

under the direction of their leader they were able to repulse every attack of the enemy. But as the days passed their food became scarce, their bodily strength diminished, and their spirits fell low. Still, they held on and hoped on, for the Governor told them that a great army of their allies was coming to relieve them. But the relief army never came, and after long waiting and watching from the house-top, the heart of the leader himself began to fail. At last, when the power of resistance from within was at its lowest, Nature herself, with that callous indifference to human suffering which she often displays, stepped in to break down the last of the city's defences. The waters of the White Nile washed away the more formidable of the fortifications, and then the whooping hordes of the Mahdi swept over Khartoum like a swarm of hungry locusts, killing first the great soul by whose strength the people had lived, and then destroying everything.

Something of this kind, so far as I can see, takes place in the human body as often as the germ of consumption lays hold of it, and, therefore, I assume it will be safe to say to everyone:

"If you allow your defences to be weakened by any excess whatever, whether by overwork or worry, or sorrow, or even the gaieties of society itself, it will only require a breath of impure air, a mouthful of germ-laden dust, a spoonful of corrupt butter, or a glass of apparently wholesome milk, to enable the worst enemy of the human race to enter your body and lay it low."

But already I hear the natural answer that it is not always within a man's power to resist the influences which go to make his lungs vulnerable, and that the inevitable struggle of life itself is often responsible for the conditions which expose him to consumption. That is only too pitifully true, and I count it among the cruelest aspects of this merciless disease that by its very nature it always hits a man hardest at the moment when he is least able to bear a blow.

The statistics of consumption show that the years of early manhood and early womanhood (about 31) are the period especially marked out for death. Can any fact be more distressing, both in the physical and moral suffering it indicates, and in

the economic loss it denotes? Think of it. At 31 the majority of young women have become mothers, and their removal is laden with tragic loss to the children they leave behind. At the same age the majority of young men have become husbands and fathers, the bread-winners of families, and their deaths are disasters that must be multiplied by the number of lives that have depended upon their lives. And then, beyond the utterly incalculable human loss there is the scarcely calculable national one, for the State has lost prematurely vast numbers of producers of labour, taxpayers and ratepayers, all of them economic assets, and responsible factors in the welfare of their country.

And this brings me to a very grave question. What are the conclusions to which the non-scientific mind must come after examination of the lamentable facts which scientific inquirers have put before him? The first of them appears to be this—that consumption is a disease produced mainly by the conditions of civilized life, that consumption is, in fact, the disease of civilization. Apparently the savage races are entirely exempt from it. The Esquimaux and the Indian and, until lately, the negro races were immune. I can say from my own observation that on the Soudan desert, where the variations of temperature seemed to require that I should dose myself with quinine almost every day, the half-civilized Coudanese, living in their crowded and noisome tents, showed no traces of tuberculosis. But civilization brings with it the necessity for cities, and cities seem to increase their area by force rather than by desire. Hence narrow streets and lofty buildings, which, shutting out the sun, which is the deadliest enemy of the consumptive germ, and increasing the dust, which is one of its strongest allies, become responsible agents in the propagation of the disease. Then the necessities of industrial as well as commercial life become agents no less active, by huddling people together in factories and workshops, by surrounding them with the material which most easily holds contagion, and by employing them in the kinds of work which most speedily lower the bodily strength and reduce the power to resist infection. The larger the city, too, the greater the difficulty of escaping from it, in order to obtain that recuperation which the sailor,