

THE FAMILY DOCTOR.

For Sleeplessness.

A physician writing to the *Christian Union* on the subject of sleeplessness, remarks:

Physicians who used to prescribe bromide of soda or potassium for sleeplessness now urge their patients to take beef tea instead. The writer, after trying various prescriptions with little benefit, was at length so fortunate as to receive such advice. At first beef tea was used with some light bread or biscuit broken in it, sipped from a spoon as warm as it could be taken. Afterward, milk just scalded, not boiled, was substituted, and, to make it more easy of digestion a teaspoonful of lime water was added to a half tumbler of milk. To facilitate matters, a pocket-stove with an alcohol lamp, or an arrangement for the gas-fixture should be at hand. If neither beef tea or milk can be easily procured, hot water with an infusion of hops or mint may be substituted, or even hot water alone will quiet restlessness and induce sleep. A darkened room that the moonbeams cannot enter, a little fresh air from an open fire-place or window, are valuable assistants in making the sleep continuous.

When once the habit of wakefulness is broken up, the beef or milk may be taken cold, but not iced. If you are always a poor sleeper, it will be well to continue this late supper as a permanent thing in your daily life.

Provide for it in the case of aged and delicate persons who may be under your roof; and as the troubles of life appear most weighty when scanned in the midnight hours, you may be able to lighten the load for the rest of their journey.

The Care of Infants in Summer.

The New York board of health recommend the following rules for the summer in regard to the nursing of infants:

Over-feeding does more harm than anything else; nurse an infant a month or two old every two or three hours.

Nurse an infant of six months and over five times in twenty-four hours, and no more.

If an infant is thirsty, give it pure water, or barley water; no sugar.

In relation to the feeding of infants, the board advises:

Boil a teaspoonful of powdered barley (ground in coffee grinder) and one half pint of water, with a little salt, for fifteen minutes, strain, then mix it with half as much boiled milk, add a lump of white sugar, size of a walnut, and give it lukewarm from a nursing bottle. Keep bottle and mouth-piece in a bottle of water when not in use, to which a little soda may be added.

For infants five or six months old give half barley water and half boiled milk, with salt and a lump of sugar.

For older infants give more milk than barley water.

For infants very costive, give oatmeal instead of barley. Cook and strain as before. When the breast milk is only half enough, change off between breast milk and this prepared food.

The Solemn Mexican Dress.

I entered at 10 o'clock p. m. a hall in a large old house in a town in Mexico, and took a seat on one of the many chairs that were ranged round the hall with their backs to the wall. The hall was spacious, and few people had yet arrived. In one corner of the hall sat a man before a small round table, on which were placed some plates full of almonds and raisins. Some ladies were seated at the other end of the room, attentively watching this man and the entrance door by turns. Their curiosity was soon relieved, for one by one the crowd poured in, and each one took his or her seat on one of the chairs against the wall. The aspect of the whole thing was ridiculously solemn. Suddenly one young man, less bashful than the rest, walked up to one of the almond and raisin-watching ladies and began to dance with her. Others followed his example, and to the slowest-timed waltz I have ever seen, gloomily moved here and there through the room. They had come there for pleasure, I for business; but what pleasure these young men and girls found in moving about the room so slowly and sedately I shall, I fear, never be able to find out. As each cavalier led his partner to her seat he would look at the almond and raisin president and very gravely nod; then, his "bein aimee" being seated, he would purchase a plateful of these delicacies and always present them to her. She would place them in her pocket-handkerchief and wait for the next beau. As far as I could make out the game seemed to be who would get the most almonds and raisins, and I shrewdly suspect that the fruits were

returned to the president, and each plateful represented a certain amount of money for the danseuse.—*Galveston News.*

A PRIZED WOOD.

Interesting Facts About the Mahogany Tree.

The mahogany tree, says the *Lumber World*, is a native of the West Indies, the Bahamas, and that portion of Central America that lies adjacent to the Bay of Honduras, and has also been found in Florida. It is stated to be of moderately rapid growth, reaching its full maturity in about two hundred years. Full grown, it is one of the monarchs of tropical America. Its trunk, which often exceeds forty feet in length, and six in diameter, and massive arms, rising to a lofty height, and spreading with graceful sweep over immense spaces, covered with beautiful foliage, bright, glossy, light and airy, clinging, so long to the spray as to make it almost an evergreen—present a rare combination of loveliness and grandeur. The leaves are small, delicate and polished like those of the laurel. The fruit is a hard, woody capsule, oval, not unlike the head of a turkey in size and shape, and contains five cells, in each of which are inclosed about fifteen seeds.

