Home Reading.

FATHER'S A DRUNKARD AND MOTHER IS DEAD.

Out in the gloomy night sadly I roam,
I have no mother dear, no pleasant home;
Nobody cares for me—no one would cry,
Even if poor little Bessie should die.
Barefoot and tired I've wandered all day,
Asking for work—but I'm too small, they say;
On the damp ground I must now lay my head—
"Father's a drunkard and mother is dead!"

CHORUS.

Mother, oh! why did you leave me alone,
With no one to love me, no friends and no home?
Dark is the night, and the storm rages wild—
God pity Bessie, the drunkard's lone child.

We were so happy till father drank rum,
Then all our sorrows and troubles begun;
Mother grew paler and wept every day,
Baby and I were too hungry to play.
Slowly they faded, and one summer night
Found their dear faces all silent and white;
Then, with big tears slowly dropping I said:
"Father's a drunkard and mother is dead!"

CHORUS.—Mother, oh! why, &c.

Oh! if the "temp'rance men" only could find
Poor wretched father and talk very kind—
If they could stop him from drinking—why, then,
I should be so very happy again!
Is it too late "men of temp'rance," please try,
Or poor little Bessie may soon starve and die.
All day long I've been begging for bread—
"Father's a drunkard and mother is dead!"

CHORUS.—Mother, oh! why, &c.

CAUSES OF INSANITY.

AN INTERESTING PAPER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF AN ENGLISH ASYLUM.

Dr. Clouston, physician superintendent of the Edinburgh asylum, in his annual report says:

Glancing over the summary of assigned causes, it is at once seen that intemperance stands out as by far the most frequent. It alone caused forty eight of 260, or about twenty per cent of the cases. Much is properly said about the prevention of diseases nowadays. Most unquestionably the sum total of the mental diseases in our city might have been lessened in that amount it the laws of nature had been better obeyed.

Fifty of the cases thus resulting from drinking and excesses being paupers, each costing £27 a year to the public rates, over £1,300 will have been paid for one year's production of lunacy from very preventable causes, and, of course, this takes no account of the cost of the old incurable cases already in the asylum from the same cause.

I am quite sure that intemperance was the remote cause of the disease in more of the cases; but, even allowing for those, we cannot put this down as accounting in any way for more than one in four in all cases of insanity.—In assigning intemperance as the cause of insanity in a number of cases, two things must not be forgotten.

The first is, that the taking of stimulants may not be a cause at all, but merely a symptom of the brain disorder; and, as a matter of fact, it is often one of the early symptoms in many cases.

The second thing to be kept in mind is that there are many cases in which it is the real cause of the mental disorder, but the mental balance has always been so unstable and the brain working so easily overset that a very little alcohol indeed will bring on an attack of insanity in these persons, just as in those same people fright or a little over excitement will upset their sanity. This is the class of persons who, in my experience, get upset by religious revivals.

The resetting and recuperative power that is really an essential part of a healthy, nervous system, whereby the effect of not too long continued overeating or overdrinking, overfeeding or overwork, are at once recovered from, is wanting in these people. Nature provides that short excesses do not do much harm to healthy people. It is a poor sort of boiler whenever the exact pressure needed for its daily work is exceeded.

Before I leave this subject I may mention that I have not reckoned in any way the mere drinking craving or the inability to resist it, as constituting insanity. I believe this may or may not be a real insanity in different cases, but it was from developed and unmistakable mental alienation that all my patients suffered. When the causes of insanity of our eighty-four private patients are compared with those of the 222 paupers, the difference is most striking, and entirely bears out the general law already indicated.

Of those eighty-eight private patients, mental causes produced the disease in about thirty-eight, physical being only twelve per cent. under them, while in the paupers they were just one-third as numerous. These facts tend strongly to show that the higher in the social scale we go the more strongly do purely mental and moral shocks act in upsetting a healthy mental balance, and that those causes operate more powerfully on the lower classes of a town population than an agricultural.

A wonderful microscopic watch has been presented to Mme. MacMahon by the Ecole de l'Horlogeriy at Besancon. It is so small that to tell the hour a glass of high magnifying power is needed. The Duc d'Aumale was present when this fairy jewel was handed to the Marshal, and related how his ancestor, the Duc de Penthievre, wore watches in his vest buttons The Duke subsequently ordered a set of Lilliputian chronometers for shirt and wrist studs, which will be ready in time for the Exhibition of 1878.

