

furnish the most important impurities in the air: such as the products of respiration and perspiration, and of lighting and warming, effluvia from excremental waste matters—sewer gases—and emanations from work in various shops and factories.

It is more than probable that the breathing of air vitiated by the products of respiration and perspiration—in dwellings, schools, shops, from want of free ventilation—gives rise to more cases of serious sickness than any other cause of disease. Next to this, probably, comes air rendered foul by emanations from decomposing, waste excremental matters near habitations.

In a lecture before the Students of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York, Dr. Willard Parker, the lecturer, used the following suggestive illustration of the manner in which the air becomes contaminated by respiration: "If, gentlemen, instead of air, you suppose this room to be filled with pure, clear water, and that, instead of air, you were exhaling twenty times a minute a pint of milk, you can see how soon the water, at first sparkling, would become hazy and finally opaque, the milk diffusing itself rapidly through the water. You will thus be able to appreciate, also, how at each fresh inspiration you would be taking in a fluid that grew momentarily more impure. Were we able to see the air as we are the water, we could at once appreciate how thoroughly we are contaminating it, and that, unless there be some vent for the air thus vitiated, and some opening large enough to admit a free supply of this valuable material, we will be momentarily poisoning ourselves as surely as if we were taking sewage matter into our stomachs."

Of the diseases caused by re-breathing breathed air the most common are those of the lungs; and

of these, consumption is the most frequent. Much evidence has been brought forward, from various sources, which goes to prove that consumption is without doubt developed by respired air.

Baudelocque, a celebrated French physician, asserted long ago, that the repeated breathing of the same atmosphere is a primary and efficient cause of scrofula, consumption being one of its most common forms, and that hereditary predisposition, uncleanness, want of proper food and clothing, cold and humid air, are by themselves non-effective. He says that invariably it will be found on examination, that a truly scrofulous disease is caused by breathing air vitiated by respiration, and that it is not always necessary that there should be a prolonged stay in such an atmosphere. Often, a few hours each day is sufficient; as sitting in a close school room, or sleeping in a confined bed room.

A medical health officer for several districts in Great Britain, J. Ward, M.D., in a paper in the Sanitary Record for July (last), writes:—On investigating the sanitary surroundings of ninety cases of diseases of the respiratory organs, other than pulmonary consumption, for the most part of an acute or sub-acute character, I observed, generally and with few exceptions, as before, undoubted defects of ventilation, as from absence of fireplace, or air-shaft in lieu thereof, in the bedroom; whereas, in some of the instances, this essential requisite of each inhabited apartment, when provided, was rendered inoperative, in consequence of being boarded, stuffed or papered over. In some instances the patient, a child, had been put to sleep with its parents—the bed, moreover, being placed in a recess or close corner of a small, over-crowded room—to breathe