



LONGEVITY.

Dr Stephen Smith, an eminent physician and surgeon of New York city, in an address delivered at Cincinnati a few years since on Human Longevity and its relations to sanitary work, stated that the results of various anatomical and physiological methods of determining human longevity, all agree in giving ninety to a hundred years as the normal period of human life, and this estimate is confirmed by observation and tradition. He says:

"Every death at an age short of that period is due to abnormal conditions. If a hundred years is the standard of longevity, to what period may exceptional lives extend? May not individuals be endowed with matter of life so largely, and have so slight expenditure that life may be extended far beyond the limits of a century? If there was any period of human history when all the conditions favored long life it was the patriarchal age. Man seems to have lived more nearly according to the dictates of instinct,—in other words, he led a natural life. He roamed about under a genial sky, tending his flocks. His exercise was moderate; his nervous system was never overtaxed, his food was simple, his house a tent, his home the uplands of Judea. His mode of life secured moderate activity to the muscular and circulating system, repose to the nervous system, simple and nourishing food, healthy digestion and exemption from local causes of disease. The historian tells us of no other causes of death during that period than accidents and old age. And what charming pictures of pastoral life and serene old age are given us in the histories of the patriarchs; what vigor of body at great age, and what repose and serenity of mind! At the age of seventy-five Abraham migrated with his family and flocks; at upwards of 120 he bore with heroic firmness the trial of his faith. Isaac led a peaceful, uneventful shepherd's life, and reached the age of one hundred and four-score years.

"The most important of the general conditions which shorten life in our day is excessive expenditure of vital force. This may occur in various ways. In the young, if food is improper or clothing insufficient, renewal does not take place at an age when the expenditure for growth is greatest, and exhaustion rapidly follows. At maturity the passions ripen into activity and have their full play, and if not suitably controlled afford large and exhaustive expenditure of vital power. Among the poor life force is often exhausted in the struggle for food, and among the rich in the struggle for the luxuries, wealth, position and power. Here owing to wear and tear from anxiety, loss of sleep and the concomitants, defective digestion and assimilation, waste exceeds supply, and exhaustion exceeds renewal. To the general causes of waste we would add impure air of dwellings, improperly prepared foods, inebriety, gluttony, social dissipations and ten thousand nameless sources of constant impairment of the vital functions, without power of suitable renewal, which fill up the measure of man's daily life in modern society. Over nearly all of these conditions man may, if he will, exert most arbitrary control. He can feed and clothe the young, old and helpless; he can moderate his passions to a healthful play; he can so regulate his habits as to secure a proportionate expenditure and renewal of vital energy; in his food, in his drink, in his home and at business he can be well nigh master of every thing that affects his well being. With all this power why such failure? We answer, ignorance. The people at large do not know, much less realize, the extent to which they may control their own longevity. Even the higher circles of society are ignorant of the nature, whether for good or evil, of the air they breathe, the food they eat, the water they drink, the clothes they wear. Nay more the medical profession is so devoted to the care of the sick that it does not study as it ought the methods of preventing sickness."—*Laws of Life.*

KEEP THE HOUSE CLEAN.

No place needs such guarding as the dwelling-house. From kitchen to attic there is an accumulation of organic matter. Our skins, our breath, our clothing, our foods, our excretions all have their processes of decay which must have riddance. "The mother of Burns," says one, "was a good housekeeper, and that is a great thing for a woman to be." It means more than any man can know. It is a list of items and incidentals having all the confusion of littleness and of numbers. The true woman organizes it all into order, not only for the general comfort, but for the health of her family. The sweeping and the dusting are not merely the removal of clear dust, but of materials which, if collected and remaining,

deteriorate the general health of the family. The shaking of carpets, the scrubbing of floors and of paint, the rubbing of walls, the cleaning of closets and drawers—these are acts of sanitary inspection, and of labor corresponding thereto, we cannot impress too much the accurate work to be done therein. Besides the daily cleansings and care, the spring and fall overhauling is a requisite for society. One of the good things of frequent removals is that it gives a chance to cleanse houses fully vacated and give the furniture an airing while on the cart.

