

ful of late that your sister had mistaken her feelings for me. It is much better that the mistake should be discovered before we were married, I may say, irrevocably. I think it is possible, also, that there has been another mistake; "he continued growing red in the face and hesitating over his words; "I have thought of late—that you, Miss Jennie—though younger—were better suited to me than your sister; you have more sense, if you'll excuse my saying so, Miss Joanna," said the Laird of Cockpen, rising with majesty; "will you become my wife? I am an old fellow, but I will try to make you happy, and I love and admire you most exceedingly."

Here was a position for a girl to be put in, and Jennie sat with wide eyes and open mouth as if she intended to swallow her admirer. This at least, had never occurred to her; she believed in her heart that it had no more occurred to him until that moment; but she reflected. It was too good to throw away. "He is a good man," thought Jennie, "and I am bright enough for two, though I am not very good. He is rich and I am ambitious. As for love, I could love anybody who would give me my own way, so that is all right. Then he has not been treated very well, poor man; and I should really make him a better wife than Essie, who is dreadfully impractical." In short, after a moment of severe thought, during which the suitor bent his new silk hat into a variety of remarkable shapes, she called up a becoming blush, and accepted the offer with considerable maidenly dignity, notwithstanding the short notice.

"So papa will get two of us married off at once," said Jennie, as she finished her report to Esther that evening; "I believe he is going to turn out a lucky man after all!"—*Ellen M. Smith in Sunday Afternoon.*

USE OF ALCOHOL AS A STIMULANT.

Before about 1860 it was taught that nature treated alcohol, whether in larger or smaller quantity, simply as an intruder, to be expelled from the human system with all speed, and by every channel, whether by the lungs, the kidneys, or the skin. The results of the older experimenters (Percy, Strauch, Masing, Perrin, Lallemand) seemed to indicate that this was the case. A physician of the old school—Professor Miller, of Edinburgh—sums up the old notion of its effects in the following words, which I quote as summatory of the last generation's physiologic creed upon the subject:

"Alcohol," he says, "is a narcotic stimulant—one of a class of substances which, given in repeated small doses, will produce a stimulant effect, which may be kept up for some time—an effect, however, which will be certainly followed by a depression profound in proportion to the length of time during which it has been delusively postponed."

But within a few years this question has been re-investigated with great care. Prominent among the contributors to our better knowledge of it are Schulnus, Anstie, Dupré, Subbotin, and Binz. It was Dr. Anstie who first clearly showed to the English-reading public, arguing from original investigations, that alcohol, in small doses, was not a poison, that, on the contrary, it was a true food; and that it was a stimulant to the system in precisely the same sense as that in which food is a stimulant. He pointed out that we had been using terms loosely; that oxygen is, for instance, both a true stimulant and a true food. "It prevents or relieves pain, averts the disposition to muscular convulsion, tremor, and spasm, reduces excessive secretion, calms all unduly frequent circulation, removes general debility and special fatigue of particular organs, quiets the disturbed brain, compensates in great measure the absence of ordinary food, promotes local nutrition." And these, he adds, are also precisely the effects that are produced by alcoholic stimulants in small doses.

So far had the doctrine of stimulant effects as distinguished from narcotic, and as closely allied to the effects of food, been carried by Anstie and others in 1864. It was based upon laborious research and experiments, which this is not the place to describe; and a further series of experiments was reported in the "Lancet" of 1868. Dr. Anstie died, his work still unfinished, in 1875; but subsequent experimenters—especially Sydney, Ringer, Binz, and Thudichum—have much advanced our knowledge of the question. Their labours have tended to verify and complete the "reconstructed doctrine of stimulants" put forward by Dr. Anstie, and have proved the view that alcohol and other of the so-called stimulants, being in small doses, are entirely assimilated in the system, and are to be regarded in some respects as true foods, rather than called by the insufficiently descriptive name of stimulants. But what is food? Let us define it as we have just sought to define stimulants. The definition of Dr. Binz, among many other good ones, is perhaps the best. He says: "We must regard as a food any substance which, when taken into the system, can serve (1) toward building up the tissues; or (2) toward supplying the warmth and vital forces necessary for the proper performance of the various functions of the body."

