

Elsie, feelingly. "It must have almost killed you."

"I wished it might," was the bitter answer, "and sometimes I wish it might still."

Elsie did not reply, and there was a silence for a few moments; then Madge rose to go. Elsie rose also and accompanied her to her own door, begging her as they parted to come and see them again any time when she felt inclined.

The following evening, a good deal to

her own surprise, Madge found herself again in Mrs. Merton's little sitting-room. All day long the memory of the sense of peacefulness and calm that had so struck her the previous day haunted her, until at last she had yielded to her inclinations and gone down for a second visit. Thus their intimacy grew apace, and though Madge still continued reserved, Elsie was as gentle and sympathetic as ever, which made Madge feel that she had found a friend.

When Guy returned she was seated in

her old chair reading as usual. She looked up as he entered and made one or two remarks, but she did not tell him of her new acquaintances, and presently took up her book again without having noticed the unusual pallor of his face and the strained look in his eyes.

And Guy took up a paper and sat down by the window, but he did not read a word and the look in his eyes became more strained.

(To be continued.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## STUDY AND STUDIO.

A. JENNIE ASTON.—We have inserted your request under "International Correspondence." We like your writing very much, and have no special fault to find with your composition, save that "&" is scarcely admissible in a formal letter to a stranger, and it would be better to use the same tenses on page 1; "you say that any one. . . may write to you," not "might." You also use two "that's" close together, which should be avoided.

We regret that through a clerical error, Miss Hathway, Anderson's, Denmark Hill, S.E., was in our December number represented as Miss Anderson, Hathway's.

ONE WHO NEEDS HELP.—You will find the National Home Reading Union adapted to your needs. Send for full details to Miss Mondy, Surrey House, Victoria Embankment, W.C. Amateur societies are frequently mentioned in this column: see our back numbers.

MISS CLIFFORD.—44, Hill Road, Wimbledon, sends details of an Art and Photographic competition; rules free by post for three stamps.

F. E. GEORGE.—We should suggest *The Beginner's Guide to Photography*, published price 6d.; J. C. Hepworth's *Photography for Amateurs*, 1s.; *Photography in a Nutshell*, 1s.; or Captain Abney's *Instructions in Photography*, 3s. 6d.

W. F. M.—Our poems are not suitable for publication, and we only accept the work of experienced writers. The idea of "Two Sides of a Picture" (the letter poem) is good, but your "form" is defective. "Descry" and "eyes," "forms" and "storm" do not rhyme. Your last verse about the homeless poor is the best.

"If you told them of the figures

You could see in falling snow,

They would mock you and make answer

"'Tis very cold! that's what we know!"

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—Your story is interesting, to the point, and well-written. We should be rather disposed to wonder why the St. Bernard dog only came into the "Haunted Lane" at night, but that being granted, the remainder is quite probable. Many thanks for your kind words of appreciation.

SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER.—1. We can honestly praise the brief sketch you send us, and see no reason why it should not obtain admission into one of the small magazines. Try one of the penny weekly "home" magazines that are so numerous just now. You may do better work with practice and study, and we advise you to persevere.—2. We think you would obtain a spinning-wheel, flax, &c., at Keswick, where Mr. Ruskin has established a spinning industry. We cannot tell you the exact address, but doubtless a letter addressed "The Ruskin Spinning Industry, Keswick," would arrive at the right quarter.

SLEEPING BEAUTY.—Your verses contain a very good thought, sometimes well expressed. Your rhymes, however, are occasionally faulty, e.g., "faint" and "gat," "mien" and "seem."

ELSIE.—Many thanks for your very interesting letter in reply to our criticism of *A Story*, to comply with the canons of literary criticism, must not record what is exceptional good fortune, and represent it as being the achievement of "patience, courage, and faith in the love and providence of God under the most trying circumstances of adversity." The marriage of a penniless governess, over forty years of age, with the rich and charming father of a pupil, comes under the category of this exceptional good fortune, and to represent it as resulting from the above-mentioned cause, is to give false views of life; for the majority of hard-working middle-aged women, though they may be as good and devoted as Violet Hermsley, do not meet with a similar reward. We did not say, nor intend to say, that such an occurrence never did or could take place, and we think if you read this answer carefully you will understand our meaning.

LOVER OF ITALY.—Your lines on "Italy" are not written in any particular metre, and you use "thee" and "you" alternately in apostrophising the "land of your dreams," whither we hope you may one day go.

IRIS.—Feller's *Pocket Italian Dictionary* is published at 4s.; Graglia's improved *Pocket Dictionary* at 2s. 6d.; Routledge's at 1s. 6d. We always use Grassi's, but it may be out of print. Your other query is answered elsewhere.

SUBJECTS PARVUS.—We append two translations, the one free, the other literal.

## WITH MANY WISHES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

The guileless Babe, moving by tedious means

In time appeareth as one fully fledged,

Forgetful oft, of friends of former days

When he hath left his lowly cradle bed!

## Literal Translation—

—MANY WISHES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

The Babe without guile, moving by tedious means

Comes after a time into the great world,

And then neither hears nor sees anyone

When h's crib is left behind!