The cases of fever which occurred to workmen engaged several years since in scraping the halls of the New York Hospital show how retentive even these may become of the organic particles which float off into the air from our person or from animal and vegetable matter. That peculiar odor to be found in many houses, and sometimes in brown-stone fronts, means nothing more nor less than an unhealthy as well as untidy housekeeping. A removal out of doors of everything in each room once a year or more and a proper cleansing saves, in medical bills and general comfort, all that it costs. Daily airing, an occasional bath of sunlight, sweeping and dry rubbing are needed often; but can scarcely take the place of general cleansing. And the hardest part of it is not the great drawing-room; but the airing and assorting in drawers and closets, in the kitchen, the basement, the sub-cellar. It is so easy to neglect these. Many a case of sickness in the country results from decaying vegetables in a cellar; and in our cities the source not only of contagion, but of depressing air, headaches, and general *malaise*, is to be found in dark places, to which dry air, sunlight, the whitewash-brush, and a general clearing up seldom comes. We would urge on every head of a household now, before the summer heat comes, to make or have made a thorough inspection of every part of the house that all the avoidable causes of disease or of invalidity and depression may be removed.—*N. Y. Independent.*

THE LOSS OF BEAUTY.

A London medical journal of high authority says that efforts are being made by a number of women of prominence to form a "School of Beauty" in England, the members pledging themselves to do everything in their power to render themselves comely by natural means. Prizes are to be given to those who can move with ease and grace, and so furnish evidence of good health and physical unconstraint. Something of this kind is needed here. Although American women have, to a great extent, seen the folly and ugliness of lacing and going thinly clad in cold weather, there are still many who think an absurdly-small waist attractive, and any number that so pinch their feet that they can not walk comfortably or becomingly. They do these ridiculous things generally because they imagine men admire them. If men have done so, they do so no longer. They prefer healthy and graceful women to invalid and awkward ones, as all women must be who cramp their waists, wear shoes too small, or dress in any way to interfere with their freedom and satisfaction. Nature and beauty are one. No woman can be beautiful who fetters or hinders nature. The more nearly she approaches the natural the closer she comes to loveliness. Women have heard this a thousand times, and accept it mentally. Yet, in their blind worship of false gods, they sacrifice themselves to infirmity and deformity. It is entirely incomprehensible to men that so many women will endure pain and incur disease from a mistaken notion of beauty.—*N. Y. Times.*

MR. J. A. PALMER has a paper on poisoning by mushrooms in the *Moniteur Scientifique*. He states that there are three different ways in which mushrooms may act as poison. First, they may produce the effects of indigestible matter, as when the hard coriaceous species is eaten; and even the edible mushroom may cause a similar result, for when it is decomposing it gives off sulphurated hydrogen gas in quantity sufficient to induce vomiting. Second, mushrooms may be gelatinous or acrid. Third, a subtle alkaloid, without smell or taste, is contained in some mushrooms, as, for instance, in the group of the *Amanites*, and is called amanitin. No antidote has yet been discovered for this poison, and to it most of the cases of death following the eating of mushrooms are due. It is at first slow in its action. But after the lapse of eight to fifteen hours the patient experiences stupefaction, nausea and diarrhoea. Delirium follows, and then death. Mushrooms containing amanitin will impart poisonous properties to wholesome varieties, if both happen to be placed in the same vessel. The poison can be absorbed by the pores of the skin. Mr. Palmer carried in his hand some *amanites* wrapped up in paper, and, notwithstanding the protection which the wrapper should have afforded, he was seized with alarming symptoms.

