

The Meteor.

50 cts. per annum.]

Lucus a non lucendo.

[In advance.

VOL. 3.

ALABAMA INSANE HOSPITAL, TUSKALOOSA, July, 1874.

NO. 9.

Alabama Press Association.

At the Ala. Ins. Hospital there is not unfrequently a good sprinkling of visitors, and when conventions, saintly or secular, gather in Tuscaloosa, we get for some days a pretty steady pour, but it was reserved for the Ala. Press Association to bring upon us a genuine human deluge. All editors being confessed knowers, (Nobis, reader,) we might have anticipated such a result; but we did not, and therefore with dilated eyes and elongated neck, did we view the vast throng of males and females, by twenty-twos and seventy-sevens, surge through the yard in front of the METEOR office, on their way to the pretties of the Hospital lying in its rear. Only a few entered our sanctum, and of these we were introduced to but one, the Captain of the Northern element of the mighty concourse.

But let us go back, and beginning at the beginning, take things in their natural order.

Consternation at the Hospital.

The Hospital was jogging along in its usual quiet way on Thursday morning, when a man, without waiting to ring the door-bell, ran up the iron-stairway, rushed into the office and handing the Superintendent a sealed note, fainted. Bidding Dr. Huger to see that for the recovery of the messenger, all needful measures were taken, provided they did not exceed a half-pint, Dr Bryce tore open the note and read as follows:

Birmingham Ala., — May 1874.

To the Superintendent Ala. Ins. Hospital.

Have the Insane Hospital made ready for the Press Convention.

The Doctor's first decision was to telegraph in reply that the Hospital being already nearly full, there was not room for so many, and that chronic cases could not be received. But on second thought he concluded that there was a mistake, or probably that Col. Ryland Randolph was playing on him a practical joke. At any rate the despatch set him to thinking. But little time was there for thought: for as,

On the broad plain to South-West

The Doctor cast his eye,

He saw a lurid cloud of dust

Rise fast against the sky;

and before he could say, "Goodness gracious!" he discovered that the despatch was no joke, and that the advance guard of an immense throng was at the Hospital.

They Invade the Lunatics.

They had left Birmingham, attended by the whole mass of the Birmese, men women and children,—hence the deluge—

had landed at the depot at Tuscaloosa, had dispersed, for breakfast, all over the "City of oaks," and for aught we know, over New-town and Northport; had had hasty but very pleasant receptions at the Larrabee hall and the old State house; had done the University and were at the Hospital.

But our chief, equal to all occasions, had all his show-wards thrown open, and bidding them go wherever they might wish, caused them to be conducted through the Hospital and over its grounds—to the vegetable and flower-gardens, to the METEOR office, the Apiaries, the Barn and the Laundry, and finally to the Amusement-Hall, where a dozen buckets of lemonade and punch were drank; then a handsome little speech having been made by the President, to id ring the thanks of the Convention for their very handsome entertainment at the Hospital, the flood began to subside, and the dry land appeared.

A Tuscaloosian skips breakfast.

We add a few details picked up somehow. In Tuscaloosa they scattered, for breakfast, here, there, everywhere, and everywhere welcomed, got the best that the families on which they lit could raise by hook or by crook. One bevy was not so fortunate. The proprietor of a handsome cottage, seeing a hack-load of females dismount at his gate with "narry a man" as escort, concluded that they were strong-minded editresses from away up North, and he beat a most ungallant retreat. He is a hospitable man, but declares that the discordant symphonies of "woman's rights," to which such folks are addicted, are more than he can endure in the day-time.

Lady-Patients.

The visit, of the Press Association was a wind-fall to some of the ladies of the establishment: not the pretty nurses, whom some of the visitors mistook for patients and began to question about the duration of their attack and other symptoms, but the genuine inmates. Several of these let slip the tethers of their tongues, and talked and talked and talked. Gentlemen of the Press, many thanks for th service then rendered! Those ladies were dying for the lack of some one on whom to turn the tempest of their gab. Now they have blowed, their condition is one of such rapid improvement that another such occasion would insure their recovery.

