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PREVAILING DISEASES AND THEIR PREVENTION.

I.—CONSUMPTION.

THERE is a great deal relating to the causes of tubercular consumption that, outside of the medical profession, is greatly misunderstood, and which if it were generally known many valuable lives, which are now sacrificed through this ignorance, might be preserved for many years. Men and women are daily falling victims to this disease, because they believed themselves doomed to it. Because a parent or a grandparent, an uncle or an aunt had died of the disease, "they are tabooed by society as fore-ordained victims," refused life insurance, and live an objectless, unhappy life; and chiefly because they know little or nothing of the causes of the disease, they do little or nothing to avoid the cause. Living as if doomed, they at most make only an effort to prolong their life a little or to make it as tolerable as they can. Very many others besides these, it is true, with no supposed hereditary taint, fall unconsciously into a condition in which they become easy victims to the disease.

Not less probably than 200,000 human lives are yearly destroyed on this Continent by this disease, and chiefly or largely by reason of public ignorance relating to its causes.

I have long contended that the disease is not strictly hereditary, or only in so far as configuration and structure of body may be hereditary. From statistics collected a few years ago by the Editor of this Magazine, and from observations in practice, I am convinced that the victims of this disease are almost invariably, if not quite so, limited in respiratory capacity—they have small lungs—these organs are the weak point in their bodily structure. This defect may be easily enough overcome in early