Length of Days.

From one cause and another, it is not surprising that so comparatively few reach extreme old age. The average of human life has been extended through the resources of modern science, but not to such an extent as might be expected, for the average still does not range higher than forty-five to fifty. Some reasons for this comparatively low average have been alluded to. To these may be added the frightful deterioration of health from intemperance. Drinking, once a fashionable vice, has become a prevalent evil in the lower departments of society, and the evil is conspicuously increased in proportion to an advancement in the gains of labor. Alcohol! In that single word we have no end of premature death accounted for. The most correctly logical definition, as far as we have seen, of the physical and mental ills inflicted through the agency of alcohol, is that given by Dr. B. W. Richardson in his work on the "Di-eases of Modern Life." There can be no doubt that the reckless abuse of this stimulant, always growing the more reckless, as has been said, as means are increased for its indulgence, has a terrible effect on the increase of pauperism and death rates. According to Dr. Richardson, alcohol has a tendency to throw life off its balance. "A balance at the best of times finely set is broken in favor of death. A mental shock, a mechanical injury, an exposure to cold, a strain, a deprivation of food beyond the usual time of taking food—any of these causes, and others similar, are sufficient to cause an organic wreck, which, left to its own fate would soon break up from progressive internal failure of vital power." Much that follows on this subject we commend to general attention, without, however, expecting that what the learned writer says will be of any practical avail. Another cause for the undue shortening of life which has not yet been referred to is the intense mental strain prevalent among literary men, artists, statesmen, judges, and some other classes. If not a new feature in society, this mental strain is at least more conspicuous than it was formerly, because the struggle to attain high rewards is greater and more dependent on individual exertion than it seems to have been in past and less exacting times. In short, the derangement of the nervous system leads to no end of functional derangements in the heart, stomach, and so on, in all of which are found reasons why so many of our most eminent notabilities are removed ere they reach fourscore. They fall victims to a heedless, certainly unfortunate, overtasking of the brain. Medical men in high practice, though well aware of the dangers of professional exhaustion, are not always exempt from the charge of being careless of their own health. The wiser among them endeavor to limit their hours of work, and at the proper season retreat to the country for the sake of invigorating rural sports. But for these precautions, the death rate among London physicians would be very much greater than it is. The late Sir Henry Holland is known to have greatly lengthened his days by habitually making long autumnal tours over the globe, always returning invigorated for fresh work. The very common practice among people in business of taking a month's holiday at the seaside or some inland healthful resort—a practice immensely facilitated by railways and steamboats—has the same beneficial tendency. As regards the salutary results of checking the mental strain in literary labor we could speak from a degree of personal experience. We have for the last forty years—whether in town or country, whether in winter or summer—never written a line after nine o'clock at night. When that hour strikes the ink-glass is shut up, the pen and paper laid aside, and the mind is allowed to calm down before retiring to rest. The rule is peremptorily followed with the best consequences. In the varied pressure of inexorable circumstances it may not be possible to be so extremely guarded. Lives are abruptly lost, the most precious in the community. He, however, who falls in the fair fight of life, though mistaken has been his eagerness, may be said to fall nobly. It is a considerably different thing when men shorten their days through luxurious indulgences, in wanton disregard of the rules essential to the preservation of bodily health. Up till fifty years of age, it perhaps signifies little how some of these rules are neglected, because the constitution, originally vigorous, resists or overcomes various deteriorating influences. At all events, there may be no immediate mischief. After fifty, and more particularly sixty, a change has taken place. The breathing, the digestive, the circulatory processes are less able to endure tear and wear. A little indiscretion may derange the whole machine and bring it prematurely to a dead stop. It is wonderful how much may be done to protract existence by the habitual restorative of sound sleep. Late hours, under mental strain, are, of course, incompatible with this solacement. On this topic Dr. Richardson says it has been painful for him to trace the beginnings of pulmonary consumption to late hours at "unearthly balls and evening parties," by which rest is broken and encroachments made on the constitution. But, he adds, "If in middle age the habit of taking deficient and irregular sleep be still maintained, every source of depression, every latent form of disease, is quickened and intensified. The sleepless exhaustion allies itself with all other processes of exhaustion, or it kills imperceptibly, by a rapid introduction of premature old age, which leads directly to premature dissolution." There, at once, is an explanation why many people die earlier than they ought to do. They violate the primary principle of taking a regular night's rest. If they sleep, it is disturbed. They dream all sorts of nonsense. That is to say, they do not sleep soundly or for any useful purpose; for dreaming is nothing more than wild imaginative notions passing through the brain while half-sleeping or dozing. In dreaming there is no proper or restorative rest.—*Chambers' Journal.*

