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FREE PARKS AND CAMPING GROUNDS.

Sanitariums for the Sick and Debilitated Children of the Poor of Crowded Cities During the Summer Months.

BY J. M. TONER, M. D., WASHINGTON, D. C.

The old adage to "take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves" may be aptly paraphrased: "Take care of the infants and the adults will take care of themselves."

The philosophy that saw nothing in diseases but the evidences of a chastising providence has about succumbed to the advance of the exact sciences and the light of accumulated knowledge, which enables earnest investigation to see something of the law of cause and effect.

Sanitary medicine is yet in its infancy. The science of the prevention of disease and the protection of life by wise and timely legislation has, in America, received comparatively little consideration from the States or the general government.

The principles and advantages of State medicine, however, are beginning to win, or have won, a recognition from our law-making bodies, and its importance must give it a position of great influence in the future. Every measure that has for its end the prevention of disease, and thereby the saving of life, is worthy the most serious consideration and support of the profession.

The excessive mortality among children in our large cities is a sad commentary upon the habits of civilized communities and the enlightenment of the age. No man can acquit himself of the obligation to assist in arresting this evil. That nearly one-half of all deaths in our country should be of children under five years of age is unaccountable, and I strongly suspect the result of ignorance, or worse.

With the hope of doing something toward staying the tide of destruction among the innocents, the writer desires to call the attention of legitimate health guardians and the medical profession to the proposition of "free parks and camping grounds or sanitariums for the sick and debilitated children of large and crowded cities," as first made by him through the *Northwestern Medical and Surgical Journal* last autumn. This article will comprehend the more important views then expressed, with additional data, so as to bring the necessity of such a measure more forcibly before physicians and the public.

It may be laid down as a principle that no city or country is prosperous that is not increasing in population by virtue of its birth rate, and that public health is a nation's strength. Health is capital, and a healthy community must thrive.

The State has a direct moral and pecuniary interest in the health and lives of her citizens. It is her legitimate province to make and enforce just and equitable laws, so as to protect the lives and property of the whole community, and in an especial manner is this true of her duty to the young, whose guardian she is.

If the view be correct that the child belongs to the State, and conditionally, and for a limited period, to its parents, the State has a most sacred duty to perform, and should be as prompt and potential to preserve and protect the life of the youngest and humblest infant in its domain as the oldest and most distinguished citizen. To the old we may owe gratitude, but to the young are given the hopes and possibilities of a life of honor and usefulness to their race and State that is unlimited.

A careful examination of the published reports of the boards of health of the cities of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and of several other cities, shows that about one-half of all deaths occurring are of children under five years of age. It is also noticeable that a large per cent of these deaths take place during the heated term, and are attributed to cholera infantum and other summer complaints almost peculiar to the United States.

This great waste of human life in its early years of existence is unnatural. Humanity demands that the cause of it be inquired into, and, as far as practicable, removed.

In the published reports of the board of health of the city of New York it appears that from 1804 to 1853, inclusive, or for fifty years, there were recorded, including the still births, 363,598 deaths. Of this number 177,433 were under five years of age, which is 48.79 of the whole mortality. For the years 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869 and 1870 the published reports give a total mortality for the city of 127,205, of which 64,182 were under five years of age, which is 50.45 per cent of the recorded deaths.

In the city of Chicago the published reports of the board of health show that from 1843 to 1869, inclusive, there were 63,538 death, not including still births. Of this number 32,550 were under five years of age, which is 51.24 of the total mortality.

In the city of Philadelphia, from 1807 to to 1827, inclusive, or twenty years, there were reported, including still births, 56,091 deaths. Of this number 22,329 were children under five years of age, which is 39.80 per cent of the total mortality. In the same city, from 1858 to 1870, there were reported 175,683 deaths, of which 79,016 were of children under five years of age, which is 45.54 per cent of the total mortality for the period named.

In Massachusetts, the State registration reports from 1841 to 1858, inclusive, except 1849, record 248,708 deaths. Of this number 92,567 were under five years of age, which is 37.15 per cent of the whole mortality.

In the city of Boston the health reports from 1811 to 1839, inclusive, show that 34,175 deaths took place. Of this number 12,913 were under five years of age, which is 37.87 per cent of the total deaths. In the same city for the five years 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871 and 1872 the reported mortality in the city, not including still births, was 31,106, of whom 13,145 were under five years of age, which is 42.22 per cent of the whole mortality.

By thus reporting the mortuary reports of these large cities into groups the increased per cent of mortality among the infant population is made more apparent. The later period, too, corresponds to the rapid growth and consequent crowded condition of the poor, and the two periods stand in the relation of cause and effect.

In the city of Baltimore, in the board of health reports for the years 1850 to 1860, inclusive, and the years 1862, 1865, 1866 and 1869, a total mortality of 75,386 is given, of whom 37,070 were children under five years of age, which is 45.54 per cent of the whole mortality for the period named.

In Washington city the published health reports for 1849, 1852 and 1858 record 2918 deaths, of which 1376 were of children under five years of age, which is 46.44 per cent of the total mortality.

In the city of Cincinnati the health report for 1868 records 3622 deaths, of which 1691 were children under five years of age, which is 46.68 of the total mortality.

In Rhode Island.—The registration reports of this State for the years 1852, 1853, 1854, 1864, 1865, 1867, 1868, 1870 and 1871, or for nine years, record 22,943 deaths. Of this number 7839 were of children under five years of age, which is 34.16 per cent of the whole mortality.