Temperance, Bees, Barn, &c.

The cold-water folks—Sons of Temperance, Good Templars &c.—mistook the

the punch for lemonade colored by the strawberrses floating in it, and declared it altogether superior to the uncolored.

Admiration of the Hospital Apiaries, magnificent Brick-Barn and Steam-Laundry was freely expressed, and so delighted were they with the Amusement-Hall that quite a number expressed a determination to go crazy so as to acquire title to participation in its entertainments.

We learn that there were in the crowd some attaches of the *New York Graphic*. We may therefore look for some spirited delineations of certain phases of the mighty concourse of editors.

Pierson Library.

Our readers may remember that the library of the Hospital is so called, in honor of a most excellent Christian gentleman of New York, who has made the institution most liberal contributions of valuable books and beautiful pictures. Upon the receipt of Mr. Pierson's last donation the whole library was overhauled and re-arranged, and a handsome label, printed in the METEOR office, attached to the inner binding of each volume, to this effect: that the nurse of the patient drawing the book will be held responsible for its proper care and prompt return to the library.

At the same time the library was given in charge to the Supervisor of male nurses, and a specified hour of every day devoted to the issue and return of books. From these tactics the literary resources of the hospital have acquired new impetus. While the books are returned with much greater regularity and in much better condition, many more are drawn, and the library is, now, a most fruitful source of enjoyment to the inmates.

But let not those friends who have been so kind and liberal in the past remit their efforts in this direction. We still lack many volumes which we ought to have. Any good book will be gladly received, yet our most obvious need is works of natural science, written in that simple, entertaining manner that distinguishes the late issues of certain publishers. Humorous books would be even more acceptable; copies of Saxe's or Holmes' poems would be invaluable acquisitions.

Our news-paper reading, too, notwithstanding the very liberal responses of the Alabama publishers to our solicitations for papers, is not as abundant as the interests of the patients require. Sometimes by splitting the papers we are able to give to each patient a leaf, but very

often, to the request for a paper, we are compelled to reply: "No paper for you this week."

In this connection we note that in some of the large cities of other States, near hotels and Rail Road depots and at other convenient points, boxes are placed with labels attached stating that all reading matter deposited will be for the benefit of the patients of such and such hospital. We learn it is Dr. Bryce's desire to try the experiment of such boxes in Tuscaloosa. The people of the State are very poor, but we believe that in such way very many interesting papers, which are now read and thrown away, might be secured for those unfortunates deprived of liberty and destitute of other means for obtaining that stimulus to intellection, that spiritual force which keeps the individual *en rapport* with the heart of humanity, and which has come, from a rare and costly luxury, to be an indispensable requisite to the happiness of every one not absolutely besotted with ignorance—the weekly newspaper.

THE METEOR.

Alabama Insane Hospital.

Edited by a Patient.

Tuskaloosa, Ala., July 1874.

THE METEOR is published quarterly, at fifty cents per annum, in advance. It is printed in the Hospital exclusively by the Patients, and original communications only are admitted in its columns.

Decoration of Graves.

On another page will be found an account of the decoration of the graves in the Hospital Cemetery. Our own views are in full accord with those of the gentleman who delivered the brief address. There was a time when insanity was deemed a disgrace, and the most stringent measures adopted for concealing its invasions. But the progress of scientific Medicine having demonstrated it to be a phenomenon of disorder of the brain, it is now, by all well informed persons, ranged in the category of physical diseases. Nor is this view invalidated, in any degree by the late declarations of Professor Gairdner, who would, in exploring its aetiology, have somewhat more importance attached to vicious mental habits: For from whatever quarter may come the disarranging impulse, whether from somatic or psychical sources, the fact remains that certain constitutional peculiarities are notably associated with its development. Errors in living or in thinking, which leave many constitutions unscathed shake to their inmost recesses the framework of others, and cause the mental powers to halt in dismay or to press with vacillating efforts the beautiful broiery of thought.

