

that he was laboring under pulmonary difficulties, and that whisky had been prescribed for him, and asking whether it was useful in such cases. His friend replied plainly that he could not see that in any case coming under his observation any benefit had been derived from it.

There are many eminent medical authorities in this country and in Europe who disapprove entirely of alcoholic medication, and some of them denounce it in strong terms. It will be interesting to see how surely, though slowly, this view of the effect of alcohol in medical practice is gaining ground in the profession.—*Independent.*

THE LAKE-DWELLERS OF EUROPE.

BY PROF. HENRY M. BAIRD.

Some of the most interesting results which the researches of antiquarians have recently attained are those that throw light upon the habits and modes of life of the earliest inhabitants of Europe who have left behind them any trace of their existence. The most ancient of profane historians, Herodotus, when describing a certain tribe of Eastern Europe, against whom the Persians sent a force, mentions among the clans whom the general found himself unable to subdue, the dwellers upon Lake Prasias. "Their manner of life," he says, "is the following: Platforms supported on tall piles stand in the middle of the lake, which are approached from the land by a single narrow bridge. At the first, the piles which bear up the platforms were fixed in their places by the whole body of citizens, but since that time the custom that has prevailed about fixing them is this: they are brought from a hill called Orbelus and every man drives in three of them for each wife that he marries. Now the men have all many wives apiece, and this is the way in which they live. Each has his own hut, wherein he dwells, upon one of the platforms, and each has also a trap-door giving access to the lake beneath; and their wont is to tie their baby children by the foot with a string, to save them from rolling into the water. They feed their horses and their other beasts upon fish, which abound in the lake to such a degree that a man has only to open his trap-door and to let down a basket by a rope into the water, and then to wait a very short time, when he draws it up quite full of them."

Doubtless the majority of readers of this account a few years ago regarded it as an extravagant story which the credulity of the writer had allowed him to insert in his

great work. What would their astonishment have been had they been informed that the singular mode of life here described as practised upon a solitary lake in Posonia, was in fact all but universally prevalent upon the continent. From the lakes and fiords of the Scandinavian peninsulas to Switzerland and the Danube, the earliest inhabitants, driven out by the Celts, have left the traces of their existence. Deep in the muddy bottoms have been found the remains of the piles which once supported their rude huts. In one case the very bridge was discovered that gave them access to the land. The bottom, under and around the dwellings, is found to be strewn with relics of that primitive age. It was before the metals were known. Even copper, the first metal employed for domestic utensils, as well as for implements of war, appears to have been, as yet undiscovered. Coarse burnt clay with scarcely an attempt at ornament, or, when greater strength of material was required, stone and bone roughly shaped, are the substances employed. Antiquarians have therefore denominated this initial period of civilization the "age of stone." Deposits of such articles of rude manufacture, as we have said, often lie several inches deep in the neighborhood of the homes of the lacustrine inhabitants. Mingled with them are the bones of the animals slain and eaten by them; for this strange people depended as much upon the chase as upon fishing for subsistence; while above them is a thick layer of mud in which no implements or bones are to be discovered—a proof of the length of time that has elapsed since the lake-dwellers were swept from the face of the earth.

Thus much we have learned of these strange builders of a remote age. But here our knowledge abruptly ends. We see that they dotted almost every lake and stream in Italy and near the Bosphorus, in Germany and in the distant north, and that everywhere they had a similar type of culture. But who they were, what name they bore, to whom they were related, to what enemies they finally succumbed—these are questions that yet remain unanswered. It is barely possible that further researches may throw some light upon the inquiry. One conclusion is probable that their settlements owed their final destruction to that all-devouring element, fire. At least, in several cases a stratum of burnt or charred timber is found covering the scanty relics which they furnish us of the long period of their existence; but whether accident or a hostile hand kindled the conflagration is uncertain.—*Christian Weekly.*