

can also be benefited by fairly windless inland localities, like Pau, Arcachon, Gardone Riviera, the South and South-West Coasts of England. (8) For chronic cases with much emphysema high places are not suitable; they require warm places, similar to those mentioned under (7). (9) Tuberculosis can often be cured in all climates, though certain climates possess advantages according to constitution and individual complications. (10) The blind confidence in climate alone without judicious management is dangerous. (11) Careful treatment in sanatoria is necessary to the majority of tubercular patients, and is most promising in the beginning of the disease. When an intelligent patient has, by residence in a sanatorium, learnt how to manage himself, he may continue the treatment out of sanatoria, and then the choice of a climate ought to be well considered. (12) Whenever it is possible to cure a case near home, this is preferable to the treatment abroad in a different climate, since it often is more or less difficult for persons treated in foreign climates to maintain their health on return to the home climate.

## THE COMBAT WITH CONSUMPTION.

### A Contrast.

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As I look back to the commencement of a long professional career, no picture which presents itself to my mind is so melancholy as that of the complete impotence of the medical man standing before a case of consumption. But now this has happily passed, and a pleasanter outlook is before us. Probably the impression was intensified by seeing two of my family fall victims to this disease, whilst a third was completely cured by discarding all the old methods and adopting a course of treatment which was quite in accordance with the advanced principles of the present day. This made me also sceptical as to the value of drugs compared with the greater importance of following the natural laws of health.

My first master, Dr. Addison, in no way weakened this feeling, when I saw him give little medicine and at the same time heard him speak of the striking effect on such cases as typhus or scarlatina when brought out of squalid hovels into the airy ward of a large hospital. Also, in a graphic manner, he went on to tell us that when, as Physician to the Public Dispensary, he found a patient whom he visited with fever in some

small, close attic, his first remedy was to break one of the window-panes to allow the ingress of fresh air.

As regards consumption, which was carrying off the fairest and most promising youth of the land, nothing more was done for the victims than prescribing tonics and cough mixtures, with the occasional episode of ordering a red medicine whenever spitting of blood occurred. If a change of air was admissible, the patients might be sent to a warmer climate (as poor Keats was sent to Rome), although it often shortened their days. A superstition existed, which still largely prevails, that cold is the source of all ills and warmth is the cure. Hastings acquired its fame from being a town closely shut in between two cliffs, but it was soon found that Torquay or Bournemouth were to be preferred. The value of mountain air had not then entered into the conception of either doctor or patient. I am not at all dissatisfied with myself when I remember that from the very beginning of my practice, on being consulted about a young man in early consumption, I ordered him to give up his occupation at any cost, seeing that the special surroundings in which he had been living had been the cause of the development of the disease; and so he was to adopt an exactly opposite course of life, and to spend the whole of his day in the open air. If he preferred a thorough change, he might take a long sea voyage or spend a few months on the high land of the Transvaal. There was no mistaking the result when patients with marked pulmonary disease returned home in two years' time cured.

As all this occurred long before the discovery of Koch's bacillus, I considered that the result was due to pure air, good light, and sunshine, as was the opinion of those who had in former times extolled the value of these three so-called elements of Nature. Celsus recommended voyages in the Mediterranean for consumptives, and sunshine obtained in his *solaria* for some other complaints. The same methods were adopted by Hippocrates, and carried out to perfection in his sanatorium at Epidaurus, as so well described by Dr. Caton.<sup>1</sup> We cannot, too, but remember how the ancient races of mankind worshipped the sun as the giver of all that was good. They saw Phœbus rising in his power at the beginning of the year, and the whole living world being new created. It may well be thought that the worship of Baal was of the same nature, and that our own forefathers, the Druids, had the sun for their god, although it is a poor imitation of their adoration when travellers meet at Stonehenge on Midsummer Day and watch for the sun's rising over the great altar-stone. It is a much more wonderful thought, after reading the grand and tragic story of Elijah putting to the sword the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, that we should,

<sup>1</sup> "The Temples and Ritual of Asklapios at Epidaurus and Athens": Two Lectures delivered at the Royal Institution by Richard Caton, M.D., F.R.C.P.

after the expiration of thousands of years, have erected a sanatorium for the cure of tuberculosis on this beautiful promontory on the Mediterranean; and that our patients now are asking for the blessings of Heaven, as did their forefathers the devotees of old.

To pass to more modern times, we have had our own Mead writing his work, "*De Imperio solis incorpore humano*." Our scientists tell us how the direct and oblique rays of the sun on our earth have originated the characters of the animal and vegetable world and produced the various races of men; they tell us also that previous to this epoch the sun was storing up its force in those carboniferous strata of the earth which we now use as our principal source of power in all the factories of the world; and they also inform us that if the sun were suddenly extinguished there would not be a particle of living matter, whether in the animal or vegetable world, at the expiration of six days.

The time had therefore arrived, and especially after the discovery of Koch that a specific bacillus or parasite lay at the bottom of the disease, that special treatment should be adopted. There were, however, men of experience and discernment who had already preached the value of the open-air treatment, and none more earnestly than Dr. Henry MacCormac, of Belfast. He wrote a treatise on the value of fresh air in consumption about half a century ago, and spent his life in enforcing his doctrines. What he says and repeats many times in his book is this:

"Here I must again declare that without the respiration day and night of a perfectly pure atmosphere we need not hope for success. A fresh, untainted, unprebreathed atmosphere, at all times and places, is the one condition of treatment which nothing must interfere with or set aside."

"The simple rule is to let the chamber atmosphere prove pure and untainted as is the open air itself, in which, indeed, the patient should otherwise spend as much time—in fact, pause as much—as his strength, the weather, the season, and his means will permit. He must, in short, live in the open atmosphere."

"The phthisical sufferer should spend as much time in the open air, in all seasons, as his strength and the weather will permit."

"Contrary to the general prepossession, I affirm that the air is as good, nay, better, by night than by day. Night air, as such, never injured anyone."

Having had no practical experience of the value of consumptive sanatoria, since these have all arisen after my retirement from the profession, I cannot speak of them personally; but always having believed that fresh air is the first or only remedy for consumption, I am quite prepared to accept all that is said in favour of their curative action, and all that is hoped for in the future.