The frequent alliance of madness and genius has been so forcibly impressed by many melancholy illustrations as to be no longer deemed a poetical exaggeration. Whatever be the endowments of mind which merit the name of genius, one of them must be trenchant perception. Now to the presence of this, a certain delicacy of nervous organization is indispensable. But the possessors of such delicate nervous framework are particularly subject to invasions of insanity. Constant application has been so uniformly demonstrated essential to distinguished success, that some have confounded it with that assemblage of mental qualities, interpenetrated with delicate sensibility, on which the rigid and interested attention, the fulcrum of success, must hinge. Between a gross and a delicate perception there is as much difference as betwixt an acute and an obtuse wedge. Neither will accomplish anything without the impelling force, application; but the same force will accomplish twice as much in the one case as in the other.

But while all may see great propriety in decorating the graves of soldiers who fell in defence of the right, some may fail to see any aptness in thus honoring the last resting place of those who have succumbed to the influence of an ordinary disease. But of the multitudes of soldiers, how few are stricken down in battle, or die of wounds there received? Thousands perish without meeting an enemy or hearing the dread pipings of a rifle orchestra. It must be remembered, too, that the beautiful custom prevalent in Catholic countries of decorating the last resting places of relatives and friends, is rapidly extending among Protestant Christians. And why should not the officers, employees and patients of the Hospital and citizens of Tuscaloosa, assuming the part of first friend, in behalf of many bereaved households, bedeck the graves of their "loved ones who died far away from home and kindred."

Nor this alone. The arenas on which the greenest laurels are won are not battlefields, but households and the daily walks of life. And if the myriad anxieties inseparable from the responsibilities of earning bread and social position for the little-ones dependent upon them, fell with so direful force on their delicate nervous organization as to impair its most noble function, should not our sympathies be more readily roused in their behalf, and lovely flowers be still more profusely strewn, in token of commiseration of the sad straits to which their native nobilities were reduced—the long and painful captivities endured, while others, more fortunate, were ploughing their way in gallant crafts, with white sails wooing every favoring breeze, to their common home beyond the skies.

The Hospital is crowded—350 patients.

Correspondence.

Editor of the METEOR:

Sitting in my cosy little room, enjoying the beauty and fragrance of the flowers given me by the Matron to smile upon and cheer me in the absence of loved ones. I was aroused by a gentle tap at the door. There stood Mrs B—, pure, peaceful, loving. I have often admired her, but she never looked as pure, and lovely as at that moment; so like her dear, pious mother, whose brow is as calm and peaceful as if she had never known a sorrow. "Would to God!" I have often exclaimed, in looking at her. "that I, like you, could have bowed to the storm that swept over the hearts of Southern mothers!"

Giving Mrs B— an affectionate greeting, I said to her. "Where did you get that love of a head-dress?" She smiled and said, "It is a present from Mrs S— of Montgomery; and, by the by, I have a letter from her, and she sends love to you." She then told me of Mrs S—'s pleasant trip home, with Mrs Goodwin, and of the success of Mrs Goodwin's readings in Mobile. The joy that filled my heart, on learning the good fortune of that kind and excellent lady, caused me to forget, for a time, the lovely head-dress. G—.

Here followed details of a conversation on dress, and encomiums on the practical fervor of the members of a certain denomination of Christians; both of which we omit in consequence of the absence of those members of our editorial staff who give special attention to fashion and polemical theology. Editor.

Editor of the Meteor:

Tell the people to hush, and stay at home, and go to work, and soon we will have nothing to complain of. We may speak of independence when we have sense to attend to our own affairs and make home happy by a kind consideration for the welfare of our family or the family with which we may be associated. If we do each day what we can for the good of friends and neighbors, we will have no time to make incendiary speeches or spend our money before it is made.

