

Health.

Health is the most valuable of earthly blessings, both in itself, and as a means to discharge all duties. "Health," said Simonides, "is *best* for mortal man; *next* beauty; *thirdly* well-gotten wealth; *fourthly* the pleasure of youth among friends." "Life," says Longfellow, "without health is a burden, with health is joy and gladness."

Every person, or at least everyone who is not afflicted with organic trouble, or who has not neglected too long the laws of nature, has within himself, the power to prolong his own existence, as well as to improve and secure his own health, which is subject to laws of unfailing regularity, of which the knowledge is quite within his reach, but which he will never learn to obey by accident or by instinct. For his usefulness and happiness as an individual, he ought to know the constitution of his own nature bodily and spiritual, so far as it is practicable. I am inclined to doubt whether the study of health is sufficiently impressed on the minds of those entering life. Not that it is desirable to brood over minor ailments, to peruse books on illness, or experiment on ourselves with medicines; quite otherwise. The less we fancy ourselves ill, or bother about little bodily discomforts, the more likely we are to preserve our health. It is true that we must have recourse to medicine sometimes, but when necessary the advice of a regularly qualified physician should be obtained and strictly followed.

Many have undergone unnecessary suffering by "doing things which ought not to have been done, and leaving undone things which ought to have been done." We cannot help believing, that the lives of many prominent men might have been prolonged, by the exercise of a little forethought and care, concerning their personal health. But alas! For honor, that may vanish like a bubble, intellectual exercise is carried to excess, the bodily strength is exhausted by it, particularly the strength of the brain, the organ which is more immediately stimulated by mental activity, and the certainty of an early grave, or an old age of suffering is incurred.

Health is not uniform. It is dealt out in different measures, at different periods of life, varying as the body varies according to usage. At different stages of life the strain falls on different organs, and thus a change is experienced in the tissues of which those organs are constructed. It is no doubt of very great importance to have a good family history, to be born of a healthy, long-lived stock. It is beyond question that malformations and diseases have been

handed down from generation to generation, and while it is beyond doubt that intermarriages have led to both physical, moral, and mental advantages, it is none the less true that intermarriages have taken place that were most inadvisable. How far this practice predisposes to the injury of the community it is hard to determine. But there is no doubt that its effects are obvious, and before many years will demand more thought than has hitherto been given to the subject.

The evidences of good health are firm physique or good development, having firmness, erectness, and good balance of body and mind; endurance in the various conditions of life or climate; and self-control. To obtain these characteristics, it is necessary to observe the following laws, many of which appear very simple, but are none the less important:

1. Nourishing diet.
2. Suitable clothing.
3. Cleanliness.
4. Fresh air.
5. Regular habits.
6. Cheerfulness and good humor.
7. Daily exercise and rest of body and mind.
8. Moderation in all things.

Mental exertion is advantageous to good health. Overwork of the mind with anxiety is attended by lessened appetite, lessened nutrition, and loss of bodyweight. Mental fatigue is to be repaired not by sleep only, but also by physical exercise in the open-air. It directs the blood-flow to the muscles and renews the appetite. A great mistake is too often made, by trying to make up for overwork of the brain by long hours of sleep. Six to eight hours daily, and nine on the seventh, are sufficient for healthy adults.

About Fruit.

It has been said that fruit eaten in the morning is golden, taken at noon is silver, but deferred till night is lead. The reason for this is that early in the day exercise enough to digest it will probably be taken. Also, if eaten on a comparatively empty stomach the digestive organs can attend to this alone and so dispose of it. For this reason it is not well to take when overfatigued and the digestive organs are in need of rest.

Too acid, too sweet, or too watery fruits are most indigestible. Berries, oranges, and grapes are the easiest of digestion because there are no tough fibres and no excessive amount of juice to be counteracted.

Of cooked fruits, baked or roasted are first on the list; then stewed; then boiled. All fruits are better for having the skins taken off previous to eating.—*Homemaker*.