

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

A LOVER OF THE "G.O.P."—In the answers which appeared last April, May and June, you will find the question of "enlarged pores" treated from every point of view. The scars left by acne pustules are permanent and nothing—save age—has the slightest effect upon them.

CHARLOTTE M.—1. What do you mean by a loose cartilage in your face? Do you mean in the joint of the jaw? This is the only place in the face where there could be a loose cartilage—and here it is very rare. You tell us that your jaw is very stiff in the morning, so that we take it that the loose cartilage is in this joint. Was this diagnosis made by a competent surgeon or by yourself? For, unless it was made by the former, it is exceedingly probable to be incorrect. You do not give us any symptom by which we could corroborate the idea of a "loose cartilage." Stiffness of the jaw may be caused by a large number of affections. Osteo-arthritis (rheumatic gout) is a common affection of the joint, as also is inflammation of the joint due to discharge from the ear. But loose cartilages in this situation are curiosities. If the cartilage is loose, the only way to cure it is to have an operation performed. A very small blister or hot fomentation will relieve the pain due to any form of joint trouble. Local frictions, massage and douches, are also valuable in some cases of disease of the maxillary joint. Of course internal medication is absolutely useless for a loose cartilage, and is very unsatisfactory in the other forms of joint trouble.—2. Your sister should bathe her legs in warm water before getting into bed to relieve cramp. We should like to know more about her general condition, for the cramps are probably dependent upon anemia or other constitutional condition.

FORGET-ME-NOT.—The best way to treat dandruff is to wash the head occasionally with warm borax and water (1 in 40), and then rub a very little sulphur ointment into the scalp. It is distinctly a troublesome condition to treat.

"HORGESS ONE"—Let us how to cure "a kind of giddiness and oppression which comes on when she goes to church or any other crowded place, or after working hard." She has had this for the last twelve years. What is the cause of this? It could be due to anemia, indigestion, or nervousness, or that versatile complaint commonly known as "liver" or to heart disease. These are the common causes. Heart disease, such as would produce this, is so exceedingly improbable that we will leave it out. Now does this "Horgess One" suffer from nervousness, anemia, indigestion or liver? She tells us nothing that suggests any one of these more than another, so that the best we can do is to direct her how to decide the matter for herself. She lays more stress upon a feeling of "oppression" than upon giddiness, so much so, indeed, as to make us think that anemia is the probable cause. She says that she sleeps well and that her appetite is good. These, we think, exclude "liver" and indigestion. So we come down to two possible causes, anemia and nervousness, or both together. Which of these it may be we cannot tell. If she is anemic, she should treat that condition by attending to the rules that we have given many times to others, especially in the answers in the April and May numbers of this paper. If she is not anemic, there is nothing to be done save attention to the general laws of health and well-being.

EMILY.—Gelatin is not a staple food of man. It is indigestible and practically innoxious. You should not feed invalids on jellies and gelatinous soups. Albumen is the nutritious element in meat. There is no gelatin in meat, and soups made from lean meat alone do not solidify on cooling. Bones contain gelatin, and it is the soup made from bones which becomes a jelly when it gets cool. Soups do not contain the nourishment of the meat in solution. Albumen is precipitated by boiling water, and so clear soups, made in the ordinary way, contain practically no nourishing properties whatever.

ANOTHER FORGET-ME-NOT.—What is the cause of talking when asleep, and how can it be cured? We are not going to enter upon a discussion on these points, for our space is limited. But we will give you a few crude hints. Do you eat a big supper? Are you worried much with cares and anxiety? These are the two commonest causes of talking in the sleep. Another cause is sleeping upon your back. Everyone should accustom herself to sleep on her right side. If you have been in the habit of taking a large supper, discontinue the practice, and take nothing before going to bed except a small glass of milk. Bathing the feet in cold or warm water before getting into bed often prevents talking in the sleep as it soothes the higher nervous centres.

ANNA.—Cold baths would do neither good nor harm in acne. The same may be said of sea bathing, except that in some people sea-water irritates the skin, in which case it would do harm in acne. We fully discussed the cause and treatment of acne in an answer to "Fair Isabel," which appeared in the May number of *The Girl's Own Paper*.

