

Health Department.

Fatigue and Indigestion.

The following wise remarks on this subject we quote from *Health*, an English monthly devoted to scientific hygiene:—

"Another cause of imperfect digestion is fatigue. When we start on a walk, it does not matter much whether the road be rough or not; any little obstacle is avoided with ease, and we tread our way over rough stones, through tangled heather, or over a quaking bog, without difficulty. Our nervous system is in full vigor, and preserves perfect co-ordination among the movements of the different parts of the body; so that one helps the other, and all difficulties are surmounted. But when we are tired, the case is very different; a little roughness in the road will cause us to stumble, and an unexpected stone may give us a sudden fall. The wearied nervous system no longer co-ordinates the movements of the various parts of the body, so that they no longer work together for a common end.

"The same thing occurs with the various parts of the intestinal canal. The mechanism by which the acts of chewing and swallowing appear to act as stimulants to the circulation and nervous system, thus insuring the proper co-ordination between the functions of the mouth, the stomach, intestines, and liver has been described. But if the nervous system be exhausted by previous fatigue, or debilitated by illness, the regular co-ordination may not take place, and indigestion or biliousness may be the result. How often do we find that the meal taken by a person immediately after a long railway journey disagrees with him, and either causes sickness or diarrhoea, or a bilious headache! Forty winks after dinner is not always a bad thing; but forty winks before dinner is certainly much better.

"L. W. often do men who have worked hard all day, with their mental faculties continually on the stretch, go home and have dinner forthwith! Exhausted as they are, how can they expect to digest properly what they eat? Almost the only saving point is, that many of them live some distance from their places of business, and have a short time during the homeward drive to sit still and rest. This is sufficient for some, especially for young men; but it is insufficient for elderly men, and they ought to make a point of having a little rest at home before dinner. Some men, unfortunately, are so misguided as to believe that exercise after a hard day's work will do them good; and instead of utilizing the little time they have for rest after a day's labor is over, they walk three or four miles, or take a tricycle-ride of several miles, before dinner. The consequence is that, under the combined mental and physical strain, their digestion is impaired and their strength broken down."

There is grave truth in these remarks, and they should be well laid to heart by those who are compelled to work at high pressure, and thus fall in that due repair of the bodily waste which lies at the root and foundation of all health. But mental emotions and the play of mind may in their turn produce disturbance of the body's duties in the way of food-digestion. Here, again, the views expressed seem with a common sense and philosophy which commend them to the thorough appreciation of those who find digestion to fail from the nervous influences that chase one another and career over the surface of the mental atmosphere:—

"Effects, somewhat similar to those of fatigue, may be produced by depressing or disturbing mental emotions, or bodily conditions. We know how readily excitement of almost any kind will destroy the appetite in some people, and depressing emotions will do it in almost every case. We not unfrequently hear of girls in whom consumption appears to have been brought on by an unfortunate love affair. If we accept the view that consumption depends upon the presence of the tubercle-bacillus (or living germ), we might, at first sight, think that there can be little or no connection between consumption and disappointed love; but the depressing effect of the disappointment will lessen the digestion, impair the nutrition, and render the body more likely to afford a suitable nidus (or soil) for the bacillus."

From this it would seem to be equally probable that various emotions affect special parts of the digestive system. A strong impression of disgust may excite vomiting; compassion is said to produce movements of

gas in the small intestine; worry is known to affect the liver; and Dr. Brunton gives some countenance to the popular notion that jaundice may be brought on through a mental cause, illustrated, for example, by anxiety. The old adage respecting the wisdom of maintaining an easy mind if we would grow fat, has, therefore, a physical basis. It is the surest of inferences that the mind and nervous system which are allowed to remain placid and unruffled are most likely to be found presiding over a body and processes which respectfully live and act in a healthy and normal fashion. If care really kills us, it seems probable that its method of slaughter is largely that of destroying the harmony of those functions on which the proper nutrition of our bodies depends.

The foregoing considerations have paved the way for the discussion of the practical question that faces us at the close of the interesting lectures we have been engaged in reviewing. We have seen, in the first place, how very varied are the causes which produce the disordered states collectively known as "indigestion." The whole subject is a complex one, and these papers may have accomplished at least one useful result if our readers have been led to note that each case requires personal study before the exact cause of the digestive disturbance can be traced. There is no greater or more foolish error, against which one might be tempted to speak in strong terms, than that which prompts the idea that all cases and classes of indigestion are of similar nature and origin. It is this idea which encourages that detestable habit of indiscriminate drug-swallowing which characterizes our age. Given an ingenious "puff" of any drug or preparation, and the "great army of martyrs" (to indigestion) will fly thereto for relief,—only, of course, to experience the trebly bitter disappointment which attends the dashing down of hopes of renewed health and regained vigor. If people would only study, even slightly, the particulars of their mode of life, habits, diet, work, and other details, and acquire even a rudimentary knowledge of the physiology of digestion, we should at least find them infinitely less liable to pour drugs, of which they know little, into frames of which they know less.

