

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

ADA.—Hairs grow upon the arms of every man, woman and child, only they are not equally conspicuous in all. We advise you to leave your arms alone. Of course, you might be able to bleach them with peroxide of hydrogen, and there is no harm in trying it if you wish to do so.

ENDOR.—You have, indeed, had a lot to suffer, but it is not uncommon for young women to suffer in exactly the same way as yourself. We have carefully read your letter and there is no symptom that you give us that cannot be accounted for by anaemia. There is a profound belief in the minds of girls that if you have anaemia you should take iron. This is quite right for nine anemic girls out of ten; but for the tenth, iron is far worse than useless, if taken carelessly. This tenth girl has indigestion, serious indigestion, and her stomach cannot digest iron, for iron is a very indigestible drug. In these cases, it is absolutely necessary to treat and cure the indigestion. When this has been done, but not before, iron may be cautiously tried, beginning with the mildest preparation, *i.e.*, dialysed iron. If you will read the article on "Diet in Health and Sickness," which appeared in this Magazine last year, and the article on "Indigestion" which appeared in December, and also the various "Answers to Correspondents" which we have brought out from time to time in the present volume, you will obtain every detail in the treatment of indigestion. Remember to take an aperient such as liquorice powder, or a pill of aloes and nuxvomica as often as it may be necessary, and be very, very careful about your diet.

A CONSTANT READER.—1. You will find "brilliantine" a useful application for making the hair grow. American hair cream is also a very efficacious hair cream. For red and rough hands wear gloves whenever you go out; wash your hands in warm water and be careful to thoroughly dry them afterwards. Glycerine and rose-water or glycerine and cucumber are useful applications for keeping the skin soft.

FLORENCE.—"Housemaid's knee" is an inflammation of the tissues in front of the knee-joint, and in ordinary cases does not affect the joint at all. It is caused by kneeling on hard floors, and therefore most commonly occurs in housemaids, whence its name. Prevention is better than cure, and if you cannot always prevent the occurrence of housemaid's knee you can at least reduce the chance of getting it to a minimum. You do this by always using a pad to kneel upon. Every housemaid should have a knee-work pad or "kneeler" which she has not got one she should ask her mistress to obtain one for her; and when she has got it she should use it and use it always. Because it is a little extra trouble nine housemaids out of ten refuse to use a kneeling-pad. Of the very many cases of "housemaid's knee" that we have seen, not one has occurred in a maid who used her "kneeler" invariably. When once the condition has developed, rest from kneeling is essential. Rest in bed, with the knees elevated on a pillow, and the application of a hot fomentation or poultice to the knee, often cut short the condition. But when the affection has occurred once it is very liable to return. In these cases, strapping the knee, inunction with ointment and massage are often useful, but when a servant is incapacitated by often recurring attacks a surgical operation should be performed without delay, as this will cure her for good. The popular remedy of painting the knee with iodine is of exceedingly doubtful value.

UNHAPPY.—You evidently suffer from deafness due to obstruction in the tube leading from the throat to the ear. The treatment for this most troublesome condition is, first to get the throat in order, and then to try to "clear" the tube (Eustachian tube). You have had your throat seen to and an operation performed upon it. But what was the nature of the operation? Of this you tell us nothing. The second point, clearing the tube, can be done in two ways, first by introducing styles into the tube—this, of course, can only be done by a skilled specialist—the other way is by introducing special drugs into the throat, closing the nostrils, and swallowing. The action opens the mouths of the tubes and allows the drugs to get into them. The best preparation is menthol in paroline (1 in 8) sprayed or painted upon the back of the throat. Menthol is an antiseptic, and is very volatile, and its vapours very readily enter the Eustachian tube. This simple manoeuvre may be repeated two or three times a day. These cases of so-called throat deafness are always difficult, often impossible, to cure, but slight mitigation may be expected in nearly every case.

