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LESSONS IN LONGEVITY.

JOHN B. HAMILTON, M.D.

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LESSONS IN LONGEVITY:

PARAGRAPHS ON HOME HYGIENE,

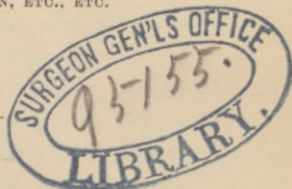
AND THE

ART OF PROLONGING LIFE.

BY

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PREFACE.

SANITARIANS seem agreed that at this time the great desideratum is that the people shall be informed on sanitary topics, and there is therefore no lack of works on that subject; but they are mainly written in so scientific and technical a style that they have failed to reach the great audience for whom they were intended.

In the pages which follow it was sought to inculcate the belief that longevity was not only possible, but in great degree in one's own control, subject to natural law; and this thought runs through every paragraph.

Some of the paragraphs included in this little book were originally written for THE REPUBLIC, of this city; and as I have since seen some of them doing duty in other papers, it occurred to me that perhaps they would not be unacceptable to the public (with such revision as the changes of time have made necessary) in book form.

JOHN B. HAMILTON.

9 B STREET NORTHWEST,
CAPITOL SQUARE, *April*, 1884.



LESSONS IN LONGEVITY.

THE STUDY OF HYGIENE.

The study of hygiene—the art of prolonging life—has engaged the attention of mankind from the earliest times. There is but little that is original in principle in the most modern sanitary appliances. The very large portion of the Mosaic precepts that are purely sanitary in their character show plainly an ingrained knowledge of the science, which was doubtless acquired by tradition as well as experience. The Greeks, who dedicated temples to Æsculapius and Hygeia, gave the latter equal rank with the former; indeed that goddess was held by some to be his wife and by others to be his sister. The more ancient legend of the Argonauts who, through the labors of Hercules, gave to Pallas the golden apple of the Hesperides, is further symbolical of

the importance attached by the ancients to the Macrobiotic art; for, as the golden apple represented the sun and typified light, it also typified the illumination of the world of science. To this legend may be traced the commencement of astrology, through which study was finally developed the science of astronomy. There is no doubt that the Arabs obtained from Aristotle their knowledge of philosophy and inductive reasoning, but filtered through the minds of another race it became a new philosophy, and when the teachings of the Alexandrian school subsequently overran mediæval Europe, it was the same philosophy, changed and distorted, but still having the same underlying principles. The astrologers were the most ancient sanitarians. Those having a knowledge of the subject were besought on every hand to cast nativities. A child whose horoscope showed the mischievous influence of an evil star was doomed to the constant use of some drug whose growth was under a more

benign influence, and to the wearing of an amulet, from which it was only to be separated by death. When astrology received its death-blow through the discovery of the Copernican system, alchemy became its legitimate heir; the philosopher's stone and the universal panacea thenceforth became the absorbing pursuit of the most intellectual minds of the age. To be the possessor of unfailing wealth, and an elixir of life or universal panacea by which all diseases might be overcome, what higher occupation could the mind of man conceive? It was for this that men forswore the society of their fellows; became hermits; and in their turn were hated as practitioners of the "black art," the object of which was not to benefit mankind but the individual. But there were skeptics among the alchemists whose studies finally developed the science of chemistry, and the study of the black art speedily fell into disrepute. As faith in astrology was now gone and that in alchemy was waning, the

slightest circumstance surrounding the lives of the aged was taken as an unfailling indication that those circumstances were the occasion of the long life of the individual. We are told that Clodius Hermippus, "who lived one hundred and fifteen years and five days by the breath of young maids," erected a tablet dedicated "to Æsculapius and Health," in commemoration of his discovery. Hufeland states that "one Dr. Cohausen endeavors to prove that Hermippus was the master of a training school, or teacher of female children at Rome, who by continually living amidst a circle of young maids had been enabled to prolong his life to so great an age. He advises people, therefore, with much benevolence, to expose themselves every evening and morning to the breath of young innocent maidens," that they may "strengthen and preserve the vital power," as the "first matter is contained purest in the breath of innocence." But the study of the art of prolonging life was not, after a time,

confined to the seedy professor, or to the monk lazily mouldering in the seclusion of his cloister. Princes, knights, and soldiers became deeply interested in its study. The "*Flos Medicinæ*"—the Flower of Medicine—the famous code of health of the School of Salerno, was written at the instigation and for the benefit of Count Robert of Normandy, while that illustrious knight lay sick of a wound received from the Saracens; and still later the shores of the western world echoed to the tramp of the soldiers of Ponce de Leon in search of the fountain of everlasting youth.

LONGEVITY.

The stoical philosophy which taught that neither pain nor suffering, nor emotion of fear or joy, nor inordinate pleasure ought to be regarded, has been forgotten by Americans. We are indeed outwardly impassive, but inwardly the fires kindled by the emotions rage. This is manifested by the worn and anxious faces which Europeans pronounce characteristic of Americans. Compare, for instance, the emotional play apparent on the face of one of our belles with the placid calm of the moon-eyed Celestial, or the sluggish stolidity of the north German peasant. The lightning flash and the glimmering candle light are not more widely distinct. Unfortunately the relative duration of the vital spark is in inverse ratio to its brightness. The more vivid the beam the sooner it burns out and exhausts itself. The more rapid the growth and maturity of the plant the more speedy the decay. It is thus in a state

of nature with human life and the vital force. Zeno, in recognition of this principle, founded the stoic faith, practiced it himself, and was rewarded by reaching the ripe old age of ninety-eight.

* * *

It is frequently asserted by our English cousins, with that singular reticence that always characterizes them when speaking of America, that the Americans would soon die out if immigration were entirely stopped for a single decade. Although not flattering to national pride, it must be admitted that there are some facts which seem to bear out the conclusion. The New England States, it appears, gain but little except by immigration; some towns are smaller than they were fifty years ago, and it is very rare to find a family of natives where there are more than two children. On "the Cape" the people have intermarried until the entire region is peopled with citizens in varying but constant degrees of consanguinity, and as

there are no immigrants there is a visible deterioration. But when our amiable English cousins speak of American degeneration, it is from such facts as these that they gather their knowledge; they carefully ignore the central, growing West, where may be found the highest type of physical excellence in America. The intermingling of the races—the enterprising and energetic sons of New England (the drones stay at home) with the Scotch, English, Dutch and Irish immigrants—has in three generations produced a race whose physique is unexceptionable, and but a few years more are required to bring up the mental training to a point of such self-control that a majority may die with their boots off, in the meek and spiritless manner peculiar to the East.

* * *

The question of marriage from the stand-point of the biologist is a very different one than when viewed from a purely sentimental basis. Race-lovers have long mourned the lack of attention

to the physical condition of the candidates for matrimonial honors and connubial bliss. The ancestral record is rarely examined or considered, and yet it has a very important bearing upon life, whether one marries an heir of consumption, scrofula, syphilis, or insanity ; for these diseases are notably hereditary and transmissible. The melancholy history of the Sandwich Islanders shows how a race may run out by this sort of deterioration, and the conservative litany itself has recognized the danger attending consanguineous marriage, by providing that a man may not marry his grandmother. The careful stock-raiser shows his faith in hereditary transmission of good qualities of health, strength, and speed by careful examination of the pedigree; and why so well demonstrated a physiological truth escapes notice when a human being instead of a horse is concerned, is one of the incomprehensible things.