CHIARETTA.—That smoking too much is harmful is unquestionable; for it deranges the liver, produces indigestion, and occasionally injures the sight. Smoking excessively at one time alters the rhythm of the heart producing palpitation and irregular pulse. It also affects the nervous system producing tremblings and headache. These effects are not due to nicotine, for although tobacco contains a considerable amount of this drug, it is decomposed by heat, and so but the nicotinic trace is left in the smoke. As regards the question "what constitutes over-smoking?" It depends entirely upon the person. Some sailors smoke many ounces of tobacco a day—an amount which would do considerable harm to most people. No one should smoke more than half an ounce of tobacco a day—this equals from nine to twelve cigarettes. According to this seventeen cigarettes daily is decidedly too many. Half that number would be a fair allowance for a full grown man. For a girl of seventeen to smoke seventeen cigarettes a day is very serious, and you ought certainly to greatly reduce the number, if you do not give up smoking entirely. Have you never heard of the really serious objection to girls smoking? That the constant movement of the lips backwards and forwards, up and down, and indulging in the forbidden act, frequently produces a moustache?

LANCAIRE.—To cure habitual constipation the following points should be attended to:—(1) If you are strong, and like it, take a cold bath in the morning. If you do not like a cold bath it is useless to take it. If you cannot stand the shock it will do you great harm. (2) Take a walk every day—a good long walk of from three to seven miles. (3) Take plenty of cooked and uncooked fruit, especially in the morning before breakfast. Take a digestible diet and eat slowly and regularly, and do not eat after meals. (4) Avoid tea and coffee except in great moderation. (5) Beware of taking drugs unless they are absolutely necessary. Chronic constipation is frequently caused by people taking all sorts of compounds of unknown composition to "cure" themselves. If any drug is necessary, liquorice-powder, or better still, calomel (gr. ij.) may be taken, but these must not be taken regularly. As an habitual laxative for this complaint the following pills are very satisfactory:—Aloin, 100 grains; extract of nux vomica, 25 grains; green extract of belladonna, 20 grains. To be divided into a hundred pills. One to be taken occasionally.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

WEST AUSTRALIAN.—We are gratified by your kind letter from a distance, and cannot forbear quoting what you say to us of our "Answers to Correspondents." "We girls starting out on life's way are often advised, cheered, and helped more than you can ever know." Our poem, "The True Woman," contains sound and wise statements; but we have our own staff of experienced writers for *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER*, and the only hope we can offer to our correspondents with regard to their literary efforts, is that of receiving counsel and criticism. You will observe that your rhymes in the following verse are out of accord with those of the other verses:—

"She does not lay her talents by and rest,
God gave them, so she uses each for Him;
And in His strength goes on day after day,
Saying, whatever comes, He knoweth best."

THORA.—Read what we have said to "West Australian." The subjects of your two poems are interesting and unusual, but you do not understand the art of versification. Your metre halts now and again; for example, "Firefly's back so white," is too short a line. "The river's marge," means "the river's edge," so that the last line of "The Boatman of the Meuse" has not the meaning you intend it to have.

MARY LESTER.—Certainly your poems are not at all "bad for a first attempt." Indeed, "A Fairy's Thought" is distinctly good; the motive is pretty and quaint. You should avoid ending line after line with "be," "happy be," "envious be," "pride here'll be" come too near together. But this defect is only due to inexperience.

CASTLEFRANC.—1. The dance "Sir Roger de Coverley" was invented by the great-grandfather of Roger de Coverley or Roger de Cowley, near Oxford. It was named after the Squire described in Addison's *Spectator*. We suppose it "comes last" at a young people's dance because of its merry informal character, which accords better with a time when spirits have risen and the first stiffness has worn off.—2. The pieces you name would be considered decidedly difficult for a girl of twelve, and she would be a clever student if she could play them well.

GERALDINE.—All the letters that come into our hands are answered here in due course. We have no recollection of reading the story, *Fear Miss Puck*, can you send it again? Your note must have somehow gone astray.

