

wealth, of the flowers displayed. Doubtless this refinement in nursing, to which his student days have accustomed him, has had its influence upon the latter day physician, and, in arranging his own consulting room, he has tried, and has most admirably succeeded, to keep out of sight everything which might be suggestive of unpleasant realities to his West End patients, whose susceptibilities are presumably keener, and more easily affected, than those of the coarser fibred patients who for the most part fill our hospitals.

The consequence is, that nowadays in entering a fashionable consulting-room, the patient is tempted to think that he has made a mistake, and has inadvertently found his way into the boudoir of the wife of his medical adviser. For instance, we call to mind one consulting room, in which the furniture is of white and gold, while beautiful blue and white Nankin china covers the walls. Still, another has the crest of the consultant emblazoned on all the chairs. But a third fashionable West-end-physician of our acquaintance has furnished his consulting room with genuine Chippendale, fills his cabinets with Lowestoft china, and his walls with valuable coloured prints. This one is often a bower of flowers, the general effect of colour is charming, while it must be an eminently comfortable and restful place to spend one's days in; and, more than this, its dainty cleanliness makes it an ideal room, and a most pleasant contrast to the consulting room of the last generation, when diagrams of skeletons and other gruesome prints probably adorned the walls, an old painting of a dentist standing over a patient, and holding at the end of a pair of forceps a newly-drawn tooth, hung over the mantelpiece, while books with the most unpleasant of titles lined the dusty bookshelves, and one looked about in vain for a chair, which would not soil one's dress, upon which to sit down. We confess to preferring the latter day consulting room. If we *must* take pills, we prefer them sugar-coated, and it is nowadays almost pleasant to be a little out of sorts, just enough to necessitate a visit to the courteous, suave, polished man of the world, and sympathetic physician, to whom we confide the story of our ailments, real or imaginary, in a room of the type which we have described above.

#### FOREIGN FUNERALS.

It is interesting to notice the extreme simplicity of the funeral arrangements which prevail on the East Coast of Africa, as well as in other tropical countries, in contradistinction to our inartistic, expensive, and often unsanitary methods of disposing of our dead. For example, an Englishman is buried at home, the words "earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes" are said, and with truly English incomprehension we fail to realize anything grotesque about the use of them. They should

convey, surely, if they are not entirely meaningless, that the Church, with its usual strong common sense, anticipates that the body which it is consigning to the grave shall be enclosed in such material that the sanitary processes of nature shall be carried out. But what is the usual rule? More often than not we know that we have done everything in our power to *prevent* earth returning to earth. The coffin is made of the hardest and most imperishable wood we can obtain, and besides this the body is placed in a leaden shell, which effectually prevents the operation of the beneficent laws of nature. In Africa, it is otherwise—amongst the native populations that is to say; for English prejudice frequently introduces English coffins where its own dead are concerned, and most gloomy affairs they are, perhaps double the width they should be, covered with dark blue native cloth, and liberally studded with brass nails. The most puritan of people could not wish for anything more funereal, or more depressing. The native fashion, however, which has been adopted by the Universities Mission for its dead, is simpler, more hygienic, and to our mind infinitely preferable. It must be remembered, that, in tropical countries, burials must of necessity quickly follow on death; they are never later than the early morning of the following day, and in the hot season frequently take place the same day. For this reason also, the simple native fashion has much to commend it. The body is placed on a board, which may be covered with white calico, and both are then stitched up in a native mat. This, again, is entirely covered with snowy white calico, and, in the case of a Christian, a red cross of turkey twill, the entire length of the body, is added. The arrangement is one which is eminently practical, and nothing could be less lugubrious; indeed, a funeral in the tropics, with none of the trappings of woe in which English undertakers delight, the European part of the population, both men and women, dressed in white, the natives, the men in white, and the women in coloured dresses with scarlet handkerchiefs on their heads, the procession to the grave being led perhaps by a native choir, in scarlet cassocks and white surplices, the churchyard surrounded by palm trees, and the whole scene in brilliant sunshine, contrasts most favourably with a funeral at home, with the ostentatious display of carriages, the extravagant and gloomy indulgence in crape, and the general vulgarity of a function, at which the ideas of the average undertaker reign supreme as to matters of taste, and by which we elect to express our belief that "the parting is behind us, and the meeting lies before." The graves used by the Arabs appear to us also to be eminently hygienic. They are dug to the depth of six feet, and then space enough to contain the body is hollowed out, the side is sealed up, and the body lies under six feet of solid earth. Could anything be simpler—or better?

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