OF COOKS AND COOKERY.

“ Un cuisinier quand je dine
Me semble un etre divin
Qui du fond, de sa cuisine
Gouverne le genre humain.”

The recorded experience of the immortal Sancho Panza during his governorship of the island shows a series of sufferings at the hands of his sanitarian which deprived him of all pleasures of the table, and finally made the governorship a burden that he cheerfully threw off at the first opportunity. It seems that we are now in a fair way to be brought to a like condition on account of the recent scientific descriptions of the diseases of animals and of the adulterations found in our food and drink. The modern representatives of Sancho's sanitarian have discovered monsters hitherto hidden in our drinking water; trichinæ in our pork; the poison of pleuro-pneumonia in our beef; sulphuric acid in our syrup; alum in our bread; rancid old grease in our butter, and

the Lord knows what in our milk. Even the mustard has not escaped the charge of having dangerous poisons hidden in every spoonful. Too much enterprise may not be pleasant, but I suppose it is as well to know the facts.

* * *

It really seems of less importance to know what the food is, than to know how it is cooked, and there are many savory foods spoiled through the incompetence of the cook. The ancients laid much stress on the science of gastronomy, as many idioms in all languages attest. "Heaven sends the food but the devil sends the cook," is an old saw that many a traveller will say is as true to-day as when it was written; but in ancient times, as now, there were cooks who knew how to cook. The Greeks, notwithstanding their extreme frugality and their occasional ridicule of the art of cookery, were extremely happy if they could secure a Sicilian cook, and such cooks were sometimes said to have been skilled in the art

of divining, and therefore had the management of marriage feasts and sacrifices. A "Sicilian table" was a synonym for a table luxuriously and bountifully supplied; but it would appear that the Athenians were somewhat behind their neighbors in this art, for Dromeas being asked which suppers were more magnificent, those at Athens or Chalcis, replied that the first course at Chalcis was to be preferred to the whole entertainment at Athens. The Greeks very much applauded the feast given by Paulus Æmilius on his return from Macedon, so much so that Plutarch embalmed its virtue in his immortal pages. The Romans, also, placed an equal value on the Sicilian cooks. Montaigne, a century ago, felt unhappy because he should have liked to "taste "the culinary art of those cooks who had so rare "a way of seasoning exotic odors with the relish "of meats." He particularly referred to the service of the King of Tunis, who, he says, "in our "days landed at Naples, to have an interview

“with Charles the Emperor. His meats were
“stuffed with odoriferous drugs to that degree of
“expense that the cookery of one peacock and
“two pheasants amounted to a hundred ducats
“to dress them after their fashion; and when the
“carver came to cut them up, not only the dining
“room, but all the apartments of the palace and
“the adjoining streets were filled with a fragrant
“vapor, which was some time in dissipating.” My
credulity is fully equal to the acceptance of all of
this story except that relating to the streets, but
I feel that the line must be drawn somewhere.
Montaigne discoursed pleasantly of an Italian
he received into his service, who had been
“clerk of the kitchen” to one Cardinal Car-
“affa. When asked of his qualifications, he
“fell to discourse of this palate-science with such
“a settled countenance and magisterial gravity
“as if he had been handling some profound point
“of divinity. He made a learned distinction of
“the several sorts of appetites; of that which a

“man has before he begins to eat, and of those
“after the second and third service; the means
“simply to satisfy the first, and then to raise and
“quicken the other two; the ordering of the sau-
“ces, first in general, and then proceeded to the
“qualities of the several ingredients and their ef-
“fects. The difference of salads, according to their
“seasons; which of them ought to be served up
“hot, and which cold; the manner of their gar-
“nishment and decoration to render them yet more
“acceptable to the eye; after which he entered
“upon the order of the whole service, full of
“weighty and important considerations. And all
“this set out with lofty and magnificent words,
“the very same we make use of when we dis-
“course of the government of an empire.” I
have always had a harassing doubt whether this
man’s practice was equal to his theory.

* * *

I do not know why common repute should attrib-
ute to cooks the possession of very ill temper, but

on examination of the subject I find that the charge is true; that a majority of cooks have a temper as hot and peppery as many of the mixtures they concoct. It appears, however, that there is a reason for this undoubted fact, found in the study of the chemistry of the body. When the temperature is raised above the normal standard, 37° Centigrade (97.5° Fah.), changes in excess of the natural change must result. If one part of the body be heated, there is an increased flow of the blood to the part. When that happens to be the head and face, cerebral hyperæmia follows; this condition, by changing the natural flow of the blood current, causes corresponding changes in the mental evolutions and the nervous manifestations. Who ever heard of a great riot when the thermometer was below zero? On the contrary, the months of July and August are those in which, we are informed, the greatest and most angry mobs have congregated and performed their bloody work. Workmen engaged in labor

where they are kept at a very high temperature are dangerous men to provoke, for the rapid changes going on in the brain beget an irritability of the nervous system. Therefore let us pay attention to the ventilation of the kitchen if we would have that household blessing, a sweet-tempered cook. A well-ventilated, airy kitchen is necessary to the comfort of the household, and brings peace to the perturbed housekeeper.

OF FOOD.

The physiologist classifies food in two general classes, viz., flesh-formers and heat-generators, and both animal and vegetable foods are subdivided into these two classes, according to their relative proportion of nitrogen,—the nitrogenous foods being the flesh-formers, and the non-nitrogenous the heat-producers. Fat is the only representative of the non-nitrogenous class in animal food, and starch and sugar represent the same class in the vegetable; seeds and vegetable tissues are, therefore, flesh-formers as well as animal food of all kinds, except fat; and fat itself may be produced in the body by the digestion and assimilation of the starches, sugars, and vegetable oils.

* * *

Almost every country has its peculiar and favorite dish. No doubt this is largely owing to differences in climate. The Esquimau rejoices in his tidbit of whale blubber and seal fat, the Oriental in his rice and leguminous seeds, the

African buries his happy face in the succulent melon, and the wisdom of natural selection is shown in the result. The fat eaten by the Esquimau furnishes the heat necessary to support life in the frigid climate in which he must live; the rice has nitrogen and starch in sufficient quantity to form flesh and producè just heat enough for the Chinaman, and the cooling melon keeps the body of the African supplied with the water extracted from it by his plutonian region. The happy denizens of the temperate climates may eat food according to the season, and are, therefore, able with impunity to gratify their palates in a manner unknown to those of the frigid and torrid zones.

