

THE EVENING NEWS.

Saturday, July 23, 1870.

CRAMP WHEN SWIMMING.—Every summer brings its sad list of drownings through cramp, and this season they have been rather more numerous than usual. The real nature of the muscular paralysis which suddenly sinks even the strongest and most expert swimmers without a moment's warning is necessarily very much a matter of conjecture. The result is in the majority of cases fatal, and, even when the sufferer is saved, the shock, followed by insensibility, prevents him from clearly remembering the symptoms. According to the common theory, the cramp seizes the swimmer's leg, but the London *Lancet* questions this. Though disabled for a moment from swimming, there is no reason why a man with cramp in the leg should not float; indeed to throw himself on his back with the distended would be almost an instinctive impulse, and in that position he could easily maintain himself without an effort, especially if accustomed to the water. It is the terrible characteristic of these seizures that the victim goes down instantly, and without a struggle. This our medical contemporaries are disposed to attribute, not to the stiffening of a limb, but to cramp of the respiratory muscles, by which the expansion of the lungs is checked or the air therein expelled; thus deprived of its buoyancy, the body sinks. Swimming undoubtedly puts a considerable strain on these muscles, and there is plausibility in the theory, though it is difficult to ascertain the truth with certainty. The subject is well worthy of further investigation. Much would be gained if only some warning symptoms could be pointed out for the guidance of swimmers, who should then strike out for the shore before the cramp actually came on.—*Albion*.

THE "BRONZE RACE."—They were shrewd men who constituted the people known as the "bronze race," or the race of men who used bronze tools and implements of war. There are virtues in this alloy that we have not yet fully appreciated; we only know it as a material for ornament, but it has capabilities for higher purposes. We could have fine edge tools of it if we could discover the ancient method of hardening them. Chantrey, the sculptor, tried the experiment, and got so far as to make a bronze razor, with which he was wont to shave himself every morning. Of the durability of bronze we need say nothing; but its property of conferring durability upon contiguous objects is not so well known. In fact, it has only just come out, in the course of an examination, by a French chemist, of the public statues in and about Paris. It was found that the stone pedestals of all those made of bronze were in perfect preservation, whereas all the supports of other figures were more or less decayed. It was clear that the bronze arrests decay; and when the rationale of its action was discussed, little doubt remained that the rain-water trickling from the bronze upon the stone contained a trace of copper in solution, and that this poisoned the cryptogamous plants, to which the disintegration of stone is probably due. Supposing this explanation correct, we are conducted to a practical consequence:—all stone monuments should have some portion of bronze or copper in their structure or ornamentation.—*Exr.*

A MAN SELLING FOR MONEY HIS SHARE IN THE FUTURE LIFE.—Before a court in the province of Pesth, Hungary, a suit was pending, in which an aged Jew was ready to take the oath, when another Jew arose and protested against it.

"This man dare not take an oath."

"Why not?" asked the Judge.

"There exists a Hebrew prayer which contains the sentence that 'every Jew has a share in the life to come.' It is now about twenty years ago, while I was present, when the man who is now about to take an oath, sold his 'share in the life to come,' guaranteed to him in the prayer, to another Jew, a Mr. Y., who paid him a certain amount of money for it. As he, therefore, cannot any longer count on a future existence, he having nothing to fear or hope for in the life to come, it must be certainly indifferent to him whether to swear to a truth or falsehood."

The matter was examined into, and, as the strange transaction was found to have taken place in reality, the court granted the protest of the old man, and the party who sold his "share in the life to come," was declared incapable of taking an oath.

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