In the city of Providence the health reports from 1856 to 1870 record, not including still births, 16,203 deaths. Of this number 6230 were children under five years of age, which is 38.45 per cent of the total mortality. Dr. Edwin M. Snow, in his report for 1870, shows that there has been a gradual and steady decline in the death rate of children under five years of age to the whole mortality in Providence from 1856, when it was 45.91 per cent, until 1870, when it was 36.72 per cent. And covering a period of thirty-one years the decedents in Providence were 30,167, of whom 11,965 were children, with an average percentage for children under five years for this period of 39.78. This result is wholly attributable to the enforcement of good hygienic regulations.

In the city of St. Louis the health report for 1871 records 6670 deaths. Of these 3409 were of children under five years of age, which is 51.10 per cent of the whole mortality.

So unconcerned have been the conservators of public health in the United States that complete files of the reports of the boards of health of different cities, for any considerable length of time, are rare; there is, however, sufficient evidence to warrant the conclusion that more extensive data would be simply cumulative of the extent of the evil.

Fortunately for our race and the country, this frightful rate of mortality among the young is not equally great in the smaller towns and in the rural districts of the United States. Indeed, the healthfulness of the country as compared with the cities is in such marked contrast in this respect that instead of the percentage of all deaths being greater under five years of age, as in crowded cities, the percentage is largely reversed; and even when the aggregate mortality of the United States is considered, the comparatively small mortality among children in the rural districts is sufficient to overcome the unfavorable percentage of cities in this respect, and presents the following results, as shown by the three last United States decennial census reports:

Census.	Aggregate mortality.	Under five years.	Per cent under five years.
1850	323,020	122,973	38.49
1860	393,006	168,954	42.99
1870	492,263	203,213	41.28

It is, therefore, fair to infer from these figures, which confirm individual experience, that there are causes operating in cities, unfavorable to the health and lives of children, that do not exist, or manifest themselves so disastrously, in the country. The causes that enfeeble or destroy human life in infancy are so manifold—constitutional, moral and unhygienic—and are so constantly referred to in health reports, as to be patent to all reflecting minds, and to require no enumeration in this connection.

That a considerable percentage of the infantile mortality of cities could be prevented under more favorable circumstances, is the settled conviction, not only of physicians, but of all persons who have given any thought to the subject.

A great part of this avoidable mortality occurs in what is known as the "heated term" (a period of special dread to parents in cities with children under two and a half or three years of age), comprising the months of June, July, August and September. Whenever the thermometer rises and remains for any considerable length of time above 80°, derangement of digestion among infants living in such an atmosphere, is very liable to occur. Milk and all animal substances used as food, rapidly deteriorate in quality in high temperature, and unless great care is taken, become unfit diet for infants. An infant's stomach is particularly susceptible, and the child, by its sufferings, will speedily show the bad effects of the least departure from pure, fresh and wholesome food or water. Persistence in the use of food that has once caused disordered digestion is sure to develop cholera infantum or some other grave form of disease. High temperature is everywhere recognized as one of the chief provoking causes of diseases of stomach and bowels, particularly among children under two years of age, whether nursed at the breast or artificially fed. These diseases in their inception, are frequently mere disturbances of digestion, caused by the debility consequent on excess of heat or by the deterioration of food, or the unsuitableness of diet.

According to the weekly mortuary reports of our large cities the diseases of this class alone are referred to as the cause of about twenty-five per cent of all deaths occurring during the summer months; and the mortality among children under five years of age from stomach and bowel troubles, increases the death rate in cities from one-fourth to one-half over the other months of the year.

As heat seems to be the constant attendant, if not the chief cause, of the "summer complaints" of children, and consequent great mortality among them, it is obviously an element to be taken into special account in studying the cause, prevention and treatment of this class of cases, and it is very desirable, as every physician knows, to provide at least for those who are actually sick, quiet apartments or homes where they can have free ventillation and pure air of a moderate temperature, with fresh and wholesome food.

Whenever these conditions can be secured for such patients, their digestive functions are quickly restored, and the child is no longer sick. The free excursions of a day to the country or the public parks, for the poor with their sick children, recently inaugurated in the city of New York and Philadelphia, will, if the exposure and fatigue is not too great for the suffering little ones, be of infinite service to them, restoring health to many a languishing child, that may be thus rescued, to live and bless the promoters and benefactors of this charity.

At all events this movement has in a special manner directed attention to the previous condition and dangers of infantile life in our cities. But the measure does not go far enough. The child has to return at night to its home in the heated city, which is often a small, crowded, badly ventilated room, with furniture and clothing saturated with foul exhalations, and where it will soon lose any benefits it may have derived from the day's airing. Beneficial as even these excursions are acknowledged to be to sick children, how much more positive and substantial a result might be gained for them by a residence of a couple of months in the country, where pure air, good water and wholesome food, with outdoor life, could be enjoyed until the oppressive warm season should have passed.

At first it would seem almost impossible for the poor to avail themselves of any mode of life—even if it should prove efficient for the preservation of the lives of their children—that must take the child, with its mother or nurse, away from their homes and out of the city.

But perhaps the first point of importance to be settled in such a question is, would a removal from the city to a healthy rural district preserve the lives of any considerable number of children, who if not removed would perish? This inquiry will be promptly answered in the affirmative by nearly every one familiar with the origin and course of infantile diseases in cities during the "heated term."

If then the measure proposed has real merit, and gives reasonable promise of lessening infantile mortality in cities, it is the duty of some one to point out a feasible plan for carrying it into practice.