* * *

The cultivation of the sense of taste was carried by the Romans of the empire and the latter days of the republic to a degree entirely unknown in our day; and while here and there great feasts are held, in which not only the sense of taste but flowers and music delight the eye and

charm the ear, these are extraordinary occasions, and confined to the descendants of a few retired cheese-mongers and fur-peddlers that constitute our American aristocracy. But it is not necessary to be even a pseudo-aristocrat in order that merry-making shall go on and the wassail bowl bring out its cheer; in all countries, almost everybody, rich or poor, have their season of rejoicing at the table, if only the poor Robinson family that gave hearty thanks for the extra allowance of salt with their potatoes. The old-time traditions of wassail and song are yet kept in memory by the colleges, and Dr. Edward Smith informs us that the ceremony of "A carol bryngyn in the Bore's Head" is still performed at Queen's College, Oxford. The following is the old ditty:

"The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary,
And I pray you my masters be merry,
Quot estis in convivio
Caput apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

The boar's head, as I understand,
 Is the bravest dish in all the land
 When thus bedecked with a gay garland,
 Let us *servire cantico*
Caput apri deferò
Reddens laudes Domino.

Our steward hath provided this
 In honor of the king of bliss,
 Which on this day to be served is
In Regiensi Atrio
Caput apri deferò
Reddens laudes Domino."

No true poet of nature ever failed to celebrate the pleasures of the table in his songs. Dear old Robbie Burns, having dined heartily with Rob. Morrison the cabinet-maker, on a Sunday, at a dinner wherein the haggis was the principal dish, sung its praises in a deathless lay that made the haggis the national dish of Scotland. "The haggis is composed of minced offal of mutton, mixed with meal and suet, to which are added various condiments by way of seasoning, and the whole is tied tightly in a sheep's stomach

“and boiled therein.”—(GUNNYON.) The song is too long to insert here, but I give the opening and last two stanzas:

“Fair fa your honest sonsie face,
Great chieftan o’ the puddin’ race,
Aboon them a’ ye tak’ your place,
 Painch, tripe or thairm
Well are ye worthy of a race
 As lang ’s me arm.

* * * * * *

But mark the rustic haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade
 He’ll make it whistle ;
And legs, and arms, and heads will sneed
 Like taps o’ thistle.

Ye powers wha’ mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o’ fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinning ware
 That jaups in luggies,
But if ye wish her gratefu’ prayer,
 Gie her a haggis.”

I am of opinion that if the sons of St. Andrew wish to make the haggis popular in America they will do well to keep its formula a profound secret.

Some dishes are most popular when most mysterious.

* * *

It is one thing to eat when we are well, it is quite another when we are sick; so it follows that scores of dietaries for the sick have sprung up, varying in all degrees, from the infinitely bad to the superlatively good; but the best dietaries are mostly too "scientific" and too complicated. The principal thing a man wants when he is sick is to be let alone, that his stomach may rest, and the digestive organs generally want a chance to be quiet. I do not say that total abstinence in the matter of eating is the best dietary for all sick, but I do say that when the stomach of a sick man or child loathes food, it is an outrage against nature to stimulate them to force food down, unless, by reason of some peculiarity in the disease, the physician in attendance has laid down a course of regimen specially adapted for the case in hand. Many a disease of the digestive

organs will get well of itself if the patient will only lie down, avoid tobacco and stimulants, and restrict his diet to those substances of easiest digestion. The great master of medicine—the only one, by the way, who ever wrote a medical book that has lasted two thousand years and more—gave the most important place in his treatment of diseases to the regimen. He prescribed barley-water for almost everything. Our people have modified the prescription; we take our barley-water after it has fermented—in our beer. But I doubt that lager-beer will ever have anybody sound its praises so that the knowledge of its qualities will go thundering down the centuries as Hippocrates' barley-water has. Happy barley-water! Sorrowful lager-beer!

* * *

In regard to salads, it is said that the ova of tape-worms are frequently deposited in the wrinkles of a lettuce leaf and near the mid-rib of a cabbage leaf, and so it behooves those wish-

ing uncooked leaves of any kind to have them very carefully washed. How much of one's comfort really depends on the cook, and how trustworthy that important personage ought to be; therefore, if the mistress of the household wishes to be very thoughtful of her guests, she will prepare lettuce salad from the leaf, while at table, in full sight, so that it will not require faith in an unknown cook to prevent post-prandial uneasiness.

* * *

At a recent meeting of the New York Medico-Legal Society, the question of the relative harmfulness of canned meats and canned fruits came up for discussion. It was asserted that the muriatic acid used in soldering the cans was very harmful, and in fact, poisonous, should any escape into the can; and further, that if one could push up the bottom of the can, so that it would snap like a sewing-machine oiler, that would be evidence that decomposition had taken place

and the contents should therefore be rejected. The reverse of this last proposition is true. When substances of any sort are placed in a can while hot, or if the can, with its contents, be heated just before sealing, the air is driven off by expansion, and there is a partial vacuum produced upon cooling. There will then be a slight depression at the top and bottom of the can. As long as there is no bulging, one may be reasonably sure that the contents are sound; but if the top or bottom bulge, it should be rejected, for that will be evidence that decomposition has taken place to a greater or less extent, and the resulting gases have caused the outward pressure. So far as the muriatic acid is concerned, in slight quantity it would be a valuable aid to digestion, but it might, if in large quantity, produce a poisonous quantity of chloride of tin by action on the sides of the can. Certain fruit acids are apt to produce an unpleasant compound with the tin, and it is, therefore, safer to purchase fruits of this class only when put up in glass.

Recent experiments in France have corroborated those heretofore made in Germany, that cattle are subject to consumption (*phthisis pulmonalis*), and furthermore that the milk of cows thus affected may become the vehicle for the transmission of the disease to those drinking it. It follows, therefore, that all milk the source of which is not above suspicion should be boiled before being fed to infants or delicate persons. Our mouths may not water for tubercle even when it is carefully cooked, but it is certainly a comforting assurance that it is harmless when in that shape. And while on that subject it is proper to say here that when cooking anything, especially poultry, game, meats, and fish, *cook* it. Do not, as you fear parasites and value health, serve it underdone.

* * *

Dr. E. J. Scott, of the English-Chinese customs service, stationed at Swatow, has reported that "there has been a grievous epidemic amongst

“the cattle in this district, killing as many as 90
“per cent. of the cows and buffalos in some
“villages. I have endeavored to ascertain the
“exact nature of this complaint, but, possibly
“from an unwillingness on the part of the Chinese
“to give information concerning it, I have been
“unable to get any trustworthy data. I can only
“learn that the disease was somewhat like chol-
“era, either prostrating the animal at once and
“ending fatally in a few hours, or beginning with
“diarrhœa, ended fatally in a few days. The
“Chinese ate the flesh of the diseased animals
“with impunity, and I heard some of them at-
“tributing the remarkable healthiness of this
“summer to the fact that the disease was amongst
“the cattle, and that the human animals escaped
“on this account.” Dr. Pichon, the physician of
the French concession at Shanghai, reported that
the epizootic prevailed extensively among the
cattle at the French concession, and afterwards
spread to the English settlement. The first case

was in a heifer imported from France. The Chinese should follow the European custom concerning American pork, and prevent the benighted French and English from importing neat cattle, as the Celestials undoubtedly have native diseases in sufficient variety without adding those of Gallic and Anglican origin.

