

In all civilised countries leagues have been organised to combat it, and many governments are seriously studying the question. Up to the present the struggle against it has been confined chiefly to preventing contagion. With this object in view, efforts have been made to teach the public what precautions are necessary to avoid it. Efforts have been made to convince consumptives that they are a source of danger to their fellow men, and to induce them to cease spreading the disease in all directions by their expectoration, and encourage them to use receptacles for it, which can be disinfected or destroyed. These measures will certainly produce good results and tend to a certain extent to prevent its increase. There is a league in Montreal working along these lines, and it deserves to be encouraged and helped, it has already done good service, and is destined to do still better in the future.

But it is not enough to put the healthy on their guard or to request consumptives to cease being a danger. It is necessary to cure these unfortunate, whose patience in the long run may become exhausted in their efforts to protect a public which will do nothing to help them. After all a consumptive is not benefited any by spitting in a pocket-spittoon rather than on the street, on church floors or elsewhere. In sheer despair at his fatal malady he might even find a grim consolation in dragging other victims down with him.

From a social point of view, consumptives may be divided into two classes: the rich who are not so much in question here, and the poor who deserve all our attention and care.

By "poor", I do not mean the indigent only, but the working class, those who have to live on small salaries, who are so much exposed to contagion, and who, when they are attacked, are incapable of obtaining a suitable, because always expensive, treatment. These are the ones the city must protect. Up to the present, nothing has been done for them; they are not even admitted to the hospitals as they are a source of contagion to other patients. They are left to themselves, and incapable of working or caring for themselves. They stay at home with their families whom they soon infect, and take, when they can afford it, a few cheap and utterly useless drugs. After a while another member of the family becomes infected, for once tuberculosis enters a poor man's house, it very rapidly spreads.

During small-pox epidemics, the city distributes vaccine, for scarlet fever, and diphtheria it provides a gratuitous service in its hospitals, but against consumption which is a hundred times more to be feared, it does nothing. It is time such an anomaly should cease. In truth, up to the present, there was not much to be done (for tuberculosis considered as a public evil), nothing except endeavours to assuage it, and console the sufferers. The public was in reality disarmed against the onslaughts of the white Plague.