



MEDICAL.

ADA WRIGHT.—The questions that you ask us are not to be hastily answered, but we are pleased to give you all the information that we can. You ought to be everlastingly grateful to your doctor, for he has certainly cured you, and it is something for a physician to be delighted with to cure a case of epilepsy. If, as you say, you have not had a fit for twenty years, we think that it is unlikely that the fits will return. When you have heard that epilepsy is the commonest cause of insanity we cannot tell. Epilepsy is an occasional cause of mental disease, but it is not a very common cause. The influence of heredity in epilepsy has been absurdly overrated. Epilepsies are most common in nervous families and in families where other members are neurotic or insane; but the direct heredity of epilepsy is in our experience rare. We do not think that the fact of your having had fits prevents your marriage. But of course you must clearly lay your case before your intended husband.

CLARA.—Mutton is the most digestible of butcher's meat, beef comes second, veal and pork (especially the latter) are not easily digested; but bacon is not indigestible, and the fat of the bacon the more digestible it is. Kidneys and liver are difficult to digest. Tripe and sweetbreads are very digestible.

CAMELIA.—The nervousness and palpitations to which you are subject are due to the tea that you drink. If you give up taking tea you will get all right in a very short time. Besides nervousness and palpitation, tea, if taken in excess, gives rise to the following symptoms:—Insomnia, often very intractable; dreams, tremors, indigestion (often accompanied with heart-burn and "waterbrash"), constipation and colic. Dependent upon these interferences with digestion are the red noses and "rosacea," so common among excessive tea-drinkers. A general irritability of temper is also induced by over-indulgence in tea. It also seems that tea produces a special inclination to talk scandal.

MAY BLOSSOM.—You ask us about the treatment of corpulency in an otherwise perfectly healthy adult. It is mainly a question of diet. You should avoid untoasted bread, brown bread, puddings, pastry, potatoes and other foods containing a large quantity of starch. Sugar in all forms is forbidden. Milk must be taken in moderation. Alcohol must be avoided in any form. Liver should not be eaten. Cocoa is also prohibited. There are various methods of carrying out the dietary treatment of obesity. Hant's method is the most severe. It is much too severe, and not only have we seen the health ruined, but even death occur from "hanting." Some modification of Elbslein's dietary is the most satisfactory. The following diet table will be found quite spare enough for ordinary cases:—*Breakfast.* Two ounces of thin well-toasted white bread well buttered. An egg. Half a pint of tea or coffee. *Lunch.* Two ounces of thin well-toasted white bread well buttered. A small rash of fat bacon. Half a pint of fluid. *Dinner.* No soup except such as is made with bone marrow. Half a pound of fat meat. Vegetables, but potatoes in great moderation. No puddings. Half a pint of fluid. Butter, fat, and fat bacon are thoroughly admissible. You see that we have to limit the quantity of food taken. No food may be taken between meals. Fluids must be restricted. Besides diet, exercise is important. You must take a walk every day, but you must not over-fatigue yourself. Slightly increase the distance walked every day. The various spas to which stout persons resort to get thin by taking "the waters," owe their efficacy chiefly, if not entirely, to the rigid system of dieting and exercise there enforced.

ANES.—Sulphur is used in medicine as a laxative, for which purpose it is fairly useful. Sulphur produces no obvious effect on the blood when taken by the mouth. It is one of our most valuable drugs for local application to the skin.

BIRNEY.—Glycerine and cucumber, or glycerine and rose-water may be used to render the skin of the face smooth. It is very wasteful to wash in milk, and besides it is not much good for the complexion.

DORREAN.—1. Curling the hair with hot irons renders it brittle and lustreless. Damp the hair before curling it would rather diminish than increase the evil effects of the hot irons.—2. The 16th of September, 1878, was a Monday.

