

free from tubercle bacilli, and to establish open-air sanatoria for the treatment of consumption. Consumption was a terrible malady—terrible not only in its mortality, but in the fact that it attacked people at an age when they were of most use to the community, the young and the middle aged falling victims to it more readily than the old and infants. The primary cause of consumption was unquestionably the bacillus tuberculosis, but the predisposing causes were almost as important as the bacillus itself. Chief among these were improper food, bad or unhealthy occupations, damp soil, overcrowding in dwellings, and hereditary predisposition. By hereditary disposition he did not mean that the bacillus was handed on from father to son. All that was handed on was that condition of constitution which enabled the bacillus to enter and do its fell work. Although consumption was contagious it was to so little an extent that the precautions against it were comparatively easy. The actual contagious material was contained almost entirely in the expectoration which came from the lungs, and each little expectoration often contained millions of bacilli. The microbe was a non-mobile creature, but it was blown about as dust, and in that way inhaled into the lungs. To prevent the dissemination of the bacilli in this way it was necessary to destroy the sputa either by burning or by antiseptics. In the milk the microbe could be destroyed by boiling the milk. Nature also provided a remedy within the body, for there was a constituent in the blood which fought and destroyed the bacillus. In the treatment of consumption, therefore, it was necessary to do everything possible to improve the condition of the blood. The open-air treatment consisted of placing the patient in such a position that practically he or she lived in the open air. That was difficult in our changeable climate, but it could be done, and the sanatoria which were to be erected would be so arranged that the patients, while sheltered from storms, would practically live in the open

air. Nothing more quickly destroyed the tubercle bacillus than sunshine and air. It had been said that England was behind in the prevention and treatment of consumption. But there was no country in the world that had done so much for the treatment and prevention of consumption than England. In 1838 the death-rate from consumption was 3800 per million. In 1896 only 1305 per million died from consumption. Since 1861 they had reduced the death-rate from consumption in England by one-half. What had other countries done? In London in 1888 the death-rate from consumption was 1750 per million. In Paris, in those two years, the figures were 4483 and 4093 per million respectively. In Berlin in the same periods the rates were 2807 and 2'93 per million. In regard to the death-rate from consumption, England was far ahead of any other country. But they had reached a point below which they found it difficult to still further diminish the death-rate. Improved drainage, better dwellings for the poor, the Factory Acts, and other measures had contributed to the large reduction in the mortality from consumption.

CONFERENCE IN EDINBURGH ON CONSUMPTION.

OPINIONS OF MEDICAL EXPERTS.

A report has been published by the Public Health Committee of Edinburgh Town Council dealing with the conference which took place on the 9th inst., in Edinburgh City Chambers between the sub-committee of the Public Health Committee on the Prevention of Consumption, representing the Town Council, and representatives of the Medical Faculty of the University of Edinburgh, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, the Edinburgh Veterinary College, and the New Veterinary College, Edinburgh. The Chairman pointed out that the scope of the inquiry was:—(1) The preventability of the disease; (2) its curability; (3) the question of sanatoria; (4) liability to the disease, and the question of heredity; and (5) the question of the notification of the