

THE CAUSE OF CONSUMPTION.

Dr. Rollin R. Gregg, of Buffalo, New York, is confident that he has solved the mystery of consumption. Regular physicians will be apt to say that he has mistaken a condition for a cause; nevertheless we are inclined to think that good may come from the emphasis he lays upon that condition, since it seems calculated to work a beneficial change in the customary treatment of the disease.

Dr. Gregg argues that as the loss of albumen from the blood through the mucous membrane of the kidneys in Bright's disease, rapidly and fairly depletes the system, much more must the more rapid loss of albumen through the mucous membranes of the lungs be serious in all its stages and speedily fatal in its results, if proper measures are not taken to stop such waste before fatal conditions have arisen. The expectorations of consumptives, and all their other catarrhal or mucous discharges from whatever organ, are mostly albumen and a direct loss of so much of this constituent from the blood. It is this wastage which causes the great emaciation characteristic of consumption, and not, he thinks, any failure of the system to assimilate food. And this loss of albumen does mischief not only in robbing the muscles of their proper nutrition, but also in throwing the constituents of the blood into disproportion. The loss of one ounce of albumen destroys nearly a pound of blood for all purposes of healthy nutrition, and leaves in the blood a relative excess of 5½ ounces of water, 7 ounces of blood corpuscles, 9 grains of fatty matter, 15 grains of fibrin, and 41 grains of salts. These elements in excess act the same as foreign matters in the blood, and disturb the entire economy of the system. Night sweats and dropsy are the result of the excess of water. The blood corpuscles left in excess are decolorized by the too watery blood, and are deposited in the capillaries or smallest blood vessels, where they shrivel and become tuberculous corpuscles, so called; the fatty matters in excess cause the fatty livers and other fatty degenerations attending the disease; the excess of fibrin causes the adhesion of the pleura to the inner surface of the ribs, the heart, or to each other, often among the most serious of the complications of consumption; and, finally, the excess of salts causes calculi, enlargement of the joints, ossifications, and similar morbid developments.

In such cases of consumption as are characterized in their earlier stages by an absence of profuse expectoration, Dr. Gregg would attribute the beginning of the disease to a loss of albumen through some other organ or organs, the shriveled blood corpuscles lodging in the lungs, starting tubercles there and setting up a dry cough, with the resultant irritation of the mucous membrane and outpouring of mucus. From this point of view, there is but one source of hope to the consumptive in any stage of the disease, and that is through the healing of the mucous membranes and the stopping of the waste of albumen. By this means, in the earlier stages of the disease—with all who have not inherited the most feeble constitutions—there is much to hope from judicious treatment.

Whatever may be the primary cause of consumption, it is pretty evident that the mucous discharge which attends the disease and finds relief in expectoration is to be repressed rather than encouraged; and to do this must radically change the usual treatment of the disease, at least in its early stages.—*Scientific American*.

WEARING GARTERS.—If garters are worn, it is important to know how to apply them with the least risk of harm. At the bend of the knee the superficial veins of the leg unite and go deeply into the under part of the thigh, beneath the ham-string tendons. Thus a ligature below the knee obstructs all the superficial veins; but if the contrivance is above, the ham-string tendons keep the pressure off the veins which return the legs. Unfortunately, most people, in ignorance of the above facts, apply the garter below the knee.

PAINTING WALLS—USEFUL HINTS.

Of course, says the *American Builder*, everybody knows, or ought to know, that walls and ceilings are finished with plaster. But everybody may not be aware that plaster has the property of absorbing moisture. This, perhaps, will not take place in rooms where a fire is kept steadily; but in rooms left, as is often the case, for weeks without a fire, the walls will take up a considerable quantity of damp. The effect will be injurious to the health of the inmates. There are few persons who have not suffered from a mysterious cold, caught they know not how, though, perhaps, damp in the plaster had something to do with it.

The extent to which damp is absorbed in a plastered wall may be discovered by noticing what so often takes place in rooms where the walls are painted and have become chilled by a season of cold weather. As soon as the temperature becomes warmer the atmosphere is condensed on the walls, and at times in such quantities as to run off in streams. Now, had it not been for the paint, the greater portion of this moisture would have been absorbed by the plastered walls. And as a consequence the quality of the plaster would have been impaired and the room made unwholesome. In view of this effect in plastered walls, it becomes a question well worth considering, whether, in finishing a house, the walls should be papered or painted. If paint is decided on, it is highly necessary that the painting be properly done and good materials employed.

