

Cleanliness as a Condition of Health.

THE uses of clothing as promoting cleanliness and good health may be further considered in relation to undergarments. These should be of material which permits of free access of air to the person, and encourages transpiration through the skin. Such garments must not be closely woven; they should be porous, soft and smooth. Let the person be enclosed in a covering of confined air rather than of solid material, if warmth, comfort and cleanliness would be secured. Air is the best non-conductor of heat to or from the body, and clothing should be such as best confines the air. We cover our ice with sawdust rather than sand, our steam pipes with asbestos or mineral wool, only because these substances hold within them large quantities of air which prevent the transmission of heat. For the same reason loose fitting garments, and especially loosely woven ones, are warmer in winter and cooler in summer than closely woven ones can be. And yet we are not strongly impressed with the virtues of woollen undergarments. They are apt to irritate the skin, and are difficult to wash without rendering them hard and shrunken. The linen mesh seems to us to be an ideal undergarment for summer, though silk mesh or silk crocheted is more comfortable for winter wear. Either of these confines the air, absorbs moisture, keeps the skin dry and warm, and will bear any amount of careless washing without serious injury.

And frequent washing of underclothing is very important—not less than once a week. But no undergarment should be worn both night and day. A complete change every night and morning is very important. Let the undergarments of the day be hung up and thoroughly aired every night, and be replaced by dry, clean night gown of cotton or linen mesh, as the case may be. In the morning it may be again worn, and the night gown left to a thorough airing.

The amount of distribution of the clothing worn is also worthy of consideration. People are apt to clothe the trunk of the body excessively, notwithstanding its greater bulk easily retains its heat, while the extremities, especially the lower, are insufficiently clad.

The consequence is that contraction of the blood-vessels for want of heat, occurring at a distance from the centres of circulation, seriously interferes with good circulation, vigorous function and good health. Cold contracts blood-vessels and heat expands them, and weakness follows both conditions. Too much blood in a part prostrates the organ and obstructs its functions; too little blood also enfeebles and prostrates; when there is too much blood in some parts and too little in others, general, as well as special weaknesses are the result. The trunk of the body is apt to be kept too warm, whereby it retains too much blood, all of which induces obstructed circulation and weakened nutrition. Unbalanced circulation is the really tangible condition in all diseases; to restore balance to the circulation is the obviously important treatment. The application of heat or cold, or better still rubbing and manipulation to contract or relax blood-vessels, becomes, therefore, the *sine qua non* to all successful treatment. Clothing is an important adjuvant. To heat the trunk of the body while the lower extremities are cold; to cultivate chamois vests, fur mufflers, heavy overcoats, etc., and leave hands and feet poorly clad, is folly to the extreme. If one is cold let him warm his feet and hands; if he has difficulty of keeping warm, he needs not Yaeger undergarments or heavy coats but loosely fitting heavy shoes and overshoes. It may be that the arm and legs of his garments need to be doubled, but chamois vests and other such contrivances to prevent colds are not recommended. Here again the real and the apparent are exact opposites. Nothing so provokes to pneumonia as the attempts of people to prevent it. Close rooms, protection against drafts, chamois vests, heavy woollen shirts, all of which increase the retention of heat and, therefore, of blood in the central organs, promote pneumonia, consumption and other chest ailments, which consists primarily of excess of blood in the parts affected. We shall see in the proper place that hemorrhages, apoplexy, congestions, all illustrate the same principles, and are to be prevented or cured by corresponding treatment.

THANK OFFERING FOR A LOVED ONE

MR. E. T. D. CHAMBERS, Quebec, Que: "I have much pleasure, in answer to your appeal, in sending the enclosed cheque for \$5.00 for the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives on behalf of my wife and myself. We regret that it is so small, for the desire to assist in so splendid a work is strong, and the amount seems so insignificant considering that it is desired to be a thank offering for the improvement in health of a dear one, as well as for a memorial of one who departed this life on Xmas Day, 1895, 'In the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection.'