

M E M O S.

Tuberculosis is a house disease. It thrives and flourishes best in dark and unventilated rooms to which no sunlight penetrates.

Advantages of Town Planning :-

Improvement of general health

Reduction of Death Rate.

Provision of cheaper and healthier homes.

The setting apart of a number of suitably located open spaces.

The prevention of slums with all their accompanying evils, etc.

BUILDINGS:

The advantages of having the entire space at the rear of the buildings are, through ventilation and the maximum amount of sunlight for the rooms and corridors, the toilets and bathrooms can be placed on the outer wall, while the fact that the "courts" instead of being individual are co-operatively aggregated, opens up great possibilities with regard to play-grounds and gardens, thereby converting the entire rear into a pleasant outlook.

REASONS FOR FEDERAL OR PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS:

Uniformity in Building By-Laws.

Prevention of slums

Prevention of the erection of cabins or what in future will

Prevention of ill lighted and badly ventilated buildings,
not only in the City itself but in the surrounding Districts, which
will eventually either become cities themselves or be absorbed into
larger communities.

Vancouver, B. C.,

Feb. 3rd, 1913.

Dr. Underhill,

Medical Health Officer.

Sir:-

Agreeably to your request I beg to submit the following observations on the "Apartment block from a sanitary point of view."

That form of human habitation, known as the apartment block, tenement, or "flats," while not new, has, of recent years become a somewhat prominent feature of modern city life. This class of building, while no doubt convenient in many respects, and growing up to meet certain social necessities, has shewn itself to possess many defects which have engaged the serious attention of sanitarians and thoughtful people generally, resulting in the universal condemnation, from a sanitary point of view of these structures in their worst form, while even the better class of "flats" are open to serious objections in that they violate many of the conditions necessary to human health and well-being.

The most common defect of these buildings is that they are generally so constructed that there is a deficiency, in many of the apartments, of natural sunlight. In some cases this deficiency amounts to almost total darkness. No room which is not fully supplied with sunlight can be healthy or sanitary. This applies with greater force to bedrooms and particularly to rooms in which plumbing is installed, such as water-closets, bathrooms, etc. Sunshine is the best antiseptic and is as necessary to a healthy, happy life as food and drink.

Another common defect is imperfect ventilation. Sanitary conditions can only obtain when there is complete continuous change of air thus removing the air vitiated by products of respiration and combustion and by the various domestic activities.

It is noticeable in most of the apartments now in the City, that the water-closets and bathrooms are so situated and constructed that the provision of light and air can only be, at best, miserably inadequate.

Other structural defects are met with, such as the "ventilation" of toilet rooms into shafts which serve pantries or bedrooms.

The apartment system facilitates and accentuates many of the most disturbing features of modern life.

There is, for instance, the destruction of home life - the mainstay of society.

Home, in the true sense of the word, cannot exist where people are herded together in the promiscuity of a tenement house, where the preparation of meals is done in a hasty and slipshod manner on gas-ranges which are an abomination in themselves; where the washing is sent out to be done, possibly, very indifferently and under insanitary conditions; and where the rearing of children is either not allowed or takes place under conditions anything but conducive to those physical and moral qualities so desirable in future citizens of our country.

The tenement system intensifies that congestion of population or overcrowding which favors the propagation and transmission of disease; deteriorates the stamina and physique of the people; and results in a distinct lowering of the moral tone and a tendency to feverish pleasures owing to the lack of opportunities for healthgiving outdoor recreation.

This process bids fair to culminate in the propagation of a race of cave-dwellers inferior in many ways to their prototypes of prehistoric ages without even the excuse of stern necessity.

The natural conclusion from these considerations would be in favor of some such system as that known as the "Garden City" which has been advocated by many, and of which some successful examples exist in England where substantial and sanitary homes are built on ample lots with abundant provision of open spaces. All

necessitates unlimited capital and cheap and rapid means of transit.

This, however, can only exist for us as a beautiful but exceedingly remote ideal.

The course of action immediately possible appears to me as follows :-

First, a campaign of education looking to the formation of public opinion along sanitary lines.

Second, the adoption and enforcement of such regulations from time to time as will progressively bring about the desired improvements, such as :- the prohibition of the so-called "light wells" for light and ventilation; the placing of all toilet and bathrooms on external walls and the gradual increase in the size of open courts until these shall approximate in dimensions to the quadrangle.

Third, the co-ordination of the civic departments interested so as to ensure complete co-operation and a common course of action.

I must confess, however, to considerable pessimism as to the likelihood of any considerable improvement in conditions in the immediate future.

These places are, of course, built as investments, and the high values of suitable sites together with the high price of labor and material render the greatest economy in space and construction imperative, otherwise the rents charged would be prohibitive in these days of high cost of living.

An increased cost of living necessitates increased salaries and this again discourages the investment of capital and the establishment of new industries, which, we are told, are necessary for the building up of the Greater Vancouver that is to be.

In brief, the whole matter opens up another phase of the age-long conflict of humanitarian and altruistic effort as against vested interests, property rights and the doctrine of "laissez-faire."

(Signed) J. G. Morgan.