* * *

The Britons received the State Department circular of 1881 concerning American swine, with the bubbling humor awarded everything emanating from cis-Atlantic shores. The following is from the editorial columns of the London *Medical Times and Gazette* of May 21, 1881:

“The conclusion arrived at by the State Department at Washington after investigating the reports circulated concerning the prevalence of hog cholera has just been officially published. The report declares that American swine belong to the purest breeds and are fed principally on corn, and that the percentage of deaths from disease among them is no greater than in Europe. The system of inspection of hog products is so nearly perfect that it is impossible for diseased hogs to pass into the provision markets. It is further declared that the reports circulated in Europe concerning the

prevalence of cholera among American hogs are gross exaggerations, and trichinosis is almost an unknown disease at Chicago and Cincinnati, the two greatest pork-preparing centers in the world. It must be allowed the Americans are advancing; the superior tone and highly official character of this report could not be beaten by any department or bureau in effete, old monarch-ridden Europe. The assurance as to the pure blood of the whole race of American swine is especially charming and to the purpose."

The editor, however, fails to draw attention to the action of the British Government, which is elsewhere set forth in the same issue :

"On Monday in the House of Lords the Marquis of Huntly, in reply to Lord Stanley, of Alderley, said: 'It is doubtful whether there is any power to prohibit the importation of such articles. There is no well-established case of American hams imported into this country being infected with trichinæ. The local government board had issued a circular to all the sanitary authorities in the country, urging special vigilance and precautions in the inspection of meat. There was nothing to show that oleomargarine contained the grease of pigs suffering from the swine disease. The adulteration of butter with soapstone he did not think to be injurious to health. Any person selling an article injurious to health would be liable to a penalty and then to imprisonment under the sale of food and drugs act. Under these circumstances the Government would not prohibit the importation of the articles referred to.'"

It is not less true now than of yore that "they order these things better in France." To guard against the fraudulent practices of the French tradesmen a public laboratory has been established in Paris at police headquarters. Microscopic photography and spectroscopic analysis are said to receive special attention, and a separate department of the laboratory is set apart for the study of trichinosis, and "the market "inspectors are to be taught the use of the micro-
"scope. Small holes, not visible after the hams
"are cooked, are made by a gouge of new design,
"and a similar instrument, which causes less
"laceration than the old crotchet (harpoon), is
"used to examine the muscles of the living
"animal, and will, it is believed, be applicable
"to human patients."

* * *

The abattoirs of Paris, which have furnished the name and the model for public slaughter-houses throughout the civilized world, were

erected in accordance with the recommendation of a commission appointed by Napoleon I., February 9, 1810. The abattoirs were opened for business in 1818. It is not to be supposed that the idea was original with the French, for they simply modified and improved the Roman system, which was in use in the time of Nero, under whose reign the butcher's guild flourished to an unexampled degree. How much farther back in the world's history the rudimentary abattoir existed we have no certain source of information. The admirable medical reports of the Chinese imperial customs are generally silent on the subject, but it is pretty certain that the Chinese have had no general abattoir system. Dr. Myers, of the Chinese customs service, reporting from Wenchow in 1877, states that the beef sold in that market "is of the most objectionable kind, "being generally procured from the carcasses "of animals that have died from disease, or "been slaughtered in anticipation of that event."

It is not a matter of wonder, in view of this fact, that the "heathen Chinese" should prefer even trichinous rats, or rice.

The modern abattoir has come to be recognized as one of the most essential factors in the solution of the problem of how to furnish our cities with healthy meat. At the abattoir the animals are received from the car, the steamboat, or driven from the road; they are allowed to rest their fevered limbs after the journey; they are fed and watered, and, after becoming thoroughly rested and cooled, they are examined by an inspector. If passed by that officer, the animals are slaughtered, and the public may be reasonably certain that everything is being done to protect it against the possibility of purchasing diseased meat. The Brighton abattoir near Boston is a good working model of what such an institution should be when properly conducted. There are facilities at that institution for the slaughter of all the cattle and sheep necessary

to supply the Boston market. The blood, bone, and refuse are converted into dry fertilizer, and the gases generated during the process are conveyed by pipes to the furnaces under the great steam boilers. No animal matter remains upon the premises uncared for; the stables and stock-yards are neatly kept, and the management of the abattoir, formerly under the State board, is now under the supervision of the city board of health. The former state in one of their reports that "it has been proved possible to carry on a "great slaughtering and rendering establishment "without its being offensive either to the work- "men in it or to the community around it."

OF SLEEPING ROOMS.

Next to our meat and drink, the subject of first importance is the sleeping room and its care. Bed rooms should be well lighted, have good air supply, be moderately well heated, and have painted walls. Never choose a room with a stationary washbowl in it if you can help it; the chances are strongly against your being able to keep the sewer air out of the room, and, in addition, there is a vile smell from the waste pipe itself. If a waste pipe, or even a pipe supplying clean water, be examined after a few months' use, it will be found that there is a considerable sediment deposited inside, and if it be a waste pipe this lining will be very thick. This lining or coating of adventitious material is a trap to catch germs and bacteria of all sorts, and germs of specific disease there find a suitable place for propagation. In the matter of ventilation, if the bed room is heated by an open grate, the

ventilation will be good whenever there is a fire. Closets for clothing should be ventilated thoroughly, and the clothing removed every week, the closet wall cleaned, and every twelve months calcimined. There is great danger in allowing a closet to open into a bed room unless these precautions be taken. The bath room and water-closet should, in no circumstances, be placed in the bed room. Do not be afraid of fresh air in sleeping rooms; and, unless the air is in summer blowing off a swamp or other malarious place, there is no danger from admitting plenty of fresh air, even at night. In cities, the air between one o'clock and six o'clock in the morning is the purest. Keep warm in bed by means of plenty of clothing, but allow the fresh air to enter. Nothing compensates for absence of oxygen. If a fire is burning in the grate the expansion of the air in the heated chimney will create a strong upward current, and, to prevent a vacuum, the air will rush into the

room at all its crevices to take the place of that extracted through the chimney flue; by this means the bed chamber may be kept well ventilated without perceptible draught. This is the reason why the grate fire is in every way preferable to the abominable stoves that throw out gas enough to choke one, in addition to the exhaustion of the oxygen, without creating any compensating current. It is well to remember that in a cold chimney there is usually a downward current; which furnishes a reason for the uncanny custom a long-unused chimney has, of "smoking," when the fires are first lit in the autumn.

Finally, it may be stated that no sleeping room should have paper on its walls.

PLUMBING AND PLUMBERS.

The Malthusians looked upon war with approbation and viewed epidemics with complacency, for they considered them to be wise provisions of an overruling Providence by which over-increase in the population of the earth was measurably checked; but there is reason to believe that the later followers of Malthus placed the efficiency of the old-fashioned plumber upon a much higher plane than either war or pestilence, for he not only slayed his thousands and tens of thousands, but he did it in each instance with the consent of the victim, who usually paid with alacrity for the privilege of having himself and his family poisoned with expedition and positive certainty. Of all the buildings erected in this city up to a very recent period, there were few without serious defects in drainage, which may be plainly seen by anyone who is neither an architect nor plumber. One of the most serious

of these defects was the practice of laying the main waste-pipe directly under the basement floor, in the long axis of the building. The rule should be to carry each waste and soil pipe separately out of the building at the nearest possible point of exit.

