

of an unusual share of mental and bodily vigour, is only too likely to induce serious disorder. As in other cases, the fittest survive, but many drop out of the race. To not a few barristers a robust constitution and a powerful *physique* are of more value than any other qualification.

The daily work of consulting physicians and surgeons in London is scarcely less arduous than that of a barrister, but it is of a more agreeable and far less exciting character. Medical men, too, spend a large portion of their time in their own houses, and the contrast between a physician's study or consulting-room and a barrister's chambers must often attract notice. No one has yet explained the preference manifested by lawyers (as shown by the state of their chambers) for dust, darkness, and discomforts in general. Such a state of things would not be allowed to exist in an ordinary dwelling-house inhabited by persons claiming to belong to the civilized classes. A consulting physician in London begins his work soon after nine a.m. He probably has a patient or two to visit at that early hour, and on his return will find others waiting who have been allowed to come before the regular consultation hour. Patients continue to arrive, and are seen in turn until the list is exhausted, a process which is sometimes not completed till one or even two o'clock. Then luncheon must be rapidly despatched, and if the physician or surgeon be connected with one of the large hospitals he must twice a week at least visit the patients under his care. These visits are always made early in the afternoon, and after this duty is discharged there are private patients to be seen at their own houses, consultations to be held, and, in the case of members of a hospital staff, lectures to be delivered perhaps three or four times a week. Consultations in the country take up more or less of a physician's time; these are usually held in the afternoon. By seven or eight o'clock the work is generally over, so far as attendance on patients is concerned, and after dinner the physician's time is, if he so chooses, at his own disposal. He must, however, keep himself well acquainted with whatever is going on in the medical and scientific world generally. He must therefore devote some time to the medical journals and reviews and to a perusal of any specially important new book. It generally happens that the evening is the only portion of the day that he can spare for these subjects. Then there are the various medical societies, such as the Medico-Chirurgical, the Medical, the Clinical, etc., meetings of which are held weekly or fortnightly during eight months of the year. Literary labour often makes further demands upon the physician's time, and if he wishes to become popular, he must, like the barrister, pay some attention to the claims of society, and not fail to appear as often as possible at receptions, conversations, dinner-parties, etc. A life spent in the manner thus imperfectly sketched has a large share of enjoyment of the best kind: mind and body are kept fully employed, and under favourable conditions at least a fair measure of success is generally attainable. Of course there are drawbacks; at the beginning, and for some years afterwards, the *res angusta domi*, the scarcity of patients, and the necessity of keeping up what are called "appearances," often give rise to very serious forebodings, and middle life is not unfrequently reached before the income is found to balance the expenditure.

To the question whether any penalties are attached to this manner of living, only one answer can be given. Every age is characterized by the presence or prevalence of special disorders of health which have a more or less obvious causation. At the present day "want of tone" is the characteristic feature of disorders in general, and in none is it more obvious than in those which peculiarly affect official and professional men working at high pressure. As might be expected, the signs of this "want of tone," or weakening of the nervous system, vary in different persons; but the presence of certain symptoms may be regarded as a test of the actual condition. Of these, sleeplessness is the most important; if allowed to continue, while the individual endeavours to perform his usual tasks, grave disorder of the nervous machinery must soon set in. The restoration of energy, which sleep alone can afford, is necessary for the maintenance of nervous vigour; and whereas the muscular system, if overtaxed, at last refuses to work, the brain under similar circumstances too frequently refuses to rest. The sufferer, instead of trying to remove or lessen the cause of his sleeplessness, comforts himself with the hope that it will soon disappear, or else has recourse to alcohol, morphia, the bromides, chloral, etc. Valuable and necessary as these remedies often are (I refer especially to the drugs), there can be no question as to the mischief which attends their frequent use, and there is much reason to fear that their employment in the absence of any medical authority is largely on the increase. Many of the "proprietary articles" sold by druggists, and in great demand at the present day, owe their efficacy to one or more of these powerful drugs. Not a few deaths have been caused by their use, and in a still larger number of cases they have helped to produce the fatal result. Sleeplessness is almost always accompanied by indigestion in some one or other of its Protean forms, and the two conditions react upon and aggravate each other. If rest cannot be obtained, and if the vital machine cannot be supplied with a due amount of fuel, and, moreover, fails to utilize that which is supplied, mental and bodily collapse cannot be far distant. The details of the downward process vary, but the result is much the same in all cases. Sleeplessness and loss of appetite are followed by loss of flesh and strength, nervous irritability alternating with depression, palpitation, and other derangements of the heart, especially at night, and many of those symptoms grouped together under the old term, "hypochondriasis." When this stage has been reached, "the borderlands of insanity" are within measurable distance, even if they have not already been reached.

The advocates of what is popularly known as "progress" at the present day will doubtless be surprised at learning (from a distinguished American physician) that the number of the insane is greater in a community in proportion to the political and religious freedom of the population; that is, to the opportunity they enjoy of working out their own

purposes, whether in relation to this world or the next, in the manner most agreeable to themselves. The explanation, of course, is that in such communities the causes of insanity are always numerous and widespread.—ROBSON ROOSE, M.D., in the February *Fortnightly*.

