

POETRY.

Selected.

(From the *Electric Review*, for July, 1884, in a review of a small volume of Miscellaneous Poems, we select the following stanzas.—*Ed. Guardian.*)

THE BIRTHRIGHT OF BRITONS.

Explore the wide Atlantic;
And thrill with every breeze
The southern isles romantic,
That stud Pacific seas;
Their coralline recesses,
Which break the ocean calm,
And reef that nature dresses
With crests of feathery palm.

Speed o'er the bounding surges
That sweep the summer-zone;
The depth the sea-tide merges,
The steep its waves enthrone:

The gardens ever flowering,
That plant the Indian wave,
With spicy shades embowering
The soil its waters lave:

Where crowns and thrones barbaric
In orient splendour shine;
Or sceptred realms Tartaric
Exhaust the jewelled mine:

The regions incense-breathing,
Where pearly billows sleep,
In caves of Ormus wreathing
Tiaras for the deep:

The groves whose clusters pendent
The wealth of commerce hold;
And sunny climes resplendent
With Africa's plant gold.

Could all their bright profusion
In one vast altar rise,
Here, in our green seclusion,
A richer dowry lies.

For England holds a treasure,
Than all their glorious spoil
More costly beyond measure:
The freedom of her soil.

This, this she cannot barter
For wealth of land or sea;
But sends her royal charter,
To set the captive free.

O bright and blessed mission!
When shall her sails convey
The tidings of fruition,
For sickening hope's delay?

The voice of intercession
Through all our land that pleads,
Abjures the long oppression,
Whose final moment speeds.

Our oaken forests weaving
The garland of the sea,
Whose billows, proudly heaving,
Bear freedom from the free;

Shall boast a name more glorious,
More fraught with deathless fame,
Than all their Boets victorious
In battle line may claim.

Our flags that yielded never,
But to the tempest's sway,
Our prowess that boldly e'er
The ocean's pathless way,

As borne on wings angelic,
Shall waft the blest release:
Not scaled till every relic
Of Africa's bondage cease.

Their course o'er rock and shallow,
Awaits a prospering gale,
That course may Justice hallow,
And Heaven direct the sail!

CHOLERA.

The following Extracts are from a PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE EPIDEMIC CHOLERA as it prevailed in the City of New York in the Summer of 1832.

CAUSES OF THE DISEASE.

The subject of cause and causation has long been deemed the terra incognita of medical philosophy, by reason of the various hypotheses with which the profession has been wont to employ themselves and amuse the public. It cannot be denied, however, that the genius, industry, and learning of almost every age, have been vigilant in investigating the causes of epidemic diseases and the result of these labours is seen in the fact, that the periodical visitations of such calamities have been combated on each of their successive returns with increasing confidence and increasing success.

Among the supposed causes of Cholera, the opinion most general among the unprofessional, and one which receives the sanction of many distinguished physicians in other countries, and of a few such in America, is that it arises from a specific contagion, and of course that it is communicated from one place to another by persons or things, as the small pox and other contagious fevers are propagated. The obvious and irreconcilable difficulties in the way of this doctrine, exhibited with uniformity in every place where it has prevailed, have, however, compelled its advocates to invent a modification of their theory,

and hence they have adopted the terms "contingent contagion," as expressive of the opinion that it is contagious only under some peculiar atmospheric circumstances. This theory, however, only involves the subject in still greater obscurity. For, if the disease be strictly a contagious fever, it can originate from no other cause than contagion, and hence the term contingent, as applied to contagion, in this case is absurd. Even its advocates concur in admitting that it may and often does originate from other causes, and that it afterwards becomes contagious by reason of adventitious circumstances, though it is not so without them. This is virtually an abandonment of the known laws of contagion, and seems to be the dernier resort of those who have not the magnanimity to abandon their favourite theory, though a multitude of facts have demonstrated its fallacy.

It is evident to the most superficial observer, that we must look elsewhere for the causes of Cholera than to emigration or importation, as the disease has appeared in cities and countries whose cordon sanitaire and quarantine regulations have successfully protected them from other contagious diseases for centuries; and it has also originated in individuals, and under circumstances where the supposition of contagion is excluded by absolute impossibility.

The numerous opinions which have been started by Asiatic, European, and American physicians, have been so various and even opposite in their character, that it would only perplex the reader even to name them. The remote predisposing, exciting, and proximate causes, have all been named by different writers, and scarcely two have agreed concerning either, although equally dogmatical. Hence the mystery which has been thrown around the whole subject, the terrors existing in the community, and the signal fatality which has attended the disease. Even among those who have become convinced that it is strictly an epidemic disease, many have imagined that it defies all analogy, and therefore represent it as a "nova pestis."

By the term contagion, however, physicians understand a disease communicable from a sick to a healthy body by contact, and of course transmissible to any distance by persons or things, such as small pox; for example, which is a contagious fever. Among the distinct characteristics of such fevers, the three following may be considered most prominent:

1st. They arise from no other source than contagion. This is invariable; and hence, if a contagious fever could be once exterminated from the earth, its re-appearance would be impracticable from any known cause.