The mahogany tree was not discovered until the end of the sixteenth century, and was not brought into European use till nearly a century later. The first mention of it is that it was used in the repair of some of Sir Walter Raleigh's ships at Trinidad, in 1597. Its finely variegated tints were admired, but in that age the dream of El Dorado caused matters of more value to be neglected. The first that was brought to England was about 1724, a few planks having been sent to Dr. Gibbons of London, by a brother who was a West Indian captain. The doctor was erecting a house, and gave the planks to the workmen, who rejected them as being too hard. The doctor then had a candle-box made of the wood, his cabinet maker also complaining of the timber. But, when finished, the box became an object of general curiosity and admiration. He had one bureau, and her grace of Buckingham had another, made of this beautiful wood, and the despised mahogany now became a prominent article of luxury, and at the same time raised the fortunes of the cabinet-maker by whom it had been so little regarded. Since that time it has taken a leading rank among the ornamental woods, having come to be considered indispensable where luxury is intended to be indicated.

A few facts will furnish a tolerably distinct idea of the size of this splendid tree. The mahogany lumbermen, having selected a tree, surround it with a platform about twelve feet above the ground, and cut it above the platform. Some twelve or fifteen feet of the largest part of the trunk are thus lost. Yet a single log not infrequently weighs from six or seven to fifteen tons, and sometimes measures as much as seventeen feet in length and four and one-half and five and one-half feet in diameter, one tree furnishing two, three, or four such logs. Some trees have yielded 12,000 superficial feet, and at an average price pieces have sold for \$15,000. Messrs. Broadwoods, London piano-forte manufacturers paid £3000 for three logs, all cut from one tree, and each about fifteen feet long and more than three feet square. The tree is cut at two seasons of the year—in the autumn and about Christmas time. The trunk, of course, furnishes timber of the largest dimensions, but that from the branches is preferred for ornamental purposes, owing to its closer grain and more variegated color.

In low and damp soil its growth is rapid, but the most valuable trees grow slowly among rocks on sterile soil, and seem to gather compactness and beauty from the very struggle which they make for an existence. In the Bahamas, in the most desolate regions, once flourished that curiously veined and much esteemed variety once known in Europe as "Madeira wood," but which has long since been exterminated. Jamaica, also, which used to be a fruitful source of mahogany, and whence in 1753 not less than 251,000 feet were shipped, is now almost depleted. That which is now furnished from there is very inferior, pale and porous, and is less esteemed than that of Cuba, San Domingo, or Honduras.

Even the feeble rays of the moon have an influence upon plants. In a paper read to the Paris Academy of Sciences Musset states that plants very sensitive to light and heat were grown from seeds in pots occupying a very dark place. They were then on three nights exposed to direct moonlight, when the stems have bent over toward the moon and followed it in its course.

Confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

Mr. Ernest Giles, the explorer, contemplates organizing a grand final expedition to traverse the remaining unexplored portions of the Australian continent.

We read, says the *Scientific American*, every now and then of cases in which burglars are supposed to have rendered their victims unconscious by holding cloths wet with chloroform to keyholes before entering an apartment. Of course, the absurdity of such a fiction is apparent. Whether sleepers can pass from natural to chloroform sleep if it is held near the face is still a question.

Drs. Sitherwood and Hanlan have expressed the belief that excessive mental work produces a rapid decay of the teeth. As an explanation of the alleged fact, another writer suggests that the overworked brain steals all for the phosphates and leaves none for the teeth, or else that too much study causes the general health to deteriorate. The *Lancet* doubts if excessive mental work can of itself induce serious disease, but thinks it more probable that ill effects result from the worry—which wears upon the system like friction upon the engine—attending such work.

As to position in writing, a German professor maintains that, while the normal distance between the eyes and the desk ought to be twenty-five centimetres, (approximately, ten inches), it is but rarely that this distance is actually observed, in very many instances no more than seven centimetres (2.75 inches) being permitted. From this close application of the head to the desk, and the circumstance that in most cases the body in writing is twisted to the right, thereby causing an elevation of the right shoulder, a curvature of the spine (developed to from thirty to forty per cent. among girls) is not infrequently brought about. It was further remarked that of the children examined only ten per cent. were naturally short-sighted, and that, as among wild races defective vision is a matter of great rarity, the trouble in question was a product of modern civilization and the existing system of class teaching.

Opium Cigars.