The question is asked, is it probable the poor would avail themselves of the means and mode of life suggested for the preservation of their children, at a nominal cost or without expense when it would disarrange their ordinary domestic plans, and separate the wife temporarily from her husband, to whom her services in their condition of life are very essential?

The judgment of the writer is that the paternal instinct with them will always be found equal to the necessities of the occasion, and ready to accept any temporary inconvenience, and to act in accordance with the best matured judgment of the medical profession that promises success, for the preservation of the lives of their children.

Next comes the very important question, what kind of an institution or scheme commensurate with the wants of a large city in this regard could be inaugurated that is really practicable and worthy of the indorsement of the medical profession, and the encouragement and patronage of legislators and philanthropists?

A free park or camping ground, a sort of sanitarium of 1000 or 2000 acres or more in extent, selected with special reference to its healthfulness—at an elevation above malaria—its accessibility, the abundance of pure water, with well shaded walks and play grounds, etc., to be improved by cheap tenements free to all who have such children, as a summer residence, would in a great measure supply this desideratum.

This institution should be governed by proper and fixed rules for admission, the preservation of order and health, and be under the general management of a recognized sanitarian. The park should be provided with a suitable play ground, and a gymnasium, school-houses and chapels to secure the advantages of a well regulated village home for all. Good moral influences might thus be planted and fostered in the breasts of many children that, under the guidance of Providence, would develop in them the higher and nobler instincts of humanity and shed a benign influence over their whole lives.

The rich can always leave the cities during the oppressive heats of summer, and find healthy country retreats for their children, but the poor can not without aid. No special interest has hitherto been manifested by any city for the health of the families of this class of the community, and no boarding houses or summer resorts suited to the wants of the poor, have ever been opened, and it is very questionable if they, with their manners and style of dress, could, at present, find accommodations in any considerable number near our cities.

To the question—Where could sites suitable for the purposes indicated be found? The answer is that a search will develop the fact that there are plenty of them sufficiently accessible to all our Atlantic cities.

A situation on navigable water, or on a line of railroad should be preferred. Elevation, too, is particularly desirable, as it removes at once the danger from malaria, and secures a cooler atmosphere for the greater part of the twenty-four hours.

Every 400 feet of altitude above tide water in this region approximates to being of the temperature to be found at sea level 1° further north. It has been ascertained that the thermometer falls 1° for every 280 feet of perpendicular ascent.

It is probable that the best results would be obtained for a sanitarium of this kind on some elevated ridge or mountain spur above the line of malarial influence, where the air is pure and cool, the water good and abundant, where provisions are cheap, and where the normal temperature during the summer months does not for any considerable period of the day range above 80° or 85°.

It is the duty, not only of large cities, but of individual cities and States, and perhaps the general government, to do whatever is possible to preserve the lives of the great army of innocents that are now annually sacrificed by a disregard of the laws of health, and the impecunious condition of a majority of parents of the laboring class in our large American cities, who are unable to remove their children, even when sick, to the country during the heated term.

The proposed measure is to meet this urgent want, namely, the preservation of the lives of the children of the poor in crowded cities; that each of our large cities secure one or more extensive tracts of land suited to the purpose in an elevated region, and improve them in a manner suitable for *free parks* for the purposes here indicated.

Special care should be taken with all the buildings and surrounding improvements, so as to insure free and complete ventilation; good surface and underground drainage should be made, so as to keep the park free from any annoyance from stagnant water and closet deposits, slops or waste water, and to secure rapid surface drainage to the walks and playgrounds after rains.

The parks should be under the immediate supervision of the medical and civil police, to preserve order and salubrity, and should either be so large or so numerous as never to be crowded (as that would establish the evils of city crowding); and all the improvements of the ground should be made with a view to encourage and enable the children to be kept or to live most of the time in the open air.

The grounds should be properly laid out with shady walks and drives, and improved in every way that could conduce to health, by the erection of pavilions, cabins, cottages, and boarding-houses, for the accommodation of mothers and nurses, with their sick children, during the summer months.

It might and would in many cases be proper for cities to contribute means to send patients to the park, and in special cases support, by contributions, sick and destitute children and their mothers while there.

The opening of free parks as summer resorts for the poor is entirely feasible, and in a humanitarian view deserving of the most serious consideration. To the statesman, the measure must present an encouraging prospect for the preservation of human life, the increase of population, and national prosperity.

When we consider that the United States census of 1870 shows that there is in the city of New York but one child under fifteen years of age to every woman between the ages of fifteen and fifty (and the same is true of our other large cities) when there ought to be three, this question assumes a still greater importance.

It is a fact not to be lost sight of, that the decline in the proportion of children in the United States under fifteen years of age, to the number of women between the ages of fifteen and fifty, is progressing, as is very conclusively shown by a comparison of the last five United States decennial census reports. The following table is made up from them. The returns from 1830 and 1840 include whites only; the others include all classes:

Census.	Females bet. 15 and 50 years.	Children under 15 years.	Children to 1000 women.
1830	2,490,058	4,750,320	1,952
1840	3,223,016	6,201,212	1,863
1850	5,389,732	9,629,699	1,786
1860	7,640,663	12,734,476	1,666
1870	9,656,544	15,115,615	1,563

Should the suggestion of free parks ever be adopted, much valuable information in the selection of the site may be had by consulting the records of the United States Signal Bureau as to elevation, force of winds, temperature, humidity, etc.—elements of great importance in a hygienic point of view.