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

MADMOISELLE MARIE PERRAUD, Quai de Retz 25, Lyons, Rhône, France, would be glad to exchange letters with an English girl. She is nineteen years old, of good family, and obtained two years ago the highest diploma for Girls' Secondary Education at the Lyons School; she is a good musician, and fond of drawing and painting.

We commend this information to Miss A. Jennie Aston, care of Dr. J. P. Aston, Richmond House, Eccleshell, near Bradford, Yorkshire, who is eighteen in the sixth class of the Salt School, Shipley, Yorks, and who wishes for a French correspondent. "Robin Hood" also asks for a French correspondent.

Miss S. Ackermann, Syke Villa, Troutbeck, Westmore, would be glad to exchange letters with a German girl.

As our correspondents still enclose stamped envelopes, we must again say that we cannot undertake to answer letters privately, and refer them to the remarks in a recent number.

## MEDICAL.

IN HOPE.—"There is no disease which is absolutely hopeless. There is no sufferer who does not hope to be cured." You tell us that you suffer from a cough which has persisted for over two years. This cough may be due to a most serious affection or a very trifling cause. You must therefore find out what is the cause of the cough. It is of course impossible for us to hazard an opinion on your condition without a thorough personal examination of your chest and throat. We can therefore only advise you to have a proper examination made by a competent physician. You say that you had your chest examined by a doctor last year, who said that you had a "weak chest." Have your chest examined again, perhaps signs of a more definite disease may have developed during the last few months. If nothing is found in your chest have your throat examined. Affections of the throat and nose very often cause chronic cough. As regards hydrotherapy for disease of the chest and throat, we give it as our opinion that it is useless. Whether you should go abroad or not is a question which cannot be answered except by a physician, who has personally examined your chest.

WHAZY ONE.—Everything that you mention is due to anaemia. You are almost certain to get well again. It has been said that those persons who mistrust their doctors take the longest time to cure. Anaemia is not a very difficult disease to treat, and we can answer for it, that your doctor knows what is best for you.

PEN.—Where you have heard that "blackheads are absolutely incurable" we do not know, for there is no condition that is easier to cure, if sufficient pains are taken to do so. We have never heard of "blackheads" not being cured, yet certainly twenty-five per cent. of adolescents suffer from them.

You say you have used sulphur ointment for a long time, but without success. Either you have not used the ointment sufficiently long ("a long time" is very indefinite) or else you have not used it properly. It is no good simply to apply the ointment. We will repeat how this must be used. Wash your face with warm water, and use only sulphur soap. After washing, rub your face well with a roughish towel, not sufficiently hard to hurt you or peel your face. Squeeze out any very prominent "blackheads," but not more than five or six a day. Apply the ointment thickly all over the parts affected, especially about the jaws and the temples. Use the ointment every evening, leave it on all night and wash it away with the sulphur soap in the morning. We venture to suggest that if you carry out this plan you will alter your opinion on the curability of "blackheads." Face massage has often been used for blackheads. It is very expensive, and the results we have seen are very far below those which we see every day after treatment with sulphur.

MOTHER.—Measles is one of the most infectious diseases known. The reason why children with measles are not usually isolated as thoroughly as those with scarlet fever, is that measles is most infectious before the rash appears; whereas, in scarlet fever, the most dangerous time is during the stage of peeling, which follows the fever. It is, therefore, comparatively easy to check the spread of scarlet fever; whereas, it is next to impossible to do so with measles. Scarlet fever is not a much more serious disease than measles.

THE BONNIE BRIAR BUSH.—1. We wish we could tell you how to remove wrinkles, but unfortunately we cannot do so. We are therefore not surprised that you found the preparation which you tried had no effect.—2. When you call on a married couple, both of whom are out, you should leave two single cards.

## GIRLS' EMPLOYMENTS.

VERENA (*Mother's Help*).—You ask whether a mother's help need be "accomplished?" In the old-fashioned sense—certainly not. But she should be accomplished in cooking, or housework, or both. The duties of a mother's help are usually pretty much the same as those of a general servant. It is sometimes hardly an enviable post. We advise you to obtain a thorough knowledge of some one department of domestic work, so that you can offer yourself as either a plain cook, parlourmaid, or lady's maid. In the last-named capacity you ought to be a fair dressmaker.

FRANCES (*Dressmaking*).—We have not kept the address of the correspondent to whom you refer. From what you tell us, there is not time now for any dressmaker to avail herself of the opportunity you mention, for doubtless the business has already been disposed of.

GRETNA (*Nursing*).—You are rather too young for admission to almost any general hospital. But if you are resolved on beginning work at once, and do not mind having plenty to do, you might apply to the matron of the Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum, Devon's Road, Bromley, E. It is stated that after a personal interview with the matron and managers, and two months' trial, applicants are received for three years' training. Candidates should be between twenty-one and thirty-five years of age, and must be well educated, active, industrious, thoroughly trustworthy, of unexceptional character, and in good health. No premium is required, and the salary paid is £10 the first year, then £15, and the third year £20. Laundry and indoor uniform are provided.