SPANISH SWEETHEARTS.—Spanish poor girls—and rich girls also—offer a marked contrast to their English sisters—so says a Spanish paper. It is a matter of simple honor with them—brave, loving, generous, passionate creatures as they are—never, having once won a man's heart, to throw it away. Come what may, your Spanish girl will never forsake, never betray you; you have suffered for her, waited for her—she will suffer for you, wait for you; never will she betray you, lie to you, throw you over—never! And so the poorest peasant-girl who has "given her troth," will wait for years and years, until he who owns and holds her pledge shall return from the wars.

THE Supreme Court of Tennessee has decided that a school-teacher has the right to corporeally punish pupils within the bounds prescribed by law, the orders of the parents to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Reporter Ahead.

Among the bummers who entered Savannah with Sherman's army was a well-known Boston reporter, who went through the march with him, taking notes, and contriving to steal enough poultry and other things for his support. Tom Miles—though that was not his name—went prospecting around the city, and by that mysterious attraction known to printcraft, found himself in a vacated printing-office. It presented a golden opportunity. There were presses and all the paraphernalia essential to business, with a form on the press; and Miles, taking out the editorial and other offensive matter, filled its columns with healthy Union sentiment, with the aid of one or two of the craft whom he had discovered in the army. His leader was a rich specimen of crowing over the victory, in which he extolled General Sherman as the greatest hero since Alexander, and his army the finest and best disciplined that the world ever saw. With this grand flourish of trumpets the first number was issued, and Miles lay back in his editorial chair, contemplating his work with the belief that he had achieved the next triumph to Sherman's, and wondered what the conqueror would say when he saw the praises he had heaped upon him. The next morning as the General and his staff were about taking breakfast a paper was handed to him—the Savannah *Republican*, I think—and he commenced to read the leader which was so lavish in his praise.

"Look here!" said he, red and furious, "what the d—l does this mean? Who knows anything about this paper?"

His orderly, who had known something about its preparation, explained to him that it was the work of one of the literary gentlemen who had followed the expedition.

"Well," said the general, "go down to the office and tell him to discontinue his paper or I'll put him under guard. I won't have such cursed stuff printed about me when I can prevent it. Abuse is bad enough, but this is a deused sight worse."

Down went the orderly, and the confusion of poor Miles was overwhelming when he got the squelcher from the general commanding.

"Why, it was all praise!" he said.

"No matter for that. If it had been the other way, it would have been treated just the same."

So Miles moved a compromise, and urged the official to express his regrets and beg the removal of the injunction, which was promised. The appeal was successful, and soon the officer came back to inform him that permission was granted him to run his paper, on condition that he should never mention the general's name again. This was agreed to, and the paper appeared.

After a day or two, an aide came down one morning with an order from General Sherman for publication. Miles glanced over it, and handed it back.

"It can't go in, sir."

"Why not?" asked the astonished messenger, who was a stranger.

"Because it has Sherman's name to it," was the reply.

"That's the reason why it must go in," urged the aide.

"And that's the reason why it sha'n't. He stopped my paper for praising him, and I promised him that his name should never appear in my columns again, and hang me if it shall."