If parents would stay at home, with their little innocent and helpless children, there would not be so many blots on society, so many awful mistakes for time and for eternity. Let us give up rambling from home, and devote ourselves more to the precious little-ones. How they love kind words, and how few they get! They have a great many things to trouble them, and if we would only patiently help them to learn to do right, we would pave a way for them to that world where there is no sorrow. C—.

We give a part only of this sensible letter, because, in addition to our penury of space, Hospital folks are not addicted to rambling from home, nor, from the Superintendent down, troubled with the care of children. Ed.

Mr Editor:

You request the ladies of the Hospital, through our Matron, to contribute original articles to the METEOR, and just to prove to you that we ladies can write as well as talk, I intend to gratify you, or rather myself, by making the attempt.

You see that I begin by alluding to one of your characteristic "flings" at the

weakness of our sex. Indeed, Mr. Editor, your meteoric editorials, as well as remarks in occasional lectures often place you in an attitude towards us women which illly comports with your well known gallantry and susceptibility to feminine attractions. Are you a widower, Mr. Editor, or an old bachelor? No married man, I am very sure, who has the experience of Caudel before his eyes, would dare to say as many sharp things, (mind I don't say they are not true,) about the sex in general as you have the temerity to do.

Now married men are expected, of course, (I'm a married woman myself,) to "show up," in the presence and hearing at least of their wives, all the pretty girls, smart widows and attractive young married women they happen to meet, but towards woman in the abstract, they are allowed no such latitude of expression. You seem to be hampered, however, by no such restrictions, but shoot and splutter and explode, meteor like, pretty much at random, and therefore we infer that you at present are "unencumbered." Less the excuse, and more the shame, then, Mr. METEOR, for your unexpected and luminous descents upon us.

But to carry the figure a little further, did it ever occur to you that meteoric showers, though, to the uninitiated, terrible to behold, were perfectly harmless? For ourselves we rather like the display, and so long as your paper aerolites fall wide of us, we shall not lose our temper.

But it was not my intention to write a defence of woman. This has been so often attempted by the "strong minded" that we have no further proofs to offer. A sketch of our life in the wards of the Hospital was the theme we had selected, and unless you think we have already consumed our space you can add what follows:—

Life in the Wards.

We rise and breakfast early in the Hospital, at least the majority do. Some of us delicate ones, however, the Doctors indulge in late hours, and breakfast in bed. The signals vary with the months and seasons of the year, according to a printed schedule which I have seen posted in the kitchen hall. During the month of June, for instance, the bell is rung at 4. 30, A. M., for rising; at 5. 30 for breakfast; at 6 for prayers; at 12 M. for dinner; at sunset for tea, and at 9. 30, P. M., for retiring.

The division of the huge building into separate wards, containing each from fifteen to twenty ladies, and cut off from intercommunication with other wards, gives to the place an air of home-life and quietness of which persons, unacquainted with the arrangement, could hardly conceive. Each lady has her own little chamber, nicely furnished, opening out upon the long corridor extending down between the rooms. Each little room has a window opening up a beautiful landscape view, and those on the front of the house, overlook the beautiful parterres and plots of flowers of every hue and variety.

Prayers are said every morning by the Superintendent, and while the attendance is not compulsory, quite a large number of both ladies and gentlemen assemble and devoutly engage in the impressive services. After this, until 10 o'clock A. M., the hour at which the physicians make their morning call, we are engaged in such domestic duties as might be supposed to occupy a housekeeper in the management of a single room which she desires to display to the best advantage. Sometimes we stroll through the

flower gardens or in the adjoining groves, under the escort of a special nurse, during the cool of the morning, always returning however to show ourselves to the inspecting physician. We await the visit of the Doctors in the common parlor of our own ward, unless we are too sick to leave our chambers, and there, in the interchange of the usual morning salutations and in pleasant social conversation, we spend a few of the most agreeable moments of the day.