CANARY.—Decidedly the cause of your bird's trouble is insects (or rather mites). You should give the bird a bath of salt and water every day. Let him come out and have a fly round the room occasionally. If you can, you had better get another cage. Metal is far better than wood for cages, and you cannot get a new cage, thoroughly scrub out the old cage with soap and water, and dry it in the sun.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

B. J.—We think there must be some mistake in the copying of your musical passage. Two persons performing a pianoforte duet cannot possibly play the same notes in the same place on the keyboard! The sign you quote usually means that, in a repeated passage, the bar so noted is to be played the first time only, but in such a case it would occur in "Primo" and "Secondo" alike. We cannot help you further unless we were to see the music in question.

LILIAN.—1. We have inserted your quotation in "Our Open Letter-Box." The time you give us for answering your query is far too brief. We go to press some time before the magazine reaches your hands.—2. Koko for the hair is said to be harmless, but we cannot take the responsibility of recommending any patent toilet preparations.

E. GLADYS LAW.—Your quotation is not quite accurately given; it should read thus (with the next line):
"The light that never was, on sea or land;
The consecration, and the Poet's dream."

The passage, which you will agree is one of the most beautiful in the English language, is found in a poem by Wordsworth, "Elegiac Stanzas: Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle after a Storm."

E. BRYAN.—We have pleasure in telling you that *A Little Pilgrim in the Unseen* is by Mrs. Opliant, and the publishers of the book are Messrs. Macmillan and Co.

HUBBLE AND SOUAK.—We do not think you could hope to see your story in any magazine. You dwell too much on details which are unimportant, and the story of a grisly bear attacking a holiday-maker in a Yorkshire village is not "convincing." Your style is fairly graphic, but we are afraid to give you hope of future possibilities of earning. Note that "oblige" is not spelt with a *d*.

PANSY.—The duet you mention must be adapted from the song "Pestal," which, now out of date, was once a favourite of the melancholy strain. It was said that words and music alike were composed by a Russian political prisoner before his doom. The first verse was something after this style:—

"Rest! it comes at last!
And from a troubled dream awaking
Death shall soon be past,
And brighter worlds around me breaking.
Hark, I hear sweet voices sing to me
Soon thou shalt be free,
Child of misery," etc.

Perhaps, guided by this information, your music-sellers could tell you the publishers of the duet "Pestal," or one of our correspondents may help you.

A. DEVONIAN.—We can hardly tell you whether you can study for the Trinity College examination without the aid of a teacher, as so much depends upon your taste and ability, and your musical acquirements up to the present date. Probably you could do so, but we should advise you to apply to the Secretary, Trinity College, Mandeville Place, Manchester Square, London, asking what music you would need to study, and all details as to the examination. We sympathise with you in your delicate health, and hope you will grow stronger.

SPIDER'S WEB.—We go to press some time before you receive your magazine, so that we can never answer queries in the "next number or two." For this we are sorry, as we should like to express our sympathy with you. Your sad verses are certainly, as regards literary merit, fully up to the average of the poems we receive for criticism. We trust that before this time you have come to feel less lonely. At first, in bereavement of the sort you have evidently experienced, the desolation seems intolerable, but the possibilities of life are wonderful, and we hope you have found comfort. We should encourage you to express your thoughts in this way if it is a relief to you.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.—1. You are certainly not too young for us to be pleased to receive and answer your letter, although your age would forbid us to criticise your verses too severely. You should not use the pronoun "they" in the line

"Be near me when rough winds they blow,"

although it is needed for the length of the line. Never use superfluous words only as a make-weight. The adjective "balmy" occurs too often. The longing expressed in your lines for your own country is touching, and we praise you for trying to express what you really feel instead of what you know only at second-hand.—2. The 21st of August, 1886, was a Saturday.

LILY OF THE VALLEY.—We do not advise you to try to write poetry. There are four mistakes in spelling on the untidy sheet you send us, and you use "knowest" for "knowth." We should urge you to work hard at lessons, though we do not know you. The recitation of good poetry, which we are glad to hear you enjoy, will be an excellent thing for you.