AT A RECENT MEETING of the French Biological Society, M. Delaunay read a paper relative to the habitual use of the right side of the system in preference to the left. He attributes the fact to the preponderance of the left frontal lobe of the brain. Anatomists have clearly proved the fact that the muscles and nerves of one side of the body are controlled by the section of the brain on the opposite side. In considering the question whether this peculiarity had any influence on the line an individual takes in walking, M. Delaunay mentioned an experiment he had frequently seen tried. In the park of Versailles is a large piece of grass plot known as the Tapis Vert. At its edge is placed any person, young or old, with the eyes bandaged, and they are told to walk straight across, but the feat has never been accomplished. After twenty or thirty steps, often less, they begin to deviate, sometimes to the left, but generally to the right, and invariably end their course at some part of one of the sides. M. Delaunay has studied the influence of age, sex and race on this peculiarity, and believes he can establish the fact that healthy adult men move spontaneously to the right; while children under three, old men and women seem to incline to the left.

HEALTH OF COUNTRY vs CITY HOUSES.—Many persons are under the impression that city residences are less healthy for gentlemen doing business in town than suburban houses. But the experience of most residents in the vicinity of our large cities would lead to a different conclusion. An English architect, in lately discussing this subject, remarks upon the delusion which had become almost a portion of the Londoner's creed—that health could be secured most certainly by sleeping nightly in what he called the country, in what was, in fact, a small, ill-built, ill-ventilated, and ill-drained box, but which he called his suburban "villa," planted upon ill-drained land, and surrounded by remnants of decaying vegetation. In order to pass to and fro between his suburban villa and business, he underwent the toil and anxiety of rushing to a railway-station more or less distant from his house or his office, twice daily, and in the course of transit probably shut himself up in the foul atmosphere of a smoking-carriage. This sort of thing is a great delusion, but it had been encouraged by the fact that, from circumstances which it would be difficult indeed to trace, it was impossible for him to find, within a reasonable distance.

ADVANTAGES OF CRYING.—A French physician is out in a long dissertation on the advantage of groaning and crying in general, and especially during surgical operations. He contends that groaning and crying are two grand operations by which nature allays anguish; that those patients who give way to their natural feelings more speedily recover from accidents and operations than those who suppose it unworthy a man to betray such symptoms of cowardice as either to groan or cry. He tells of a man who reduced his pulse from 126 to 60 in the course of a few hours by giving full vent to his emotions. If people are at all unhappy about anything, let them go into their rooms and comfort themselves with a loud boo-hoo, and they will feel a hundred per cent. better afterward. In accordance with the above, the crying of children should not be too greatly discouraged. If it is systematically repressed, the result may be St. Vitus' dance, epileptic fits, or some other disease of the system. What is natural is nearly always useful, and nothing can be more natural than the crying of children when anything occurs to give either physical or mental pain.

APROPOS of the unfortunate condition of the young lady in Louisville, Ky., who has chewed gum so incessantly that she cannot now control the use of her jaws, the Albany (*N. Y.*) *Journal* says "that case is by no means an isolated one." That paper is authority for the statement that "there is a young lady attending the Albany high school, who is so unfortunately afflicted from this constant practice as to excite the commiseration of all who have seen her. At times her sufferings are painful to witness, and notwithstanding the most eminent physicians have exhausted every means that science suggested towards the alleviation of her condition, they have failed thus far, and her jaws continue to open and shut with a violence that threatens dislocation. The young lady in question is noted for her amiable disposition, and though her singular infirmity naturally precludes her from participating in the pleasures which society affords, yet on account of her musical accomplishments she is much sought after in her delightful home."—*Ex.*

IN "LE PROGRES MEDICAL," Feb. 1, M Galippe has called attention to the medico-legal value of the odor of the human hair, and has given some new facts. He asserts that from the simple smell of a lock of hair he can tell whether the lock has been cut from the living subject or whether it has been composed of hair that has fallen out. Hairdressers have

acquired this art, which is said never to fail them. Hair which has fallen out has a dull appearance, attributable to disease, and is not easily made up; it has no peculiar smell. The hair of the Chinese has a characteristic odor of musk, which is so persistent that it cannot be concealed by cosmetics, for it cannot be destroyed by washing with potash. The hair of the Chinese has also a reddish tinge, and is polyhedral in section. Hair of hysterical patients has a peculiar and distinguishing odor which is most perceptible at the approach of a crisis. Certain hair is electrical, the electricity being developed more readily after rubbing. M. Bert states that hair which is turned white from age begins to change color rather at the apex than at the base.

