

### A PROFESSIONAL FALLACY.

It is high time that some one spoke out in no uncertain tone against the present manner in which physicians habitually treat their consumptive patients. We never tire of writing upon this disease, for it sweeps away about a fifth of the human family. Yet, amid the holocaust it makes, the unafflicted in the main look unconcernedly on. The State takes little or no cognizance of it. The profession endeavour, in the majority of cases, to repair the patient with drugs. All this is a grievous mistake.

When consumption once fixes upon a man, it melts him down like heat does a block of ice. Once under headway, the physician as about as much control over it as a fire company over an enormous fire. Let us remember this, the time to deal with consumption is while it is yet a great way off. Another point, as long as the conditions obtain which favoured the on-come of the disease, medical skill is futile. Recently the writer took a trip to some of the dispensaries where consumptive diseases are treated. This was succinctly what he saw. Examinations, cough mixtures, cod liver oil, orders to return in ten days.

Not a word about the soil the patient lived on, the size of the room slept in, or the amount of overcrowding to which the patients were subjected.

Those familiar with the subject know very well that dwellers on clay furnish twice as many consumptives as do those on sand. London and its suburbs are largely built on clay, and, travel where one may, this fact is disregarded by builders generally. Were the houses built clear of the ground, as the sojourners in Africa build their houses or huts—far above the ground, so that the wind could blow under them—there is no doubt but that the death rate from consumption would be greatly lessened at once.

Too long has it been taught that means of averting consumption existed only in New Mexico, Colorado, or the Alpine forests, and are possible only to the rich.

Clothing constitutes an important point for consideration. It has frequently been pointed out in HEALTH how the wearing of flannel lessened the death from pneumonia one-half. The consumptively inclined should wear flannel the year round, and particularly at night.

Let the phthisical look out for dyspepsia. When the fates are going to inflict this disease, the warning is indigestion. The best preventive of dyspepsia, perhaps, is never to eat quite to the full, and absolute regularity in all the habits of life.

The consumptive, then, should be warmly clad, well fed, live in large, properly aired, light rooms, which should be in a dry house, if possible, on sand. Dust-laden air is a pregnant cause of phthisis. Is it too much to hope that ere long every house may, with an inexpensive electric battery, clear its atmosphere of smoke in time of fog? Nay, more, is it too much to hope that the State which has passed a Poison Act may not some day enact laws regulating the building of houses on clay, and the size of the rooms, which are such fatal factors?

A word about cod liver oil. It is a good food—the best for consumptives—but should not be taken alone, lest it disturb the stomach. The best form of it is undoubtedly the Kepler Solution, which should not be overlooked. But bear in mind that not one thing only, but many things are to be considered. A few of the more important we have thus endeavoured to outline briefly.

### ON RELIEVING PAIN.

SOME two or three years ago a new drug called antipyrin was introduced to lower the temperature in fever. Nothing more was thought of it; but it has recently been discovered that this same drug possesses in no mean degree the power of stopping pain. It will check the pain of sick-headache, facial neuralgia, shingles, lumbago, sciatica, angina pectoris, biliary and renal colic. In asthmatic complaints it has proved of value, and also in the shortness of breath occurring in bronchitis it has brought relief. The well-known therapist, Germain See, writes: "Medication by antipyrin constitutes for all organs a real means of calming their exalted sensibility; antipyrin is the remedy for sufferers and for pain." It is customary to give it hypodermically in five to eight-grain doses, but it is often efficient when given by the mouth in double this dose. The "Tabloids" are by far the most eligible preparation to give, they are soluble, free from adulteration, and easily taken with a draught of water. In fever, very much larger doses are required.

Chloride of ammonium is a drug of great service in chronic neuralgic troubles, and especially where these are associated, as is frequently the case, with disturbances of the liver. It is hardly realized by the profession how really valuable a drug we have in chloride of ammonium. Three ten-grain "Tabloids" of it swallowed with a little water will often control neuralgic pain when all else is as useless as water. It is also more valuable for the throat, but here the "Tabloid" should contain three grains of the drug.

In these days when dwellers in town are all more or less subject to gastric troubles, often of a most painful nature, it is worth remembering that for these there is nothing so useful as nux vomica. Twenty drops of the tincture in a wineglass of water, taken as the pain comes on, will check, and five-drop doses three times daily will cure.

The most wonderful discovery of our time in therapeutics is Cocaine. By its use any part may be rendered anæsthetic, and operations performed painlessly. A "Tabloid" inserted into the cavity of an aching tooth will check the pain. The voice "Tabloids" so exquisite for the throat and lungs contain a trace of cocaine.

Who has not heard of breast-pang—a disease which seems to clutch the heart as if in an iron vice? Yet Trinitrine dispels the agonizing pain as if by some magic touch.

What shall we do in cancer of the breast? Here a plaster of phytolacca will bring surcease from pain. In anæmia the cure is arsenic, iron, and cod liver oil.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)