Such parks should be free to all who have sick or debilitated children, and persons while there should be permitted to live in tents and cottages, and in such style as their means and tastes might justify, so that they do not violate the laws of health or incommode their neighbors—the main purpose of the institution being to secure by a healthy rural residence the restoration to health and the preservation of the lives of the children of the poor, suffering from or threatened by diseases incident to and aggravated by the excessive heats of summer in cities.

It has long been the practice of city physicians to send their young patients suffering with summer complaints to the country during the "heated term," whenever their parents can afford the expense, as almost the only means of saving their lives.

The scheme of free parks and camping grounds would, it is hoped, secure to the children of the poor of crowded cities during the summer nearly the same chances for life that are enjoyed by our well-to-do classes of society.

Washington, D. C., March 3, 1873.

"You'll not worry when I am away, darling! Absence, you know, makes the heart grow fonder." "Yes, of some one else," added the doubtful darling.

The Census Charts of Disease.

[From the New York Times.]

One of the most interesting and ingenious things ever published in the field of statistics, are the charts of mortality from various diseases in the United States, issued in the second volume of the ninth census. The object of these maps is to show, in distinct colors, the relative mortality from the various diseases in different parts of the country. The first chart, which will be of great interest to all the inhabitants of the Northern States, is that of the "mortality from consumption," that great scourge of this country. The highest average of death, that is, of over 2000 in 10,000, is indicated by a great blue color, numbered as the fifth grade. A little lighter shade of blue, or the fourth grade, indicates an average of from 1400 to 2000 deaths; the third grade shows from 900 to 1400. The first grade is from 250 to 550, and a band of pure white indicates an average of under 250 deaths from consumption in 10,000.

To the surprise of most who study this interesting chart, the deepest blue, or the fifth grade, is not confined to the Eastern States. It is true that nearly all of Maine, all of New Hampshire, the northern part of Vermont, the greater part of Massachusetts, and almost all of Rhode Island, the northeastern portion of Connecticut, are in the fifth grade, and show the terrible average of over one-fifth of the deaths to be from consumption. But this fatal color appears again in Northwestern New York, on the borders of Lake Ontario, on the St. Lawrence. It crops out in Eastern New Jersey; it forms a kind of dark island about the upper waters of the Ohio; it is seen again in a singular band running through Southern Ohio, Northern Kentucky, and Southeastern Indiana. It is found to cover even the eastern portion of Tennessee, and a part of Middle Tennessee. It is not once seen in the Northwestern States, or in the Southern. The next grade of color, however, showing a formidable average of deaths, from 1400 to 2000, is found largely over the West and Northwest. It occupies a large part of the peninsula of Michigan; it includes a considerable portion of Southern Wisconsin, of Northern Illinois and Eastern Iowa. It appears again in Central Indiana, in Central Ohio, in Tennessee and Western Virginia, and covers the greater part of the Middle States, except Pennsylvania. Even Eastern Virginia shows this fatal average. The only portions of the Union with a perfectly white record with regard to this disease—that is, showing an average of from 250 to 550—are Northern Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, and Northeastern Michigan (though the freedom of this latter district may be due to scarcity of population). A purely white spot is seen also in Southwestern Virginia, in Western North Carolina, in the middle of Georgia, and in Southern Florida. The next highest grade, representing freedom from this disease, is found in the Adirondack region in New York, and nowhere else in the Northern, Middle or Western States, but comes forth again in the extreme South, a broad belt of faint blue, especially in Louisiana and Texas. The large cities stand somewhat favorably in regard to this disease, New York and the southern part of Westchester county ranking with Newport and New Orleans, and Chicago, even, in the third grade; and Boston, with its east winds, not lower than the fourth grade. It will surprise many that the most fatal grade—the fifth—is found on the coast in California, north of San Francisco, though Southern California and the Sierras indicate a remarkable exemption from this disease.

If we turn to the chart of the "malarial diseases," we find the shading of the localities reversed from that which we have just examined. The north is white and the south dark. The New England and Middle States offer almost a pure white, while the greater portion of Virginia and West Virginia presents the same cheerful color. The extreme Northwest again is white, that is, showing an average of less than 100 in 10,000 deaths from this cause. Where was the greatest mortality from consumption there appears to be the least from malarial diseases, and the reverse is usually true. The deepest grade of color in this chart is found in South Carolina, Florida and Texas, indicating an average mortality of over 1400 to 10,000. The Central West appears better on this chart than might have been expected, generally showing the same grade of color with Maryland and Delaware, and the same which appears in Brooklyn and western Long Island, and in the adjacent region of New Jersey; that is, the first grade, or an average of from 100 to 250. New York City appears to stand with Boston and the remote Northwest in freedom from this scourge.

If we examine the chart for "enteric and typhus fevers," we find the deepest color, or the fatal average of over 200, only reached once in the United States—in Southeastern Georgia. The fourth grade is only found in a few small districts in the Union—in upper Mississippi, in Missouri, and singularly enough, in the central part of Minnesota. The healthiest States in regard to these diseases appear to be New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee, the upper parts of Missouri and Illinois. The northern part of the New England States, and a portion of the central West show a worse condition of these diseases than New York State, a large portion of this State being in the first grade, or having an average of from 250 to 500 in 10,000 deaths. In the chart for "intestinal diseases," the lower grade is reached but once in Mississippi; the highest is found in Maine, Tennessee, and Missouri. New York city and Brooklyn reach in this a low grade, showing an average of from 900 to 1400, which is lower than in almost any other portion of the country.

The general result from these interesting charts is, that the healthiest portion of the country is that central region, stretching through West Virginia and Tennessee, into Upper Missouri, along with the extreme Northwest, on the borders of Lake Superior. Our own State, however, and our city present in all these charts, with the exception of the last, a very high average grade of health. The great mortality from intestinal diseases in this city is undoubtedly due to local causes, which can be removed.

