

ing the sick room with growing plants, for it is in such cases that dry heat does the most harm. "But," says Dr. Anders, "it is in the sweeping disease, phthisis, that plants offer the best hope of success as therapeutic agents. The importance of this point demands that it should receive careful attention." Deeming it necessary that the experimental data should receive supporting evidence of an unequivocal character before the efficacy of plants in phthisis would be firmly established, Dr. Anders opened a correspondence with some prominent practitioners, besides instituting inquiries of those in the immediate range of his acquaintance. Only one of the medical gentlemen, however, whom he consulted, Dr. Hiram Corson, of Conshohocken, Pa., had anything definite to offer. He gave the history of his own family, clearly a consumption one, in which there had been many deaths from phthisis. In the case of a sister who had been pronounced a victim of tubercular consumption death was averted, and life prolonged to an old age, apparently through the influence of house plants, of which she was an enthusiastic cultivator. A number of other instances, both of phthisis and other affections, are related in which the beneficial influence of house plants seemed clear.

In order to facilitate a practical application of the data gained by experiment, Dr. Anders gives the following formula:

"Given a room twenty feet long, twelve feet wide, and ceiling twelve feet high, warmed by dry air, a dozen thrifty plants with soft, thin leaves, and a leaf surface of six square feet, each would, if well

watered, and so situated as to receive the direct rays of the sun (preferably the morning sun) for at least several hours, raise the proportion of aqueous vapour to about the health standard.

This formula may serve as a guide in the use of plants for hygienic purposes; but under conditions of actual disease it will be necessary to increase the proportion of plants according to the degree of humidity sought, or as the indications of individual cases may demand.

It should be stated that to obtain the best results, both the rooms occupied during the day and the sleeping apartments should contain plants. It was for a long time the opinion of scientific interpreters generally, that plants in sleeping apartments were unwholesome, because of their giving off carbonic acid gas at night; but it has been shown by experience that it would require twenty thrifty plants to produce an amount of the gas equivalent to that exhaled by one baby sleeper; so this is no valid objection to their admission, and not to be compared with the benefit arising from their presence."

In the *Times* of the 26th ult. Dr. Ely McClellan, U. S. A., relates another case in which house plants seem to have exerted a prophylactic influence in a member of a family of a decidedly tubercular diathesis.

The evidence thus far adduced is, of course, scarcely sufficient to establish any hygienic, and much less any therapeutic virtue for house plants, but certainly the facts reported should encourage investigation, and we give them to that end.