Miles stood resolute, and the officer returned for orders, expecting the ordering out of a file of men and an arrest, but was astonished to see the general burst into a hearty laugh, and hear him confess that the printer had the best of it. The messenger was sent back with a conciliatory note, and there was no more trouble.

Women in India.

Lady Anna Gore-Langton, who had recently returned from India, where she had been residing with her brother, the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Governor of Madras, recently delivered an interesting and instructive address on "The Social Condition of Women in Southern India." She said that Indian children were married at eight years of age. Native fathers considered it a disgrace to have single girls in the family and endeavored to get them married in childhood, but then they did not always go at once to their husband's homes. Although but little money was expended in clothes or education, the marriages were very expensive, as there was a great deal of feasting, and many families had been for years impoverished by the expense of marriages. Infanticide was not so prevalent as was the case a few years ago, and the Government had done a good deal to put it down. The marriages were generally arranged by the old women, who went from family to family to find suitable matches. The men in India were to a great extent ruled by the women, who were very conservative and had a great objection to any improvement in their customs. The lower-class women worked very hard, pulling stone rollers, cutting grass, and helping their husbands in bricklaying. The natives treated widows very badly; their clothes and jewels were taken from them and they were made as miserable as possible. Nothing was more painful than the vacant, hopeless, melancholy faces of the adult women, and nothing was more wanted than lady doctors, who might save Indian women much suffering. Sir Salar Jung had exerted himself to get a lady doctor, but he had to send to America for one, who has now a large practice among the native women.

NEWFOUNDLAND.—The island of Newfoundland is curiously favored, inasmuch as it is not infested with reptiles. Captain Chearnley writes—"In Newfoundland there is not a snake, toad, frog or reptile of any sort. There is not a squirrel on the island, no porcupine, moose or minx; whereas, with the exception of the porcupine, wanting in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, all these creatures are found in the neighboring provinces. The Arctic hare is found in Newfoundland, but in neither Cape Breton nor Nova Scotia." Captain Hardy calls attention to other deficiencies. He visited Newfoundland at midsummer, and could not help remarking that fireflies were not to be seen there; while in Nova Scotia they swarm by thousands, their scintillations adding beauty to a quiet night. The island is full of bogs and swamps, which renders it difficult to account for the total absence of reptiles.

CAPRICES OF FASHION.—Novelty is the cry of the times; and the Paris hairdressers have decided that wigs should be worn at balls and on all grand occasions. Thus a fair young woman will appear on the same day as a modest-looking brunette at the breakfast table, with jet-black locks at an official dinner, where a grave demeanor is requisite, and with coquettish golden tresses at a lively ball.

BLUE glass—the whisky glass.

Hiring Horses in Russia.

Leaving the inn, I hailed a passing sleigh, the driver appearing to me to have a more intelligent expression than his fellows. Getting into the vehicle, I inquired if he knew of any one who had horses for hire.

"Yes," was the answer. One of his relatives had some; but the house to which I was driven was shut up, and no one was at home. I began to despair, and think that I should have as much difficulty in obtaining horses at Orsk as I had in procuring a servant at Orenburg.

I now determined to try what gold, or rather silver, would do, and said to the driver, "If you will take me to any one who has horses for hire, I will give you a rouble for yourself."

"A whole rouble!" cried the man, with a broad grin of delight; and jumping off his seat he ran to a little knot of Tartars, one of whom was bargaining with the others for a basket of frozen fish, and began to ply them with questions. In a minute he returned. "Let us go," he said; and with a "burr" (the sound which is used by Russians to urge on their horses) and a loud crack with his lash, he drove rapidly in another direction.

I had arrived at the outskirts of the town, and he stopped before a dirty-looking wooden cottage.

A tall man dressed in a long coat reaching to his heels, bright yellow trousers, which were stuffed into a pair of red leather boots, while an enormous black sheepskin cap covered his head, came out and asked my business. I said that I wanted three horses to go to the next stage, and asked him what he would drive me there for, the regular postal tariff being about two roubles.