Let us clearly recognize that there is no panacea, no universal healer, no one unfailing remedy, no sovereign specific, for the many-headed ailment we have named "dyspepsia," or "indigestion." Those who labor under such an idea are only to be compared to the deluded persons who, believing in the absurdities of the quack, are found to purchase a pill or ointment which, if the ordinary statements puffing the wares in question are to be credited, will as readily heal cancer as cure consumption; or an unfailingly cure scrofula as dissipate a tumor of serious nature. Recognizing the true and scientific aspects and phases of the digestive process and its disturbances, we shall be the better able to appreciate the nature of the means which are to be relied on for the relief of the latter conditions.

Care of the Feet in Winter.

From now until early in May the care which we take of our feet will go a long way towards insuring us good health. No one can with impunity neglect the feet, and it has now become a well established fact that wet and cold feet are a prolific source of disease. There are many things which a tired mother may perhaps be pardoned for allowing in her children, but we would kindly ask them not to allow their children to go with wet or cold feet. Provide warm foot wear, and they will more than repay you for being well and strong. The choice between cotton and woolen stockings must be left to the wearer, but care should be taken to use only one kind during the season. It is not wise to wear cotton stockings to-day and woolen ones to-morrow, and alternate from one to the other, as it is a sure way to catch cold. Select the kind most comfortable to the skin and wear them, and if more warmth is needed add one additional pair. Many people wear an additional pair and claim that their feet are much warmer by wearing both a cotton and a woolen pair of stockings at the same time. The warmth and dryness of the feet depend largely also upon the quality of the boots or shoes which are worn. It is related that poor Mrs. Can die, the good lady whose curtain lectures we long kept her patient husband awake, came to her death through no more serious cause than a pair of thin shoes; she could talk to the men about their carelessness, but after all she died, and Job, thanks to his thick

cowhide boots, lived to "mourn her loss." No one at any time should continue to wear a shoe when the outer sole is worn through so that the under layer comes next to the ground. Rubbers and overshoes were not designed to be worn in the house, but when one is going out during wet and cold weather they should always be worn, whether riding or walking. Some one has remarked that "self-acting rubbers"—on and off with a kick—are the grandest life-preservers of the age."

It is well known that people who live in the country are much more subject to "chilblains" than those who live in the city. It is to this we would call special attention. One reason why so many suffer from this trouble in the country is because the floors of the houses are not warmed. In the city this is usually the reverse, as most houses are provided with furnaces or heated by steam. And where neither of these is used, the buildings are more compact and closely built, and are also protected by other buildings, so that the floors of the average city house are not so cold by many degrees as are those in the country. This applies especially to women and children, who are for a large part of the time confined to the house, and often walk about all day with no better protection to their feet than thin stockings, almost as thin as their shoes or slippers. In addition to this they will run out to the barn, henry, or well, without stopping to put on additional rubbers, or even thicker shoes. But the constant exposure to the cold in that way is only half the trouble. In addition to this thoughtless carelessness they adopt the habit of "boasting their feet." This is equally as bad as the other, and consequently the feet soon become subject to chilblains, together with all the attendant sufferings. One reason for this is that the feet are subject to two extremes, first cold and then hot. If more care was not taken of cooking utensils by some women than of their feet, there would be some heavy bills to pay at the hardware and stove stores. People cannot go to opposite extremes in regard to the care of their bodies, any better than they can with other things, and if persisted in serious results must follow sooner or later.

Another frequent cause of cold feet is the dampness which arises from incessant perspiration. This is sometimes caused by wearing woolen stockings, but it can often be prevented by wearing a pair of thin or light stockings under the woolen ones. Those who are troubled with moist feet should not wear cork soles in their boots, as they soon become saturated with moisture, which is held for a long time. Rubber boots, if worn for a long time, will often cause the feet to perspire. For this reason they should be worn only when actually travelling, and not be kept on while in the house, school-house, store, or mill.

