

means to the general welfare of the world, which of us can say? Think of the great spirits prematurely lost to life by this accursed pestilence. Keats, Schiller, Chopin, Spinoza, Rachel, and Robert Louis Stevenson are among the victims whose names come without prompting to one's lips. But when I look back to the period of my own early manhood, and count up, within the narrow circle of my own acquaintance, the number of young men and young women, unknown to the public, who have since fallen victims to consumption, I give it as my confident opinion that a large proportion of them were people who must have played a great part in the business of life if they had lived. A physician told me the other day that this was his experience also, and in no other connection can it be more true that whom the gods love die young.

I am quite prepared to hear that what I have said thus far on this subject is main-

ly sentimental in its appeals, and before attempting, when more space is at my disposal, to deal with the economic aspect of consumption, in order to show how great is the mere financial loss that is caused by this disease both to the individual units of the people and to the State as a whole, permit me to conclude with one statement which must certainly come home to all of us.

If it be true that consumption is not an hereditary but an infectious disease; if it be true that consumption is curable; if it be true that the mortality caused by the malady chiefly centres in the age of 31; and if it be also true, as the insurance companies tell us, that the average expectation is thereby curtailed by twenty years, then it follows that the stamping out of tuberculosis alone—and true co-operation in public health matters will do it—would endow everyone of us with longer life.

THE MIRACLE OF DIGESTION

By HEREWARD CARRINGTON

When one stops to think of it, there is nothing more marvelous in the world than the process of digestion. It is taking place all the time, too—right inside of us! We eat certain foodstuffs, and they form a living human body—flesh, bones, muscle, nerves, organs. And all of these nerves, muscles and organs are capable of living, moving and acting upon food in turn.

Look, for instance, at that chicken! It walks about, picking up seeds and grains and worms and what not; and all this is transformed into eye and comb, beak and feathers of multiple shades! The fish that swims in the sea lives on its varied food, and, in his case, it is transformed into scales and fins and glassy eyes, which give one the creeps to look at! Yes, it is all very wonderful.

One fact of practical importance must be borne in mind here. It has been said that "digestion begins in the mouth and ends in the lungs." The meaning of this is as follows: After the food has passed into the stomach, and is acted upon by its appropriate digestive juices, and after it

has passed on into the intestine, and is acted upon by other juices there, it is absorbed into the blood stream, and carried to the lungs, there to be mixed with air.

The oxygen of the air combines with the particles of food, and renders them capable of being used by the system. Until this process has been gone through the food can not be used by the body. No matter how much food we eat, if it is not mixed with the oxygen of the air in this fashion the body can not use it. (Hence the great importance of fresh air after eating).

From this fact we draw the following important conclusion: That the more food we eat, the more we should breathe; and the less food we eat, the less need we breathe. If the disproportion between the two be great, and be kept for months and years, grave diseases are bound to follow in consequence.

Until recently it was thought that digestion was a comparatively simple process. The proteids—the muscle-forming foods—were, supposedly, quickly acted upon by the gastric juice of the stomach and ab-