

CURRENT LITERATURE.

LIFE.

Thoughts surge on thoughts, and man forever thinks;
Yet, better hope to read the silent Sphinx
Than life. For who can lift dark nature's veil
Or know the spring where one Omniscience drinks!

Scarce more than this the musing sage will say,
Man's life's a tent pitched only for a day,
Trembling beneath the blast of every wind,
Frail as a flower that blooms in gentle May.

Man follows man, and age comes after age
Favored by calm or lost in tempests rage,
Each lives but once, and, when that life is o'er,
Has writ a tale on Time's eternal page.

J. F. D.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

CLIMATOLOGY AND MINERAL WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES, By A. N. Bell, A.M., M.D., editor of the *Sanitarian*, Member of American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, and corresponding member of the London Epidemiological Society. This is the October volume of "Wood's library of Standard Medical Authors." New York: Wm. Wood & Co. So greatly do local and commercial interests conceal and distort the truth that reliable information respecting the subjects of which this volume treats has been exceedingly difficult to obtain. Moreover, the subjects are intricate and imperfectly understood. The talented author of this volume has contributed a reliable much needed work, valuable both to the Medical profession and the intelligent public. He holds with Parkes that unsanitary conditions rather than climate are most to be dreaded. In his own observations and studies on the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Central America, in the West Indies, and on the Coast of Africa, "the sickly places were every where marked by unsanitary local conditions." In his preface he states, "It is an almost practice which the author of this work follows, to measure the influence of climate by the relation which different regions and localities hold to pulmonary consumption—a disease which, probably more than any other, depends upon preventible conditions intimately associated with foul soil, or density of population." Studying from a life assurance stand-point, the author shows that in the Atlantic States from Maine

to Florida and from Florida to Mexico there are annually twenty-one deaths from consumption to ten thousand living. In the Western States there are eighteen and one-half deaths per ten thousand. In the North western and Pacific States, seventeen consumptives die annually to ten thousand living. The deaths under fifteen years of age are not included. From facts gathered the author concludes that the greatest differences in the healthfulness of countries are due to the hygienic conditions of the inhabitants. "A life in abundance of pure air, sunshine and out-door exercise is the most healthful, wherever lived. Mountain or sea air is healthful, mainly because it is freer from impurities. The same is true of the climate of sea islands. The pine forest regions are especially noted for their freedom from consumptives. Temperature operates principally because it either shuts people up in foul air or permits them to live out of doors."

EPILEPSY AND OTHER CHRONIC CONVULSIVE DISEASES: THEIR CAUSES, SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT, By W. R. Gowers, M.D., F.R.C.S., etc., Physician to the National Hospital for the Paralyzed and Epileptic, London. New York: Wm. Wood & Co. This is the September volume of "Wood's Library." It is a valuable contribution to Medical literature, by one who, from his position, has had abundant and unusual opportunities for extended knowledge on the subjects of which the volume treats. The foundation of the work appears to have been laid in 1880, when in the Gulstonian lectures