



Selected Articles.

THE BEDSTEAD AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN
DOMESTIC HYGIENE AND COMFORT.

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THERE is no article in ordinary life-long use with which we are so closely related, with which we spend so much of our time, which we so often occupy with such affectionate readiness and leave with such poignant regret as our bedstead. Yet how little care is given, certainly but little was given in the past, to the principles of its construction and use, so that personally I feel that between the primitive Scotch box-bed filled with a good elastic truss of well-dried heather and one of Whitfield's Ideal Bedsteads, introduced by that firm with my own name attached as a hospital bedstead, there is nothing to choose. Both of these have excellently well carried out the first necessities of health and comfort, and all between had better be given up.

This is the theme I propose to discuss in the following paper, combining in my narrative of the "bedstead as a factor in sanitation" some advice which I regard as wholesome and much needed in the general management and arrangement of our bedrooms. That this advice will be successful I have little doubt from the widespread revolution caused by a little paper which I wrote some twenty years ago, on "Bedroom Ventilation," out of which have grown the whole army of automatic ventilating and heating arrangements combined with and made into stoves of all kinds, gas and coal-burning. Had I patented the suggestions in that paper, I had now been more than a millionaire, but I do not regret that I gave my plans free to the public as I now give my notions on bedroom management.

It is always useful and full of interest to trace the evolution of any object, whether in the animal frame or in the ordinary use of humanity—and the growth of the bedroom and the bedstead have their interest like other things. From the time of the cave-dwellers through the various stages of savage and nomad life, the dwelling space was used for all purposes in common, and it is only after the wandering hunter has achieved fixity of tenure and residence that he discovers the advisability of shutting off part of his house as a sleeping place. This becomes easier as he learns how to use the more permanent kinds of building materials, timber,