

life, and is not difficult to remove during middle life. I believe it is plain that in this is about all there is in heredity or predisposition as regards consumption. I am quite in accord with the opinion of Dr. Flick, of Philadelphia, who recently in a paper at a meeting of the County Medical Society, said that heredity, *i. e.*, as now commonly understood, "Ought to be out of the question at the present day. It is an unscientific theory, and at variance with all modern knowledge about the etiology of disease. Its complete eradication from the public mind is one of the first steps necessary in a sanitary crusade against phthisis."

The causes of consumption may be well considered under two heads. Under one, come all those causes which produce in the body a receptivity to the other cause; this other cause, the exciting or immediate one, being as hardly disputed by any one at the present day, the bacillus tuberculosis of Kock.

Under the first head may be placed any and every cause which tends to lower the vitality of the body. It is only in an organism in which there is a diminished vitality that the bacillus can take root, develop and carry on the work of destruction. And it seems probable, on the theory of Dr. Carpenter, that the bacilli will not live and multiply in an organism except where there is in the fluids of the organism retained waste decomposing matter—matter which should, and in a vigorous, healthy condition would have been thrown off from the body by the excretory organs—skin, kidneys, etc.

Some very interesting investigations were made a year or so ago by Prof. Metschnikoff. It appears that he found, with the use of a powerful microscope, that in certain conditions of an animal, as a rabbit, certain little organism, such as corpuscles or cells in the blood and lymph of the animal, had the power of directly destroying, as it were devouring, certain bacilli, as those of anthrax, when these were placed along side the corpuscles; the bacilli entered the corpuscle, broke up and disappeared. In other conditions of the animal, it was found that the reverse of this took place, and the bacilli seemed to destroy the corpuscles. Now, what were the conditions of the animals in which these opposite effects took place? It is a fair inference that there was