2d. They attack but once during life, and the subject is ever after free from a return, however much exposed. The exceptions to this rule are so few and far between, that they do not invalidate the general rule, but rather prove it.

3d. They are capable of being communicated by engrafting or inoculation; and this is the case, not only with fevers of this class, but even with local diseases which are contagious, as small pox, cow pox, &c. This, therefore, plainly distinguishes contagious from infectious epidemics for the latter cannot be inoculated, having been tried with Cholera, Yellow Fever, and many others.

Now, as neither of these constituents of a contagious fever are found to be true of Cholera, there can be no foundation for regarding it as contagious.

But the term infection is one often confounded with contagion, and for want of the necessary discrimination here, much ambiguity has been created on this subject. A contagious disease may be justly denominated infectious, but a disease strictly infectious cannot possibly be contagious. All epidemics and epidemics are said to be infectious; by which term we mean that the district of country suffering under them is infected by the cause whence they originate. For example, a neighbourhood is labouring under the prevalence of ague and fever, and the air is so infected with the cause of this malady, that most, if not all, of those who visit it in health, contract the disease. But the diseased person, or any number of such, may be removed into a healthy neighbourhood, and they cannot infect the air, nor can any or all of them propagate the malady to others who have not been within the infected district. This is the case with nearly all our venereal and autumnal epidemics, such as bilious, intermittent, and malignant fevers. Hence they are no longer viewed as contagious, and quarantine regulations to prevent their introduction are now nearly exploded in every enlightened country.

But although we know enough of these and kindred epidemics to abjure all apprehension of their contagion; and although they are now every where regarded as strictly atmospheric, and their origin traced to exhalations from the decomposition of animal or vegetable substances, under the combined influence of moisture and heat; and although barometrical and meteorological science has thrown some light on the cause and causation of these maladies; yet the precise nature of this miasma, malaria, or whatever it may be called, has hitherto baffled investigation, and seems to defy our scrutiny. Still, however we know enough of its *modus agendi* to assist us in detecting and removing the sources whence it originates, and in controlling and removing its effects upon the public health, by the appropriate means within the power of enlightened science; and this knowledge, imperfect as it is, has every where diminished the severity and fatality of such epidemics, as well as prevented their more frequent recurrence.

From these and other similar facts, it must be apparent that the predisposition to Cholera was superinduced from atmospheric causes, as in our other American epidemics, and hence more or less of premonitory symptoms were felt by nearly all of those who inhaled the vitiated air of such localities. As in others, so in this epidemic, thousands who felt this predisposition for days, and even weeks, escaped the onset of the disease by avoiding its existing causes, while others, though unconscious of the predisposition, suddenly fell its victims without a single premonitory symptom, perhaps by some excess, or in some few instances without any overt imprudence, although such cases were exceedingly rare.

Among the exciting causes to which sudden and alarming attacks of Cholera were attributed, very many articles of diet and drink have been named, and indeed many of the proscribed articles were almost invariably followed by its visitation in however small quantities they were used. In general, however, it may be remarked, that it was not owing to any specific or poisonous quality of the fruits or vegetables eaten, but to their *indigestible character*; and hence many of the victims of the disease were rigidly scrupulous in abstaining from everything which was proscribed as hurtful by any authority. Some of the worst cases in New York were of this character; and occurring in persons strictly temperate, as well as rigidly abstinent from the supposed causes of the disease, they excited much astonishment and alarm. In all such cases, however, there was found on careful inquiry, evidence of previous derangement of the digestive organs; and in many of them we had the clearest evidence that animal food had been eaten in a quantity greater than the stomach was capable of disposing of; and as most kinds of meat were strenuously recommended, it was generally eaten more freely than ordinary. A majority of the cases occurring among the temperate, under my own observation, were found to be enormous eaters of flesh.

Observation and experience clearly demonstrated in multiplied instances in this city, (New York,) as elsewhere, that any articles of food, whether animal or vegetable, undergoing fermentation or putrefaction in the stomach, were exciting causes of Cholera in the predisposed, whether with or without premonitory symptoms. And as these processes quickly follow in the temperature of the gastric juice, if digestion does not overtake the food soon after its introduction into the stomach, especially in the debilitated state of that organ in the predisposed, it is not to be wondered at that Cholera should be excited in such persons, either by a quantity of food indigestible in itself or by long full meal, or by too long fasting, or by previously existing dyspepsia. Facts which are familiar to physicians experienced in the disease, will go very far to sustain these views as rational and conclusive; and if they are admitted, many of its phenomena are accounted for which are otherwise inexplicable.

The following table exhibits the articles of food and drink which, in this city, were distinctly observed to excite the attacks of Cholera in individual cases among the predisposed. They are placed as nearly as possible in the order in which they were observed to produce this result:

DRINKS.—Ardent Spirits, Beer and Ale, Wine.