Visiting among each other or receiving visitors to the Hospital and strangers from abroad, reading, sewing, etc., etc. occupy the rest of the morning. After dinner a nap, and later a stroll in the woods, in the gardens, over the lawn, playing at croquet, jumping the rope, gathering berries and fruit in which the country abounds, and many other pastimes too numerous to mention, bring us to the hour of tea. After tea, social gatherings in the common parlors of our respective wards, enlivened with music on the piano, violin and guitar, singing, games of different kinds, reading aloud, etc. etc., occupy the time until the hour for retiring. In other wards not so socially inclined, sewing, knitting, tea-drinking and sacred psalmody of the old time kind, relieve the dull hours intervening between tea and bedtime.

We wish that we had more space to devote to the description of the details of hospital life, but we fear the Editor of the METEOR will think our pen like our tongue is interminable. We must not forget, however, to allude to the evenings, once a week, given to amusements in the beautiful Hall, built expressly for the purpose in the rear of the main hospital building. Concerts, and dramatic entertainments of a high order, exhibitions with a splendid stereoscopic, lectures, tea parties, etc., form the staple of these entertainments and are beyond question a most valuable aid to the physic of the Doctors in restoring the sick and despondent to health and buoyancy of spirit.

On Sunday afternoons, divine service by the ministers of the several denominations is held and largely attended. In our next letter we may enter into some of the details which for want of space we are compelled to omit.

Olivia.

Our old friend and College-mate, Rev. John W. Pratt, D. D., Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Lexington Va., formerly Professor of Belles-lettres in the University of Ala., paid our sanctum a pleasant pop-call the other day. In the course of a facetious conversation he got off the following classic and impromptu parody on—well, on something:

I want to be a horse, and with the horses stand
In Doctor Bryce's stables, the best in all the land.

All hands indulged in a moderate horse-laugh, and we promised to use our influence to have a place assigned him among the quadrupeds.

Doctor Pratt is in excellent health and fine spirits, and is welcomed to Tuscaloosa by hosts of old friends.

Matrimonial. Mr. Webster Smith and Miss Julia Fike, both nurses in the Hospital, were married at the Baptist church in Tuscaloosa on the 24th of May last. In accordance with an inexorable and cruel regulation of the Hospital, they resigned their respective positions and retired to spend their honey-moon in the country.

It is generally supposed, and from the stringency of the rules regulating the meeting of the nurses of the respective sides of the house it is undoubtedly the fact, that courting goes on here under great difficulties. The *denouement* however above recor-

ded fully establishes the truth of the old saying, "Love laughs at locksmiths."

Speaking of the visit of the Press Association reminds us to say that the lady patients of the Hospital are convinced that certain peculiarities of our METEOR man which they were wont to attribute to cranial fractures, are nothing more than editorial idiosyncracies. When confronting Dr. Bryce with the remarkable testimony in our behalf, he drew an inference from it altogether foreign to our desire, but which a regard for the crowded condition of the wards forbids us from publishing.

We learn from an undoubted source that one of our most popular and talented lady-patients is engaged in writing for publication a novel to be called *Uncle Eddie*. We risk nothing in promising that its readers will be edified.

An interesting article on the use of the Bible in Insane Hospitals, and which was promised, in our last, for this number of our paper, was crowded out. It will certainly appear in our next.

Amusement Hall.

On the evening of Wednesday, June 17th, an impromptu entertainment, that was much relished by the patients, came off in the Hos. Amusement Hall. There was greater variety than on previous occasions, and to the crowding out all long-winded contrivances we are disposed to attribute much of the delight experienced by the audience. Nineteenth century folks are emphatically an impatient tribe.

Whatever they engage you to do, there is one stipulation that is never omitted; to "be quick about it." They write fast, eat fast, travel fast, marry fast, get rich fast and die fast. If they could, they would doubtless hurry up the Earth, and secure two or more short, daily and annual revolutions in the place of the one long one that they have to grin and bear as best they can. And the thaumaturgy of past ages over which they open their eyes widest, is the willingness of their ancestors to stand or sit through one or several entire days, waiting the lapse of a "miracle play." To nothing but this love of speedy results—quick sales and prompt profits—can be attributed the neglect of the Prince of the drama. Popular as is Shakespeare as a reading-book, his plays take poorly on the stage, unless wofully trimmed and awfully "doctored."

