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ALCOHOL AND INFLUENZA.

Mrs M. A. Allen, Superintendent of the Medical Department of the World's W.C.T.U., writes that the cry that ardent spirits is necessary to "cure" the influenza or accompanying pneumonia does not come from physicians, but from the laity who in times of illness such as this are always ready to give medical advice unasked.

When la grippe swept the country many years ago the medical profession gave spirits a full trial, and the outcome was that many physicians unqualifiedly condemned alcoholic liquors for the disease, saying that deaths were more frequent where given than where it was not used. Thus Dr. Nathan S. Davis, Dean of Northwestern University, Chicago, told the American Medical Association his treatment of pneumonia in Mercy Hospital during 30 years. While in other hospitals using whisky in pneumonia all had death rates ranging from 28 to 38 per cent., Mercy Hospital, with no alcohol had only a 12 per cent. death rate. Dr. Alexander Lambert, of New York, said that the death rate in his pneumonia division of Bellevue Hospital was 10 per cent. higher when alcoholic liquor was used.

Dr. Henry Koplik has also experimented with and without whisky in pneumonia in Bellevue Hospital, and has abandoned the use of that agent because it did not save life. (See Journal of the American Medical Association for November 17, 1917.)

Last year the writer of this article sent out a questionnaire to thousands of physicians asking their opinion of alcoholic liquors in pneumonia. Nearly all the answers said that alcoholic liquors are dangerous in pneumonia because alcohol lowers resistance to disease and weakens the heart—already weakened by the disease.

Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson, M.D., when connected with the London Temperance Hospital, said that in pneumonia ammonia was the only medicine used. He gave a three or

five grain tablet of bicarbonate of ammonia dissolved in a cup of coffee with milk and sugar.

In Cornell Medical School, New York City, Professor Meara teaches his students not to advise whisky in pneumonia. In a letter to me, Professor Meara said: "Alcohol has been much used in pneumonia, I believe, without justification. I believe that it is never a true stimulant, but a depressant."

It has been asserted that alcohol, as an antiseptic, was useful in epidemics, but careful physicians have noted that its use is followed by greater depression and many new and complex symptoms. Patients who survive take longer to recover.

If alcoholic liquor were a "cure" for pneumonia why is it that it is not a preventive? It is a well attested fact that heavy drinkers are usually fatal cases in this disease.

Those who find themselves with colds that may prove to be influenza may find quick relief by taking a hot bath, going to bed, and drinking quantities of hot lemonade. The London "Lancet" advised the free use of orange juice when the epidemic of la grippe was on in 1899, as the orange juice hindered the tendency to pneumonia.

The American Medical Association at its annual meetings in New York in June, 1917, declared that the use of alcohol in therapeutics "as a tonic, or a stimulant, or as a food, has no scientific basis," and "the use of alcohol as a therapeutic agent should be discouraged."

As Sir Victor Horsley, the great London surgeon, said: "No one who has closely investigated the action of alcohol in recent years prescribes alcohol. . . . Every one will feel relief when it is abandoned."

Dr. DeWett G. Wilcox, Boston, Mass., in his presidential address before the American Institute of Homoeopathy in 1914, said:—"Alcohol has no place in medicine. . . . Instead of being a preventative of any disease it is the best possible persuader of all

diseases because it lowers the opsonic index and the bodily resistance. That it hastens a fatal termination of all pulmonary diseases is likewise proven."

Lieut.-Col. C. H. Connor, U.S.A., Medical Corps, Assistant Director General of Department Military Relief, says "The First Aid Division of the American Red Cross does not approve of the use of alcohol as a stimulant, a tonic, or a therapeutic agent."

"EGO RUS IBO."

I weary of the houses without end,
I sicken of the crass commercial way.
Ah! fieldward, fieldward, let my foot-
steps bend,
That I may breathe once more the liv-
ing day,
And listen to the passing of the
breeze
Touching to sound the silver poplar
trees.

Thrice balm to me the fragrant stub-
ble's breath,
Thrice music is the creaking of the
wain.
The years roll back, the myriad waves
of death
Ebb into silence of the distant main.
Far in the heart of Suffolk re-arise
The grove, the orchard, and the starry
skies.

The sixty-winter'd elm across the way
The well-thatched barns of timber old
and stout,
Stackyard and neathouse, and the
August day
O'er distant water-meadows ebbing out
Whereover steals the snow-white mist
and cold,
Yet takes not on the rising tilthland
hold.

And far o'erhead athwart the apple-
boughs,
Above the tower'd elms, the kindling
lights
Of God's supernal palace bid me rouse
My homeward longing whither, God in-
vites,
And can scan far off, from that deep
well of shade,
The many mansions for His Children
made.

—H. E. G. Rope.