AN OLD FRIEND OF THE "G.O.P."—Sulph-hydrate of calcium is an unsafe and most uncertain depilatory. If you apply this substance to your face for two minutes and then wash it off again, you will not notice much difference in the hairs. If you keep it on too long it will peel your face. The best result we have seen from using sulph-hydrate of calcium for superfluous hairs was in a girl, who applied it to her upper lip to remove some short hairs. The next day the skin of her lip was red and started to peel. It went on peeling for a fortnight, at the end of which time the hairs were a little longer than before. Sulphide of calcium smells of rotten eggs, and it will require some uncommonly powerful scent to render it free from its foul odour. We discussed the subject of superfluous hairs at full length some weeks ago.

JONKEY.—It is highly probable that "eustachian obstruction" is the cause of your deafness. As this condition is rather serious and needs prolonged treatment, we advise you to do as you suggest and go to your doctor, or if you cannot afford his fees, to go to the special department of a general hospital. You say that you were in a hospital with tubercular lip disease, and you ask us if this would have anything to do with your ears? Possibly it might, for ear disease is sometimes due to tubercle. Severe headache is a common accompaniment of ear troubles.

LAUREL LEAF.—Bunions are due to the pressure of ill-fitting boots. Modern boots are made of such a shape that the joint of the big toe is forced out of position and made to project. In consequence of this it is pressed upon, irritated, and eventually becomes inflamed, forming a bunion. The treatment for the condition is to see to your boots. Let your boots be roomy and as near to the natural shape of the foot as possible. We have lately seen boots for sale in London which actually bear some resemblance to the human foot! If you could get a pair of these boots we strongly advise you to do so. Besides seeing to your boots, wash your feet every evening in warm water to which borax, or boracic acid has been added (one dram to a pint). Keep the foot elevated on a pillow at night. Massage may also be of service (see below).

PHILLIPA asks us "Do you think much of massage?" Most decidedly we do! It is one of the most useful measures that we have for relieving pain and curing inflammations. She also asks us "How is it done, and can any one do it?" Yes, any intelligent person can perform massage if she pays attention to the rules. The object of massage is chiefly to promote the circulation of the part by helping the return of the blood and the lymph towards the heart. It consists in rubbing. It is done in the following manner. Suppose you wish to massage the knee. Have the knee bare. Stand facing your patient. Dip your fingers in sweet oil and rub upwards towards the heart. Use the tips of your fingers only, press firmly, and remember that you must only rub towards the heart. Continue the rubbings for twenty minutes. Whatever part you massage you must rub towards the heart; upwards for the arms and legs, and downwards for the head. This is all that is necessary. The elaborate rubbings, smackings, and gymnastics which constitute professional massage are very rarely necessary, the simple massage if properly done is quite sufficient in nine cases out of ten. Massage produces a delightful feeling of comfort, easing pain, and promoting absorption of inflammatory exudations. It is used in many forms of injuries and diseases of the bones, joints, and muscles, and in various diseases of the nervous system.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

KATHLEEN.—1. There is nothing whatever to pay for "International Correspondence," except that you must put a shd. stamp on each letter you send to your foreign friend.—2. Your writing would be better in our opinion if it did not slope backward. You should try and keep a uniform space between the lines of your letter.

SWEET SEVENTEEN.—We hardly think you would be able to get children's stories accepted for English magazines because of your un-English mode of expression, e.g., "For many years already I write short children's stories." We do not wish you to think we feel anything but admiration for your nicely-written letter. If you would like to try your fortune, send a story written on one side of the paper, to the editor of any children's magazine for which you think it suitable, enclosing stamps for its return in case it is not accepted, and keeping a copy. No fee is required.

HERMIONE.—We are answering one of your questions elsewhere, and are glad to hear you are pleased with your prize. As for classical allusions, if you had Dr. Smith's classical dictionary beside you, you could look them up whenever you were perplexed. It is an expensive book, but secondhand copies are often to be met with. The only other course is to read all you can concerning classic lore. Dean Church's tales from ancient history, Kingsley's *Heroes*, Butcher and Lang's translation of the *Odyssey*, are all fascinating.