* * *

The invention of the plumber would not be an unmixed evil were plumbers everywhere required by law to register and to pass a practical examination before such registration. Any plumber of a few months' experience may "wipe" a joint with great facility, and be thereby considered an able workman, but few of the old plumbers knew anything whatever of the properties of sewer-gas, the law of its diffusion, or the first principles of hydraulics; on the contrary, the average plumber went on constructing his drains with right angles instead of curves, put in traps without ventilation, and invariably laid the main drain with the greatest possible length under the cellar.

When a chemist desires to collect a gas for experimental or other purposes he proceeds, at considerable trouble and expense, to construct a complicated system of pipes and furnaces; he conducts the outlet pipe under water, that the gas may bubble through it. An inverted receiver completes the apparatus, and the gas is collected therein *secundem artem*. But our friend, the unlearned plumber, accomplishes this result with much more directness. He simply bends a lead pipe under the sink; this he calls a "trap," which he fills with water and designates the "water-seal." The arrangements are thus easily made for filling the house with sewer-gas, which, as soon as the "water-seal" is saturated, bubbles through it with greater or less rapidity, according to the amount of pressure. The modern plumber who reads, constructs a ventilation pipe leading from the trap to the roof of the building, or to a heated chimney; the gas then seeks a natural and unobstructed outlet. An architect who plans

or allows an unventilated trap to be placed in a soil or waste-pipe should be indicted as accessory to attempted manslaughter.

The introduction of a vent-pipe at the trap also prevents the accident known as "siphoning." The careful house-maid, ambitious to excel in poisoning the household, suddenly pours a large quantity of water into the bowl, whereupon, with a gurgling sound, the water is all drawn by suction from the trap, and even the little protection given by the "water-seal" is taken away, and the sewer-gas, or rather poisoned air, is afforded free access to the room. But it is useless to put in place a small pipe; it must be large enough to do the work. It is also well to remember that the larger and deeper the water seal, the more perfect the protection.

OF FUNERALS.

The ancients attributed to Pluto the origin of funeral ceremonials, and, judged by modern standard, it must be admitted that they were right in assigning that duty to the god of the infernal region. To this belief is ascribed that custom which decreed that the dead Greek should have an *obolus* placed in his mouth to pay Charon, and a sweet cake in his hand for Cerberus's delectation. The general custom of the world for succeeding ages was that of cremation. It is true that the Colchians had invented the inspiring practice of suspending the dead among the branches of the trees; the Chinese buried them in the earth as they do now, and the Jews used the sepulture; but even the Jews used cremation when the plague came, and sanitary law triumphed over their superstitious fanaticism. So, then, it may be said with truth that cremation was the nearly universal practice of mankind for count-

less centuries; and this brings me to inquire why so universal a practice and apparently so unexceptionable a mode of disposing of the dead should have been discontinued. Burial as now practiced among christian nations was substituted for cremation in the reign of Thedosius the Younger in the fourth century. Cremation had become very expensive; the bodies were anointed with the costliest oils; the most expensive perfumes were burnt as incense; the wood used must have come from a long distance, in order to be fashionable, and animals and slaves were sacrificed and burnt, to accompany the deceased to another world. Not infrequently the wives of a deceased pagan immolated themselves upon the funeral pyre. But it was the christian doctrine that at the last day "the body should arise and become as incorruptible as the soul" that gave the final stroke, and thus a practice, begun through superstitious mythology, ended through the acceptance of a religious dogma.

It is easy to see that the necessary, and to the middle classes, the cruel expense attending our modern burials will result in a radical change of opinion in favor of the cheaper mode of cremation, until in progress of time it in turn revives the ancient incense-burning practices. One needs but to look at a long funeral train—to see a few mourners in the front carriages, and the gradual lightening of the grief along the line—to satisfy himself of the unnecessary character of this display. And it is absurd to suppose that the average bystander does not know that in many cases the procession is largely made up of the morbidly curious and that the very hacks on their return from the funeral do duty as “night-liners.” The cruelty of the custom consists in the fact that no matter how poor the surviving relatives, they feel the obligation strong upon them to follow the fashion of the time, and all these unnecessary trappings, must be paid for.

* * *

The Bureau of Ethnology of the Smithsonian

Institution, of which Major J. W. Powell is in charge, has been making some excellent anthropological research. Several volumes have been published on various cognate subjects, and among them the "introduction to the Study of Mortuary Customs among the North American Indians," by Dr. H. C. Yarrow. To those who believe with General Sheridan that the only good Indian is a dead Indian, the last-named volume will have the most abiding interest; and as from considerable acquaintance with the red man in his native lair I incline to agree with the General's dictum, I was interested in Dr. Yarrow's volume. The work which the Doctor modestly styled an introductory paper is the result of three years' labor in the examination and consolidation of data, in which the Bureau of Ethnology already abounds. Dr. Yarrow proposes to eventually embody in a larger volume all the material which he shall obtain from Indian agents, agency physicians, and army officers with whom he is in

correspondence. The present introductory volume gives the classification of the subject and furnishes examples of burial ceremonies among different tribes, and examines, critically, analogous customs among the civilized nations of the Old World. The Doctor adopts as a provisional arrangement the following classification:

1. Burial "by *inhumation* in pits, graves, holes in the ground, mounds, cists, and graves.

2. "By *cremation*, generally on the surface of the earth, occasionally beneath, the resulting bones or ashes being placed in pits in the ground; in boxes placed on scaffolds, or trees in urns; sometimes scattered.

3. "By *embalment*, or a process of mummifying, the remains being afterwards placed in the earth, caves, mounds, or charnel-houses.

4. "By *serial sepulture*, the bodies being deposited on scaffolds or trees, in boxes or canoes, the two latter receptacles supported on scaffolds or posts, or on the ground. Occasionally baskets have been used to contain the remains of children, these being hung to trees.

5. "By *aquatic burial* beneath the water, or in canoes turned adrift."

* * *

The sanitary and scientific reasons why inhu-

mation should be discontinued and cremation readopted, are many and conclusive. The existence of foul and almost irrespirable air in and around the cemeteries, especially where vaults are used; the gradual but sure saturation of the earth with putrefying material; the contamination of streams, reservoirs, and wells from which drinking water is drawn; the spreading of epidemics by reason of attendance on the funerals,—are facts which carry conviction against the practice of burial; and the absolute freedom of cremation from these evils is altogether in its favor. The clergy, I presume, will continue to fight cremation, but even the strongest believers in the real resurrection of the body ought not to believe that cremation or any other disposal of the dead could interfere with the laws or power of an omnipotent God.

