

Half the sleeplessness of great cities is due to the absurd hours we select for food. A savage eats and sleeps as a dog does; a Hindoo, fortunately for himself, is compelled by his creed to eat just before he sleeps, being prohibited from cooking twice in the same sun; but a civilized man eats, then while digestion ought to be going on does half the work of his life, and then, just as the body becomes wakeful again, settles himself into a bed specially constructed to bring the blood to his head. Of course feeding time will not be altered for the sake of sound sleep, nor fashion yield to hygiene, but it is possible to eat something at bed time, if only a crust, and if men who take wine would take it then, instead of after dinner—a villainous unsocial suggestion—they would find half their difficulty disappear. Still even with this fact clear, much more is still required which science alone can afford. It must be possible to reduce the flow of blood to be brain and to still excitable nerves without drugs, and if we could do it the diminution of misery would be enormous. Any system which really increased the average capacity for sleep would benefit nervous disease, increase the habitableness of great cities, and probably diminish perceptibly the average of lunacy. There are physiologists working among us, piously endeavoring to ascertain the laws which connect mind and matter; will not some one of them at once utilize his knowledge and earn an enduring reputation by a successful attack on the great foe of great cities—the habit of sleeplessness?

The Eternal Fires of Baku.

A traveller residing in the city of Shamakia, at the foot of Mount Caucasus, on the western shores of the Caspian Sea, is generally induced, by the representations of the natives, to visit those little known Phlegrean Fields which eternally flame and smoulder in the vicinity of Baku. Probably no portion of the earth's surface is more replete with natural wonders. The summits and upper valleys of the Caucasus, in many parts a little known as the Mountains of the Moon, are said at times to emit flame and smoke, and to distil strange oleaginous substances, which, trickling down through rocky veins and crevices, ooze out of the earth at considerable distances, and are designated by various names. At the foot of the vast Paropamisus range, on which the Arabs bestow the name of Kaf, and regard as the girdle of the earth, a small peninsula, about nine miles in length by four and a half in breadth, projects into the Caspian, and is known among the natives by the name of Okesta. On this stands the city of Baku, whose origin is lost in remote antiquity. A body of legends, which would fill a volume, clings about the ruins of this antique dwelling of the Medes, and modified by credulity and superstition, has worked its way into the Islamitic mythology of Persia, and been carried by Parsee pilgrims to the shores of India, where it sparkles or glooms about the hearths of the fire-worshippers, many of whom, at the hazard of their own lives, have sought to obtain a glimpse of the sacred flame, ever burning clear and bright on the margin of the Caspian wave, around which their ancestors once knelt and worshipped in countless multitudes.

Along the neck of the peninsula runs a chain of mountain spurs, the valleys between which are fertile and carefully cultivated; but as you advance southwards, the ground becomes barren, consisting in some parts of shifting sand, in others, of dark mud, while elsewhere the naked rock, porous as pumice-stone, and almost entirely composed of the debris of sea-shells, crops out of the earth. Here and there are small conical hills, crested sometimes with tombs of saints in ruins, nodding over salt-lakes, or crumbling away particle by particle into the circumjacent

Some people are never content with their lot. Clouds and darkness are over their heads. To them every incident is an accident, and every accident a calamity.