## TIMES OF WILLIAM COBBETT.

### THE ARISTOCRACY.

THE great nobles desired to retain their influence, and did so by living in the country; they imposed upon the public by their state, and by lavish and magnificent hospitality such as that shown by Lord Egremont at Petworth, Lord Buckingham at Stowe, the Duke of Beaufort at Badminton, Mr. Coke at Holkham, and Lord Fitzwilliam at Wentworth; they furnished the provinces with a court which might well compare in display with the royal one, and far exceeded it in decency. The law was inclined and was strained to respect the prerogatives of peers. A suggestion that Lord Lonsdale's face might fitly be taken to represent that of the devil, was made the subject of a criminal prosecution. This same Lord Lonsdale, on being stopped when driving in Mount Street by the officer of the Guards on duty, exclaimed, "You rascal, do you know I am a peer of the realm?" Captain Cuthbert replied, "I don't know you are a peer, but I know you are a scoundrel." A duel followed, but unattended by fatal results. In one of Miss Edgeworth's stories the Duke of Greenwich is represented as estranged from Lord Aldborough because his correspondent had not sealed a letter to him, and I have no doubt that the trait is drawn from real life, because in a correspondence with Lord Buckingham Lord Sydney alludes to offence having been taken on account of his addressing Lord Buckingham in the same strain as that in which Lord Buckingham had addressed him—probably without his title.

No preacher would in these days speak in his funeral sermon of a woman who was lately "a great and good duchess on earth, and is now a great and good duchess in heaven." Civility, decent civility, in a peer, seems to entitle him, in the eyes of his admirers, to special eulogy. "I have known Lord Sandwich apologize to a lieutenant in the navy for not being able to be exact to his appointment," writes a friend of his lordship. Bishop Warburton is spoken of as beyond measure condescending and courteous, having even graciously handed some biscuits and wine on a salver to a curate who was to read prayers. The position of a peer is, no doubt, less imposing now, but it is probably more comfortable; state is avoided because it brings no corresponding advantage. Lord Abercorn, travelling in 1813 between Carlisle and Longtown, was preceded by the ladies of his family and his household in five carriages, while he brought up the rear mounted on a small pony, and decorated over his riding-dress with the ribbon and star of the Garter. In this guise he would now be taken for the advance guard of a travelling menagerie. Whitaker speaks of the Earl of Cumberland travelling in 1525, with thirty-three servants and horses, and says that now, viz., 1805, a nobleman of the same rank going alone from Skipton to London would be content with six horses, two postilions, and two outriders. "Modern habits," he adds, "have certainly gained in elegance what they have lost in cumbersome parade." The change between 1805 and 1885 has been even greater than that between 1525 and 1805, and it is difficult to conceive how travelling could be rendered more simple and free from parade. From the days of Haroun Alraschid, the wearers of rank have found it among their chief pleasures to lay it aside, and to observe the manners of their time unnoticed themselves. The facilities for this enjoyment now are far greater. The age, too, is in a hurry; one horse goes quicker than four; life is short, and the actors want to get as much as possible out of it. They want to enjoy the advantages of wealth, of leisure, and of educated taste, as much as ever, but they have less veneration for form. We give the title of esquire to a costermonger or a chimney-sweep, and should much prefer giving the latter the title of marquis, if he desired it, sooner than have our chimneys unswept. A peer in these days may be defined as a country gentleman with an embarrassed income, incapable of taking a part personally in contested elections, and who, *cæteris paribus*, has the first refusal of an heiress and of a Court appointment. It is very seldom that he possesses even the moiety of a borough, and if he does, it is only owing to legitimate means, and in no way the result of his peerage.

### PLAIN SPEAKING.

No one swore harder than ex-Chancellor Lord Thurlow, or spoke out his thoughts with more clearness; no one, to put it plainly, used more hideous language. (He died cursing his servants.) "Sir, your father," he said to George the Fourth, "will continue to be a popular king as long as he continues to go to church every Sunday, and to be faithful to that ugly woman, your mother; but you, sir, will never be popular." We have one delightful story at a later period about the King's language. He was very angry with Lord Mansfield on account of a speech he had made on the Catholic question. "He lied," said the King; "had I been an individual, I would have told him so and fought him. As it was, I put the Archbishop of Canterbury in a fright by sending him as my second to Mansfield to tell him he lied. The Archbishop came down bustling here to know what he was to do. 'Go,' said I, 'Go and do my bidding—tell him he lies, and kick his behind in my name!'" History does not record whether the Archbishop carried out his royal master's orders or not. Cobbett understood the value of repetition as well as that of abuse; he hammered at the borough-monger whatever his subject might be—"that monster to be moved by nothing but his own pecuniary sufferings." His "English Grammar," which deserves a permanent place among the best