

The Ingle Nook

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DEAR Ingle Nook Friends.—The other day I was reading a book upon "The Subconscious Mind," by Dr. A. T. Schofield, a medical doctor whose studies have roamed somewhat past the field of medicine only, when I came upon the following passage, which, in consideration of the aliveness in Canada just now of the prohibition question may be of interest to you. In writing the paragraph, Dr. Schofield had not the slightest intention of entering upon temperance propaganda; the subject came up, incidentally, as an interesting phase in study of the brain.

To make the quotation clear it may be necessary to explain that the brain has three parts: 1, the "cortex," or upper brain, which governs all conscious and voluntary action; 2, the "basal ganglia," or mid-brain, which governs our habits, or acquired, reflex actions; and 3, the "medulla," or lower brain, which governs all actions performed unconsciously, whether we will them or not, such as circulation of the blood, digestion, and, to some extent, breathing.

Now for the quotation:
"Alcohol, as pointed out by Dr. Hughlings Jackson and many others, paralyzes the brain from above downwards. If a moderate amount of alcohol only be taken, paralysis does not supervene, but only general excitement of the nerve centres is seen. But if this is exceeded, symptoms of paralysis of the cortex are evident in the loss of voluntary will power and conscious control over actions, consciousness being also lost to a large extent; while at the same time the performance of the most complicated actions, singing well-known songs, or dancing well-known dances, shows the paralysis has not yet extended deeply enough to reach the mid brain or the cerebellum—the small hind brain that governs always unconsciously the equilibrium of the body. Here is an instance of this state:

"A lady engaged to play at a private concert took too much to drink at supper, and the result was, she not only kept on playing too long when she returned to the piano, but whenever her fingers rested on the keys, she started playing like an automatic musical box, and could not be stopped.

"If, now, more alcohol be taken, a complete change takes place. As the paralysis extends lower, it involves the cerebellum; and the upright position, for some time a matter of difficulty, can now no longer be maintained at all, and the victim falls down on the floor. At the same time the mid brain shares the paralysis, and all complicated though unconscious habits cease. The man no longer sings or talks or dances, but is quite still. He is now 'dead drunk,' which means that the whole of the brain is temporarily paralyzed with the exception of the medulla, which still quietly carries on the functions of life, and will continue to do so, because at this stage the man always stops drinking, and for a very curious reason. It is not because he wishes to, for his intelligent will power is long since abolished, while the craving remains; but it is simply because his arm is paralyzed, and he can no longer mechanically carry the poison to his lips. But for this thousands would die of drink every night. Their salvation consists in one simple physiological fact; the arm is paralyzed before the paralysis has had time to reach the medulla. If now, however, some kind friend pours more alcohol down the person's throat, the medulla at last succumbs, and the man is no longer dead drunk, but dead."

A little further on Dr. Schofield remarks quite casually, "Habits formed during life strongly tend to become hereditary. This is clearly seen in the love of strong drink."

If further remark is necessary, I may say that we have in our office a girl who for years has played the organ in the gaol in this city at the Sunday morning services. I have just been talking with her, and she says that ever since prohibition was brought in as a war-measure the number of prisoners in the gaol has

been greatly reduced. That this must be the case elsewhere may be judged from the fact that recently the question came up in the Ontario Legislature as to whether county gaols might not be "consolidated," that is, one made to do duty where two or three were required before, in cases where adjoining counties so agreed, the surplus buildings thus being liberated for other use.

In September women will have a chance to vote on the question. It might be well if lecturers were engaged to go about before the time of voting to give full instruction in regard to marking the ballots. The papers will, no doubt, all give such instruction in good time, but the advantage of having a lecturer is that better opportunity is afforded for immediate asking and answering of questions.

All women voters should see that their names are properly entered on the voters lists. This may be a question that all women's organizations will have to see to. The question came up at the meeting of the Interprovincial Council of Farm Women, at Winnipeg, last week, and it was found that as yet there is much confusion in regard to the matter.

By the way, Quebec, a short time ago, voted in favor of the retention of beer and wines. Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have been made by vote permanently "dry," so it is only in Ontario and British Columbia that a referendum will be taken in the fall, when the soldiers are home from overseas.

AND now another suggestion that may be of value to all who love birds, and, at the same time, would like to see our cemeteries kept in better order and made more attractive.

A movement has been started by the Audubon Society in the United States, to convert all the cemeteries of the country into bird-sanctuaries.

Don't you think that a splendid idea? In the cemeteries, if nowhere else, the dear songsters should find peace—peace in which to build their nests, unmolested, and sing their hearts out in sweet songs over the quiet graves of the dead.

So very little effort, too, would be required to do this good thing,—nothing more than the planting of trees, if there are none already, and the putting up of bird-boxes, perhaps, occasionally, some food that the birds like.

It is not hard to bring these little feathered friends about, and, once they have established their homes, they fly far a-field, repaying those who have befriended them not only by the sweetness of their songs, but by eating insects and grubs and weed seeds. The fewer the birds the more difficult the struggle the farmers and fruit-growers must have against all these pests. Were our country filled with birds there would be little need, indeed, for spray-pump and poison.—Not bird-lovers only, affirm this, but the scientists also, who have found out exactly the destruction to insects and weeds that may be brought about in one year by even one little bird.

"But the robins eat my cherries!" says one. Perhaps they do, but if you gather the cherries soon enough the birds will not have time to take off a great many. Besides, they more than make up for the bit of damage they do to the cherry crop by the great good they do otherwise.

It is said that a very good plan to protect one's fruit is to plant wild cherries, elder-berries, etc., about the confines of the orchard. The birds like the wild fruit best. . . And, just here, comes a suggestion for the proposed sanctuaries. When the trees are being planted in the cemeteries why not number among them such beautiful native trees as the wild bird-cherry and the Juneberry?

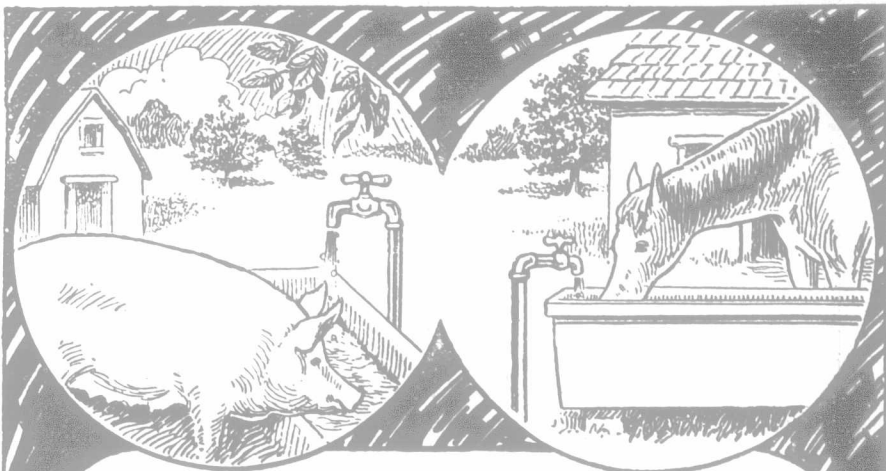
We thank the U. S. Audubon Society for their suggestion.

JUNIA.

Needle Points of Thought.

"Success is a habit of doing everything right from the start."—Edward Earle Purinton.

"By nature's great law of Equal Reaction we can help ourselves only by helping others, and whatever we do to harm others will react to harm us. This is not a dream: it is an absolute fact, and the quicker we all recognize it the better it will be for all of us."—Roger Ward Babson.



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