

MISCELLANY.

Exercise and Occupation.—Exercise for the body, occupation for the mind—these are the grand constituents of health and happiness, the cardinal points upon which everything turns. Motion seems to be a greater preserving principle of nature, to which even inanimate things are subject; for the wind, the waves, the earth itself are restless, and the waving of the trees, shrubs and flowers is known to be an essential part of their economy. A fixed rule taking several hours of exercise every day, if possible in the open air, if not under cover, will be almost certain to secure one exemption from disease, as well as from the attacks of low spirits, or *ennui*, that monster who is ever waylaying the rich and indolent. "Throw but a stone and the giant dies." Low spirits can't exist in the atmosphere of bodily and mental activity.

Where Lightning Strikes.—To reassure the timid and nervous some calculations and directions for security, which, from the frequent occurrence and unusual severity of thunder storms, might not be unacceptable to some, are given.

There are seventy thousand chances to one against an individual's being killed in this way in the whole year. But as there are perhaps ten of these storms in a season, the chances of being killed are as 700,000 to one in any one storm. At the worst, there seems to be a half a million chances against a timid lady's having her terrors realized, according to the doctrine of chances. If she lies down in her fright, as she is likely to do, on either a feather bed or hair mattress, these chances in her favor are multiplied to at least a million.

Another consolation is that she has little to apprehend from a flash of lightning which she has leisure to see. As light travels 227,260 miles in a second, and lightning only 1,142 feet in the same time, you may easily compute the distance of the electric discharge. If 4.62 seconds and six beats of the pulse elapse between the lightning and the thunder, the discharge is a mile off.

To guard against possible danger on its near approach you may insulate your bed or chair by putting their legs on glass. Feathers and hair afford great security. There is also less danger after the rain has begun to fall copiously than before, because a moist atmosphere serves as a conductor for the electric fluid, diffusing it and conveying it to the earth.

A man who is wet, being a better conductor than a tree which cannot be so thoroughly wetted, ought not to stand under one, and animals, on account of their bodies, are always better conductors than trees. But though wrong to stand near a tree, you will be very safe a little beyond the extent of its branches—a position which ought to be chosen, as the higher object will take the lightning first—or you might stand on dry wood, or wool or silk.

The middle of a room is safer than near a partition, and this than near an exterior wall. A building is a better protection than a tree; but a barn or stable containing wet grain or hay is worse than an open field. Sitting on horseback or in a carriage is dangerous.—*Worcester Gazette.*

Fingers and their signification.—A Professor Crosby, in a lecture on the "Human Hand" at New-York, lately, said that "the fingers, if smooth, they are the symbols of inspiration, passion and intuition; if naturally knotted about the joints, they show mental powers in the direction of induction, order and arrangement. On transverse section the fingers may be circular or ovoid or oblong and flattened. The tips of the fingers are full of interest—the principal forms being the spatulous, square, oval and pointed. D'Arpentigny claimed that in a given hand all the lines would have the same termination; which is obviously not true, since fingers like character are liable to be mixed. The spatulous finger, so called because its outline is like that of a druggist's spatula, is the index of corporeal activity, of industry, of the mechanic arts. Such fingers indicate constancy both in occupation and in love, but show deficiency in metaphysical power, and no love of spiritual poetry nor tendency to speculation. The spatulous finger gets its best illustration in the Anglo-Saxon hand.

"The square hand and finger-tip is the index of precedent, of custom, of routine, of defined art. The English and Norman hand is of this type. The tendency of the Norman to adhere to custom is illustrated by the fact that the caps of the Norman woman are the same in form as those worn by the wife of William the Conqueror and identical with those represented on the ancient tombstones in Normandy. In North Germany the square type, with square fingers and a fleshy palm, predominates, and nowhere is deference to form and high title more marked. Illustrative of this, a North German advertised himself, as Principal Chimney-sweep to the Court and Principal Hunter of the hamber, the last title when translated meaning 'rat-catcher.'

