

seven hundred donations besides a special distribution of two thousand pond lilies. Thirty-four towns had the pleasure of contributing to this happy result.

To be generous with flowers brings its own reward; for the more they are cut, the more will the plants bloom, as any gardener will tell you. You can represent the matter in this light to your friends who have gardens; and not be afraid of begging in so good a cause. Then, the woods and fields yield their treasures without a murmur. There are the yellow and flame-coloured field lilies, the gorgeous cardinal flower, the whole tribe of orchis, all of which are formidable rivals to the garden beauties.

If you live in a city that has no flower mission start one of your own. The only capital required is the wish and the will.

Two young ladies of New York, during a visit to Boston, became interested in its Flower Mission, and on their return determined to copy so beautiful a thing. Two or three discouraging mornings, with not a single flower, was the beginning of a mission which now sends out its bouquets by the thousand; and the end is not yet.

If flowers are grateful to the eye of the sick, still more grateful is fresh fruit to their capricious tastes. Would it not be pleasant, in those places where berries abound, to form berry parties, the result of the day's labour to be forwarded in the same manner? I will not mention all the fine plans which suggest themselves for the promotion of this labour of love, leaving some for your own quick wits to invent, but will close with the hope that some hearts may be made lighter, and some sad homes the brighter, by efforts of our girls and boys.—*From Oliver Optic's Magazine.*

15. A YEAR'S BRAIN WORK.

Over thirty-five hundred new books appeared in England last year, besides thirteen hundred new editions—the exact total of both classes being 4,835—and the most notable circumstances in the literary history of the twelve-month was the decrease of novels, from 200 in 1870 to 155 in 1871. Still, lest it might be inferred that the English novelists are falling into disfavour the statisticians are careful to add the explanation that the number of new editions of romances has largely increased during the year—which is a tribute to the older writers. Works on Political Economy are rapidly increasing in numbers—45 last year against 26 in 1870. Theological books are in greater demand than formerly—nearly 800 having appeared last year. Educational books are also in demand—nearly 700 having been published during 1871. The number of American importations into the English book market sensibly diminished last year—the figures being 322 in 1871 against 426 in 1870.

Two countries of Europe present a striking contrast—the comparatively new literary life of Russia being represented in the statistics of 1871 by no less than 1,359 works published in thirty-one different cities of the Empire, while Spain makes a beggarly show, although her civilization and her literature are four centuries old. Spanish writers produced 115 new plays last year, but other contributions to the literature of the country are very inferior to those of Russia, in number as well as in quality. Of the books of the year in Russia, according to Mr. Eugene Schuyler, 153 were on language, 133 on jurisprudence, 118 were historical works, and 242 were novels, poems, and essays. The most remarkable feature of the Russian book returns is the great progress, made by native writers in the production of political works.

In regard to Germany, Robert Zimmerman writes that it is a significant indication of the present state of philosophy, that in place of philosophical systems, biographies of philosophers and of their wives appear. Varnhagen's "Remains" seem to be inexhaustible, fourteen volumes of the "Diaries" having been published, a new work follows under the title of "Biographical Portraits."

16. UNCONSCIOUS BRAIN WORK.

Sir Benjamin Brodie has referred, in his "Psychological Inquiry," to a very remarkable quality of the brain, a quality Dr. Carpenter calls unconscious cerebration. It often happens that after accumulating a number of facts in an inquiry, the mind becomes so confused in contemplating them, that it is incapable of proceeding with its labours of arrangement and elaboration; dismayed at the chaotic heap, it backs, as it were, upon itself, and we feel certain it is no use cudgeling our dull brains any longer. After a little while, however, without having once consciously recurred to the subject, we find to our surprise, that the confusion which involved the question has entirely subsided, and every fact has fallen into its right place. It is possible that the brain can, without our knowledge, select and eliminate, aggregate and segregate facts as subtly as the digestive organs act upon food introduced into the stomach.

