



must be applied in the earliest stages of development to be effective.

"Take consumption: I am pleased to say that we have found only three or four cases of advanced consumption in all the 700 applicants. The open-air life and strict attention to diet in building up tissues is about all a physician can prescribe for a consumptive, and it is quite probable that this much has already been said to most of the victims of tuberculosis in our district. They may be already in the mountains or the country somewhere under the advice of a physician, and this may explain why we saw less than five cases out of 700 examined. But there is hope even for a consumptive. At least, he can prolong his life and perform useful service if only he will start in time, take particularly good care of himself, and endeavor to build up tissues faster than the mischief-making germ can destroy them."

One sees almost daily some person who has played a winning game against frightful odds with the dreaded tuberculosis, and the writer of this article has personal acquaintance with several men who are apparently strong and healthy specimens, but who in early life were infected with the consumption germ. One began as a telegraph operator for a railroad, and one day was found by the General Manager lying across the keyboard, weak from the effects of a hemorrhage. The young man was a faithful, earnest worker, and the General Manager knew that he was making a living for himself and mother. The rail-

road company sent him to the mountains, paying expenses and telling him to remain there until he was sound enough to begin work again. That man is today the highest official in the passenger department of one of the greatest railroad systems in the country.

"There is little cause for the discarded men to go through life brooding over their being found unfit for military service," Dr. Stuart continued. "The majority can be made sound. What they owe their country, families, and themselves is to begin at once to build up their health. These men have received through Uncle Sam the services of physicians, surgeons, and specialists, and each has had an examination that otherwise would have cost not less than \$10. The truth is that few of them ever would have asked for an examination, because not many ever had experienced a warning symptom of trouble, and those who had were too unversed in medical science to get the warning.

"It is encouraging to believe that the many thousands of men who have been told there is something the matter with them will appreciate the immediate importance of getting themselves back to a standard of manhood. I believe that this inquiry will result in one of the most beneficial activities ever seen in the United States—a general movement for the improvement of health."

Many other prominent physicians believe that the Federal Government will increase its interest in the prevention of disease.



FIRST DRILL OF DRAFTED MEN.

© International Film Service.

These Ambitious New Yorkers, Having Passed the Conscription Tests, Have Seized the Opportunity of Advance Training on Governors Island in Order to Get Warrants of Non-Commissioned Officers Before Draft Camps Open.

Thousands Rejected in the Draft Learn from Doctors How to Get Well

"Even If Peace Should Come Tomorrow, Mustering of a Vast Army Would Not Have Been in Vain"

By Remsen Crawford.

THAT the ill-winds of war have blown somebody good—somebody besides the food speculators and the makers of ammunition—is beginning to appear as the doctors make their reports on the thousands of men they found physically unfit for military service. Coming to know their infirmities, after a rigid examination by specialists, is of itself a great benefit to these men; a disguised blessing almost sufficient to offset the humiliation of being classed incompetent to perform the highest duty of citizenship.

Many were ignorant of their ailments. They were sick and didn't know it. Seemingly capacitated for the ordinary routine of domestic labor, they little dreamed that their "life expectancy" was being reduced ten, twenty, or thirty years by the invisible invasion of some menacing disease.

There are considerably more than two million homes in the United States now harboring an invalid, according to statistics compiled by an eminent medical authority, and he gives it as his opinion that in the great majority of these cases the disease can be traced to ignorance. This ignorance, he does not deny, has been largely due to the wide gap the medical profession has dug between the doctor and the people. Lest he be charged with "self-exploitation" or of invading the field of the charlatan, the average doctor has refrained from communicating medical knowledge to the public. Until comparatively recent years the United States had no Federal Department of Health, and doctors generally express the opinion that the great percentage of exemptions for failure to enter the country's service makes glaring exposure of the Government's neglect of the public health.

