

WHO WILL IT BE ?

As we read almost daily, in this age of study and onward progress, of some new discovery, be it a new bacillus, or how to change the color of a prima donna's eyes, the question comes to us,—will a genuine *cure* for that "seal of death," phthisis, ever be discovered. True, by change of climate, nourishment properly administered, and careful treatment, the pain and distress of the patient may be relieved; and in a few instances (if the disease be not hereditary) cured. But as the physician diagnoses the case, and in all honesty tells the name of the dread disease to the friends of the patient, in at least five cases out of ten the answer comes, "Yes, consumption is hereditary in our family." In the name of humanity let all physicians try, as much as it in their power lies, to advise and warn against marriage, all over whom this dread sword of Damocles hangs, ready to smite at the first chill blast. There came recently under the writer's notice a case in which an educated married lady, whose constitution was undermined by hereditary consumption, had already borne a child, and was soon again to become a mother. As she put it, "just to prolong her own life, she really did not want the children particularly." Such a crime against innocent childhood! Surely such cases are rare: a physician is not a sentimentalist, he must be made of sterner clay: but he is a man, and such a statement as the one quoted is enough to make even the stoutest heart quail, and make physicians feel it to be a duty to advise against motherhood and fatherhood, all who are prone to this awful disease. Often medical men say, "The profession is over-crowded." No, it is not; for we still stand where our fathers stood and ask, How shall we *cure* phthisis? We reverently bow the knee of homage and give to the Jenner, the Simpson and the Koch, of yesterday, the thanks and admiration of a world for what they did to alleviate the suffering of humanity. But we still look anxiously for the man who will give to the world a *cure* for this dread malady, and add to the ranks of our noble profession a hero.

"I want a hero, an uncommon want,
When every year and month sends forth a new one."

W. A. Y.