

Functions in Fruit.

THE 'Medicine Brief' thus summarises the various uses of fruit in relieving diseased conditions of the body. The list is worth keeping—Under the category of laxatives, oranges, figs, tamarinds, prunes, mulberries, dates, nectarines, and plums may be included. Pomegranates, cranberries, blackberries, sumac berries, dewberries, raspberries, barberries, quinces, pears, wild cherries, and medlars are astringents. Grapes, peaches, strawberries, whortleberries, prickly pears, black currants, and melon seeds are diuretics. Gooseberries, red and white currants, pumpkins, and melons are refrigerants. Lemons, limes, and apples are stomachic sedatives.

Catholicism in Germany.

CENSUS compilations of Prussia for the decade ending December 1, 1900 (says the *Rosary Magazine*) reveal a remarkable growth in the population of Catholic inhabitants, which has tempted some statisticians to calculate that 200 years hence, if the increase continues at the same ratio, the Catholic population will be equally as large as that of the Evangelical in the kingdom of Prussia. In 1890 the Catholic population in Prussia numbered 10,252,818, five years later 10,999,505, and in 1900 had increased to 12,113,670. The growth of the Catholic population during these 10 years has been 10.1 per cent., while that of the Evangelicals only 7.2 per cent. In 1890 the Evangelical population numbered 19,232,449 and in 1900 increased to 21,817,577. Although the Evangelicals show a larger increase, amounting to 350,000 persons, the relative growth of the Catholic population is nevertheless 3 per cent. greater. The official census reports set forth that this growth of the Catholic population was at the cost of the Evangelicals and Jews.

The prime reason advanced for the relative decline of the Evangelical population is the revival of reactionary political movements such as the social democracy. The principles of Marx and La Salle, which form the basis of social democracy, take issue as well with the Church as the State, and consequently the social democrats, including Bebel, Richter, Singer, and Heine extend their propaganda against the established Church of the Empire as well. There have not been wanting efforts to make inroads on the Catholic parishes, but these have been signally unsuccessful. On the other hand the social democrats found the ranks of the Evangelical Church more yielding and the large following of this party in a great measure explains the distress of the Evangelicals. The Christian Social Union and Christian Workmen's Unions have been created as auxiliaries of the Evangelical Church to resist the socialistic tendencies, but the very last elections in districts made vacant by resignation of death reveal an ever increasing growth of the social democratic vote.

How strong the spirit of religious and political independence still remains in the breasts of the Polish subjects of Germany, Austria, and Austria-Hungary may be seen by the continued protest meetings against the Wreschener affair. Large contributions are asked by the central Polish propaganda, operating from its headquarters in Switzerland, to render aid to the movement and give assistance to the relatives of those who have been imprisoned in Posen for taking part in the demonstration before the schoolhouse. Indeed the agitation kindles up flames on all sides which show how readily the Polish sprang to the defence of their compatriots. The speech of Vor Buelow in the Reichstag was non-committal, but it is doubtful if the German Government will recede from its position to require instructions in German in religious classes in the Polish provinces of Posen and Silesia.

The completion of the magnificent royal church edifice opposite the Imperial palace in Berlin, which is to serve as the site of royal devotions for the Kaiser and Empress, serves again to draw attention to the decline in church attendance in Berlin. With its population of 1,800,000 souls it can boast of no more than 59 churches; the Evangelical synods and councils are struggling hard to discover the reason and apply the remedy. The cause need not be hard to look for. Berlin is social democratic and socialistic. It sends a solid social democratic delegation to the Reichstag, controls, with the Liberals, the city council, and likewise wields a powerful influence in the administration of the common school system. The 'volkschule' have been criticised of late because of the tendency in municipal circles to appoint teachers and principals whose views coincide with the dominant political party. Moreover, it is the great number of lecture halls in Berlin which also causes the Churches to resemble deserted ruins. Leading Evangelicals utter alarm cries from their pulpits almost every Sabbath day, but the crowds flock to the lecture halls, the cafes, and theatres.

Kaiser Wilhelm's reference—at the recent palace speech to the sculptors of the Sieges Allee—to the gruesome realism and hopeless materialism which to-day govern German art, serves to call forth comment on all sides. Not alone German art but also its modern literature and drama are struggling with the so-called 'modern realism.' Upon the stage it is the gloomy psychological drama. In literature and poetry it is the philosophies of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kant, and Hegel which flow through the books. In the plastic arts as well as painting the German school has of late displayed particular fondness for the 'modern realism' of French, Italian, and Belgian art. Indeed it is a grim procession which to-day stalks through German literature, the German stage, and its art gallery.

Is Cancer Contagious?

AT a meeting of the Budget Committee of the Reichstag, says the *Morning Post's* Berlin correspondent, the representative of the Government stated that the Berlin committee for the investigation of cancer had received from German doctors materials embracing more than 12,000 descriptions of the disease. It has now been positively established, he said, that cancer was not hereditary, and that it was contagious.

There existed, for instance, localities in which the disease was constantly reappearing. The contagion, the Government representative continued, is not communicable through the medium of plants. Many animals, especially dogs and cats, suffer from cancer. Horses and cattle are little, if at all, affected by it. It is now intended to reserve, in addition to the institute in Frankfurt, two departments of the Charity Hospital in Berlin for the investigation and treatment of cancer.

Longevity.

MORE people over 100 years old are found in mild climates than in the higher latitudes (says the *Family Doctor*). According to the last census of the German Empire, of a population of 50,000,000 only 78 have passed the hundredth year. France, with a population of 45,000,000, has 213 centenarians. In England there are 146, in Ireland 578, and in Scotland 46. Sweden has 10, Norway 23, Belgium 5, Denmark 2, Switzerland none. Spain, with a population of 18,000,000, has 401 persons over 100 years of age. Of the 2,250,000 inhabitants of Serbia, 575 have passed the century mark. It is said that the oldest person living is Bruno Cotrim, born in Africa, and now living in Rio de Janeiro. He is 150 years old. A coachman in Moscow has lived for 140 years.

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