

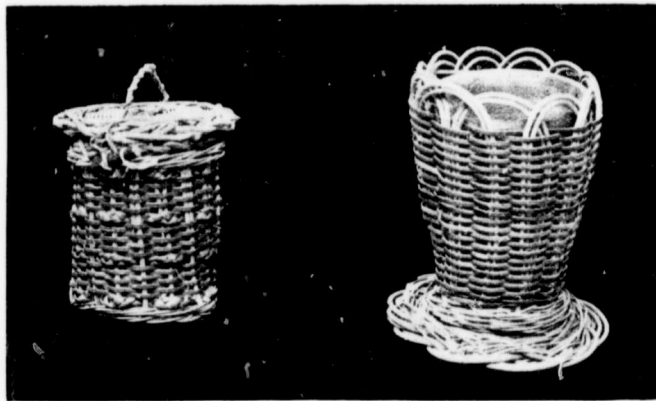


VOL. XIX.—No. 951.]

MARCH 19, 1898.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

HOW TO WEAVE CANE BASKETS.



MARMALADE BASKET.

FLOWERPOT HOLDER.



OVAL BASKET.



UPRIGHT BASKET WITH HANDLES.

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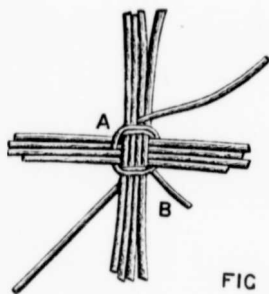


FIG 1

THERE is hardly any limit to the number and variety of baskets that can be made of cane when once the easy art of weaving them is understood. Almost everyone appreciates baskets useful or ornamental, and they can be made at home with far more ease and economy than the uninitiated would suppose.

Of course the worker's first requisite is a due supply of materials. The cane itself is sold in large skins and at prices varying from 1s. to 3s. the pound. The sizes of it range from the coarse, which is about equal in size to an ordinary lead pencil, to the finest, which may be compared to a No. 17 knitting-needle. Some of the makes of cane are round, and, if coarse, principally used for the spokes or uprights of the baskets; others are split; others again flat on both surfaces and useful for weaving only.

In fancy baskets coloured straw-plait is sometimes used. This is procurable in different tints and in lengths of six dozen yards. By the dozen yards also are sold rush, a soft green plait very effective for mixing in with the canes; and raffia, similar in weaving, but cream-coloured and much finer.

So much for materials. Tools are few in number and need not be obtained by those desirous of beginning on a small scale only. There are nippers to be had to cut the cane, but a strong knife and scissors do their work quite well. For the piercer, whose uses are to force the weaving apart temporarily and to bore holes in coarse canes or soft wood, a stout stiletto or similar homely tool can be substituted.

Baskets having no bottom are sometimes made on a wooden frame or base, which is

small baskets according as the outer or inner circles of holes is made use of.

Where a basket is to have a permanent wooden base, this can be bought or cut to any shape ordered. Only the sides have then to be woven, but the finished article cannot be ranked so highly as one in which the bottom is woven as well as the upper portion.

The question as to the sizes of cane with which a beginner should practise is a difficult one, some authorities recommending the use of the finest. As better work can be done with medium sizes, the little extra difficulty felt at first in managing these is soon compensated.

It is a good plan for a novice when applying for cane to mention the purposes for which it

is required. This because sizes vary in number with different makers, and to ensure that the spokes are not too fine for the working strands and *vice versa*.

For spokes, No. 10 (round) is, for baskets of average size strong and amply coarse; for weaving over it, 4, 5 or 6 in round, and 6, 8 or 10 in flat cane will be found good average sizes.

On receiving the hanks of cane, cut the strings only enough to enable the strands to be drawn out singly. Wind each loosely round and round the hand and put to soak from ten to forty minutes according to texture. Every worker will desire to begin with a mat or basket which can afterwards be made useful. The easiest way of weaving a centre for either of these articles is seen in the earliest stage at Fig. 1. The coarse cane, when well soaked, should be laid on a cloth or tray and cut to the lengths required for the spokes. For a mat, cut each the length of the diameter, with an added eight to sixteen inches for the edges. For a basket, measure the depth of both sides, and the width of the bottom, and add to this the extra allowance for the edge or border. For this round weaving always cut one extra spoke half the length of the others.