"The conical and pointed finger indicates enthusiasm and artistic desires. Individuals with such fingers put the artist before the artisan, and evince a love of sculpture, architecture, poetry, painting

and song; such persons are worshippers of the romantic and beautiful. Thus we have a digital index of art. In the northern nations the artist gives way to the artisan, and here we find spatulous and square fingers. In English and North Germany, where these types prevail, there are few great vocalists; but in Italy and Spain where the conical finger prevails, they are to the manner born. It is a curious fact that even the religion of man is largely determined by the form of his fingers. Protestant nations excel, as is well known, in the mechanic arts, and are found to possess as a rule spatulous and square fingers. Witness the hands of England, North Germany, and Holland. Roman Catholic countries, on the contrary, are noted for excellence in the fine arts, and are found to possess the conical or artistic type of finger, as may be seen in Italy, France, Spain, and Ireland. In Middle Germany both types of fingers are found, but the same principle seems to obtain. Thus the great Scriptural poets in Germany, representing the refined art of language, are Protestant, as is illustrated by Klopstock, Wieland, Körner, Uhland, Herder, Goethe, Schiller and Jean Paul Richter. The great musical poets of Germany, however, have been essentially Roman Catholic. The fine art of music has thus been adorned by Hadyn, Beethoven, Mozart, Weber, and Kreutzer. The only exceptions are Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn, both of them Jews.

"In Italy, the where conical finger is predominant, the priests are not uncommonly hated, yet Protestantism never has made and probably never will make any essential headway. It is too cold and austere for a people with the artistic sense and vivid imagination of the Italians. It would thus appear that the conical or artistic finger is essentially Roman Catholic, and the spatulous and square essentially Protestant, and that any disturbance in these relations is abnormal, and illustrates the difficult feat of attempting to put square pegs in round holes. It has been said that if the superiority of an animal is in the hand, the superiority of the hand is in the thumb. The thumb of the monkey extends only to the root of the first finger. In idiots who are amenable to instinct only, the thumbs are very small and badly developed. The great perfection of the human thumb is due to the fact that it is capable of such perfect opposition to the other fingers. The first metacarpal bone in the thumb of the monkey is on the same plane with the other fingers; but in the thumb of man it is by itself, possessing great mobility; and by virtue of a long flexor or muscle connected with the last digit, the thumb is capable of a peculiarly perfect flexion, so that a pen, a graver, or a needle can be held. It is this perfect power of flexion and adduction of the thumb that gives to the hand its wonderful dexterity and delicacy, and enables the thumb not only to touch the tip of every finger, but of every joint in the hand. Above all the rest of the hand, to the thumb may be assigned the attribute of intelligence. In repose, the thumb is in a position of half opposition to the fingers, which is never true for the monkey, the power of opposition in these animals being very slight. The monkey can spread all the fingers on a plane surface on which he walks; but in man the hand is not an organ of locomotion. Like the monkey, he can spread the hand as a plane, but he can also round it into a cylinder, hollow it into a gutter, spread the fingers like a compass with five branches, can collect them into a cone, compress them into a spheroid, and finally can with the fingers reach every part of his body.

"The thumb is the intelligent agent of the brain. In idiots the thumb seeks concealment beneath the fingers, as if recognizing the fact that the brain lacks supreme intelligence. When, however, the brain of the idiot begins to develop, the thumb shows its recognition of the fact by emerging from its hiding place and flexing outside the fingers, thus asserting the supremacy of intelligence. When the premonitory aura of an epileptic fit comes on; the thumb takes alarm and hides itself in the palm beneath the fingers, and when the great darkness of death settles down the fingers shut over the thumb and bury it. When the popular exclamation is heard, 'Simon says thumbs up,' we understand that all is well, but when the old Romans in the gladiatorial arena turned their thumbs down it meant death. Small thumbs always indicate vacillation and irresolution, and although the possessor may be loving and accomodating, he will be weak. Large thumbs indicate a strong will, lacking perhaps in sympathy, but in force of character supreme."

[The preceding points and others were illustrated by the stereopticon.]

Dr. Crosby further said:—"There is much significance connected with the length of fingers. Persons with short fingers are generally masters in their judgments, care little for matters of dress, etiquette or propriety and yet in business, especially in speculation, they decide points rapidly—at a glance—and seem at times almost inspired. A person with long fingers is always given to detail, and dwells more on minute than on grand works. Such a person would be likely to inspect all details of person and dress; if an orator, he would spend his force on the niceties or rhetoric rather than on his subject matter; if a painter, would work up little details at the expense of the general effect—in fine, would scatter his power in devotion to little details.