

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Subject "Nerves and Personal Power"

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**DYING DOCTOR AS
AUTHOR.
BATTLES WITH TWO
DREAD DISEASES.
CONSUMPTIVE WRITES FOR
CONSUMPTIVES.**

The story of a doctor's brave fight against two dread diseases which attacked him is related by the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King) in the preface to "Nerves and Personal Power" (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 10s. 6d.), a book which his brother, Dr. D. Macdougall King, wrote during the last months of his life.

The Canadian Premier tells how his brother was practising his profession in Ottawa when, at the age of 35, tuberculosis attacked him and spread rapidly. It was particularly virulent in its form, and recovery seemed beyond hope, but for his family's sake he decided to go to Colorado, where, after a three years' fight with the disease he was sufficiently restored to be able to take up his practice again. For the benefit of other sufferers the doctor wrote a book entitled "The Battle with Tuberculosis and How to Win It."

"He believed," says Mr. Mackenzie King, "that once a patient could be brought to see that his rewards will upon courage and discipline, whether the battle be against a human foe or against disease as one of the common enemies of mankind, the humblest private in the ranks of human sufferers might come to recognise himself a general commanding the forces of life in the resistance to death."

SECOND ATTACK.

Two years after Dr. King had resumed his practice, he was stricken with progressive muscular atrophy. He knew that in the case of this disease one form of victory alone was possible, and "that was the triumph of spirit over unconquerable odds."

Again, to pass on to fellow-sufferers and to his profession some benefit from his own tragic experience, he determined to write another book, which, by actual calculation of months, he believed he could complete before the end came. In his book on tuberculosis he had begun with fractions of hours, working up to portions of days of sustained effort. In writing the second book ("Nerves and Personal Power"), he began in such fulness of strength as he had regained; worked first with comparative "freedom of movement; then crippled and bed-ridden; finally with complete paralysis of his entire body."

"All the while he faced knowingly not the possibility of restored life, but the certainty of approaching death.

UNABLE TO HOLD A PEN.

"Before the end came he was unable to hold a pen or to dictate a paragraph, but he had completed his self-imposed task. His last days, ever with the assistance and constant ministrations of his wife, were given over to attempts at revision of the manuscript."

The doctor's posthumously-published book abounds with a wonderful optimism, and is full of stimulating counsel to invalids.

King, Rt. Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie (MG 26 J 7 volume 17) Dr. and Mrs. Dougall Macdougall (Max) King - Clippings - Nerves and Personal Power - Reviews n.d., 1922-1943

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