

CHAPTER II.

VENTILATION.

THE first requisite in the sick room is pure air. Emanations from the body and the breath of the patient are constantly tainting it, and it must be removed or else the soiled air is inhaled over and over again, poisoning both sufferer and nurse. Fresh air can be admitted only through the windows. Two points must be observed. Supply heat to keep the room at a proper temperature, and protect the sick person from draughts. Those in bed rarely take cold—never, if properly protected.

Lower the window at the top a few inches. If the upper sash is not made to open, remove the cleats underneath it and move them down the required distance.

Where the upper and lower sash lap, there is a space which admits a constant current of fresh air. If the bed is near the window, place a screen between them. If the weather is too cold to permit of the window being kept open, cover the patient's head and all, with an extra blanket, and open the window three or four times a day, keeping on the extra covering until the room is warm again.

If a room is cold, it is no sign the air is fresh. Cold air may have been breathed over and over until it is as impure as warm air. The only safety lies in constantly changing the air. A thermometer should hang in every sick room and the temperature be kept at 68°, except in fever, and then at 65°. An open fire is the best heat producer, because it helps to carry the bad air up the chimney and acts as a ventilator as well. In summer, place a lighted lamp in the fire-place, or if there is a stove-pipe hole in the chimney, take the tin stopper out of it. When the room is heated by a stove, a coil of pipes, or a register, keep a saucepan of boiling water on it to give off steam to moisten the air.

In order to keep the air pure, no vessel that has been used must be allowed to remain in the room, a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. A little disinfectant solution should be kept standing in them. Covers should be provided, and the moment the patient has finished using one, it should be carried away and emptied, well scalded with boiling water and rinsed in the disinfectants. Vessels of the proper shape for use in bed can be obtained at a small expense, and no sick person should be allowed to get out of bed for any purpose whatever. It exhausts the strength unnecessarily and is a fruitful source of colds. The India rubber bed