

**PHYSIOLOGICAL  
REMARKS UPON  
THE CAUSES  
OF CONSUMPTION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649671151

Physiological Remarks upon the Causes of Consumption by Valentine Duke

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Cover @ 2017

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REMARKS UPON THE CAUSES OF CONSUMPTION.

PHYSIOLOGICAL REMARKS

UPON THE

CAUSES OF CONSUMPTION.

By VALENTINE DUKE, M.D.,

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DUBLIN:  
FANNIN AND COMPANY, GRAFTON STREET.  
LONDON: LONGMAN, GREEN, AND CO.

1867.

157. m. 67.

E. D. WEEB AND SON, PRINTERS, DUBLIN.

## P R E F A C E .

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THE following remarks upon the ordinary causes of consumption, and the means best calculated to prevent its occurrence, have been written under strong conviction that a great deal can be effected by judicious, well-directed, medical management, to lessen the ravages of this scourge of the human race, and to improve the health of many of those who are by nature predisposed to its inroads.

My aim is not to introduce any novel or special mode of treatment for the disease when established, but rather to point out the value of early, persevering attention to certain conditions and circumstances, too frequently over-looked or neglected, and to dwell upon the advantages to be derived from the adoption of precautionary measures, generally easy of application, and within reach of all.



Some years since, when in charge of an institution established for the treatment of affections of the respiratory organs specially, considerable opportunity was afforded me of studying the nature of consumption, in both its incipient and advanced stages. The great want of information which I then noticed amongst the various classes who applied for advice respecting the preservation of health, the sad mistakes continually made through ignorance of the laws given for its regulation, and constant painful observation of the insidious manner in which tubercular disease of the chest crept upon and secured its victims, suggested the queries: Are we doing all that can and ought to be done by science to point out the best means of guarding against the first approaches of this fatal disease? Might not many of these hopeless and distressing cases have been warded off by timely and appropriate professional interference? Subsequent reflection originated an idea, which, dwelt upon and amplified, resulted in the writing of these remarks: but circumstances interfering with their publication, it has

been delayed until now, when, whilst extended observation, confirming former conclusions, might warrant some additional notices upon the subject, increasing occupation has encroached upon the time at my disposal for making them.

Upon the subject of ventilation, much has been written, and attention has been a good deal directed to its importance since the essays of Doctor MacCormac and Miss Nightingale have appeared ; but a great deal remains still to be accomplished in this respect—as those can best testify whose avocations bring them continually into the apartments of the invalid. By some who do not view this matter in a strong light, I may be regarded as endeavouring to give it undue prominence, and as over-estimating its physiological advantages. I beg to assure them, not dogmatically but with well-founded confidence resulting from experience, that such is not the fact, for I am thoroughly convinced that no condition of ordinary occurrence is so capable of exercising a powerful and continuous influence upon man's physical welfare—an influence healthy and beneficial in

proportion as the practice is understood and effectually carried out—unhealthy and injurious in the ratio of its being misunderstood and in part or entirely neglected.

Through the medium of the medical profession have the chief advances been ever made in hygienic science. To its members the public look for example and guidance in all things relating thereto. Hence I appeal with confidence to my brethren for a deeper consideration of the important question of the prophylactic treatment of the consumptive, founding my hope of a favourable reception for these observations, and a more general recommendation of the practices advocated, upon their appreciation of the vital importance of the subjects treated of, rather than upon what may have been advanced in their behalf by the writer.