"The Last of the Hurons."

From one of the village lanes came swaggering toward them a figure of aggressive fashion—a very buckish young fellow, with a heavy black moustache and black eyes, who wore a jaunty round hat, blue checked trousers, a white vest and a morning coat of blue diagonals, buttoned across his breast. In his hand he swung a light cane.

"That is the son of the chief, Paul Picot," whispered the driver; and he is a notary of Quebec."

"Excuse me," said the Colonel, instantly; and the young gentleman nodded. "Can you tell me if we could see the chief today?"

"Oh, yes," answered the notary, in English; "my father is chief. You can see him," and passed on with a somewhat supercilious air.

The colonel in his first hours at Quebec had bought, at a bazar of Indian wares the photograph of an Indian warrior in a splendor of factitious savage panoply. It was called "The Last of the Hurons," and the colonel now avenged himself for the curtness of M. Picot by styling him "The next to the last of the Hurons."

"Well," said Fanny, who had all a wife's willingness to see her husband occasionally snubbed, "I don't know why you asked him. I'm sure nobody wants to see that wretched old thief and his bead trumpery again."

"My dear," answered the Colonel, "wherever Americans go they like to be presented at court. Mr. Arburton, here, I've no doubt, has been introduced to the crowned heads of the old world, and longs to pay his respects to the sovereign of Lorette. No! Well, then, you shall go on my account. I always call on the reigning prince when I come to Lorette. The rudeness of the heir apparent shall not repel me."

The Colonel led the way up to the principal lane of the village. Some of the cabins were ineffectually whitewashed, but none of them were so cleanly within as the outside prophesied. At the doors and windows sat women and young girls working moccasins; here and there stood a well fed mother of a family with an infant Huron in her arms; they all showed the traces of white blood, as did the little ones who trooped after the strangers and demanded charity as clamorously as so many Italians. Only a few faces were of a clear dark, as if stained by walnut juice, and it was plain that the Hurons are fading if not dying out. They responded with a queer mixture of French liveliness and savage stolidity to the Colonel's jocose advances. Great lean dogs lounged about the thresholds. They and the women and children were alone visible. There were no men. None of the houses were fenced, save the chief's. This stood behind a neat grass plot, across which, at the moment our travelers came up, two youngish women were trailing in long morning gown and eye glasses. The chief's house was a handsome cottage, papered and carpeted, with a huge stove in the parlor, where also stood a table exposing the bead trumpery of Mrs. Ellison's scorn.

A full bodied elderly man, with quick, black eyes, and a tranquil dark face stood near it. He wore a half military coat, with brass buttons, and was the chief Picot. At sight of the colonel he smiled slightly, and gave his hand in welcome. Then he sold such of his wares as they wanted, rather discouraging than inviting purchase. He talked, upon some urgency, of his people, who, he said, numbered 300, and were a few of them farmers, but were mostly hunters, and in the service of the officers of the garrison, spent the winter in the chase. He spoke fair English, but reluctantly, and he seemed glad to have his guests go, who, were, indeed, all willing enough to leave him.—*W. D. Howells, in June Atlantic.*

The Habit of Reading.

"I have no time to read," is the common complaint, and especially of women, whose occupations are such as to prevent continuous book perusal. They seem to think, because they can not devote as much attention to books as they are compelled to devote to their avocations, that they can not read anything. But this is a great mistake. It is not the books we finish at a sitting which always do us the most good. Those we devour in the odd moments, half a dozen pages at a time, often give us more satisfaction, and are more thoroughly digested than those we make a particular effort to read. The men who have made their mark in the world have generally been the men who have in boyhood formed the habit of reading at every available moment, whether for five minutes or five hours.

It is the habit of reading rather than the time at our command that helps us on the road to learning. Many of the most cultivated persons, whose names have been famous as students, have given only two or three hours a day to their books. If we make use of spare minutes in the midst of our work, and read a little, if but a page or a paragraph, we shall find our brains quickened and our toil lightened by just so much increased satisfaction as the book gives us. Nothing helps along the monotonous daily round so much as fresh and striking thoughts to be considered while our hands are busy.

A new idea from a new volume is like oil which reduces the friction of the machinery of life. What we remember from brief glimpses into books often serves as a stimulus to action, and becomes one of the most precious deposits in the treasury of our recollection. All knowledge is made up of small parts, which would seem insignificant in themselves, but which, taken together, are valuable weapons for the mind and substantial armor for the soul. "Read anything continuously," says Dr. Johnson, "and you will be learned." The odd minutes which we are inclined to waste, if carefully availed of for instruction, will, in the long run, make golden hours and golden days that we shall ever be thankful for.

Rowing Extraordinary.

[From the Cincinnati Gazette, July 28.]

Charles Zirhut arrived in our city yesterday morning about half-past three o'clock. This is equivalent to saying that he had rowed the distance between Allegheny City and Cincinnati, 485 miles, in six days. He had wagered $500 that he could accomplish this unprecedented feat of rowing, and has won the wager, having about thirty minutes to spare. The boat used by him was a paper shell, twenty-eight feet long, twelve inches in width and weighing twenty-eight pounds. Zirhut is a member of a boating club and was in full training for this undertaking. He met with many hindrances, the wind being against him so much that on two or three occasions he was compelled to lie idle a number of hours. A steamer passing would start a swell of the waves which the wind would keep up to such a pitch that the boat could not ride them. Michael Hannon, the referee and stakeholder, who started with Zirhut, was compelled to leave the river 103 miles above here on account of the water having so softened his boat as to ruin it. He took the earliest opportunity of reaching this city, and came in a couple of hours behind the oarsman.

