

DISEASES, UNKNOWN

It sometimes happens that a person is ailing, yet does not know the nature of his disease. Perhaps he is able to keep about and do some work, yet there is a general weakened condition of the system. He is easily fatigued, does not rest well nights, but feels tired or exhausted on waking, has no appetite, feels better about ten or eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and continues to feel so until two or three in the afternoon, then begins to be weary. The question is, What ails him? The doctor answers, Nervous debility. But what is that? What are his conditions? They are dyspeptic, with torpid liver, constipated or relaxed bowels, weak lungs, and, in fact, nearly every internal organ is more or less diseased. The organic nervous system is not sustained properly because the blood is poor, and this is caused by indigestion and a failure to breathe enough to properly vivify the blood. Such persons wish to know what to do to regain health.

Treatment.—He should carefully examine every habit of life and ascertain wherein he is transgressing the laws of health, and correct every false habit. Perhaps the sleeping room is not properly ventilated, or it may be the sunlight is

shut out of the dwelling. The water used may be hard or impure, or perhaps he does not bathe sufficiently often to keep the pores of the skin open. It may be that the food is too highly seasoned, or is not properly cooked, or is eaten in too large quantities or too frequently, or too late in the evening; perhaps tea or coffee is used with the food, or too much flesh may be eaten, or fats, oils, butter, rich gravy, or preserves, and condiments. Or the food may be imperfectly masticated, or there may have been exposure to wet and cold. The clothing may not be properly adjusted; perhaps the limbs and feet are insufficiently clothed, while the body may be too warmly clad, or the clothing may be too tight. The habits may be sedentary, and he may not exercise sufficiently to keep up a good circulation, or the exercise may not be of the right kind, or he may be over worked. Perhaps rest and sleep are not taken regularly, or the bed is old and filthy, or is not aired daily, or perhaps a feather bed is used, or perhaps the night vessel is left standing in the room, or left uncovered to send off its effluvia. Perhaps the faeces and urine are retained until their poisons are reabsorbed by the system, or, in the case of females, until by the accumulation the uterus is displaced. The bodily positions may be wrong, so that by the constant bending or crooking of the body some of the internal organs may be so pressed out of position that they cannot properly

perform their functions. Or it may be that there is decaying vegetation near the residence, and that the air is tainted with its noxious gases. Perhaps a heap of stable or barn yard litter, or a pigpen or privy vault, or a pond of stagnant water throws off these gases, or the cellar may be unventilated or contain decaying vegetables, fruit, or meat.

Perhaps there is some mental difficulty that causes the ill health. It may be care and anxiety, or worry, or a lack of cheerfulness, or moroseness, or despondency, or the mind may be unoccupied the patient having no object in life. It may be a sense of wrong doing, or a knowledge of duties undone, that weighs upon the mind and preys upon the health.

These points should all be considered, for every one of the foregoing habits and conditions engenders disease, and prevents a restoration to health. Therefore let every chronic invalid study well the requirements of health as given in Part I., and then try to put its teachings in practice. He should also take constitutional treatment.