Sir Henry Holland is inclined to dissent from such a conclusion,

and leans rather to the explanation of the phenomena which Sir Benjamin Brodie has himself suggested—namely, that the seeming ordering process may be accounted for by supposing that all the unnecessary facts fade from the memory, whilst those which are essential for the ultimate arrangement and classification of the subject under consideration are left clear of the weeds that before encumbered them. But this explanation involves a confession of an eliminative process going on unconsciously in the brain, which appears little less wonderful than a hidden cogitation. Why should the non-essential facts alone fade? We see no reason why we should refuse to recognize masked operations of the mind. Surely we see every day examples of cerebral acts being performed, of which the individual afterwards is totally oblivious.

Let us instance, for example, the mental impression engraved with a searing iron as it were, upon the brain in moments of delirium. Under chloroform, again, the mind is often in a great state of exaltation, and goes through mental labour of a kind calculated, one would imagine, to leave traces behind it on the memory; nevertheless, water does not more readily give up impressions made upon it than does the tablet of the brain under this influence. Even in our dreams, of which we take no notice, but which are patent to by-standers by our speech and action, there must be plenty of "unconscious cerebration." Indeed, Sir Henry Holland, in reference to a vague feeling that all of us have experienced when engaged in any particular act, that "we have gone through it all before," endeavours to explain it by supposing that the faint shadow of a dream has suddenly, and for the first time, come to our recollection in a form so unusual, that it seems as though we had acted the part before in another world. That we go through brain work unconsciously, we have, therefore, no doubt, and we see no reason why we should deny the existence of power seated in the brain, whose duty it is silently to sift the grain from the husk in the immense mass of mental pabulum supplied to it by the senses.—*Edinburgh Review.*

17. THE NUMBER SEVEN.

In all ages and in all countries the number seven has had a peculiar significance. Among the Hebrews it was called the number of perfection. Apuleius speaks of dipping the head seven times in the sea for purification, Pythagoras taught its efficacy, and Cicero in the vision of Scipio calls seven a complete number which is "the connecting principle of almost all things." The learned Prof. Bush, says in his Notes on Genesis, that "the original word for seven, comes from a root, signifying to be full, complete, entirely made up." No other numeral is used so frequently in the Bible, and the separate structure of many passages is remarkable.

"On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made." The week of seven days was established, the last to be a day of rest, the seventh year was made a year of rest, not only for man and beast, but even for the fallow ground; and at the expiration of seven sabbaths of years, the year of Jubilee allowed liberty and homesteads to all the inhabitants. Enoch was the 7th from Adam, Abraham the 21st, and St. Matthew enumerates forty-two generations from Abraham to Christ.

Noah had 7 days' notice of the flood, during which time he gathered the clean beasts and fowls of the air into the ark by sevens, and in the 7th month the ark rested on Mt. Ararat. He sent out a dove which returned, but after 7 days he again sent forth the dove, which brought back the welcome olive leaf, and after 7 days more he repeated the experiment but lost the dove.

Jacob served 7 years for Rachel, made a mistake in the bride, and served 7 years longer, and when he met Esau he bowed 7 times before him. Pharaoh's dreams of the 7 years of plenty and 7 years of famine were apparently of 7 fat and of 7 lean kine, and of 7 full ears and of 7 suckers. Joseph mourned for his father 7 days, and Zipporah the wife of Moses was the 7th daughter of Jethro. Moses came out of the cloud on Mt. Sinai on the 7th day, and he made 7 lamps of pure gold, and on the 7th day no manna fell. The feast of the tabernacle lasted 7 days, and on various occasions 7 animals of various kinds were to be offered. Jericho was besieged 7 days when 7 priests, with 7 trumpets of rams' horns went 7 times round the city, but on the 7th day they went round 7 times and the walls fell. Solomon's temple was 7 years in building. Job's 7 sons were slain in one day, and Homer relates that Achilles slew the 7 brothers of Andromache in a single day. The dead son of the Shunamite sneezed 7 times and opened his eyes. The servant of Elisha went to the top of Carmel 7 times to see the probabilities of rain.

Naaman the Syrian was told to bathe 7 times in the Jordan, and Nebuchadnezzar went with the cattle grazing 7 years. We also read of 7 golden candlesticks, 7 seals, 7 loaves, 7 baskets full, 7 devils, 7 deacons, a 7 headed beast, 7 angels with the 7 last plagues, and 7 golden vials.