SPRINGTIME.—1. The English spring is proverbially fickle, but you may consider March, April, and May as the three spring months.—2. Books "become out of print" when the last edition is all sold and they are not reprinted, but even in this case they can frequently be obtained. If your local bookseller cannot procure *The Harvest of a Quiet Eye*, write to some London firm, such as Messrs. Sotheran, Strand, London. We are glad you have taken our advice about the Home Reading Union.

NAPOLÉON.—1. You do not say what price you would be willing to give for your dictionary. Nuttall's Pronouncing Dictionary is 2s. 7½d. net; Chambers' Etymological Dictionary is the same price; Skeats' Concise Etymological Dictionary is 4s. 1½d. net. Webster's Pronouncing Dictionary is only 5d. net. We should suggest that you purchased a cheap pronouncing dictionary and a good etymological one "showing the derivation of words."—2. We think your writing, though very plain and legible, is too black and square. The only way to alter it would be daily to practise a good "running hand" from a copybook.

A BRIGHT BLOSSOM.—You should attend one of the Metropolitan Technical Schools for instruction in your special branch of designing. Openings for work might afterwards present themselves. See Mrs. Watson's recent article "What is the London County Council doing for Girls?" or write to the Technical Education Board, St. Martin's Lane. We feel sympathy for you, and may add, that if you wish for help (gratis of course) in your stammering, there is some one who will be pleased to give it to you, S. W., Esq., 12, Boulevard Street, Fleet Street, London, E.C. Stammerers can often read, declaim and sing without difficulty; it is in conversation that the trouble arises, where the even flow of the voice is frequently broken.

MISCELLANEOUS.

S. P. P.—The "Studies in Plant Life," by Mrs. Brightwell, published in this magazine, are reprinted in book-form by Mr. Fisher Unwin.

LOTTIE.—It was not the use of the needle as a means of livelihood that brought them into such contempt as that expressed in the old adage, "It takes nine tailors to make a man." The phrase has been corrupted from the original, and does not refer to tailors at all, but to a special kind of bell-ringing. The method of distinguishing the sex and age of the deceased, for whom the church or cemetery bell is tolled, is as follows:—Three strokes given successively (nine in all)—are rung three at a time and followed by the "knell," denotes the death of a man; three strokes, twice repeated, before the "knell," are indicative of the death of a woman; and three strokes, without repetition, before the "knell," of that of a child. Thus the original saying was "Nine tolls, or proclamations of death" mark a man; the word "tellers" corrupted to "tailors," and "mark" to "make"—a mischievous change, yet possibly of accidental growth.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND.—We are not in a position to affirm nor deny the wonderful possibilities dimly foreshadowed by, as yet undeveloped, scientific experiments with reference to the planet Mars. Old theories appear to be fading away before the clearer light now being thrown on long-sealed mysteries. Perhaps the great telescopes, some of the chief features of the Exposition Universelle of the year 1900—may settle the question of the habitation of this planet, since such power is claimed for it, as may bring the moon within a mile distance of us! The telescope will be 180 feet long with a level mirror six inches in diameter, whereas the Lick telescope (the largest, next to the Yerkes's, of the Chicago University) has one of 36 inches only.

VERY WORRIED.—1. When a wrong and fraudulent name is given by one party only, and the other party is innocent, the validity of the marriage is not affected. The names by which the parties are known are sufficient for the publication of the banns, so that a variance from the strict baptismal name is not important. The case is quite different where wrong names are designedly given for the purposes of concealment or fraud. This may make the marriage null and void.—2. The name Melhiush is usually pronounced Melish—we do not see where the trouble lies.

LILY OF THE VALLEY (Munich).—We think your composition correct, and your writing plain and well formed. A weak solution of spirits of wine will, we think, remove the stains of the beer, but you must be very careful to place the silk on a clean towel several times doubled and apply a little with a clean rag or sponge.