

cian named Mesmer. He boasted of the possession of extraordinary magnetic power, which enabled him forthwith, by its agency, to remove every disease and prolong life. At the instigation of the French government, a scientific commission was appointed to report upon the various phenomena, and the practical result was the discovery of what was then called "animal magnetism," afterwards "mesmerism," and now "hypnotism." Mesmer had unquestionably ascertained that the hypnotic condition could be produced in certain persons, either with or without the aid of a "medium;" but the rest of his assertions had no grain of truth in them. Prior to the report of the commission, he had refused three hundred and forty thousand livres (about \$68,000) for his discovery, which was unsaleable as soon as the truth had been made known. Mesmer lapsed into obscurity soon afterwards. Last, but not least, in the rank of imposters, was Joseph Balsamo, alias Count de Cagliostro (1743-1795). During this man's very remarkable career, he made more than one fortune, which he subsequently lost, and he died in prison in 1795. The well-known Cardinal de Rolan was one of his chief dupes. Like Saint Germain, Balsamo boasted that he had discovered the elixir of life, and throughout Europe there were almost an unlimited number of persons who were eager to possess his panacea. This elixir was a very powerful stomachic, possessed of great stimulating properties. It is a fixed law of nature that every drug which tends to increase the vital forces also tends to abridge their duration. Concentrated and potent stimulants, which are generally the active principle of most "elixirs of life," while, for the time, increasing strength in some way, are prone to lose their effect, if their use is continued for any considerable period; and, in any event, they are prejudicial to longevity. Before proceeding to mention the methods which, as far as our present knowledge goes, appear to be the most certain for promoting longevity, I propose to examine certain theories which, although of very little practical value, are worthy of some attention, because they show the direction which men's minds have taken in the past.

"Hardening" and Immobility

The plan of "hardening"—based upon a false supposition that by toughening the physical organs they would wear longer—obtained at one time numerous followers. When we reflect that the main principle of life depends upon the pliability of every organ, combined with free circulation, it naturally follows that rigidity must be unfriendly to long life. Perpetual cold baths, exposure to keen air, and exhausting exercise, were advocated by the "hardening school." Like most enthusiasts, the disciples of this

school carried their ideas to excess, and forgot that moderation in everything is the best policy. Later on, a theory well suited to the idle and luxurious gained many adherents—namely, to retard bodily waste by a trance-like sleep. One fanatic, Maupertius, went so far as to propound the possibility of completely suspending vital activity. Even some well-educated physicians, having observed the restoration of apparently dead flies by exposure to warmth, were struck by the feasibility of promoting long life by the agency of immobility. The error of this hypothesis, from a physiological point of view, is self-evident, as want of exercise is absolutely poisonous to health. Physical well-being must depend, to a great extent, upon a constant metamorphosis of the tissues, and a destructive plethora would certainly be induced by attempting vital suspension.

The Rosicrucians.

That celebrated sect of mystical philosophers, the Rosicrucians—famous for their profound acquaintance with natural phenomena, and with the higher branches of physical, chemical and medical science—considered that human existence might be prolonged far beyond its supposed limits. They professed to retard old age by certain medicaments, whose action upon the system would curb the progress of natural decay. The means by which they undertook to check senile decrepitude were, like other mysteries of their fraternity, never revealed. The celebrated English Rosicrucian, Dr. Fludd, whose writings, such as "Fama Fratunitatis" and "Declaratio Brevis," became famous, is said to have lived a century. The Rosicrucians became extinct about the year 1700. The history of the society is very obscure.

The chief disadvantage of the various ancient plans which have been set forth for the promotion of longevity is that they are all deficient in one important respect, viz: They all regard one special object, to the neglect of other conditions. However beneficial any theory may prove, it must be materially inadequate for fulfilling its purpose, should numerous other matters of the greatest importance, bearing upon the human economy, be ignored. The real art of longevity consists in cultivating those agents which protract existence, and by avoiding all circumstances tending to shorten its duration. This is undoubtedly the most reasonable method for obtaining the end in view. Moderation in all things, avoiding, as far as practicable, every morbid condition, and open air exercise, are much more reliable methods of prolonging life than are any of the elixirs ever manufactured. Health and longevity can only be attained by an intimate acquaintance with, and obedience to, those natural laws which govern our physical economy.

In 1889, Dr. Brown-Sequard, an emi-

nent physician, who was a professor of physiology at Harvard from 1864 to 1869, announced that he had discovered, not an elixir vitae, but a rejuvenator. A description of its composition would be out of place here, but it may be mentioned that it was a liquid, and that it was injected under the skin. The first experiments were tried upon dogs, and with such good results that Dr. Brown-Sequard then used his rejuvenator upon himself. Although he was more than satisfied with its effect, in the hands of others, it proved a complete failure, and was quickly forgotten, as might have been anticipated, for old age is a normal and purely physiological condition.

Scientific Investigation.

Finally, turning to what is scientific, the late Sir George Humphrey, an English physician of repute, devoted a great deal of time to an elaborate investigation of facts concerning longevity. He examined the family history of nearly one thousand persons, seventy-four of whom were almost one hundred years old. His conclusions were somewhat as follows: The most important factor is a good constitution, which appears to be largely dependent upon satisfactory digestive and nutritive functions. An energetic temperament and active habits are conducive to long life, but it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the vital machinery is wound up, so to speak, for a given period, and except for accidents—or in spite of them—it is likely to go on till the appointed time has elapsed. This fact involves some extremely complex problems in heredity, the solution of which is very far off. To an individual who comes of a short-lived family, extreme old age is not often vouchsafed. Upon the other hand, the Jews, who are remarkable for their longevity, unsanitary surroundings and uncleanly habits—it is undeniable that immigrant Hebrews are often uncleanly—seem powerless to increase the mortality to any appreciable extent.

Buffalo, N. Y., June 25, 1901.

"The last word has not been spoken," says the Cleveland Plain Dealer (Dem.). "Congress is clothed with full power, now to legislate as it sees fit for the government of the insular territory of the United States. Public opinion can operate on congress."

"The aggressive tariff worshippers cannot too soon conclude that tariff revision has become inevitable and that the people will not tolerate monopoly abuses under the guise of protection," warns the Chicago Post (Rep.). "The manufacturers, with the cheapest labor in the world (cheap because of its efficiency and productivity), with unexampled natural resources to draw upon, want markets more than they want a high barbed-wire fence to exclude foreign competitors."