

rule, be placed upon an air or water bed as soon as possible. If such an appliance cannot be secured, an air pillow to protect the lower part of the back may be perhaps obtainable; if that cannot be gained, it is possible to improvise a makeshift by means of pads of cotton wool or lint. Then the back should be washed or sponged with some preparation containing alcohol or benzoin, or other hardening material, once or twice a day, and then dusted with some such preparations as "Sanitary Rose" or Vinolia powder, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the injurious effects of pressure. When, however, the skin has once gone—and this will happen sometimes, despite all precautions and every care—poultices of charcoal are most useful, in order to remove the slough as speedily as possible. When the latter is cleared away, the surface must be kept clean and the ointments or other applications which may be ordered for it, must be carefully applied.

A very practical point in the Nursing of all Chest cases is to raise the patient in bed with as little exertion on his part as possible. In the majority of cases, this is attempted by propping the patient up with pillows, and some Nurses are special adepts at the art of so arranging the pillows on an inclined plane as to give considerable comfort and relief to their patients. But even with the best and most skilful adjustment, pillows, as a rule, are insufficient to maintain the position of a patient who is so weak that he requires complete support. He will either not be raised in bed sufficiently high to enable him to breathe with perfect freedom, or, if so raised, he will be continually slipping down towards the foot of the bed. An old-fashioned but most useful arrangement consists of placing an ordinary bedroom chair, or if necessary two chairs side by side, with their backs on the bed and their feet against the top of the bed, or the wall behind it. The space between the seat of the chair and its back makes a solid support to pillows properly sloped; or two chairs may be placed sideways, and their legs tied firmly together. Then the patient, propped up by pillows against the seats, can lean his arms upon the backs of the chairs with added comfort. The length of the chairs pushes him downwards towards the end of the bed, so that his feet can obtain support from the bars at the foot, and so he is prevented from slipping down, while at the same time he is completely supported in the raised position. There are many elaborate appliances designed to effect the same end, in the shape of wooden props and bed racks; but when, as so frequently happens, these cannot be obtained, the Nurse will find the chair device most valuable.

The most fatal disease of the lungs is that which is known as Phthisis, or Consumption, and which is, in many instances, as we have already seen, a sequel to a severe attack of Pneumonia. The patient suffers and dies, practically from two causes: firstly, from deficient oxidation of his blood, in consequence of the damage to the lung tissue preventing the organ from performing its work; and, secondly, from the gradual failure of strength in consequence of the exhausting discharges to which he is subject. The breaking down of the lung tissue into abscess cavities, and the consequent prolonged discharge from these, of larger or smaller quantities of "matter," or *Pus*, represent a constant loss to the patient which it is always most difficult adequately to replace. The frequent cough which is induced by the need of clearing the air tubes of the accumulating discharge tends to produce the same effect, and finally the profuse perspirations, especially during the hours of the night, from which the patient suffers, and the gradual failure of appetite and power of digestion which naturally follows upon the general enfeeblement of the health, all assist in the downward course of the disease.

Now that the causes and sequence of Consumption are thoroughly understood, the disease has lost much of the terror with which it was formerly regarded, and it has ceased to be regarded as necessarily hopeless. If taken in its early stages and actively treated, especially with sufficient care of the patient's general nutrition, in a large number of cases a cure, or, at any rate, an arrest of the disease may be expected. But when the patient belongs to a family predisposed to Consumption, and when the disease occurs in what is known as the Tubercular form, or when it has progressed into the stage of ulceration and destruction of the lung tissue, the prospects of recovery are very small.

The first principle in Nursing a case of Consumption is to improve the air which the patient breathes; it must be pure, and it should be of an even temperature, whether this be of the extreme cold, which some medical men recommend, or of the modified warmth which others consider advisable. In the early stages of the disease, and whenever the expectoration is purulent, much good results from the inhalation of various antiseptic vapours, and, if there be ulceration of the larynx as well, the use of sprays composed of such fluids are of the greatest comfort and assistance to the patient, by cleansing and disinfecting the diseased surface. It is, therefore, of importance that Nurses should practically learn the methods of administration of such remedies, and, concerning this point, something has already been said in a previous lecture.

(To be continued.)

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