



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

VERA.—Snoring is invariably due to nasal obstruction—not complete obstruction necessarily, but sufficient to make breathing through the nose difficult. This amount of interference with healthy breathing may not be manifest during the day when one is in the upright position, but as soon as one lies down it becomes manifest. Snoring is most common in children because nasal obstruction is most often due to “adenoids,” and “adenoids” are almost confined to children. In adults nasal spurs or a broken nose due to previous injury are common causes. Catarrh of the nose is, however, the chief cause, and a constant accompaniment of this disagreeable habit. To prevent a person from snoring the nose must be first seen to. You say that you are forty years old, but that the snoring is of long standing. We can be certain that some amount of nasal catarrh is present, and so we had better direct our efforts to cure this and see what will be the result. You have been recommended to wash out your nose with salt and water. This is not a bad lotion, but it appears from what you say that you have used it too strong. The best lotion for the nose is that composed of chlorate of potash, borax, bicarbonate of soda, one part of each, and finely powdered sugar two parts. This is a powder. You make the lotion by dissolving one teaspoonful of this powder in a teacupful of tepid water. A spray of menthol in paraffine (1 in 8) used in an atomiser is a very useful adjunct to the lotion.

EMILIE.—You want to know of any remedy other than iron and arsenic for anaemia. You have been treated with iron and arsenic pills, these relieved the anaemia but produced a rash. The rash comes out invariably after taking the pills. Now it is in all probability not the iron but the arsenic which produces the rash; arsenical rashes being by no means uncommon, they are probably due to idiosyncrasy. The omission of the arsenic might therefore prevent the rash after taking the pills. Still, if the iron and arsenic is necessary for your health, the skin is of very third-rate importance. Iron is very seldom badly borne in anaemia; many women say that they cannot take iron because they have taken the strongest preparations of the metal to begin with. The dialysed iron is the mildest of all preparations of iron, and we do not believe that it will disagree with anyone. Syrup of hæmoglobin, a French preparation, is said to be less indigestible and more efficacious than the dialysed iron. It is far more expensive, and we are sceptical as to its superior value. Besides iron, arsenic, myrrh, aloes and various other drugs are used in anaemia, aloes being very useful for its action on the bowels. The tabloids of the red marrow of bone are now extensively used in chlorosis, often with results that leave nothing to be desired, but they are very powerful and may only be administered with great caution.

ISOBEL.—Iron does to a certain extent blacken the teeth, but only temporarily. Even if taken in pills it has this defect, which is partly due to the general action of the drug. When taking iron you should clean your teeth often, and always after taking a dose of the iron. It does not do any permanent damage to the teeth and does not make the gums tender.

A BRIGHT LASSIE.—The question that you ask us is one of overwhelming difficulty. If, as you say, it has puzzled eight doctors, who have personally examined you, it is hardly to be expected that we could do very much for you with anything to go by but a letter. From your account it is obvious that you suffer from one of the functional diseases of the nervous system, either migraine or neurasthenia. You had far better see a specialist in nervous diseases, for very probably something can be done to cure you.

MARTHA.—The best form of applying mustard to the chest to act as a counter-irritant is as a mustard-plaster. To make this, spread mustard on a thick flannel or linen rag and apply it to the chest. Do not let any of the mustard touch the skin. Remember that mustard must be mixed with cold water, if you use hot water the volatile oil of mustard is set free and will set up much too violent irritation. After taking off the plaster apply a rag smeared with cold cream or some simple ointment. The mustard leaves (*charta sinapis*) of the pharmacopœia are less efficacious but much less messy than the household plaster.

ANA.—It is not uncommon for the hair to turn grey and to comb out in young girls. This is due to a variety of conditions of which the chief are affections of the scalp, derangements of the general health, and emotion. To cure it, it is necessary to remove the cause, if possible, and to apply a stimulating lotion or pomade, such as a preparation of cantharides or rosemary. Brilliantine is often very useful for the purpose.

AMY.—Cracked lips are very common in the winter, especially in cold windy weather. In some individuals the lips always split in the centre during cold winds. In slight cases a little glycerine or vaseline will cure the condition, or the following preparation may be used:—Sulphate of zinc, four grains; compound tincture of lavender, one drachm; glycerine, one ounce. In bad cases, running the point of a sharpened stick of lunar caustic (silver nitrate) down the slit is an excellent though rather painful remedy.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

PORC-ÉPIC.—Local examinations in music are held and certificates granted by The Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music (address The Secretary, 52, New Bond Street, London, W.); and by Trinity College, Mandeville Place, Manchester Square, W. Write to these addresses for full particulars.

INGEBORG.—We should suggest that you write to the secretary of the Froebel Society, 12, Buckingham Street, Adelphi, W.C., and ask for full particulars as to Kindergarten training. Your letter is very pleasant to read, and does you great credit as a Danish girl.

HERMA.—We should advise you also to read and study. Your verses are unusually good, considering that you are not yet fifteen, but we only accept the work of experienced writers for THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. We do not wish you to be discouraged, but it is too early in life for you to succeed in writing poetry on such a theme. We cannot forbear expressing our admiration of your handwriting.

E. A. C.—We are glad your efforts have been of use to your friend. As you ask our candid opinion of your verses, we cannot give them much praise from a literary point of view; but there is a certain earnestness about them which may commend them to some readers. In No. 1, this is a halting couplet—

“Acknowledging our every joy or care
Cometh direct from His hand.”

Your own strictures on verse 7 of No. 2 are quite correct, and in No. 3 we also notice imperfect lines, e.g.—

“And that time when from sin and bondage,”
which is of a different cadence from the parallel line—

“We take a chapter from Nature's book.”

Verses worth reading are seldom written without trouble. The inspiration may be spontaneous, but the execution demands care and work.

HESPERUS.—You have chosen a difficult subject, and one that requires very delicate and cautious handling. We doubt, ourselves, whether in the sudden presence of a lingering and terrible death, the love of life and sense of duty would not assert themselves more strongly than any such feeling as you have described. We consider that you show some power in the sketch, and should advise you, if possible, to practise your pen. In order to improve yourself you should read and study the masters of English literature. If we knew more of your tastes we could advise you in detail.

DANSBORG.—“The Oath of the Benedictine Monk” would be better if your friend had obeyed the laws of metre. She evidently intends the poem to be in the usual metre of blank verse, with ten-syllabled lines such as line 4, verse 1—

“There stands a temple torn from heathen hands,”

but she is constantly forgetting and running into twelve syllables, as in the first line—

“Far in a southern clime by languid sparkling waves.”

“Wotan's Lament” is better, so far as the metre is concerned. Blank verse needs to be especially good from a poetic point of view to atone for the absence of rhyme; therefore it is difficult for an amateur to attempt it. The subjects of each poem are unusually well chosen, and indicate culture in their author.

OPERA (Vienna).—A book called *The Standard Opera Glass*, by Amuseley, contains detailed plots of eighty celebrated operas, with critical remarks, dates, etc. It is published at 3s. 6d., net price 2s. 7½d. Any good firm of London booksellers would procure it for you. As you do not recollect the name of the work you saw advertised in the *Morning Post*, we cannot, of course, tell you whether this is the same; but we should think it would serve your purpose very well.