Alcohol fails, perhaps, to fulfil the first office of food, according to the foregoing definition, since it is incapable, as far as we know, of supplying materials to build up the tissues. But when given in small doses, oft repeated, especially in the case of a sick person, it may be said to surpass all other substances as a species of easily burning fuel, from whose combustion the heat required to generate vital force may be derived. Indirectly it answers the first of the aforesaid purposes; for though it may furnish actually no new-building material, it spares the reserve supply of fat in the body, which would otherwise have to be burned to give the necessary warmth. The heating powers of alcohol, of pure coal, of cod-liver oil, and of hydrogen gas are as 7, 8, 9, and 34.5 respectively. Contrast with this, now, a *mere* stimulant (ether), as filling exactly the place which the early physiologists assigned to alcohol. The same writer says: "Ether is a cardiac stimulant, but as such it contributes no new force to the heart, all it does being to excite the heart so as to make it put forth what force it already has more energetically. Instead of contributing fresh power, it draws away more rapidly that which is left."—*Dr. Titus M. Coon, in Harper's Magazine.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

In preparing a meal for any one whose appetite is delicate, it should be made to look as tempting as possible. The tray should be covered with the whitest napkin, and the silver, glass, and china should shine with cleanliness. There should not be too great a variety of viands, and but a very small portion of each one. Nothing more quickly disgusts a feeble appetite than a quantity of food presented at one time.

The patient never should be consulted beforehand as to what he will eat or what he will drink. If he asks for anything, give it to him, with the doctor's permission; otherwise prepare something he is known to like and offer it without previous comment. One of the chief offices of a good nurse is to think for her patient. His slightest want should be anticipated and gratified before he has had time to express it. Quick observation will enable her to detect the first symptom of worry or excitement and to remove the cause. An invalid never should be teased with the exertion of making a decision. Whether the room is too hot or too cold; whether chicken broth, beef tea, or gruel is best for his luncheon, and all similar matters, are questions which should be decided without appealing to him.

Household troubles should be kept as far as possible from the sick room. Squabbles of children or servants never should find an echo there.

In the event of some calamity occurring, of which it is absolutely necessary the sufferer should be informed, the ill news should be broken as gently as possible, and every soothing device employed to help him bear the shock.

Above all, an invalid, or even a person apparently convalescent, should be saved from his friends. One garrulous acquaintance admitted for half an hour will undo the good done by a week of tender nursing. Whoever is the responsible person in charge should know how much her patient can bear, she should keep a careful watch on visitors of whose discretion she is not certain, and the moment she perceives it to be necessary, politely but firmly to dismiss them.

She must carry out implicitly the doctor's directions, particularly those regarding medicine and diet. Strict obedience to his orders, a faithful, diligent, painstaking following of his instructions will insure to the sufferer the best results from his skill, and bring order, method and regularity into domestic nursing.—*Scribner for September.*

OCEAN SPLENDOR.

When the sea is perfectly clear and transparent, it allows the eye to see objects at a very great depth. Near Mindora, in the Indian Ocean, the spotted corals are plainly visible under twenty fathoms of water. The crystalline clearness of the Caribbean Sea excited the admiration of Columbus, who, in the pursuit of his great discovery, ever retained an open eye for the beauties of nature. "In passing over those splendidly adorned grounds," says School, "marine life shows itself in an endless variety of forms; the boat, suspended over the purest crystal, seems to float in the air, so that a person unaccustomed to the scene easily becomes giddy. On the clear, sandy bottom appear thousands of sea-stars, sea-urchins, molluscs, and fishes of a brilliancy of colour unknown to our temperate seas. Burning red, intense blue, lively green and golden yellow, perpetually vary; the spectator floats over groves of sea-plants, gorgonias, corals, alcyonulums, flabellums and sponges that afford no less delight to the eye, and are no less gently agitated by the heaving waters, than the most beautiful garden on earth when a gentle breeze passes through the waving boughs."

A HINT TO WORKINGMEN.

The honest workingmen of the country, many of whom have large and increasing families to support, have been the chief sufferers from the great financial pressure under which we have laboured for the last few years. Diminished wages have not been attended by a corresponding diminution in price of every thing which the workingman needs. Rents, fuel, food, and clothing are cheaper, but these do not constitute all his necessities. It is sometimes necessary for him to employ a lawyer or a physician, yet the fee rates of physicians and lawyers are as high as they were in "flush" times. Yet cheap medicines are as necessary as cheap rents or fuel. Cheap medicines are not necessarily poor medicines. It must be obvious to every intelligent person that medicines, compounded and put up at wholesale, can be sold at much lower rates than when retailed from the doctor's pill bags. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and Pleasant Purgative Pellets have completely restored persons who had spent hundreds of dollars in vainly seeking relief from private practitioners, and all at a very slight expenditure.

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THERE is now, says a Dublin correspondent of the "Pall Mall Gazette," a direct importation of American cattle into Belfast, and the beasts find a ready sale at from twenty to thirty guineas each. The cattle must, under the order in Council, be slaughtered on the quay, which somewhat checks the trade, but when this order is removed it is said that Belfast will become the general depot for the North of Ireland for an extensive American trade.

The Holy Synod of Russia is said to have in contemplation a reform of the monasteries and nunneries under its jurisdiction. There are very frequent scandals in connection with these establishments, and many of the monks lead openly profligate lives and revel in wealth, not being required to take the vow of poverty. It is thought that some of the most crying evils of monastic life may be remedied by depriving the monks of the right of holding private property.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

It is proposed to celebrate the centenary of Rev. Dr. Thomas Chalmers, of Scotland, next March.