DOMESTIC.

MUSTARD should be mixed with water that has been boiled and allowed to cool; hot water destroys its essential qualities, and raw cold water might cause it to ferment. Put the mustard in a cup with a small pinch of salt, and mix with it, very gradually, sufficient boiling water to make it drop from the spoon, without being watery.

OYSTER SHORT CAKE.—One quart of flour, three teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one tablespoonful of butter, a pinch of salt, enough sweet milk to moisten well. Roll about one inch thick and bake on tin pie-plates quickly. While it is baking, take one quart of oysters and one half cup of water and put on the stove; then take one half cup of milk and one half cup of butter mixed with one tablespoonful of flour, and a little salt or pepper; add all together and boil up once. When the cakes are done, split them open and spread the oysters between them, and some on the top. Put the oysters that are left in a gravy dish and replenish when needed.

STEWED LIVER.—Two pounds of calf's liver carefully washed in cold water, then cut into strips three inches long, one inch thick, and one inch wide; season with a teaspoonful of salt and a saltspoonful of white pepper; dredge lightly with flour, fry a light brown in boiling hot drippings, turn often to prevent burning; put in the bottom of a stewpan two thin slices of salt pork, and fried liver on top of it, with a large onion stuck with six cloves, a small bunch of mixed herbs tied together, and a half pint of good stock or gravy; stew slowly for an hour, take out the onion, herbs and pork, thicken the gravy with a tablespoonful of flour, rubbed smooth in a tablespoonful of butter; let the stew stay on the fire ten minutes longer. Cost, twenty-five cents. Will serve six persons, with vegetables.

RAW OYSTERS.—Wash the shells, open, detaching the flat shell, loosen from the deep shell, but leave them in it, and serve half a dozen on a plate, with a quarter of lemon in centre. Eat with salt, pepper and lemon juice or vinegar. In serving them without the shells the most attractive way is in a dish of ice, made by freezing water in a tin form shaped like a salad bowl, or in a block of ice from which a cavity had been melted with a hot flat iron. They should first be drained well, in a colander, sprinkled with plenty of pepper and salt, and placed on the ice and let remain in a cool place, for half an hour or until time of serving. A simpler and equally delicious way is to drain well, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and place the dish on ice or in a dish of cold water for half an hour before serving, adding bits of ice. Serve with horse-radish, Chili sauce, slices of lemon, or simply vinegar.

TO KEEP ICE.—In this uncertain climate of ours, we are so frequently liable to be tripped up, as it were, by the sudden setting in of hot weather, that we are not always prepared with regular appliances to meet it, and an impromptu ice-safe has often to be constructed. It is, therefore, useful to know how we may make a very simple make-shift out of materials not difficult to obtain from the lumber room of most households, and by an excursion to a carpenter's shop. With an old wooden chest or box, with a smaller tin box, or canister, such as biscuits are generally packed in, a few pounds of sawdust and a piece of thick flannel, we have all that is necessary for our purpose. Set the tin-box within the wooden one, fill up the intervening space between the two on all four sides thickly with the sawdust, having previously put a layer of the same at the bottom, wrap the ice closely up in the folds of the blanket, deposit it then in the tin box, put on the cover both to that and the wooden one, stand the whole in the coolest and darkest cellar available, and we may keep a store of ice by us for an almost unlimited time in the hottest weather. When a small quantity of ice is required for use it may be chipped off the parent block in large or small lumps by merely tapping a strong pin on the head, and so driving the point sharply into the edge of the block. No strength need be exerted if the pin beheld at right angles to the surface.