* * *

There is one undertaker in Washington who has the cheerful custom of trotting out a hearse without doors or windows whenever he has a

funeral to conduct where the person died of a contagious disease. The health office regulations require that such cases shall be "hermetically" sealed, but there is no such regulation concerning the hearse; consequently the undertaker may use his own judgment. That judgment leans in the direction of his pocket, as all judgment without restraint is apt to do, and the spectacle is not at all reassuring to persons of a nervous temperament. I know a lady who lost a little child, and came near losing her own life, through attendance at a funeral of a person who died of diphtheria, although the coffin was of the so-called "hermetically-sealed" variety; and it seems to me that not only ought public funerals in such cases to be forbidden, but open hearses should be consigned to the flames along with the avaricious undertaker who furnishes them.

EUTHANASIA.

From the school of Seneca the philosopher to the
—— Medical Society is a long stride, but I am brought to that by reading the report of a discussion that took place in that body not long ago on the so-called "doctrine" of *euthanasia*, which is, in plain English, the production of an easy death; some unscientific persons even call it murder. The committee appointed to consider whether it is ever justifiable for the medical attendant to produce an easy death in an incurable and hopelessly helpless invalid, otherwise destined to drag on a miserable existence through long and weary years; and whether, in fact, the same blessed relief might not be extended to such an one which we do not deny the lower animals, reported that while, morally, humanity might be entitled to the same mercy accorded the brute creation, yet the practice might be abused! Moreover, the religious belief in the decree that

a certain amount of human suffering must take place, was no slight obstacle; but it was in its legal aspect that *euthanasia* met its impassible barrier. The human law which sprung from the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," seemed to the committee conclusive against it in the present state of society. A medical gentleman present remarked that he not only believed in the doctrine, but practiced it! It is to be hoped that this truly advanced scientist does not meet with many incurable cases in his practice; but that any such discussion could take place at all, shows how the world has moved since Zeno's time, when, instead of learning to rise superior to pain and suffering, it is proposed to sneak away from them, even through "the valley of the shadow of death."

SUMMER RESORTS.

The season of summer is once more upon us, and, although Congress is still in session, the capital already begins to assume that listless and half-deserted appearance characteristic of the time of torrid heat. To some, the coming of summer brings with it a sense of freedom from care and a welcome relief; to others, it means three months of torment. If Richard goes to a country place where the dogs bay the moon nightly until twelve, and chanticleer crows sturdily under his window from three in the morning until six, he will have little comfort in his vacation; if the gnats and mosquitoes are so numerous that every available inch of human skin serves as a bloody battle-ground, he will have less; but if, in addition, he can scarce snatch a morsel of food without displacing a swarm of flies, his cup will be full metaphorically, if not literally. To make the cup run over it is only necessary that the

mercury should mount into the nineties. Such a place as is described is the one of all others where the "delightful comforts of a country home" will be advertised; and, as the garlanded calf of the Greeks skipped happily to the sacrifice, so the victim to the advertisement goes to his place of wretchedness-to-come, dreaming only of Arcadia.

* * *

The State boards of health, of which we have plenty, could perform no more praiseworthy work than to make thorough and complete inspection of the various summer resorts within their respective boundaries, and publish the results. The effect, in some instances, would be quite damaging to very many well-patronized summer hotels, but the people would be the gainers. The healthfulness of the drinking water is much more important, in a sanitary point of view, than the range of the thermometer. Well-water is nearly certain to be contaminated with soakage from the barn-yard

and the out-house vault. If, by reason of its remoteness, the water escape contamination from this source, there will usually be found *infusoria* and low forms of animal and vegetable life, some of which are visible to the naked eye. It is safe, then, in selecting a place for the summer, to take one supplied from a spring rather than from a well. Public water-works drawing from a large river furnish much better water. If one must use well-water, let it be filtered. The Chinese habitually boil their drinking water, which theoretically accounts for their alleged immunity from diseases of the sort brought on by bad drinking-water; and if boiled water is afterwards aerated by shaking or pouring from a height, it is not unpleasant to the taste; without aeration, boiled water is disgustingly insipid.

* * *

The question of drinking-water being settled to one's satisfaction, the next point for investigation is that concerning the healthfulness of the house,

for it will not infrequently be found that the very room assigned is one in which last year a child died of scarlet fever or diphtheria. A room cannot be thoroughly purified after a case of scarlet fever, except by more radical measures than the average landlord is willing to adopt; and, on learning such a fact, one ought to seek some other domicile without delay.

* * *

The question of food and bedding is really a minor one compared with the main ones above mentioned, and it may be laid down as a general rule that, whatever place is selected for the summer, there is, after all, no place like home. The dweller by the sea naturally selects the mountain for his diversion in summer, and the mountaineer, in turn, goes to the sea and dips in the surf; but each is completely out of element, and comes home again in the autumn as to a haven of rest; or, if he must labor, it is something like glee that he rejoins his task. The seashore, however, always

has been and always will be the favorite. The Greeks, Phœnicians, and Rhodians loved the sea on account of their maritime situation, and that wise old Roman, King Ancus Martius, built "that most pleasant city, Ostia," at the mouth of the Tiber, as a summer resort, where the turbulent nobles might cool their fiery tempers in the surf. In the time of Charles the Second the interior was the more fashionable, for the King and Court went to Bath on the Avon—as Mr. Pepys has informed us. That worthy did not seem greatly impressed with Bath, for he says: "We come before night to the Bath; where I presently stepped out with my landlord, and saw the baths, with the people in them. They are not so large as I expected, but yet pleasant, and the town most of stone, and clean, though the streets generally narrow. I home, and, being weary, went to bed without supper. Up at four o'clock, being by appointment called up to the Cross Bath, where we were carried one after another, myself and wife and

Betty Turner, Willett, and W. Hewer. And by and by, though we designed to have done, before company come, much company come; very fine ladies; and the manner pretty enough, only methinks it cannot be clean to go so many bodies together in the same water." One can conjecture what Mr. Pepys would have said had he visited the baths in Pekin, where the bathers are one after another placed into a tank, the water whereof is changed but once daily. Early rising in such a case is rather more than a virtue. And thus it happens that although the mountains with their glades and gorges, their forests and flowers, and their field for pleasures of rod and gun, may attract us, yet our real summer love is

"The sea, the sea, the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free,"

which, with its cooling breezes and the white sails flecking its bosom, continually woos one to its embrace.

OF BATHS AND BATHING.

The splendor of bath-rooms was dimmed when Rome went into decline; and, since her palmy days, bath-rooms are nowhere constructed with a tittle of their ancient splendor. The Roman baths were a sort of club houses, where poets read their compositions, statesmen met and discussed—the tariff, perhaps, or other burning questions. Sweet strains of music pleased the ear, and the air was laden with rich perfume. Architects, seeking immortality, vied with each other in devising original plans for the public baths. None succeeded; even he who designed the “hanging baths” in the time of Sergius Orata, like the architect of the hanging gardens of Babylon, failed to send his name to posterity. A contrast of the strongest kind then exists between our custom at this day and that of the Romans in regard to the construction and use of public baths. Only a few of our cities recog-

nize the necessity for them; when built, they are constructed of the cheapest materials, and their use is restricted to the poor. It is true that modern city houses all contain bath rooms, but they are usually the neglected part of the household.