GIRLS' EMPLOYMENTS.

PEO (Medical Profession).—We are afraid that a girl who without means—the medical profession is closed. To become a doctor involves five years' training and residence in one of the cities where there is a medical school open to women. Moreover, an excellent general education is needed as a preparation, and although you are doing your best to profit by the opportunities afforded you of Extension Classes, you will probably be at a disadvantage compared with a girl who has continued her general education at a high school up to the age of eighteen, instead of leaving school at fourteen, as you have done. Our advice to you is to continue to avail yourself, as you are doing, of all the educational advantages you possess, but to turn your attention rather to a business career than to the profession of medicine. A position in a superior kind of wholesale manufactory—for example, electrical works, a manufacturing chemist's, or a firm dealing in typewriting machines—would probably be one in which you might eventually do well.

AN OLD READER (Hospital Nursing).—Your friends have been misinformed. You are a suitable age for admission to the matron's office. Apply in Liverpool, to the Liverpool Training School and Home for Nurses, Ashton Street; Liverpool Northern Hospital; Royal Southern Hospital, and the Workhouse Infirmary, Brownlow Hill; and in London to the London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, E.; St. Bartholomew's, East Smithfield, E.C.; or to St. Thomas's, Palace Road, Lambeth, S.E.

HOPE (Poultry Farming).—Poultry farming is, like many other occupations, a good stick but a bad catch; that is to say, some money may be earned by it, but generally not enough to constitute a regular income. There are now many places where you could be trained in poultry farming alone; although you might be taught this business in connection with gardening, hosiery, or some other subject. You might apply to the Director of the St. Leonard's Poultry Farm, near Kingwood, Hants; ladies have occasionally been received there as pupils, we believe.

GREENHOEN (Teaching).—For a post as teacher in very best schools, including the first of those you mention, preference is given to candidates possessing a University degree or its equivalent; but to have passed the London Matriculation would be sufficient qualification for a post in many schools, or for a governessship in private families. We recommend you to consult the Teachers' Guild, 74, Gower Street, further on the subject. Elementary teaching is a branch of the profession which might offer you good opportunities for distinction at the present time.

DARINANT (Music Teaching).—This offers a very precarious living to a girl, unless music is one subject out of many which she can teach, as in the case of a private governess. It is a great pity to overlook, as you evidently are doing; for loss of health means loss of money, as well as the deprivation of many sources of happiness. You should consult a doctor at once about your eyes.

ASPIRANT (Book-keeping).—You find you cannot settle down to domestic service, and, consequently, you are taking lessons in book-keeping. You must remember that there are book-keepers and book-keepers. We have known a woman earn £50 a year with board and lodging by acting as head book-keeper to a draper in a country town. Book-keeping in the drapery business, however, is very exacting work and implies long hours. In the lighter kinds of book-keeping, such as those you mention, the pay is often very low, and girls have difficulty in obtaining situations. At a butcher's, for instance, you would not be likely to earn more than fifteen shillings a week, out of which you would be obliged to support yourself entirely. You would not be at all so well off as you now are. The point for you to consider is whether you have sufficient aptitude for business to become a first-rate book-keeper and to work long hours without over-strain. If not, you had better try to improve your position in domestic service by becoming a first-rate waitress and parlour-maid.

SCHOOLGIRL (Savings Bank Clerkship).—Examinations are usually held about twice a year in London and other centres; the dates are announced some time beforehand in the London daily papers. These announcements should be looked for on a Thursday. You had better try for a vacancy as Female Sorter. The subjects required are reading, copying MS., handwriting, spelling, arithmetic and geography. Sorters may be attached to any department of the Post Office. If you think of entering the Civil Service you had better not lose time, as you are sixteen, and, consequently, old enough to enter the examination for a post as sorter.

MADCAP (Post-Office).—See reply to "Schoolgirl."
GARNET (Dressmaking).—1. The address you require is the Scientific Dress-cutting Association, Oxford Circus, London.—2. December 13, 1871, was a Wednesday.