

Health and Physical Training.

PUBLIC HEALTH SESSION.

HOW THE ANTI-TUBERCULOSIS CRUSADE CAN BENEFIT THE GENERAL HEALTH OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.

By HER EXCELLENCY THE COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.

The subject of which I have made choice appeals to all, for in practically all countries a movement has arisen to combat a plague which has carried on its havoc practically unimpeded for centuries because of the widespread belief that it must be regarded as a visitation of God against which there was no remedy.

It took twenty years and more since the discovery of the tubercle bacillus by Koch, for the world to realize that the discovery meant that the dreaded disease was not, after all, hereditary and unpreventable, but that it was a communicable affection and one that is wholly preventable and capable of being stamped out.

This is too joyful a message to be taken in all at once, and at first when its import is recognized we have another danger to face in an unreasoning panic and fear of consumptives, as if they were stricken with the plague or smallpox, and we have to overcome this with the further knowledge that a consumptive who has been instructed how to take certain simple precautions is no danger to anyone, and that it is only in the final and advanced stages of the disease that isolation is the only safe course.

When once this is understood, the instructed community will proceed to take certain measures which, applied in due relation one to another, must succeed in extirpating the foe at no distant date.

What are these measures?

I need but mention them to an audience such as this:—

1. A system of notification.
2. The hospital for advanced cases comes first to provide for the proper care of the sufferers and for the protection of the community.
3. The sanatorium for the early cases and for the education of those disposed to the disease, so that they need be no danger to others, and that they may spread this knowledge on their return home.