During the journey from Maysville, most of which was in the night, Zirhut was so exhausted and sleepy that he could only keep himself awake by dashing water in his face. The physical endurance necessary to sustain this man through six days of hard labor, seated as he was in a narrow boat little more than two inches above water, is hard to be appreciated, and we will only add that it surpasses everything recorded or held in tradition by boating men.

Zirhut is a young man, twenty-three years of age, and is in thorough training. His height is five feet eight inches, and his build appears more light than it really is on account of his training and the severe exertion of his journey. Yesterday after his arrival he was allowed to sleep two hours and a half, but as he became stiff so rapidly whenever he was resting before he slept, they feared to let him remain quiet any longer. The remainder of the day he moved quietly about conversing with his friends and anticipating the pleasure of a sound sleep as soon as he was sufficiently rested.

Ocean Ballooning.

The New York *Times* publishes a letter from Professor Wise, the aeronaut, with reference to his contemplated balloon trip across the Atlantic. The professor is an enthusiast, and seems to entertain no doubt of the success of his undertaking. He says:

You are right about the percolation of gas, or, as it is technically termed, exosmose of gas; but I propose to meet this in an equivalent expenditure of ballast of 4000 pounds in weight, say from thirty to forty pounds per hour. That would keep us afloat six days. We are arriving at a better impermeability, and hope to reduce it to twenty pounds per hour, which would keep us afloat twelve days.

Should we fail in this expectation of perfection in the air float, and thus be brought down to the water level, we shall be prepared for that contingency in a seaworthy boat and an experienced sailor. Our great object is more to demonstrate a meteorological principle than the transit of the sea, desirable a feat as the latter may be. If we get half way across we will claim it as demonstrative of both questions—feasibility of transmarine ballooning, and the proof that the air tide is eastward continually, and thus establish another principle of weather signal service, in which we can inform our neighbors on the other side of the ocean what kind of weather is coming to them three or four days in advance of its coming.

The Theory of True Greatness.

Aaron Burr was a keener thinker than was George Washington. He was a far more ingenious man, a more active, and if he had been a moral man, and maintained normal relations with himself, with his fellow-men, and with the laws of rectitude, he would have been an abler man. Washington was a man of good sense, but he was not a man of genius in any direction except that of conscience. He was a man of singular equity, great disinterestedness, and of pure and upright intent. Sagacious he was, by a light which comes from integrity. He endured having faith to believe that right was right, and that that was safe, and that right in the end would prevail.

That which made Washington the great hero of our revolutionary struggle was the light of the moral element that was in him—not any intellectual genius which he possessed, not any rare tact of administration, or any remarkable executive power. And if you look back upon those names in our history that have best stood the test, you will find that they have been men who were faithful in the highest moral element. And as times go on, those men who lack these elements sink lower and lower till they sit below the horizon; and those who possess them rise higher till they reach the meridian, with undying splendor, to shine upon history and the world.

ON AN INTAGLIO HEAD OF MINERVA.

BY T. B. ALDRICH.

The cunning hand that carved this face,
A little helmeted Minerva,
The hand, I say, ere Phidias wrought,
Had lost its subtle skill and fervor.

Who was he? Was he glad or sad,
Who knew to carve in such a fashion?
Perchance he shaped this dainty head
For some brown girl that scorned his passion.

But he is dust: we may not know
His happy or unhappy story:
Nameless, and dead these thousand years,
His work outlives him—there's his glory!

Both man and jewel lay in earth
Beneath a lava-buried city;
The thousand summers came and went,
With neither haste, nor hate, nor pity.

The years wiped out the man, but left
The jewel fresh as any blossom,
Till some Visconti dug it up
To rise and fall on Mabel's bosom!

O, Roman brother! see how time
Your gracious handiwork has guarded.
See how your loving, patient art
Has come, at last, to be rewarded.

Who would not suffer slights of men,
And pangs of hopeless passion also,
To have his carven agate stone
On such a bosom rise and fall so?

"Mamma is Dead."

[From the Virginia City, Nevada, Enterprise.]

Mr. John W. Van Brocklin, of Twin Bridges, a short distance from this city, was helping to build a church at Sheridan, and was away from home with his wagon and team from Monday morning till Saturday night. He had been several weeks so occupied. He was, therefore, absent from his wife and two little children, the eldest five years old, all week, except Saturday night and Sunday. Mrs. Van Brocklin and the children enjoyed good health, and the husband and father had no fear for the safety of the birds in the home nest. There were near neighbors, too. On Saturday evening the two children used to toddle a good distance along the road by which their father came to meet him and get a ride home in the wagon. On a late Saturday Mr. Van Brocklin was returning home as usual, and the two little fellows had gone quite a distance to meet him. He stopped to take them in the wagon, and as he lifted them up he asked, "How is mamma?" Two little voices replied, "O, papa, mamma's dead." He thought he did not hear correctly, and asked again, "Your mamma?" The little voices again chimed together, "Yes, papa, mamma's dead in the bed." Van Brocklin hurried his team home. He found his wife indeed in bed insensible and fast sinking in death. She was there alone; no neighbors were near. He called loudly for help; the neighbors were alarmed; a doctor was summoned, but before he arrived the poor woman had passed away. The doctor said her attack was of a paralytic nature.

