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AIR AND HEALTH.

Air is the first essential of life and health, as everybody knows, and the Creator has provided an absolutely unlimited supply for the use of His creatures. Water, which may be regarded as the next essential, is very abundant, but less so than air: while food is much less plentifully supplied. It may be because of its very abundance that man so commonly overlooks or disregards the great value of air; and in the higher civilization which he creates, and which carries him onward and upward, he neglects frequently to seek, in the first place, localities in which it is naturally most pure, and most favorable to health and life; or by surrounding himself with elegant but almost impervious walls, he shuts out the pure air and breathes over and over again the small measure he has so closely imprisoned; or he makes foul that near his dwelling, by waste excremental matters, chiefly from his own body, or by the products or refuse of the occupations by which he lives.

That most eminent Sanitarian Dr. Parkes says: "It might be inferred from the physiological evidence of the paramount importance of proper aeration of the blood, that the breathing of air, rendered impure from any cause, is hurtful, and that the highest degree of health is only possible when to the other conditions is added that of a proper supply of pure air. Experience

strengthens this inference. Statistical inquiries on mortality prove beyond a doubt that of the causes of death which are usually in action, impurity of the air is the most important. Individual observations confirm this. No one who has paid any attention to the condition of health, and the recovery from disease of those persons who fall under his observation, can doubt that impurity of the air marvellously affects the first, and influences and sometimes even regulates the second.

The subject of air in its relations to health and life is a very wide one, and constitutes indeed a very large proportion of the entire subject of hygiene. It involves the consideration of climatology, locality, drainage, and the situation and general construction of dwellings and all buildings intended for habitations, of ventilation and warming, the removal or disposal of all waste or excremental matters—sewage, etc., and disinfection. For example, dampness of soil, or want of drainage, renders the air above damp, misty and cold, which condition of it is believed to predispose the system to rheumatism, neuralgia and catarrh; the diseases arising from badly located and badly constructed habitations, are for the most part the diseases of impure air, from too great humidity of the air, from damp walls or from want of ventilation; while all collections of excremental or waste matters soon contaminate and poison the air in the vicinity.

The habitations and works of man