A CHINESE WAY OF DEALING WITH CORRUPT OFFICERS.

The following extract from a China paper gives a picture of paternal government in that country, in which the precept of not sparing the rod is carried into practice in a way which ought to strike terror into the hearts of the official hierarchy. The bamboo has long been known as an effective instrument for governing the masses and the correction of offenders against the Chinese code, but there is something novel as well as startling in the idea of a degraded official being made to hold out his hand for a hundred blows to be administered on the palms as a preliminary castigation for malversation.

If such a mode of dealing with official malpractices were to become general we might soon hope to see a notable improvement in the administrative departments which in China are so notoriously bad and corrupt.

"We learn that one of the mandarins here, had swindled the government out of a large sum of money when making purchases of warlike materials at Hong Kong during the Formosan affair, was brought up for trial before the redoubtable Ting the Fautal. On the fourth of August this degraded official was subjected, as an introduction to something severe in store for him, to a flogging of one hundred blows on the palms of his hands. He was to have been bambooed in the usual way as other criminals on the breech but for his bitter crying and vehement entreaties, coupled with the fact of his not being in very good health. The defaulting official is surnamed Man, and is related to a Taoutal of that name who was degraded at the same time with the Viceroy Ying Han in the Waising affair."

GOOD SENSE NEEDED.

No branch of business can be successfully prosecuted without labor, and it is equally true that a fair amount of intelligence is needed, in order to succeed. Some people have an idea that anybody can run a farm, whether they have any intelligence or not; but this is a great mistake.

Farming means more than merely following a plow, or plodding from day to day without forethought or system. That many people are failures as farmers is true; but in nearly every case the failure arises not from a want of good soil or good markets, but from a want of proper application of the means within reach of every man who will avail himself of them. A man cannot run a farm without system; and he must know that his time is money, that his land will not produce without proper cultivation, that different pieces of the same farm are adapted to different crops, and that every seed must be put in the ground at the proper season.

It is just as logical to talk of an ignorant school-teacher as an ignorant farmer. By this we do not mean merely book knowledge; for some men have more practical sense in running a farm who cannot read or write than he who farms it in algebraic style and in the dead languages. Theoretical knowledge is good when made practical; but when held as a mere form of knowledge it is worse than no ideas at all. An educated farmer is not a man so much of books as of good hard sense. He avails himself of the experience of others, learns by observation, corrects his own mistakes, and lays his plans in accordance with all the facts within his reach.

These are the men who succeed, and make farming a business which yields its rich harvests and blesses mankind with the fruit of his intelligence and industry.

LEATHER IN ONE HOUR.

Wonderful are the changes that have been effected of late years in the manufacture of leather by the use of chemicals and machinery, in place of the old fashioned tan pits and the slow maulpulation of the currier and tanner.—If some of our leather manufacturers could be resurrected—men who were accustomed to soaking their hides for years, and turning them assiduously at certain seasons—how they would stare to see the present process! But every day we hear of something new in this direction.

A joint stock company was recently formed in Detroit for the purpose of tanning leather in an hour. We give the information for what it is worth; but it certainly does look like sleight-of-hand. The process is a chemical one performed by the action of certain inexpensive materials, the compounding of which in the right proportions is a secret. It is claimed that robes, tanned with the hair on, are soft as the finest wool; hides of the deer, horse, dog, etc., are smooth and soft, while calf and kip show the texture and grain which good shoemakers most admire. No bark is required except to give the proper color to the leather.

Bark is worth from eight to nine dollars a cord, and about two hundred cords are required to tan one thousand hides by the common method. Two cords would be sufficient to give the proper color to the same number of hides, and the saving in this item will be enormous.—We understand that the company are turning out from two thousand to three thousand hides a month.

How the article is wearing we have not been able to ascertain, but shall watch the result with interest.

Mr. George Dawson, in a lecture at Birmingham, England, said that the office of a man's house was not only given to shelter, food and meat, but also to surround his children with those fair sights and sounds by which the sense of beauty might be developed. There were houses in that town in which not a poem was read nor a song sung throughout the year, and yet people wondered why their children were vulgar. The beauty of towns was one of the most neglected duties, and one of the most deserving. If a town was beautiful, people took a pride in it, liked to live in it, and were sorry to leave it. In Birmingham they wanted a new society to be called the Beauty Society.