FOOD.—Pork, fresh and salt, Lobsters and Crabs, Green Corn, Clams and Oysters, Watermelons, Cucumbers, Strawberries, Peaches and Pears, Blackberries, Cherries, Most other fruits; Beans and Peas, Cabbage and Greens, Cheese.

MEDICINES.—Every form of spirituous liquors and fermented drinks, Opium, in any form, Rhubarb, Jalap, and other drastic cathartics, Nostrums of all kinds.

It may be found that there are individuals who continued to eat and drink most, and perhaps all of these articles with impunity; but still it is the fact, that cases occurred almost daily so immediately after taking each of them, that it was difficult to avoid the impression that these were the exciting causes. Especially was this the case if these articles were eaten or drank just before going to bed; and a full meal, under such circumstances, produced an attack before morning, in numerous instances, however simple the fare. In some melancholy instances, a little crackers and cheese, with a glass of beer or wine, taken before retiring at night, had developed the disease in a fatal form before morning, and in persons who were not previously sensibly indisposed.

The fact that some few persons continued to drink rum, and eat pork and beans, cucumbers, watermelons, and the like, through the whole course of the disease, without suffering an attack, are to be regarded as extraordinary escapes, and by no means render it safe to imitate them, when, in an overwhelming majority of cases, they were found

to be so mischievous. And on recurrence of the epidemic, therefore, prudence will dictate that we avoid those articles which experience has taught to be pernicious and unsafe.

(To be continued in our next.)

SNEFFING A CANDLE WITH A BALL.—The snuffing of a candle with a ball I first had an opportunity of seeing near the banks of Green River not far from a large pigeon roost, to which I had previously made a visit. I heard many reports of guns during a dark night and knowing them to be those of rifles I went towards the spot to ascertain the cause. On reaching the place, I was welcomed by a dozen tall, stout men, who told me they were exercising for the purpose of enabling them to shoot under night at the reflected light from the eyes of a deer or wolf, by torchlight, of which I shall give you an account somewhere else. A fire was blazing near, the smoke of which rose curling among the thick foliage of the trees. At a distance, which rendered it scarcely distinguishable, stood a burning candle, as if intended for an offering to the goddess of night, but which in reality was only fifty yards from the spot on which we all stood. One man was within a few yards from it, to watch the effects of the shots, as well as to light the candle; while others gradually snuffed the candle without putting it out, and were recompensed for their dexterity by numerous hurrahs. One of them, who was particularly expert, was very fortunate, and generally snuffed the candle, whilst all the other shots either put out the candle, or cut immediately under the light.—*Audubon, the Ornithologist.*

DAYS OF THE CREATION.—Supposing that there are inhabitants at the poles of the earth, how must they understand the days of the creation? To them a day of light is six months long, and a night of darkness six months long, and a day made up of night and day covers a year, and it is a day too, limited by morning and evening. Such persons, therefore, must suppose upon the literal understanding of the days of the creation, that at least six years were employed upon the work.—So also at the polar circles there is every year one day that is one continued vision of the sun of 24 hours and one continued night of 24 hours; while every where within the polar circles the days and the nights respectively are for six months more than 24 hours, extending even as we advance towards the poles through the time of many of our days and nights. How are the inhabitants of these regions to understand the week of creation if limited to the literal interpretation of the inspired record?—*Professor Stillman.*

PARADISE REGAINED.—A Mr. Bloxham, Chaplain to the Earl of Erroll, has lately published a portion of a poem, entitled *Paradise Regained*; the same subject, as is pretty generally known, which was treated about a century and a half ago, by "one John Milton." The preface of the modern poet, exhibits a remarkable specimen of excombyry. Mr. Bloxham observes, that Milton's attempts has generally been regarded as a failure; he has himself never read that work, but is decidedly of opinion that the subject is worthy the most exalted ability. His own reason for selecting it was that as a poet, he has determined to be "all or none;" that He who made Milton, can make others; and that is a slavish and impious thought that "any man, in past times could never find his equals or superiors in succeeding generations." He wished not to be understood as designing to detract at all from the merits of the *Paradise Lost*.

A CONCLUSION.—Some half a dozen green hands, who had shipped on board a merchant vessel, being dilatory in making their appearance on deck in a storm, at the call of "all hands!" the mate went to the hatchway and hailing them, asked in the phrase often used on such occasions, "Below there I have you concluded?" "Yes sir, we've concluded to let the sail blow away and pay for it!"

CUTTING DOWN.—"Married, at Washington, on the 17th ult., Mr. Joseph Peck, to Miss Aurelia Bushel." The young lady has certainly betitled herself in a small measure in this match. To go down from a Bushel to a Peck, must be realizing what is sometimes meant by a woman lowering her dignity in wedlock. A Providence editor says he supposes the next generation will be half-Pecks and half-Bushels.—*Courier.*

POSTHUMOUS GLORY.—"Men who love glory, be careful for your tomb—lay yourselves gracefully down in it—try there to make a good figure, for you will remain there!"—*M. de Chateaubriand in Blackwood.*

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