APPLE BLOSSOM.—Your story is interesting and contains some graphic touches. If you have leisure time at your disposal, we should certainly advise you to continue to practise your pen. You and our other correspondents should write anything to be submitted for criticism on one side of the paper only. But we can certainly encourage you as regards the substance of your manuscript. Of course we could point out many defects in style, such as the question "Think you not so, reader?" "Three weeks later," placed as a separate sentence, and so on. Dr. Abbott's little book, *How to Write Clearly*, is valuable to literary aspirants.

T. BELL.—The play you send is amusing, but we think the motive is a little too far-fetched for anything but the broadest farce. And the burglar walking in by daylight and dressing himself up in the Professor's Oriental silks, is hardly "convincing" enough even for that.

HOPE.—We published in the July part of *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER*, 1897, a very favourable criticism on a story and some verses sent under this pseudonym. Perhaps you can consult the bound volume for it. The story now sent has some merit; but it does not produce the conviction of being true to life, and is written in too artificial and sentimental a strain.

DEVONSHIRE DOWLING.—1. Would you not like to join the Queen Margaret Correspondence Classes? For all details apply, Hon. Secretary, 31, Lansdowne Crescent, Glasgow. Or there are the St. George's Oral and Correspondence Classes; address, The Secretary, 5, Melville Street, Edinburgh. We frequently publish the addresses of amateur societies (consult our last bound volume), and have mentioned that R. G. P., Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, gives correspondence lessons at 1s. a lesson. You can study privately for certain examinations in which you can take one subject at a time. Apply for all information to H. T. Gerrans, Esq., Clarendon Building, Oxford.—2. We will answer your second inquiry later.

L. M. H.—Our rules preclude us from answering more than two questions at a time. 1. Your question

"Why rushed the discords in but that harmony should be prized?"

is from "Abt Vogler," a poem by Robert Browning.—2.—

"She should never have looked at me if she meant I should not love her."

is from "Cristina," by the same poet. If you send your other quotations again, we will reply in a future issue.

LA PETITE BERGERE.—Many thanks for your very charming letter. Although you "did not love" your English governess, she appears to have taught you English very well. But you ask more than two questions; see *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER* for July last, where the rules are repeated. 1. There are many easier books than *Memoirs of Grammer and Analysis*; for instance, Meiklejohn's, or Gill's Oxford and Cambridge Grammar, each published at 1s.—2. We do not wonder you are perplexed about the pronouns, as we have none answering to your "moi," "lui," etc. "She" is the nominative case; "her" is the objective or dative, e.g., "I knew it was she." "It's just like (to) her." The verb *to be*, in English, takes the same case after it as before it, e.g., "It is I." Certainly you may write again.

LA MARGUERITE.—1. We should advise you to write to the office of the Prudential and inquire if there are any vacant clerkships for which you could apply.—2. Perhaps some correspondent will tell you "how to do pictures on panel." We quote from your letter. "The kind I mean look like photographs of Academy pictures hand tinted and stuck on a wooden panel. . . . If they are painted on photos, would you tell me where to obtain them, what medium to use, and how to put the paint on?" We have not ourselves seen the panels in the shop which you refer to.

VIVIAN (Durham).—1. We cannot praise the "Easter Hymn" you send us, so far as workmanship is concerned, though your sentiments are excellent. The hymn obeys no known laws of metre.—2. Your writing is neat and legible, but scarcely formed as yet—it is like the writing of a child. You do not tell us your age.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

"**LYS DE FRANCE**" has the offer of three more correspondents:—MAY NORTON, "Roselea," 244, Willesden Lane, London, N.W., aged sixteen; AGNES J. DADD, Olive View, Dunmow, Essex; and MUREL JOHNSON, 5, Lucknow Place, St. Luke's, Jersey, aged just sixteen.

ETHEL CORRETT, Cotteswold Lodge, Swindon, near Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, aged fourteen, would like to correspond with a French girl of about her own age. She suggests that at first each should write in her own language, reversing the plan after a little while.