

What an Eastern Physician and Surgeon Thinks of Its Health-Restoring Elements.

Dr. J. V. Goff, who was formerly surgeon for the Southern Pacific R. R. company, now practicing in this city, was asked for his views on the subject of tuberculosis and the beneficial effects of this climate, and has handed in the following:

Tuberculosis is probably the most common of all diseases, for it is estimated that 18 per cent. of all cases of death occurs from this cause. According to an eminent authority on this disease, it arises more frequently by inheritance than in any other way; but, although, the bacillus may undoubtedly be transmitted from parent to offspring it is probable that only a predisposition to the disease is the more frequent result of hereditary. The disease rarely arises then in such predisposed persons when the bacillus gains an entrance to the body through the respiratory organs, whether inhaled with the air as dust arising from dried spits and other excretions, from the human body, or taken into the alimentary canal with food and penetrating the intestinal mucous membrane. It may also be introduced through wounds of the skin chiefly of a trifling character, such as bruises or scratches. It is undoubtedly an infectious disease and may be contracted by persons of healthy anatomy by continuous exposure to its germ.

The spits of tuberculous patients should be carefully collected and destroyed. Patients should be urged not to spit about carelessly but always to use a spit-cup. A careless person affected with tuberculosis is an extremely dangerous person to be mingling with mankind, and more especially young children and delicate women. The only safeguard is from the spits and it should be boiled or thrown into the fire.

A second important prophylactic measure relates to the inspection of dairies and slaughter houses. The possibility of the transmission of tuberculosis by infected milk has been fully demonstrated, and in the interest of the public health the state should take measures to stamp out tuberculous cattle. Systematic inspection of dairies should be made, and full power granted to confiscate and kill suspected animals. The butchers should be under skilled veterinary control, and the carcasses of animals with advanced tuberculosis confiscated.

A mother with pulmonary tuberculosis should not nurse her child; an infant born of tuberculous parents, or of a family in which consumption prevails, should be brought up with the greatest care and guarded most particularly against respiratory affections of all kinds.

The child should be clad in flannel and live in the open air as much as possible, avoiding close rooms. Special attention should be paid to diet and the needs of feeding. In the choice of an occupation preference should be given to an out-of-door life.

Families with a marked predisposition to tuberculosis should, if possible, reside in an equable climate.

It would be best for a young person belonging to such a family to remove to a climate like that of Southern Arizona, where it is well adapted for these conditions, and should go before trouble begins.

The following may be considered favorable circumstances in the prognosis of pulmonary tuberculosis. A good family history, previous good health, a strong digestion and last, but not least, a suitable environment in which climate is of first importance.

Investigators with the microscope have repeatedly demonstrated the fact that tubercle bacilli have remained alive in a dark, damp room for a period of nine months, and when examined were apparently as strong as when they were first introduced there; but when they were removed and exposed to the light and sunshine they perished in a short time, varying with the amount of heat and sunshine. Thus it will be readily observed that there is little danger in the spits or excretions from a tuberculous patient which is cast into the street and subjected to the action of the burning rays of a warm sun as compared with the other parts of the world, where they are thrown into a street, the ground is damp and the sun obscured by the clouds for several months in the year, these bacilli seem to grow and thrive, the warm sun comes out in the spring, the earth becomes dry, the wind raises the dust and the air becomes filled with these germs. Flies are great carriers of this affection; they go from room to room into the streets and everywhere. They take up the spits and carry it on their legs and bodies to the lips and nose of any unfortunate upon whom they may alight.

The question of environment is of the first importance in the treatment of tuberculosis and all chronic diseases. This is illustrated by experiments performed upon rabbits which were inoculated with tuberculosis. Those confined in a dark, damp place quickly succumbed, while others, allowed to run wild, either recovered or only showed slight lesions. It is the same in human tuberculosis. A patient confined to the house is in a position analogous to the rabbit confined to the hutch in the cellar, whereas the patient living in the fresh air and warm sunshine has chances comparable to those of the rabbit running wild.

In pulmonary tuberculosis, neither the cough, the night sweats, nor the hæmoptical contraindicate this rule. Only when the weather is cold, blistering or rainy should the patient remain in the house.

The requirements of a suitable climate are a pure, warm and dry atmosphere, an equable temperature, not

subject to rapid variations, and a maximum amount of sunshine.

Other considerations which should influence the choice of a locality, are good accommodations and good food.

A very eminent authority on the subject of tuberculosis writes as follows:

"Very much is said at the present time concerning the choice of locality in the different stages of pulmonary consumption, but when the disease is limited to the apex of the lung in a person of fairly good personal and family history, the chances are that he may fight a winning battle if he is placed in a warm, dry climate with only moderate elevation."

The climate of Tucson has all these and more. It is possible to sleep out of doors 270 nights in the year and spend 365 days in perpetual sunshine. It is a progressive and prosperous city, in which a man may not only find health, but a means of livelihood and live in comfort.