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SOME SANITARY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE CONSTRUCTION, HEALTH AND VENTILATION OF HOUSES*

By Peter H. Bryce, M.A., M.D., L.R.C.P.S. Editor,
Chief Medical Officer Dept. Interior.

Last year I had the pleasure of addressing the Club on the subject of climate in relation to health, and have thought it may be of interest and perhaps profit to speak to-night on the subject of House Atmospheres or Artificial Climates.

The value of fresh air and sunlight and the evils of foul air were then set forth, while I pointed out that these evils consisted always in the excess of carbonic acid, of lessened oxygen and deficient humidity in the house atmosphere in winter. It will be plain that the location of the house, as regards the nature of the soil, the free exposure to sunlight and air currents must be of much importance as regards health; but as it is not always possible to select the best location in the streets of a city, it is some comfort to remember that so long as the house can have the wind blow freely around it, there can be at least an assurance that ample fresh air can be had if we choose to allow it to enter the house. Let us then deal briefly with the nature of the soil under the house. Ordinarily in this country, no difficulty will arise with regard to the presence of decaying organic matter under the house unless in some old filled up ravine in a city. The upper organic mold is taken off when the cellar is excavated, and the chief difficulty experienced is to get rid of ground water when the house is on a clay sub-soil. Of course, in the city, an ordinary residence need not be more than 3 or 4 feet below the ground level, but with roof water and ground water running down the walls, provision must be made for its rapid removal to prevent a damp cellar, promoting organic decay as seen in moulds on the walls, on fruits,

*Address delivered before the Club, Jan. 7th, 1908.