There are few persons outside of those in police circles and dealers in articles consumed by opium users that are aware how widespread is the use of this noxious drug in San Francisco. Druggists can tell of the numerous calls for it in liquid and powdered form, and the police have only a partial knowledge of the number of places where opium smoking is surreptitiously carried on. Cigarettes impregnated with the fumes of the drug have long been sold, and in this way the habit of opium smoking has often been unconsciously acquired. If the several forms mentioned in which the drug is made to supply the demand were not enough, another and more insinuating at the same time as innocent in appearance as any, has been introduced. Probably some of the readers of this item have recently seen small, elegantly made boxes, an inch or an inch and a half wide by two inches long filled with the tiniest of cigars—toy cigars they look like—much better made than the larger article. If curiosity had prompted an examination these little cigars would have been found to have been made of the best tobacco and very fragrantly scented. These small specimens of the cigar-makers' craft are the new form in which the appetite of opium smoking is indulged in in a more open manner than it can be usually followed by the devotees of the pernicious habit. Opium is too costly to be mixed with the tobacco of these small cigars, and it is a question if it is not in a more poisonous shape than when used in the way of a liquid such as laudanum, or a powder, or in the usual pasty form. The tobacco—and good tobacco is used—is put in a brazier and held over burning opium, until the weed is thoroughly impregnated with the fumes of the drug, and it is a question if it is not stronger thus smoked than when inhaled direct from the pipe. Those who know the terrible effects of drinking anything from a glass "smoked" with tobacco smoke can probably appreciate the strength of these innocent looking small cigars when saturated with the fumes of opium. These cigars are not sold by tobacconists, and are difficult to get even by those who use them. They are sold on the quiet, so it is said, by Chinamen who are strictly "no sabee" to any one they are not certain of. Two sizes were shown the writer, one an inch long and over an eighth of an inch in diameter, the other nearly half an inch long and proportionately thicker, both kinds well made. A small mouth-piece, similar to a cigarette holder, accompanied the box, which contained fifteen cigars.—*San Francisco Call.*

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

The latest in ordnance is a French gun, twenty-nine and a half feet long, that will put a ball through fifteen inches of steel armor at a distance of seven and a half miles. By the time England and France go to war they can probably remain at home and fight one another across the Channel.

It is marvelous how sheep and wool growing have increased in the United States within the past fifteen years. In 1880 there were only about 23,000,000 sheep in the United States. We now have nearly 50,000,000. In 1860 the wool clip amounted to only 60,000,000 pounds; to-day it is nearly 300,000,000 pounds—an increase within this period of over two-fold of sheep and five-fold in the production of wool, giving unmistakable evidence of the advance in this industry.

The tornadoes with which portions of the Mississippi basin are tormented are frequent, but their seeming number is added to by every violent wind gust that topples down improperly built chimneys and "balloon-frame" houses. The frequent destruction of such cheap structures in the West is no proof, according to the *Chicago Times*, that this part of the country is peculiarly subject to dangerous winds; it only shows that it is subject to a sham mode of house building.

The canal which M. De Lesseps proposes to cut from the Mediterranean sea to the Great Desert of Sahara will cost \$30,000,000, but will redeem over 100,000,000 acres of barren land to agriculture. Gen. Fremont has a similar scheme for the redemption of the barren lands of Arizona, by cutting a canal through from the Gulf of California, or diverting the waters of the Colorado river upon the plains. It is said to be practicable, but, as the land will not be needed for years, the enormous expense makes it impracticable.

A florist near London recently sued the owner of some paper mills next door to him for destroying his *Marechal Niel* roses with the noxious fumes which came from his factory. For the defence several witnesses deposed that the real cause of the roses drooping was the neighborhood of the deplorable metropolitan atmosphere and neglect on the part of the nurseryman. But the roses finally carried off a verdict. The injured florist was compensated by \$1250 for his desecrated garden, but the judge plainly hinted to him that he better remove his nursery garden to a place not adjacent either to London or to paper mills emitting hydrochloric acid fumes, and not surrounded by "high brick walls."

A physician, writing in one of the magazines, says that the health of American women is very bad, compared with that of their sisters in other lands. He states that for thirty years past he has been in the habit of questioning travelers, missionaries, and foreigners with regard to the health of the women of other climes and races, civilized and uncivilized. In no single instance has he been told that women are in worse health than men. He attributes the ill-health of American women to their dress, and, particularly, to the use of corsets, tight shoes, heavy skirts, and to the insufficient clothing of all the limbs. If what he says of tight-lacing is true, or even near the truth, the practice is even a greater evil than it is generally supposed to be.

