

happiness; and the business of the world will be carried on, even in the lowest forms, not by unthinking, unreasoning, unenjoying machines in human form, but by man worthy of the name, men with minds as capable of labor as their bodies, and having the means and opportunity of exercising the one as well as the other in that active, earnest, but *temperate* manner which seems to have been ordained as the best manner for man in all his relations. The means whereby this happy change is to be brought about, as far as our feeble power can foresee, seem to lie mainly in the general cultivation of men's minds—in other words, in the imparting of knowledge to all those capable of receiving it.—*From a Lecture on Happiness in its Relations to Work and Knowledge—By John Forbes, M.D.*

THE CHURCHYARD BEETLE.

Fraser's Magazine has lately contained a number of very interesting papers called "Episodes of Insect Life," from the last published one of which we make an extract, as follows:—

"A German, named Gleditsch, who had laid some dead moles upon the beds in his garden, whether as examples of retributive justice for their delacement of his borders and walks, or for other good reasons, or for none at all, does not appear, observed that the bodies of the little gentlemen in velvet disappeared mysteriously. He watched, and found that the agents were beetles, which having first deposited their eggs in the carcasses that were to be the provision for their larvæ, buried the bodies, so that they might be safe from predatory birds and quadrupeds. Into a glass vessel he put four of these insects, having filled it with earth, on the surface of which he placed two dead frogs. His sextons went to work, and one frog was interred in less than twelve hours—the other one on the third day. Then he introduced a dead human. The beetles soon began their labors, commencing operations by removing the earth from under the body, so as to form a cavity for its reception. Male and female got under the corpse, and pulled away at the feathers to lower it into its grave. A change then came over the spirit of the male, for he drove the female away, and worked by himself for five hours at a stretch. He lifted the body, changed its position, turned and arranged it, coming out of the hole, mounting on the dead bird, trampling on it, and then again going below to draw it down deeper still. Wearied with his incessant efforts, he came out and laid his head upon the earth beside the object of his labors, remaining motionless for a full hour, as if for a good rest. Then he crept under the earth again. On the morning of the next day, the bird was an inch and a half below the surface of the ground, but the trench remained open, the body looking as if laid out upon a bier, surrounded by a rampart of mould.

When evening came, it had sunk half an inch lower. The next day the burial was completed, the bird having been completely covered. More corpses were now supplied, and in fifty days twelve bodies were interred by the four beetles in this cemetery under a glass case."

COWS HOLDING UP THEIR MILK.

It is well known that many cows when they come in, when their calves are taken from them, will hold up their milk, sometimes to such a degree is almost to dry themselves before they will give it down.

"A few years ago," writes a correspondent of an English newspaper, "I bought a young cow which proved to be very wild, and when I took her first calf she would not give her milk. I had heard it remarked that putting a weight on the cow's back would make her give her milk down. I accordingly drove her into a stable, got a bushel of grain and put it on her back. While in this position, she had no power to hold up her milk, for it came down freely. After doing it a few times, and afterwards putting my hand on the back of the cow, it would give way and she would immediately give down her milk. The rationale of this treatment appears to be that the weight counteracts the upward tendency of the animal's muscular action.

THE SOAP PLANT.

From a paper read before the Boston Society of Natural History, it appears that the soap plant grows all over California. The leaves make their appearance about the middle of November, or about six weeks after the rainy season has fully set in; the plants never grow more than a foot high, and the leaves and stalk drop entirely off in May, though the bulbs remain in the ground all summer without decaying. It is used to wash with, in all parts of the country, and by those who know its virtues, it is preferred to the best of soap. The method of using it is merely to strip off the husk, dip the clothes into the water, and rub the bulb on them. It makes a thick lather, and smells not unlike brown soap. The botanical name of the plant is *Phalargium pomaidianum*. Besides this plant, the bark of a tree is also used in South America, for the purpose of washing. Several other plants have been used in different countries as a substitute for soap.

AFRICA.

We find by a series of levellings recently carried across the Isthmus of Suez, that instead of there being a difference of thirty feet between the level of the Red Sea and that of the Mediterranean, as has so long been believed, there is in reality little or none—an interesting fact, which will be still further verified during the progress of the railway works to be set on foot in that locality under the superintendence of Mr. R. Stephenson.—How the past and present will be brought together by having light thrown on ancient geography by modern enterprise! Besides this, an attempt is being made to solve another important problem in the Valley of the Nile. Lepsius has stated in his great work on Egypt, that this river formerly flowed at a much higher level than now, having in the course of ages worn away its bed to a depth of twenty-seven feet; and this statement being disputed, a deep pit or well is to be sunk at Heliopolis, with a view to examine the strata and deposits through which it flows, and thereby determine if any and what change has