But to our entertainment. The first article cried off—everybody took something of all that was offered—was a sentimental song by a school-girl from the city. She is a favorite with Tuscaloosians, and her vocalizations have been extravagantly commended. In our opinion her voice though very sweet is deficient in strength and volume.

The live-programme, Mr. J. J., next announced a recitation of verse by a gentleman, (a patient.) As the writer of this review of the entertainment, modestly forbids his saying anything but this, that the verses were spirited and were ren-

dered in a manner that might possibly be surpassed by an author of a treatise on elocution.

The third feature was a song by a sweet-sixteen girl, from the city, whose voice was as round, strong and sweet as her organ accompaniment was skillful and bewitching.

Next came a song, by Tom Thumb and wife. The real General could hardly have done better, for the little fellow, Master Larrabee, from the Methodist Female College, who strutted about, ordering his wife, stroking his beard and smoking his pipe, was not more than two feet, 4 inches, high, and off the stage looked the veritable child.

To another song from one of the young ladies, succeeded "The Standard Bearer," by our handsome young Steward. His articulation was distinct, his emphasis just, and his movements across the stage, *i. e.* the management of his legs, incomparable.

Master Larrabee then treated us to a brief French recitation, which, as we do not know French and did not understand a word he said, was doubtless excellently well done.

Mr. Morcombe, the engineer, then gave us an entertaining selection from the inimitable Pickwick Papers; after which a motion to adjourn having been offered by the toll of the Hospital curfew, the company sought the main-building, to try in sleep the histrionics of dreams.

Original Conundrum. Why do the boys and girls generally take to stargazing, sighing, talking hifalutin, and writing doggerel in the Spring of the year?

Answer. Because, with the "rise of the sap," they become *sap-heads*. (*A young Miss who looks over our shoulder says, It's because they become SAP-ient.*)

Bread.

It was Cobbett, we believe, who affirmed that he had never really liked bread since the day he saw, in Paris, a great strapping fellow, with his breeches rolled up to his knees, kneading dough, after the French fashion, with his feet. Yet he was forced to confess that the man's feet were clean. That they were so when he first entered the tray could not be affirmed with equal confidence.

How dough is kneaded at the Ala. Insane Hospital we do not know, but are convinced that it is not done with the feet. Our baker having a pair of the biggest and strongest hands and arms that were ever attached to human frame, it is unreasonable to suppose, being so well equipped with legitimate weapons for contests with lumps, that he would resort to the equivocal, if not absolutely illegal, bludgeons of the French metropolis. What he might, or does do in emergencies, we have never inquired. Every trade has its exigencies, and we are not disposed to make in the Baker's avocation an exception to the general rule, that tight places justify resort to more summary processes.

The bread which is habitually served at the Hospital is sometimes excellent, always good, that is, when the materials are so.

The Stewards—the writer has eaten under four of them—now and then have the misfortune to strike a poor lot of flour, and until it is eaten the Hospital bread is no whit better than that met with in the world. For some time past, the bread has been excellent—white, soft, porous and as sweet as farinaeous youths know how to be before marriage to the luscious beauties of the cane-field.

Our Baker is a Baptist Minister, but we can not say if he is a "zortor," a genuine preacher or one of those haranguers on religious topics, who begin by sticking down a text, to enable their audience to estimate with exactitude the extent of their departure from the course started on. We have heard that he is not a "rousticator," that is, does not try to palm off noise for thought. He can read, write and cipher, but we know not if he writes well, emphasizes correctly or can calculate the market value of eggs from the price of corn and bone dust. He is studying German, on a principle, we suppose, in vogue in our schools; to give especial attention to whatever promises to be of little use in after-life. But now we think of it, he is probably devising means for converting the Teutons, not to a belief in the doctrine of his church, but in the quality of his loaves.

Decoration of Graves.