In Fig. 1 eight long spokes are used, four crossed over the centre of the other four.

next to it; at B, the end of each spoke is beside the next but one; at C, two spokes are missed, and the end of the first is inserted beside the third spoke.

An oval base for mat or basket is illustrated at Fig. 3. The six long strands here are crossed first over a pair of shorter upright ones. The weaver, inserted as before, is so bound over to secure these in place as to form a cross on the right side of the work; then two upright stitches are made on the long strands only; another pair of side strands is affixed with a cross bind, and so on until five pairs in all are in position. A second weaver is now needed and the two are taken together alternately one over and the other under the pairs of spokes until the oval is large enough.

On even spokes it is not possible to use one weaver alternately under and over one spoke as in simple or plain weaving.

As the work proceeds it must be damped and pulled into place to keep it a good shape. Another way of working over an even number of spokes is illustrated at Fig. 4. Here also the weavers are used in pairs and together. The first is placed behind, the second in front of each spoke, and between each pair of spokes the weavers cross, that which was formerly below being raised before placing it behind a spoke.

In Fig. 5, A is shown yet another way of working with two weavers together. This plan can only be pursued on an unequal number of spokes or the repeat would not come true.

B (also Fig. 5) shows four weavers used together much as the two were in Fig. 4. Begin with one; place it in front of four, and behind one spoke, afterwards before three and behind one. Starting the other three weavers in the same place, put the next always in front of two and behind one; the third before two, behind one; the fourth before one and behind one. After starting thus, bring each in turn before three and behind one,

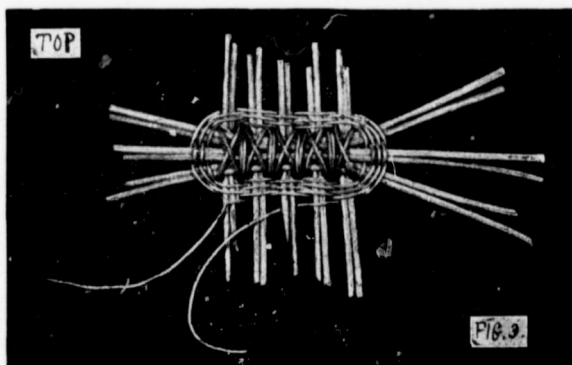
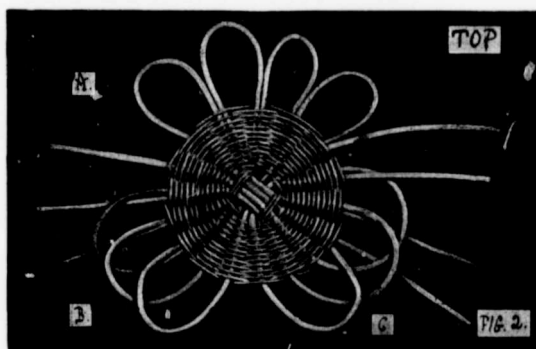


FIG. 3.



really a round piece of oak pierced with several rings of holes through which the canes are pushed, while the sides of the basket are formed by inter-weaving. The frame is afterwards drawn off, and so can be used an indefinite number of times and for large or

small baskets according as the outer or inner circles of holes is made use of.

In Fig. 1 eight long spokes are used, four crossed over the centre of the other four.

crossing the others on its way. Thus each weaver should be, as it were, one spoke in advance of the one behind it.

For C, work in the same way but omitting the first row, as three weavers only are employed.

All the parts of a basket are now dealt with save the handles. Two forms of these are given at Fig. 6. A is simply three spoke canes twisted together; at B three spokes are interplaited.

Now to put the pieces of our baskets together. A group of finished specimens appear on page 385.

For the upright cover for a marmalade- or soup-jar, weave a circle three and a half inches across, work two rows triple twist, soak well, bend up the spokes to the shape for the sides, work: one row single twist *, one row rush, seven rows single weaving (with flat cane); repeat from * twice; one row rush, two of triple twist, open border C (Fig. 2) with the spokes pushed far down to form a close border.

Make the top like the bottom, finishing with the same border left more open. Make hinges, handle and fastening of weaving cane well soaked.

For the open oval basket weave a bottom four by five inches and one row four ply twist. Turn up the sides and work another row of twist. One inch of plain weaving with fine round cane; five rows double weaving with flat cane (see Fig. 5, A); three rows rush, five of double weaving, half an inch of plain weaving, finish with any open border. The handle is three spokes, twisted bound over with rush, the ends being pushed down (with the aid of the piercer) nearly to the bottom of the basket.

