

Miscellaneous.

CURE OF SOULS AND OF BODIES.

We may know what we mean, but we can never tell exactly what our typographical friends will allow us to say, and when they do not go the length, as some, in pure pastime, will do, of inserting and taking out negatives, so as to improve the sense of the text, there often still remains in the manipulated copy or form a fine field for the critical faculty of Readers, which it would be quite a pity to trespass upon by "corrections of the press." The press has been the bulwark of civilization; are we now become so free a people in Canada, as to lend to the inference that it has done its work in that line? We will trust not, at any rate. The Doctors present, here, a noticeable contrast; often high minded men, they are yet remarkable for putting forward few medicaments for the mind. While far from averring that they do not understand a good deal of the diseases of the body, one would be pleased sometimes to see the highly benevolent spirit of their walk exercised in the way of advice on points in the conduct of life. They, happily, as a body, have not yet thrown Christianity overboard. Take the broad question of registered or patent medicines. What sort of test is mere popularity of their value? Does immense advertising make a medicine good? Certainly when a medicine is offered so widely, it is to the interest of him who sets it forth to make it as good as he can. The stake he has in its success should be sufficient inducement for him to give a large, if not undivided, attention to its preparation. But here we must call a halt. He is generally exceedingly anxious for a rapid sale, and so, is apt to believe he can extend his market by declaring that his specific can cure everything, and also by prescribing, on the label, great and frequent doses. Nothing could really be more suicidal as to the true interests of his undertaking. Either let proper, that is moderate, doses be prescribed, with a general admission that special cases cannot be met without personal advice, and we believe the dose would sometimes be scarcely more than a tenth of what we are now asked to swallow; or let all such medicine-takers be warned to imbibe only the doses they find by experience to suit their case. But so warned they will not be, we may be well assured, either tomorrow or next month. The ordinary popular history is, that good citizens make themselves uncomfortable by over dosing, and then discontinue the remedy for good. A common interest might, one would think, be established between medicine-man and client. There will be no need to put the thing forward in a diluted form, for all such panaceas are quite dear enough already. Rather let us find the dose that suits our case and determine not to exceed it. Testimonials should be sifted and if possible reported upon by some authority not yet discovered by the pandits of the press.

HOMO.

THE NECESSITY OF PLENTY OF SLEEP.

A writer in *Scribner*, considering "The Relations of Insanity to Modern Civilization," speaks of the loss of sleep as a prominent cause of insanity. He says: "During every moment of consciousness the brain is in activity. The peculiar process of cerebration, whatever that may consist of, is taking place; thought after thought come forth, nor can we help it. It is only when the peculiar connection or chain of connection on one brain-cell with another is broken and consciousness fades away into the dreamless land of perfect sleep, that the brain is at rest. In this state it recuperates its exhausted energy and power, and stores them up for future need. The period of wakefulness is one of constant wear. Every thought is generated at the expense of brain-cells, which can be fully replaced only by periods of properly regulated repose. If, therefore, these are not secured by sleep; if the brain, through over-stimulations, is not left to recuperate, its energy becomes exhausted, debility, disease, and, finally, disintegration supervene. Hence, the story is almost always the same; for weeks and months before the indications of active insanity appear, the patient has been anxious, worried and wakeful, not sleeping more than four or five hours out of the 24. The poor brain, unable to do its constant work, begins to waver, to show signs of weakness or aberration; hallucinations or delusions hover around like floating shadows in the air, until finally disease comes, and

"plants his siege
Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds
With many legions of strange fantasies,
Which in their throng and press to that last bounds
Confound themselves."

THE SECRET OUT

An American weekly newspaper—*The American Manufacturer*—which calls itself "the leading Iron and Manufacturers' Journal in the United States," has an article why our friends on the other side still protect hardware goods with a prohibitive tariff, while so many American manufacturers are exporting goods to England, and so many American journals are boasting of the lead they have taken from us in the commercial world. But the *American Manufacturer* is careful to explain that "the goods we do export to England are either those which we are enabled to make cheaply by use of improved machinery, those recommended by their fine appearance and workmanship—as our inimitable castings, and those which meet with sale simply on the ground of their superior quality, such as axes and some other tools." And, further, our transatlantic contemporary is good enough to inform us that any one looking through the list of the United States exports will not find "any of those articles made of iron or steel which are but a few removes in the process of manufacture from raw material, such as pig iron, bar iron, scrap iron of various kinds, plate iron, beams, channels, rails, or Bessemer ingots or rails. These articles form the great bulk of our iron manufacture, their total footing up in millions of tons, but not one of them can be profitably exported to England, nor is it probable that they can be for several years to come." Now such a confession as this is doubtless good for the soul of the *American Manufacturer*, but that journal still seems to sail along with the calm conviction that the English manufacturer is fast asleep, and is going to allow the bread to be taken out of his mouth, or else is too much engaged in protecting British interests in Asia Minor, and settling quarrels between Bashi-Bazouks and Greeks, to think of such mundane matters as the quality and price of his goods. Never was a greater mistake. American competition has been the saviour of our manufacturing reputation. No longer do we go along in the old way, but on every hand may be found employers improving their processes of manufacture, putting down new and improved machinery, and spending capital and brain-power to make their goods superior to those of their transatlantic rivals. Nor have they been unsuccessful; and we do not doubt that in a very few years' time American journalists will have to find something else upon which to employ their facile pens than the imaginary way they have taken Great Britain's place as a manufacturing country. Hampered by its silly protective policy, and burthened by the ill-doing of its professional politicians, America is terribly handicapped in commercial rivalry. The writer, a few days ago, mentioned his views to one of the largest hardware manufacturers in the United States, who called upon him in the way of business. Said this gentleman, with evident sincerity, "I guess you are right; if you are a prophet—and I think you are—in ten years' time there will be no hardware goods exported from America to England." This is a fact for the *American Manufacturer* to make a note of.—*Martineau & Smith's Hardware Trade Circular*.

INFLAMMABILITY OF SEWER GAS.

Editor *Scientific Canadian*.

I can corroborate the evidence of your correspondent J. S. that appeared in this month's number of your paper, as to the inflammability of sewer gas. Some years ago, while making repairs to the plumbing of the old stone house corner of Alexander and Dorchester sts., I had removed the sink and broken the connection between waste pipe of sink and drain, and on placing the candle near the mouth of the drain, in order to look into it, I was surprised by the gas in the drain taking fire; it burned for a few seconds with a bluish flame, which gradually receded into the drain until it became extinct. The drain was an old one, and to the best of my recollection, terminated in a cesspit. I never heard of a similar case, until that of your correspondent came under my notice. I think sewer gas as ordinarily met with, is not inflammable, but that old drains, especially when connected with unventilated cesspits, should contain an inflammable gas, is in my opinion not to be wondered at.

Yours,

J. W. HUGHES.

Montreal, April 21, 1879.