If the care of the feet is of so much importance to adults, how much more so is it to children. In closing we would offer a word of caution to mothers, and that is, never allow their children to go to bed with cold feet. See to it that the feet and legs are dry and warm. In this connection we would add a word with reference to children sitting in the schoolroom with wet feet. It would be little if any trouble for teachers to allow their scholars to dry their feet at the register before taking their seats. It is but fulfilling an oft repeated adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Perhaps no class of men suffer more from cold feet than those who are obliged to remain out in severe winter, whether from the nature of their work are obliged to stand or sit in one position most of the time, as, for instance, teamsters, hackmen, and drivers, &c. To such, and all others, who are particularly exposed, the following may prove a valuable suggestion. It is one of the Rules of what is known as the "Swedish movement system," and is as follows: Stand erect and very gradually lift yourself upon the tips of the toes so as to put all the tension of the foot at full strain. This is not to be done spasmodically, or by jumping up and down, but simply to rise, the slower the better, upon tiptoes, and remain standing on the point of the toes as long as possible, then gradually coming back to the natural position. Repeat this several times, and by the amount of work the tips of the toes are made to perform in sustaining the body's weight, a sufficient and lively circulation is quickly established, and thus a more natural warmth is obtained than can be by the application of extreme heat.

WINTER WRINKLES

The sigh of the seamstress—A-hem!

The world owes every man a living, but some of us are finding collections rather slow.

"Jennie, do you know what a miracle is?" "Yes'm. Ma says if you don't marry our new parson it will be a miracle."

"Yes," said old Colonel Mooney, "you often hear of a coal dealer who is kind, but he doesn't go much out of his 'weigh' to be so."

"Thank heaven," exclaimed a fond father as he paced the floor at midnight with his howling heir, "thank heaven you are not twins!"

The most thoughtful man living is the one who immediately stopped dying when reminded that his life insurance policy had expired.

The most gigantic sharks in the world are said to be found near Australia. Of course this discovery will make some of our lawyers mad, but facts are facts.

Judge Peterby's wife almost talks him to death. "How is your wife coming on?" asked a friend. "Splendid; she has caught such a fearful cold she can't talk."

"Have you read 'Half Hours with Insets'?" asked Bromley. "No," sadly replied Pompano, with a retrospective gleam in his eye, "but I know what it means."

The more hat a man can buy for two dollars the less bonnet a woman can buy for twenty, and yet some folks say this world was hung together in perfect harmony.

"So you've been out to the Pacific coast, eh? Did you see the great gorge of the Colorado?" "I think so. At least out at Cheyenne I saw a buck Indian eat six pounds of bologna sausage, half a box of crackers and nineteen herrings without a grunt. How is that for gorge?"

A little fellow of four years went to a blacksmith to see his father's horse shod, and was watching closely the work of shoeing. The blacksmith began to pare the horse's hoof, and thinking this was wrong, the little boy said earnestly: "My pa don't want his horse made any smaller."

Scotchman—"What'll y' hae?" Frenchman—"I'll take a drop of contradiction." Scotchman—"What's that?" Frenchman—"Vell, you put in de whiskey to make it strong, de water to make it weak, de lemon to make it sour and sugar to make it sweet. Den you say, 'Here's to you!' and you take it yourself."

A court officer having been questioned as to whether he had spoken to the jury during the night, gravely answered: "No, your honor; they kept calling out for me to bring them whiskey, but I always said: 'Gentlemen of the jury it is my duty to tell you that I'm sworn not to speak to you.'"

Small brother—"Where did you get that cake, Annie?" Small sister—"Mother gave it to me." Small brother—"Ah, she always gives you more than me." Small sister—"Never mind; she's going to put mustard plasters on us when we go to bed to night and I'll ask her to let you have the biggest."

A Swindler's Sharp Trick.

A French nobleman played a game of cards with a foreign Count. The latter won, and the Frenchman pulled out 10,000 francs and handed them to the winner, who quietly secured them in his pocketbook and went home. Early next morning a gentleman of aristocratic bearing and decorated with the order of the Legion d'Honneur was shown into the apartment of the foreign Count who was still asleep. "Monseigneur," he said in tones trembling with excitement, "you hold in your hands the honor of a whole family." "Indeed!" "Kindly tell me, was it you who played with M. de H.?" "Yes." "You won 10,000 francs and he paid you." "Yes, in bank notes, and I have them here." "Well, sir, the notes are false. Last night we heard of the nefarious practices of our relative, and I came in heaven's name to ask you to exchange them for ten others I have brought." The noble foreigner at once exchanged the notes. In the evening he was not a little surprised to meet his opponent at the club, and to be asked to give revenge. The foreigner curtly refused, which led to an explanation. The Count drew from his pocket the exchanged notes he had received in the morning. They were false. The gentleman with the decorations was a notorious French swindler.