* * *

Animals must get rid of the outer layer of skin in some way. In some species—certain reptilians, for example—the outer skin is shed entire at certain seasons; birds cast their feathers and fishes their scales; and at each casting off of this kind, the vital processes are afterward carried on with more energy, because the drains and sluiceways of the surface are not blocked up at their mouths by broken-down epidermis; so, in man, the skin is renewed; only the process in a state of health is gradual and less startling in its visible signs. It is, however, just as necessary; the child that was gilded to represent an angel at the coronation festivities died in a few hours; and even horses have been killed by the application of an im-

permeable coating. Whatever tends, then, to keep the skin soft and free from scaly debris of its outer layer, will aid in keeping the drains open, and assist nature in getting rid of the structural waste.

* * *

Indiscriminate bathing is as hurtful in some circumstances as its reasonable use is in others. The aged, the feeble, and the invalided should use the bath only as directed by their physician, for in them the slightest change affecting the temperature of the surface has a bearing upon their vital power, and should be undertaken with care. The temperature of the bath is comparatively unimportant, provided it is not below 60° nor above 90° Fah. The ancients used the bath at three temperatures—first the hot bath, then the tepid, and finished with a plunge into or a shower of cold water. The bath was concluded by rubbing with a towel until the skin glowed with warmth; then slight anointing with perfumed oil

completed the exercise. This, it seems, is the method best adapted to preserve the skin.

* * *

Neither bathe immediately after a full meal, nor stand shivering when the bath is over, if you would avoid injury. These precautions are necessary to be taken in sea bathing.

THE AMERICAN CLIMATE.

Johannes Schoepf, the surgeon of the Anspach Bayreuth troops in America during the war of the Revolution, wrote a fierce diatribe against the American climate when he got home. He had more leisure to write it there. The Hessians could not whip the Americans, but they might at least abuse their climate. Americans, however, have managed to bear up under it with tolerable complacency for a century, in ignorance of the existence of such a book, until Dr. Chadwick, of Boston, translated it a year or two ago, and let in a little light; and now it is too late to stem the tide of immigration. Dr. Schoepf was of opinion that a country that froze a man solid in winter and melted him liquid in summer was a very poor country to emigrate to; and if I had been "taken in and done for" as the Hessians were in New Jersey I might not yield even to Schoepf in ferocity of invective against the beastly

and inhospitable climate which heaven gave the Western world. I have felt some faint beginnings of anathemas at two o'clock in the afternoon some days last August, and several such symptoms on very many Augusts preceding, and I am very sure the disposition was strong on some spring mornings when winter ought to have been over, but was not.

* * *

No one need suffer in any part of this country because the climate does not suit him, if he has money to travel; for whether he shall seek humidity or drouth, the sea level or the mountain top, the forest or the arid plain, he may find the object of his search within the boundaries of the United States and under the protection of its flag. The invalid, however, should choose his objective point after consultation with his physician, rather than by flying off hurriedly to an inappropriate climate, to find his malady aggravated. The bones of climatic victims whiten the cemeteries of many

famous health resorts, simply because that particular climate was the one of all others worst adapted to those particular cases. It is now possible, by reason of the accurately-kept meteorological records of the Signal Service, to determine the relative moisture or dryness of almost any given place for five years—quite long enough to show the average. Other things being equal, the place that can show a record of the greatest number of sunshiny days will be found to have the most equable climate, both as regards humidity and temperature.

* * *

The memory is a very uncertain thing to trust when the state of the weather for any given period is under consideration; and it is a common observation that that ubiquitous individual, the "oldest inhabitant," never has seen such weather as the present. But the record, when investigated, fails to bear him out, for there is much less variation at any given place from year to year than is commonly supposed.

OF EPIDEMICS.

There has been no considerable period of time in the world's history unmarked by an epidemic of one sort or another. From the time of the Hippocratic writings down to the present, the histories of the various epidemics have formed an important part of literature. Thucydides' account of the great Athenian plague, Boccacio's chapter on that of Florence in 1348, De Foe's masterpiece on the London plague of 1664-'65, will ever stand as graphic specimens of, shall I say, pestilential literature. But the histories of human suffering will never be lost, nor the record blotted out; so that, what was mankind's pain, became in time the study of the literati.

* * *

Illinois may be cited as a typical example of the prosperous agricultural State. Her debt is practically extinguished, and the income from the Central Railroad pays a large share of the expense

of the State Government, diminishing taxation. The new Constitution secures the railroad income to the State coffers, until such time as the people shall vote to abolish that clause in it. She has recently built and paid for a new State-house. She was a pioneer in legislation against quacks, and has a new and active board of health, to whom unlimited power has been delegated. The farmers are wealthy, and as happy as their frequently-recurring epidemics will allow them to be. Scarlet fever, diphtheria, and cerebro-spinal ("spotted") fever have repeatedly devastated the interior towns and the farm households, until but few families remain untouched by death from one or the other of these dreadful diseases. At the State Capital last winter all the public schools were closed on account of the prevalence of scarlet fever, and a winter rarely passes without leaving behind the record of some terrible epidemic in some of the smaller towns. Typhoid fever is

quite common among the families of farmers, but is not usually epidemic.

* * *

Now, this excessive liability to epidemics not only exists in Illinois, but in most of the States of the Republic, that State having been taken for purposes of illustration, as the type of an American agricultural region. From Maine to Texas these occasional outbreaks of epidemic disease are not uncommon. For those not too deeply immersed in politics to consider it, the problem of preventing this disastrous depopulation may prove not uninteresting. A study of the habits of the people shows that in a majority of cases the public health is sacrificed from an apparent notion that the stable, the out-house, and the kitchen refuse must drain into the well which furnishes the rural liquid poison known as drinking water. When it is remembered that the average well is the receptacle, or reservoir, for the underground drainage of a surface area of, say, one hundred and

fifty feet in all directions, down to the level of its bottom, we may sometimes discover that, instead of the abstraction truth, which is metaphorically alleged to lie there, the thing is material, and is a real, tangible poison.

* * *

It is doubtless true that in civilized countries epidemics are somewhat under control. We no longer beat tom-toms or make hideous noises in the streets for the purpose of frightening off the evil spirits, but many things are done equally foolish, and productive of a great deal more harm. For example, it is customary in some places to attribute almost every disease that flesh is heir to to malaria; and the unfortunate victim is dosed with quinine, and stimulated, until the blood-vessels are swollen and throbbing, and the patient, finally becoming burdensome to the doctor, is shipped off to the seashore or to the mountains, and gets well of his own accord. The amount of punishment (on account of a preconceived theory) that

the average constitution will permit without permanent injury is a never-ending source of astonishment, and bears perpetual tribute to the wisdom of the Creator. But when a case of sickness occurs in the house from any of the infectious diseases, the patient should be promptly isolated; no one should see him but the nurse and the physician; and on the termination of the case, the clothing and bedding used in the room, as well as the other textile fabrics there present, should be burned or thoroughly fumigated, according to the nature of the disease and its severity. When the patient has had small-pox, yellow-fever, or diphtheria, there is usually no difficulty in inducing sensible people to sacrifice the class of articles mentioned; but in typhoid-fever, scarlet-fever, whooping-cough, measles, and chicken-pox, there is great reluctance to either destroy or fumigate the bedding, although equally necessary.