THE American Board has recently sent out eight missionaries to reinforce its stations in different parts of Turkey.

THERE were 1,053 persons killed last year in working the railways of Great Britain and Ireland, and 4,007 injured.

THE herring fishery in the north of Scotland, on which so many of its hardy fishermen depend, has been poor the past season.

THE various Bible Societies in England and elsewhere have, since their formation, issued 147,947,520 copies of the Bible and New Testament.

THE resignation of the Rev. Dr. Henry of Queen's College, Belfast, has been accepted. It is probable that his successor will be Dr. Porter.

A NEW society has been formed in Boston with the lucid name of the Physiognoscopy Society. How has the world existed so long without it?

THE first Chinese Christian church in the Sandwich Islands has been organized in Honolulu, six persons uniting with it on profession of their faith.

THE memory of the sweet poetess, Frances Ridley Havergal, is to be fitly cherished at Swansea, South Wales, by the formation of a Young Women's Christian Association.

THE late Sir Rowland Hill, whose introduction of cheap postage proved him a public benefactor, was buried last week in Westminster Abbey, among those whom England delights to honour.

THE "Faking Gazette" announces the wonderful discovery by a Chinese of a process of generating steam without fire, and states that a steamboat is to be constructed to be propelled by it.

THE Indianapolis and St. Louis Railway Directors are consulting the public welfare as well as their own interests in their recent prohibition of the use of intoxicating liquors by their employees.

THE steamship "Great Eastern," after an expenditure of half a million dollars, is to be fitted up for carrying cattle and sheep from Texas to London. It will be able to carry 2,000 head of cattle or 36,000 sheep.

THE Crown Prince of Germany is not so popular as he ought to be, and this is mainly because, like his ancestor Frederick the Great, he never can refrain from sneering at the fools with whom he is brought in contact.

THE "Christian Herald" of London has made the astounding discovery that Prince Jerome Bonaparte, the new head of the Imperialists of France, is the "Beast of the Revelation" whose number is 666. We wonder how many "Beasts" have already been discovered!

THE Philadelphia "Record" claims that the bituminous coal-fields in the \$6,000,000 acres about Pittsburgh would pay off the American national debt thirty times, since, estimating the upper seam at eight feet in thickness, they would contain 53,516,430,000 tons, which at \$2 a ton, would be worth \$107,032,860,000.

SHORTLY before the death of the late Baron Rothschild, he called at a bookseller's to inquire if he could furnish him with a hymn-book containing the precious hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul." Happy for him if in his closing days his mind and heart were turning to Him who is "the hope of Israel and Saviour thereof in time of trouble."

IN Rome was recently ordained a coloured priest who was formerly a slave. He had suffered many indignities, and an Italian lady, learning his condition and character, purchased him and gave him his freedom. He was then sent to the Propaganda, and his ordination is the result. His field of work is Abyssinia, where he has been sent to labour among his own people.

MISS WEST writes from Smyrna that a Rest and Coffee Room has been opened in an admirable location, where British railway men and others are furnished with refreshing drinks, and opportunities are given for religious work among them and the natives who throng the place. It is meeting great favour with the Greek, Armenian, and Turkish residents. The preaching services on Sabbath evenings are crowded.

MESSRS. JOHNSON and Richardson, coloured students of Mr. Spurgeon's college, who sailed from England last September, as missionaries to Bakunda, on the west coast of Africa, have gained already a very strong foothold among the people. Through the influence of the king all the boys in the village of 1,000 people have been sent to their school. When very sick last April, the king made his will, commending his youngest son to the care of the missionaries, and commanding his subjects to obey them and protect them and their wives.

THERE has been a serious outbreak at Cabul. An attack on the British Embassy at Cabul was commenced by the Afghan regiments, which were joined later by nine others. The military escort of the Embassy was too small for the conflict. The populace joined in the onset, and the British Embassy, of which Major Cavagnari was chief, and all his suite, were cut off after bravely defending themselves. The Mission consisted of Major Cavagnari, his Secretary, Mr. Jenkins, Dr. Kelley, Lieutenant Hamilton, commanding the escort, consisting of twenty-six cavalry and fifty infantry, and a Sepoy guide.

The question of intemperance is now attracting a good deal of attention in the Church of Scotland. The committee appointed by the Assembly, reporting on the evil, say the General Assembly will approve and encourage those who adopt the total abstinence policy; but, on the other hand, the committee would "urge on the abstainers of the Church the duty and expediency of respecting the convictions of those who cannot see their way to personal abstinence, but who are, nevertheless, anxious to see the reproach of drunkenness removed from the Church and the country, and who are willing to work for this great end in united and friendly effort."