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WANT OF WINTER VENTILATION AND THE HIGH MARCH DEATH-RATE.

I N this temperate climate the dwelling houses are all closed up about this season of the year, for the winter, and in most cases with double windows. Many thousands of people, indeed a large majority of the people, are closed up in the dwellings, or in shops or offices, and from this until April or May breathe but little of the pure, fresh, invigorating outer air, but breathe daily, over and over again, the same, often overheated, atmosphere of the closed rooms. The consequence is that in March and the early part of April—just when the beautiful, cheery spring has already broken up the winter frosts and almost everything in nature is full of vigorous life—we have in Canada, every year, as shown by statistics year after year, the highest death-rate of the year, in all ages and classes, with the most sickness, especially lung diseases, "colds," &c. There is no doubt whatever about the relation of cause and effect in this matter. The debilitating effect of breathing and re-breathing the same foul air of closed rooms for a few months renders the human system an easy prey to disease of various sorts, and more especially to disease of the respiratory organs which are so directly affected by the foul over-warmed air of the rooms. The wonder is, that so many can tolerate the foul air and that so many survive. This can only be explained by the well known power of the human organism to suit itself in a large measure to circumstances and environment. Night and day the foul air breathing goes on. While some get a respite for an hour or two a day in the open air, many, as of the women and children, but rarely go out at all. And as the British Medical Journal (of Sept. 27 '90) puts it, whilst the impor-

tance of keeping pure the air of living-rooms during the day is recognized by a large majority of the educated classes at the present time, it is to be feared that there are still very many who by preference sleep at night in closely shut bedrooms. "The conviction that night air is unwholesome and should be rigidly excluded, once so prevalent, probably now only survives amongst the unlettered and ignorant. It doubtless had its origin in times when undrained swamps and malaria-breeding mists, arising at nightfall, were characteristic of large tracts of rural England, and is thus a survival of a belief founded more or less on the results of observation and experience: but at the present day it cannot be too strongly asserted that . . . night air is as wholesome as that of the day, and may even be said to be purer, as it is more free from dust and spores raised from the ground by winds, human traffic, and evaporation." The occupation of close bedrooms the Journal continues, putting it very mildly, creates an atmosphere often sufficiently vitiated to cause weariness and drowsiness in the early morning, instead of that feeling of renewed life and vigour that should be experienced, and much of the headache and neuralgia so constantly met with may be reasonably credited to the same cause. If anyone will take the trouble to return to his shut up bedroom after spending ten minutes in the fresh morning air outside, he will be surprised to find how close and disagreeable is the atmosphere in which he has spent the last eight or nine hours.

What is the remedy? Ventilate—provide means for letting out or drawing off the once breathed, foul air and letting in the