Muley Hassan, sultan of Morocco and "Absolute Ruler of True Believers," is probably one of the richest sovereigns in the world. Unlike other millionaires, however, he does not invest his wealth in profitable securities, but, like a monarch of the Thousand and One Nights, he hoards it in underground vaults, with which the greatest bank and trust vaults of civilized cities cannot be compared. The treasures of gold, silver and gems are buried a hundred feet deep, surrounded by tenfold walls of alternate stone and metal, fifty feet thick; they are reached only through a subterranean labyrinth of the most intricate description, and are guarded by a band of armed Africans who, having once entered this service, never ascend to the light of day. They live and die in an Aladdin's garden.

The secretary of the interior rules that lands within the bounds of the grant voted twelve years ago to the Texas Pacific railroad cannot be pre-empted, or taken up under the homestead law. This grant includes fourteen million acres. The district lies closed to all human endeavor until Congress repeals the act of grant. But this area is but a slice of those which have been locked up. Since

PEARLS OF THOUGHT.

It is better for a young man to blush than to turn pale.

The usual fortune of complaint is to excite contempt more than pity.

A good man is kinder to his enemy than bad men are to their friends.

There is no substitute for thoroughgoing, ardent, and sincere earnestness.

The claims of habit are generally too small to be felt till they are too strong to be broken.

All other knowledge is hurtful to him who has not the science of honesty and good nature.

How wise we are in thought! How weak in practice! Our very virtue, like our will, is—nothing.

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough; but riches, fineness, is as poor as winter to him that ever fears he shall be poor.

If it be difficult to rule thy anger, it is wise to prevent it; avoid, therefore, all occasions of falling into wrath, or guard thyself against them whenever they occur.

There is but one solid pleasure in life, and that is our duty. How miserable, then, how unwise, how unpardonable are they who make that one a pain.

It is not merely selfish, but wicked to live too exclusively and exclusively in our little worlds. It is a crime against self in its true sense to live a life of loneliness and isolation. The mind becomes disorganized and preys on itself, when it is, as it were, hide-bound by the neglect of social obligations.

In a Moorish Shop.

The old spelling (gross-ery) would certainly fit a modern Oriental provision store, if the following is a fair specimen. Mrs. Elizabeth Murray, describing a Moorish merchant and his stock in trade, as she saw them in Tangiers, North Africa, says that, "In the morning the Moor unlocks his box in the wall—for such is his shop—and jumps in among his merchandise. There he sits cross legged in the midst of his wares, offers them for sale and endeavors to attract customers. His stock cannot be described in honest truth as very tempting in its nature. It consists of heaps of musty raisins, coarse sugar plentifully mingled with flies, stale leathery figs, snuff and several other odds and ends mixed up together without any attempt at regularity or order. There are also several large jars of rancid butter, the presence of which is announced by the odor even before one comes in sight of the shop. The article is popular, notwithstanding (or perhaps because of) its staleness, and bears many visible signs of the demand which it has excited in the mark of the merchant's fingers in all directions upon the jars. It is an old saying that travelers see strange things, and those that only open their eyes may witness not only many novelties, but also the novel uses to which familiar things may be put. A carotid cat, for example, sits at the merchant's side, and appears to be in the enjoyment of that state of perfectly satisfied repose which individuals of the feline tribe appear to appreciate so much. The cat answers the purpose of soap, water and towel to the Moor, who carefully wipes his hands on her back between each dispensation to his waiting customers!"

A Lost Bond.

One of the prominent treasury officers told me a story about a former official of that department, who had a desk in the broad division, says a Washington correspondent. Anderson was in the habit of coming into his office promptly on time each morning, removing his boots and placing slippers on his feet. Then he would settle down to work. Millions of dollars worth of bonds passed through his hands, and his honesty was undoubted. Well, one day a bond of large denomination was missing, and the entire division was thrown into great excitement. Desks were ransacked, floors were swept, and every nook and corner of the division peered into, but still the bond was missing. As the hour approached for closing the department, the excitement ran up to fever heat, and Anderson was fully as agitated as any of his associates. After the vigorous search had been pursued for a long time, Anderson made up his mind that he would go home; so he reached down for one of his boots, and as he drew it on he felt something crisp inside. Then the whole matter of the disappearance of the bond became as clear as daylight. He had thrown the bond into the ample recesses of his boot in a fit of absent-mindedness, mistaking it, as he afterward explained, for the basket ordinarily used for the reception of money. It was a good many days before Anderson heard the last of the "bond story."