in an open fire-place night and morning during all damp weather. Though threatened with the same disease, this young man is now the picture of health and the father of a family.

The idea that because the parent died of consumption, therefore the offspring should meet with the same fate, should be abandoned. This depends upon whether sanitary laws are understood and regarded. "Diseased tendencies are for a generation or two; the laws of health are for a thousand years," and can therefore completely eradicate the seeds of disease. It may be suggested by some of our late investigators—in the case just mentioned—that a bacillus floated from the lungs of the diseased to those of the healthy above, formed a nidus there and began the work of destruction. But without favorable surroundings in my opinion this bacillus would have perished.

In consumption it is the weakened nutritive system that is inherited, just as it is the weakened will and the craving appetite for alcohol that is inherited by the drunkard.

This tendency of medical men to consider more closely the conditions of disease promises the greatest possible benefit to mankind.

I am glad to be able to say that these unmistakable lessons teach us that no inexorable decree like the sword of Damocles hangs over the heads of the offspring of consumptives, condemning them to the fate of their fathers; that breathing and exercising in the pure air, bathing in Heaven's health-giving light, aided by nutritious diet, a milder climate on a warmer and dryer soil if necessary, may and does furnish a strong