Physicians who have had to do with the examinations in the selective draft say that the great majority of the men they found unfit for service were surprised to learn of their infirmities. Many of them asked the doctors of the Exemption Boards what to do. They were told, of course, to consult a doctor at once and undergo treatment. So hundreds of thousands of young men throughout the United States are being turned by the draft to the task of building back their health. It is predicted that the good results of this awakening will be shown in a short time; and more pointedly upon coming generations of Americans. Therefore it can be said that even if peace should come tomorrow the mus-

tering of a vast army would not have been in vain.

"The care of the public health is the first duty of a statesman," said Lord Beaconsfield, and Herbert Spencer wrote: "To be a good animal is the first requisite to success in life, and to be a nation of good animals is the first condition to national prosperity." A fitting climax to these maxims, or nut-shell philosophy, is found in the words of Descartes: "If it be at all possible to ennoble mankind, it will be through medicine."

"Untold benefits will be derived from the medical examinations for our new army, and these benefits will be felt in every nook and corner of the country," is the way Dr. George R. Stuart of 152 West Ninety-fourth Street put it last week. Dr. Stuart is one of the visiting surgeons to St. Vincent's Hospital, and has been serving on Exemption Board 130, with headquarters in the rooms of

the Patriotic League, Broadway and 105th Street.

"Our percentage of physically unfit ran around the 30 notch, which means that a great many men were found in our particular section of the city who did not come up to the standard of physical manhood required by the Government to enter the army. It is quite true that the standard first given to the doctors to be applied to the registration for service was a very high one, and many a man was kept out of the army who had but technical shortcomings. A great many failed to pass because they weighed more than was called standard to their height. It can be readily seen that this could have been remedied by careful dieting. On the other hand, there were some who did not weigh as much as their height would demand to be standard. It may be that some of these were suffering from temporary failure of the nutritive forces to perform their proper functions.

Probably a good tonic might have built them up in a short time.

"Such failures to pass into the new army are what I mean when I say 'technical.' Besides these, many were barred by the War Department's requirements who could quickly be cured—yes, permanently cured, and made just as sound as ever they were before their diseases took hold on them. If these men, however, permit their afflictions to run along without medical attention they will always be unfit for military service, and will, in time, become weaklings and die much ahead of their appointed time.

"I am referring particularly to two or three ailments which I noticed came bobbing up with amazing frequency as our daily examinations proceeded—hernia, varicose veins, and 'flat-foot,' meaning by this last term a fallen arch of the foot. Now, the form of hernia that I have noticed so prevalent in our territory can be cured by a comparatively slight operation. Varicose veins, such as appeared so frequently, can be remedied easily by an operation and permanently cured.

"The fallen arch trouble is prevalent to an amazing extent in this city. The cause may be traced to improper care of the feet. If the whole weight of the body falls too heavily upon the ball of the foot and upon the heel it stands to reason that the bones forming the arch of the instep will soon or late give way under the strain and the person will come to grief. Nothing is more annoying than foot trouble, for the foot has to carry the weight of the entire body. It can readily be seen that the Government wouldn't want men in the service who had anything the matter with their feet. A soldier who couldn't be quick and lasting in his leg work would never be of much service in a battle or on long marches. And yet it can be seen that this need not be such an ailment as would cause a discarded man to brood over it. He could get treatment from a chiropodist which would give him comfort, or if he would require a surgical operation to reset any of the bones this might easily be obtained.

"Take the more serious cases—cancer, for instance. In the first place, I want to say that there were only slight traces of cancer in all the 700 registrations with which we had to deal. It was most gratifying to me. But suppose one of these young men were to display a cancer in its incipient stages. It could easily be cut out, if the operation be in time effecting a permanent cure. That, of course, is the only known cure for cancer, and it



Mayor Mitchel and Colonel Reginald Foster Inspecting the Twelfth Regiment, Which Has Been Drilling in Central Park After Eliminating All Weakly Members Through Rigid Physical Examinations.

Photo © Underwood & Underwood.