On the morning of Decoration-Day we were summoned to the front Centre-building, and upon arrival were favored with as entrancing a vision as falls to the lot of ordinary mortals—a carriage filled with loveliest flowers, packed as closely as a right regard for the witchments of the tender beauties allowed, excepting only the space occupied by the charming woman who was to be their purveyor to the cemetery in Tuskalooosa. On the day following, all the flowers unappropriated to the soldiers' graves were harvested for the adornment of the Hospital Cemetery, and in the afternoon all the denizens of the institution made their way to "the sequestered brow of a bold hill overlooking the Warrior, which forms the last resting-place of our unfortunates."

On each grave were laid a bouquet and evergreens; and a large cross, centrally located, was profusely decked with roses. The flowers deposited, the crowd, swollen by ladies from the city, proceeded to an extemporized stand, and listened to a brief address by a gentleman, (a patient,) and to the reading, by another male patient, of an original composition, abounding in beautiful thoughts, contributed by a lady-patient for the occasion. The colored people participated in the proceedings of the day by decorating the graves in that portion of the Cemetery appropriated to the use of their race.

Address.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Heartily approving the beautiful design which calls us here to-day, I could not find it in my heart to refuse to accede to a very polite request that I would make a few remarks. I confess indeed that no event that has occurred in or about the Hospital, has been to me a source of more profound satisfaction than the announcement of this celebration. And I sincerely hope that the proceedings, to-day inaugurated, will be repeated with each revol-

ving year; to the end that fathers and mothers and husbands and wives, and brothers and sisters may know, that when the beautiful Spring-time comes on, a throng of sympathizing friends will wend their way hither from the Hospital, to bedeck with odorous blossoms the last resting-place of their loved ones who died far-away from home and kindred.

Darwinism with a Vengeance.

A late contributor to the *Contemporary Review* (English) would anticipate the slow results of the law of "Natural Selection," so far at least as the human race is concerned, by restricting the liberty of marriage to such individuals, of either sex, only, as can produce "a clean bill of health." Candidates, should be required, he says, to submit to "a medical examination," and should produce an "untainted pedigree." The supervention of insanity and certain other constitutional diseases should constitute legal grounds for divorce. He predicts, that under such a system, "the coming race will become as much superior to ourselves, in mind and body, as the race horse is superior in form to the shaggy pony!"

Macaulay, in his *Review* of the life of Bacon, tells us that Socrates and his school, advocated views very similar to these of Mr. Darwin, notwithstanding these old fogies had no theoretical acquaintance with the new dogma of "survival of the fittest." These old philosophers, however, would proceed in a more summary manner, by allowing the unfortunate, who was no longer able to benefit his race, to perish, without assistance, of his own infirmities. It was generally conceded that Lord Bacon did something for philosophy in exposing the inhumanity of such procedure. But we are learning, or rather unlearning, every day!

May Day.

More than twice twelve months having elapsed since the establishment of the METEOR, it has fallen to our lot to record the features of two May-Day celebrations. In that of 1872, the various flowers were personated by the patients and nurses, who, advancing in turn to make their obeisance, delivered couplets or quartets of original verse, germane to the sentiment attributed to them in "Languages of Flowers;" the Queen responding also in original verse, and at the conclusion of the floral levee, delivering a long poem of her own composition. In the celebration of '73, the principal feature, besides the crowning and the May-pole dance, was an original address, of some length, by a gentleman, (a patient.) In that of '74, there was neither recitation of verse, address nor May-pole dance. Yet the celebration, in our opinion, was fully up to its immediate predecessors; for the Queen was as pretty a girl as eye ever lights on, and though a patient, not crazy "worth a cent;" and the supply of lemonade and cakes was abundant. Many nimble feet, too, assiduously gave a local habitation and a name to emotions roused by the viol's entrancing tones. Details we cannot give, our reporter having been so possessed with a sudden passion for the queen and the cakes as to be unconscious of any other presences than those of the charming girl and the delicious bread.