This is the children's story, gathered from them by odds and ends: On Thursday evening Mrs. Van Brocklin called her children to her and told them she was sick, and to run and call the nearest neighbor. Then she fell down on the bed. She never said anything more to them, and they at first supposed she was asleep. It was growing dark, and they were afraid to go for the neighbor. They slept in their clothes and tried to waken their mother in the morning, but she would not rouse. They ate what they could find cooked in the house and drove up the cows morning and evening to be milked, but there was nobody to milk them, and at the usual time they turned them into the pasture again. The neighbors seeing the children at their usual tasks supposed, of course, that all was right with them at home, and it so happened that none of them called. The oldest child began to be a little frightened, and suggested to the other, "What if mamma should be dead. She must be dead, or she'd waken up," and so the little boys came to the conclusion that their mother had gone away from them, and wondered what papa would say when he heard of it. Their curiosity on this point was excited, and, with their hearts full of news, they started out to meet their father coming home in his wagon. They had been forty-eight hours with the shadow of death in the house, and were not old enough to realize what it meant.

Ice Cream in Paper.

The Danbury man says that Mr. Rogers, of Winchester street, thought he would surprise his wife and a few of her friends with an ice cream treat, Saturday evening, as the weather was dreadfully hot. So he went into the confectionery and ordered a quart, and had it put up in several thicknesses of paper, sugar loaf style. The confectioner told him how to carry it, and Mr. Rogers gripped it and hastened toward home. About three blocks from the house he met a neighbor that was going home on the same mission, and both of them stopped to remark on the coincidence. Then they fell to talking about "Betsey and I are out," and trying to compromise on the authorship, but didn't make much headway. Rogers, who was a personal friend of Miss Emmerson, claimed that she did not write the poem, and tried to throw the odium of the authorship upon Carlton.

The neighbor was indignant at this, as he favored Carlton, and made the rather strong assertion that Miss E. was not too good to write it. Here Rogers lost his temper, and the neighbor missed his, and both of them were laying themselves out for one of the grandest intellectual tussels ever seen in that ward, when a sudden and severe chill along his left leg startled Rogers into a recollection of his errand, and looking down, the unhappy friend of Miss Emmerson was shocked beyond description to see a pair of doeskin pants blighted in the bud, and to find that the entire contents of the paper package, with the exception of a trifle caught in one shoe, had noiselessly disappeared. "Godfornitus!" said Mr. Rogers, and immediately started for home. The neighbor was appropriately pained by the accident, but was of the private opinion that it was a sort of judgment from heaven on Rogers, but whether for stopping to talk when carrying ice cream, or for his literary views, he could not tell.

When he got home he told his wife about it, and sat down to pull off his boots. Then he bounded up and shot one hand behind him, and howled; and shot the other hand back there and howled again. Then he jumped around and tore away at his coat, which was a new dress pattern, and hurled in remarks about religion and business, and all the while that coat wept great tears of vanilla, and dropped them on the furniture and wall paper, and buried them in the carpet, and dashed them against the blanched cheeks of the astonished wife. It was some fifteen minutes before she found out that in zeal for Carlton he had unconsciously jammed his package of ice cream into his coat tail pockets. The next morning he hunted up Rogers and divided with him the express charge on a package of clothing to the Howard mission.

The Moral Rights of Children.

Advanced opinions as to the moral rights of children have at last, in Massachusetts, reached an audience among teachers. At a late convetion, Superintendent Marble, of the Worcester schools, read an earnest and well written paper, in which he asserted that every child in school, however young, has the same right to his opinion, his judgment, his will and his way which a full grown man would have if he sat in the same seat. "The fact," he said, "that he is weak and ignorant does not alter the case. If the child's opinion or judgment be at fault we should correct him in the same rational way as we would an adult. If his will be obstinate and his way productive of harm to himself or others, we should point him out the right way, and if he did not desist from his evil way, we should enforce both adult and child in the same manner.

"The qualities of reason and intelligence should always be recognized both in the child and in the adult. The first right of every child, then, as of every human being, is to be treated as an equal and not as an inferior. It seems to be the opinion of some people that to teach is to stamp one's own image upon the child; that what I know the child must learn; that what I think he must be taught. We have no business to do any such thing. A child is weak, but we have no right to bully him. He is undeveloped intellectually; no more have we a right to impose our opinions upon him without his choice."

We can imagine the pedagogues of the past generation rising from their graves in horror at such doctrines, but no legion of ghosts can prevent "new ideas."

How Mrs. Henry Dealt with a Burglar.

[From the Danbury News.]

There is a peculiarly saddening effect in awakening in the night and hearing burglars at work in your house. This was the case with Mr. Henry, on South street, Friday night. As soon as he detected the noise, which appeared to be down stairs, he softly crept out of bed, and commenced to prowl round for a match. His wife was soon awakened by the same noise, and believing that something was the matter with the children, who slept in the next room, she carefully withdrew from the bed so as not to disturb her husband, and started for the door. An instant later they collided. What he thought was evident enough. All the hard earnings of an arduous life were at stake. Before him stood one or more robbers. With an exclamation of condensed eloquence he clinched her. What she thought was not quite so evident, but it was doubtless of her husband and children, and, being plucky withal, she at once twined her fingers in his hair, and gave a wrench that made him think of death.