"One of noble birth," replied the fellow, "the roads are bad, but my horses will gallop the whole way. They are excellent horses; all the people in the town look at them, and envy me. They say how fat they are! look, how round. The governor has not got any horses like mine in his stable. I spoil them; I cherish them; and they gallop like the wind. The people look, wonder, and admire. Come and see the dear little animals."

"I have no doubt about it. They are excellent horses," I replied; "but what will you take me for?"

"Let us say four roubles, your excellency, and give me one on account. One little whole silver rouble; for the sake of God let me put it in my pocket, and we will bless you."

"All right," was my answer. "Send the horses to the Tzarskoe Selo Inn immediately."

Presently the fellow rushed into my room, and bowing to the ground, took off his cap with a grandiose air, then, drawing out the money I had given him from some hidden recess in the neighborhood of his skin, he thrust the rouble into my hand, and exclaimed, "Little father, my uncle owns one of the horses; he is very angry. He says that he was not consulted in the matter, and that he loves the animal like a brother. My uncle will not let his horse leave the stable for less than five roubles. What is to be done? I told him that I had agreed to take you, and even showed him the money; but he is hard-hearted and stern."

"Very well," I said, "bring around the horses."

In a few minutes the fellow returned, and exclaimed, "One of noble birth, I am ashamed."

"Quite right," I said, "you have every reason to be so. But go on; is your uncle's horse dead?"

"No, one of noble birth, not so bad as that; but my brother is vexed. He has a share in one of the animals; he will not let me drive him to the next station for less than six roubles"—and the man, putting on an expression in which cunning avarice and pretended sorrow were blended, rubbed his forehead, and added, "What shall we do?"

I said, "You have a grandmother?"

"Yes," he replied, much surprised. "How did you know that? I have; a very old grandmother."

"Well," I continued, "go and tell her that, fearing lest she should be annoyed if any accident were to happen during our journey; for you know misfortunes occur sometimes; God sends them," I added piously. "Yes, he does," interrupted the man; "we are simple people, your excellency." "And, not wishing to hurt the old lady's feelings, should therefore leg of your uncle's horse or the hind leg of your brother's suffer on the road, I have changed my mind, and shall not go with you to-day, but take post-horses to-morrow."

The man now became alarmed, thinking that he was about to lose his fare. He rubbed his forehead violently, and then exclaimed, "I will take your excellency for five roubles."

"But your brother?"

"Never mind; he is an animal; let us go."

"No," I answered. "I shall wait—the post-horses are beautiful horses. I am told that they gallop like the wind; all the people in the town look at them, and the inspector loves them."

"Let us say four roubles, your excellency."

"But your uncle might beat you. I should not like you to be hurt."

"No," was the answer, "we will go;" and the knotty point being thus settled, we drove off, much to the dissatisfaction of my little servant, Nazar; a blue-eyed siren in Orsk having, as the Orientals say, made roast meat of his heart, in spite of his being a married man.—*Captain Burnaby, in "A Ride to Khiva."*

TASTE IN HAIR DRESSING.—Young women always look well with their hair taken off, so as to show the face. The ear, according as nature has formed it with more or less delicacy, may be entirely uncovered or partially hid; the forehead, if high—if longer than the nose—should be concealed a little, and the face only uncovered near the temples; long curls, such as Lawrence's figures wear falling on their cheeks, have an expression of sentimental reverie which may suit certain romantic ladies; but, in a general way, the cheeks left bare and the hair turned back is more graceful and natural than these drooping ringlets, which the most chaste and tender kiss would disarrange. Why display beautiful curls on the cheek when they look so elegant on the nape of the neck or the shoulder? To conceal a part of the face, is it not, apt to make people suspect some defect, or to lead them to believe more than really exists? Women who hide under cork-screw curls their faded complexion, or the mark which the finger of time has left on their faces, make themselves look old by this very precaution. Sincerity is best. As regards young girls, they are always charming when they display the whole of the face; youth is a skillful hair-dresser.

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