* * *

I know well a farm-house in the country where the nearest neighbor lives a mile distant, and the

house itself is situated on a hill, where the pure country air, fresh from God's mighty alembic, blows around and about it. The barns and the cellar are well stocked; the granaries are full; the cattle low contentedly in the field; the farmer owes no man a dollar, and he has a handsome balance at the bank. But the house has only one story; the bed-chambers are mere cells, with the walls lined with surplus clothing, and in each the one small window is kept carefully closed, except during about an hour each morning, when the good house-wife opens it for an "airing." The smell of the vegetables (in which chemical changes—decomposition—are going on) in the cellar pervades every room; but neither the farmer nor his wife perceive it, long acquaintance with it having blunted their sensibility to this peculiar odor. The well is handy to the kitchen, and the outhouse is but a step away. The kitchen floor is white; no dust ever settles in the shut-up best room or the chambers, for the farmer's wife is

untiring and a sworn enemy of dirt. The farmer is devout and his wife godly, but the home is unhappy, because childless, a "mysterious dispensation of Providence" having carried off the children at successive periods, and the farmer and his wife are devotees of a quack nostrum, the alleged virtues of which are solemnly set forth in astonishingly large and clear type in the family "almanac," with the usual and customary certificates of the clergy attached. Do you know a like family? If so, it will be a christian charity to tell the master about his well, and urge him to provide a storehouse for his vegetables, and the mistress to air her bed-chambers. This done, the next census may not show all the gain in population at the South, (where the use of cistern water is more common and the houses are ventilated,) and quack nostrums may then in truth become a drug upon the market.

* * *

I am inclined to think that the Malthusian laughs in his sleeve when he contemplates the popular

practice in cases of whooping cough, scarlet-fever, and measles, for he knows that as soon as any little patient has passed the dangerous stage of either of these diseases, he will be allowed to run about the street to infect other children, and that in the number thus infected, death may claim a royal harvest. Epidemics of scarlet-fever and the infantile diseases may be kept alive indefinitely by a careful exposure of the children in this way ; and if this fails, the young convalescent may be sent to Sunday school. He will there have opportunity to infect a great many more little ones than he possibly could on the street. Seriously, and without satire, there is a most lamentable laxity in the matter of quarantining or confining indoors, until all danger of communicability is passed, children suffering from these contagious diseases. The physician in attendance should be consulted on this point, and his advice followed.

* * *

A physician is certainly culpable who, in the light of modern teaching, allows a patient with a

contagious disease to infect the remainder of the children in the household without warning. All such patients should be carefully isolated, and the other children kept out of harm's way, or, what is better, sent away from the house until the danger is over. Then let the bedding and clothing used about the patient be destroyed, the bed-room fumigated, and if there is paper on the wall, let it be removed and newly papered; have the carpet steamed and cleansed, and all reasonable precautions will have been taken. The temptation is strong upon me, before closing, to write here how much the power of whooping-cough, as a slayer of children, is underrated; but I shall not do so now. It is not intended to give too much information in this little book; for it is not well to give or receive too much cake for a shilling.

MODERATION.

In beginning my remarks, I took occasion to say that the relative duration of the vital spark is in inverse ratio to its intensity, and implied that if one wished long life, he must moderate his emotions and passions. It is equally necessary to be moderate in everything. Pope said:

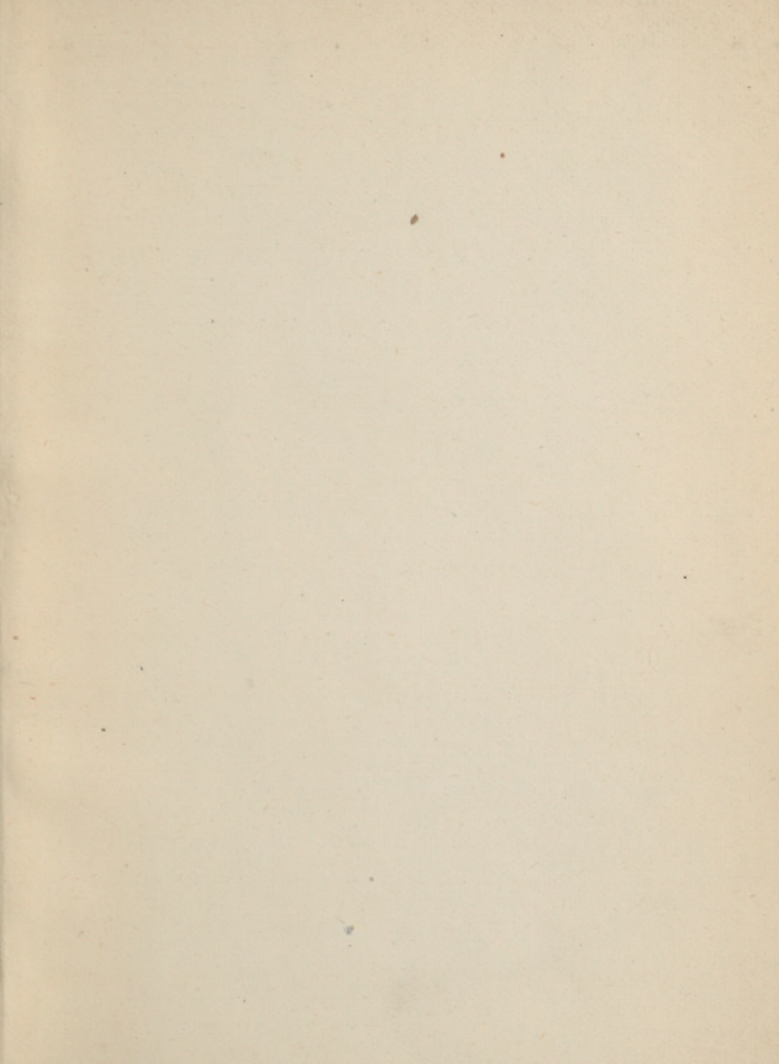
“Reason’s whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words—health, peace, and competence.
But health consists with temperance alone,
And peace, O virtue! peace is all thine own.”

Montaigne, while recognizing the law of moderation, bewailed its necessity. “Both our “spiritual and corporal physicians,” he says, “as “by compact betwixt themselves, can find no “other way to cure, nor other remedy for the “infirmities of the body and the soul, than what “is oft times worse than the disease, by torment- “ing us more, and by adding to our misery and “pain.”

Those who have lived to the greatest age in modern times have usually been those who have been moderate in all things pertaining to their daily life. Temperate eating and drinking, placid temper, moderate work, and moderate play are the talismanic actions that open the gate to the way of long life. May you, dear reader, walk therein, and I echo from my heart the toast of Rip Van Winkle:

“May you live long and prosper!”

THE END.



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