Then both of them went down to the floor together, she having the advantage in the fall, and, getting on top, with her hands still in his hair, she shook his head against the floor with an energy and courage that would undoubtedly have filled him to overflowing with admiration, had he known who it was, or had he known anything at all. Every time she rapped him she shrieked for help, and in a brief space of time the children and Mrs. Eben Davis, who lives down stairs, were on the scene. Mrs. Davis was not dressed for company, but in the excitement she didn't mind adornment. She held a candle in one hand and a long carving fork in the other, and was about to drive the latter into the legs of the villain, when recognition ensued. Then Mrs. Davis laid down her candle in one direction and the fork in another, and immediately returned to her own apartments, her yellow flannel nightcap, as she shot down the stairs, being the first thing Mr. Henry saw on springing to his feet. The children were returned to their room and put to bed, but the parents did not resume their couch. It was so pleasant that Mr. Henry concluded to remain up the rest of the night and enjoy the scenery, and Mrs. Henry thought it best to stay up, too, so as to change the cloths on his head as often as possible.

An Eccentric King.

[From the Vienna Press.]

The eccentricities of the young King Louis II of Bavaria have of late become such that the question whether or not the present representative of the house of Wittelsbach is insane, is more anxiously agitated in Munich, and more especially at the Imperial Court at Berlin, than ever before. The former curious freaks of the King have all been forgotten; his expenditure of $6,000,000 for imitating at his castle of Hohenschwagan the hanging gardens of Queen Semiramis; his attempt to build a pyramid like that of King Cheops on the famous Lechfeld; and his numerous flirtations with royal princesses, whom he jilted most unceremoniously when they had most reason to look for an offer of his heart and hand.

But that which engrosses at the present time the attention of the good burghers of Munich is the singular mania of the young king in regard to theatrical affairs. It is a well known fact that King Louis II. looks upon the theatre as the prime source of popular education; that he considers Frederick von Schiller and Moliere the two dramatists without whom the stage could never have acquired its present eminence; and that he, the Wittelsbach ruler himself, has written a play, which he not only, as might be expected, values very highly, but which, in his opinion, is a combination of all that is praiseworthy both in Schiller and in Moliere. This wonderful play is entitled "The Fan of the Marchioness," and there exists but a single manuscript copy of it. It contains three acts, and is written to Alexandrine verse. That is all that is known about it. No profane critic has yet cast his eyes upon it, but one person has seen it performed on the stage, and yet the whole company of the Royal Theatre of Munich knows it by heart; and the play has been performed upward of a dozen times with scenery and decorations such as have rarely been bestowed upon the tragedies of the greatest masters.

The explanation of all this is a very simple one. King Louis II. is a man of the most retiring character. Most of the time he lives in utter seclusion. The pomp and splendor of royalty are most distasteful to him, and rather than appear at a gala review of his army, he will plead sickness, or, without cause, bury himself in the Alpine retreats of the Bavarian highlands. The stage is his favorite pastime, but to witness public performances when everybody rises from his seat and bows to him as soon as he makes his appearance, is so distasteful to him that for years he has not set foot in his own theatre at Munich, except on the occasions which we are about to specify.

About four months ago the actors of the Royal Theatre in the above mentioned city received from the manager of the stage the cast of a play entitled "The Fan of the Marchioness," whose author, he said, wished to remain unknown, but which was to be rehearsed immediately. A week afterward the rehearsal took place, and a few days later the actors and actresses who were to appear in it were startled by the notification that they were to play the piece after midnight on the third of March. The most rigorous secrecy was enjoined upon them, and immediate dismissal was threatened to those who should talk about the affair.

Who had ever heard of such a theatrical performance? The actors were all there, and when the curtain went up they vainly looked for an audience. No one was present to witness their performance but a young man dressed in a loose suit of gray, his handsome face adorned with a small, well-trimmed moustache. The young man was seated in the left proscenium box, and he seemed to follow the performance with rapt attention. The experienced actors did their best to play their parts well. None of them had ever performed under more singular, not to say discouraging circumstances. Applause there was none. The curtain went down, and it went up again, before a dark and empty house. The only spectator present was, to all appearances, highly interested, but not even once did he clap his hands.

Finally, just as the neighboring clock of St. Catherine's Church struck four, the play was over, and the actors went home. This singular performance has been repeated since then a dozen times. The actors are almost in a state of revolt, for it seems unnatural for them to play to no audience, without marks of applause or disapproval; simply before one young man who, if he wears a crown, profits by his royal prerogatives in a curious manner.

Taking Pills.

[From the Danbury News.]

The surfeiting we all undergo during this season of fruit brings into action the family pill-box. It is a little singular how much hunting has to be done to find that box. The party who last needed its services doesn't know where he left it, and doesn't care to think of it at all, while he whose turn now occurs isn't exactly tortured to death by anxiety. We are not quite sure but that there is a faint hope down somewhere in his breast that it may not be found at all. He feels lumps forming in his throat as he peers among the bottles and boxes which constitute the pharmacy at his house, and when the box finally appears, and he feels it in his hand, there is a sensation at the pit of his stomach as if somebody was trying to turn that organ over with an old brass candlestick. Some people swallow a dose of pills without a qualm, and afterwards go round looking as proud and overbearing as a boy whose father plays in a band, but the most of us are more delicately constituted, and counting out a dose of pills while some one else gets the water, and observes that he doesn't see how any one can swallow the awful things, is about as serious an undertaking as can be found on record. There is something too awfully solemn about it to describe. And it is a little singular that while a man can swallow whole whortleberries, cherry pits, and even buckshot without any uneasiness at all, yet a single pill will catch in his throat, at a particularly ticklish spot, and hang there four hours, and make faces at his stomach. And a man in a fix like that is not exactly the party we would select to concoct mottoes for a festival.

Of all stations in life police stations are least desirable.