TO REMOVE GREASE AND PAINT SPOTS.—The *Manufacturer and Builder* gives the following useful hints under the above head: The treatment varies according to the material; white linen can stand alkaline lyes, while cotton, especially when colored, does not stand it so well, and wool or silk not at all. To take grease spots out of linen, cotton or wool, first try soap-suds; if these do not take them out perfectly, you may use a potash or soda lye for linens; for wool it is best to use ammonia, or strong soap-suds mixed with ammonia. If the grease spots are produced by the drippings of a stearine candle, which often happens, use strong alcohol; this is also good for silk; but ordinary grease cannot be taken out with alcohol; it is necessary to use either ether or benzine, and in any case to rub carefully with a clean rag, so as to remove the dissolved grease. Do not (as we have often noticed some persons do) merely pour some benzine on the grease spot and let it dry up; if you do not rub it out the whole operation is of no use. Silk requires great care, as also does paper, and it requires some experience to become an expert. One method, especially adapted for removing grease spots from light-colored silks and valuable papers, is to cover the spot with pulverized magnesia, chalk, fuller's earth, or pipe clay; lay a paper over it and then press with a hot iron; the heat will liquefy the grease and the powder will very readily absorb it. The yolk of an egg and ox bile are also recommended for silk, and soap also when used with care. In regard to varnishes, they are usually soluble either in turpentine or strong alcohol of 95°, and more easily removed than some oil paints. The most obstinate of the latter is zinc white, which, in combination with linseed oil, forms a hard white crust, which, as it resists most the above-mentioned solvents, is very difficult to dissolve out when it has penetrated into the texture, and especially when the material is woollen cloth.

A DUTCHMAN once met an Irishman on a lonely highway. As they met, each smiled, thinking he knew the other. Pat on seeing his mistake, remarked, with a look of disappointment, "Faith, an' I thought it was you, an' you thought it was me, and its nayther of us." "Yaw, dat is dru. I am anuder man, and you is not yourself, and we are some other bodies."

PRESERVING TIMBER BY THE VANDALIA PROCESS A FAILURE.

Whatever may be thought of the merits of infusing creosote, sometimes called carbolic acid, into the fiber of timber for its preservation, we know that either the material or the method adopted to infuse it into the pores of the wood used in the construction of the U. S. S. *Vandalia*, was a total failure. In some cases the strength was so completely destroyed that planks broke into two lengths while being transported on men's shoulders from the tank to the vessel.

The effect of the infusion of this material into the fiber of green timber, on its strength, seems never to have been thought of, much less tested. So far as observation could determine, the strength was impaired in the ratio of about the amount of material infused. It was found by the workmen, who left their dinner baskets standing in contact with the timber so treated on the *Vandalia*, from roll-call to dinner time, that the food had acquired a greenish hue, and could not be eaten. The most sensible method of seasoning timber, so as to make it durable, is to extract the poisonous juices drawn up into the fiber by capillary attraction. If this is properly done the timber will be stronger than when in its green state. There are several methods by which this desirable end may be secured, at reasonable cost, and the timber made secure against rot for the third of a century, at least.—*American Ship*.

SWEEPING CARPETS.—Anabel C. Andrews is recommended to sweep her carpet with a wet broom, in order to prevent the dust rising. To prepare the broom for sweeping dip it in clean water, let it become perfectly saturated, then jar the water off so thoroughly that it will not drip. Sweep a breadth, or part of a breadth, then give the broom another bath—always in clean water, and proceed. She will be surprised at the quantity of dust that has found lodgment in the broom—which changes, in a twinkling, the pail of clear water into mud-puddle, and which otherwise would be sailing about in an untrammelled freedom quite beautiful to see, if only it wasn't dust, ultimately to settle just where it was swept from—not neglecting to settle a portion of itself upon the cherished bits of the wildwood that have been carefully and artistically arranged "over the pictures in the sitting room." The most delicately tinted carpet can be treated in the manner described without injury, always bearing in mind that no *dripping* broom must come near it.

DEATH FROM TOOTHACHE.—A Miss Stevens of Walton, Delaware county, died on May 1st of toothache. Although this is a rare occurrence, this is an undisputed case of death resulting from an excruciating toothache. The victim, who was a young American woman employed in a family in Walton, had suffered some days with a terrible toothache, which accompanied an ulcerated jaw. An attempt was made to extract the troublesome members, but her teeth were broken off and her face was too sore to permit their removal by the painful process of cutting away the gums. The girl suffered entire nervous prostration from the extreme pain, and gradually sank under it until death ended her sufferings. An army surgeon, who attended her, pronounced her symptoms the same as those following the amputation of a limb.—*Middletown, N. Y., Press*.

A SMALL boy had seen his mother's fur muff that had been badly eaten by moths. Shortly afterward he was in his father's stable watching the process of currying his pet pony. The animal was shedding its coat, and consequently large bunches of hair came out with each application of the comb. With tears in his eyes the little fellow rushed into the house and exclaimed, "Oh, mamma! mamma! the moths have got into my pony, and I'm afraid he's ruined!"