For the flower-pot holder, work on the wooden frame. Choose the circle of holes measuring two and a half inches across and through each space insert a spoke for eight

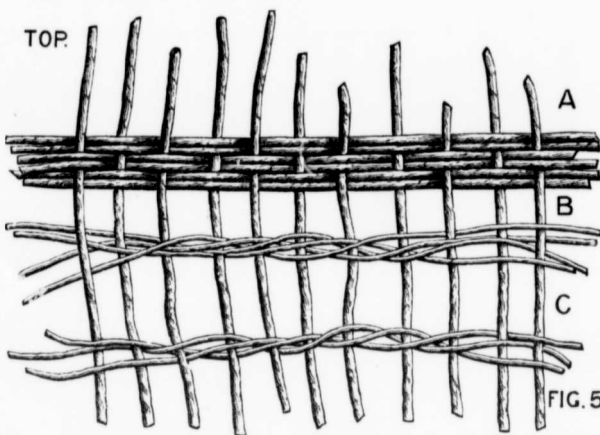


FIG. 5.

inches. Two rows triple twist, then five inches of plain weaving with flat cane. Bend the tops down for an open border (either) and make each loop double by inserting extra spokes pushed down to the bottom of the basket. It is well to work round a flower-pot to ensure shapeliness. The top finished, slip off the frame and soak the ends of the spokes. Bend them outwards into saucer shape, work two rows triple twist and finish with a double open border as above.

For the upright basket with handles, make a round base five inches across. Work one row treble twist. Soak and turn up the spokes. Work one row triple twist, three inches of plain weaving *, one row raffia, one row with any bright-coloured cane, repeat four times from *, work three inches of single weaving; push the ends firmly down each beyond the third spoke to make a close border. Work the handles of twisted fine cane round two extra spokes each twenty-four inches long, inserted two inches from the rim of the basket and pushed well down.

Space forbids the enumeration of any more articles here, but readers should now be able to invent others for themselves. All the principal plaits have been mentioned, and the worker has only to combine these according to her desires.

All work needs moistening now and then to keep it pliable, and should be gradually moulded into shape when in process. It will then dry and harden firmly.

Basket-work can be singed, varnished, or

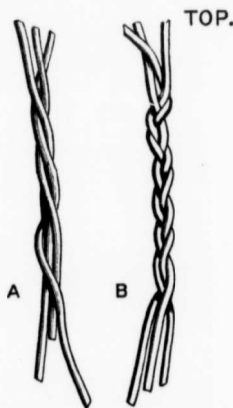
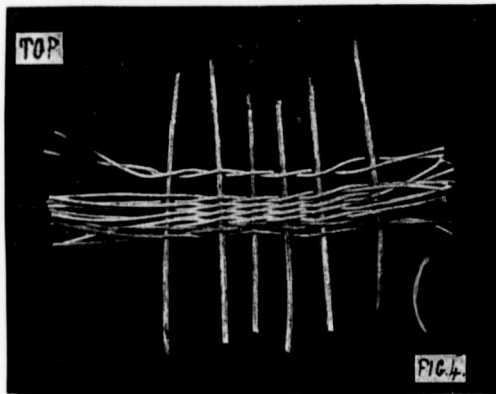


FIG. 6.

enamelled when finished, but this is not necessary.

If these hints prove insufficient or obscure to any reader, additional information can be forwarded to her if she will mention her difficulties.

LEIRION CLIFFORD.



VARIETIES.

THE RULING PASSION.

They had been drifting about in an open boat for seven days, and had almost given up hope, when the look-out cried wildly—

“A sail! a sail!”

The only woman passenger looked up anxiously, “Oh, is it a bargain sale?”

ON THE WAY TO PROSPERITY.—No gain is so certain as that which proceeds from the economical use of what you have.

NO LIMITATION TO GENIUS.

“How do you paint sunrises? you never saw one in your life.”

“That’s no drawback. I paint sunsets and turn them upside down.”

TRUTH.

“Seize upon Truth, where'er 'tis found, Among your friends, among your foes, On Christian or on heathen ground, The flower's divine, where'er it grows.”

THE HEROINE'S REPLY.

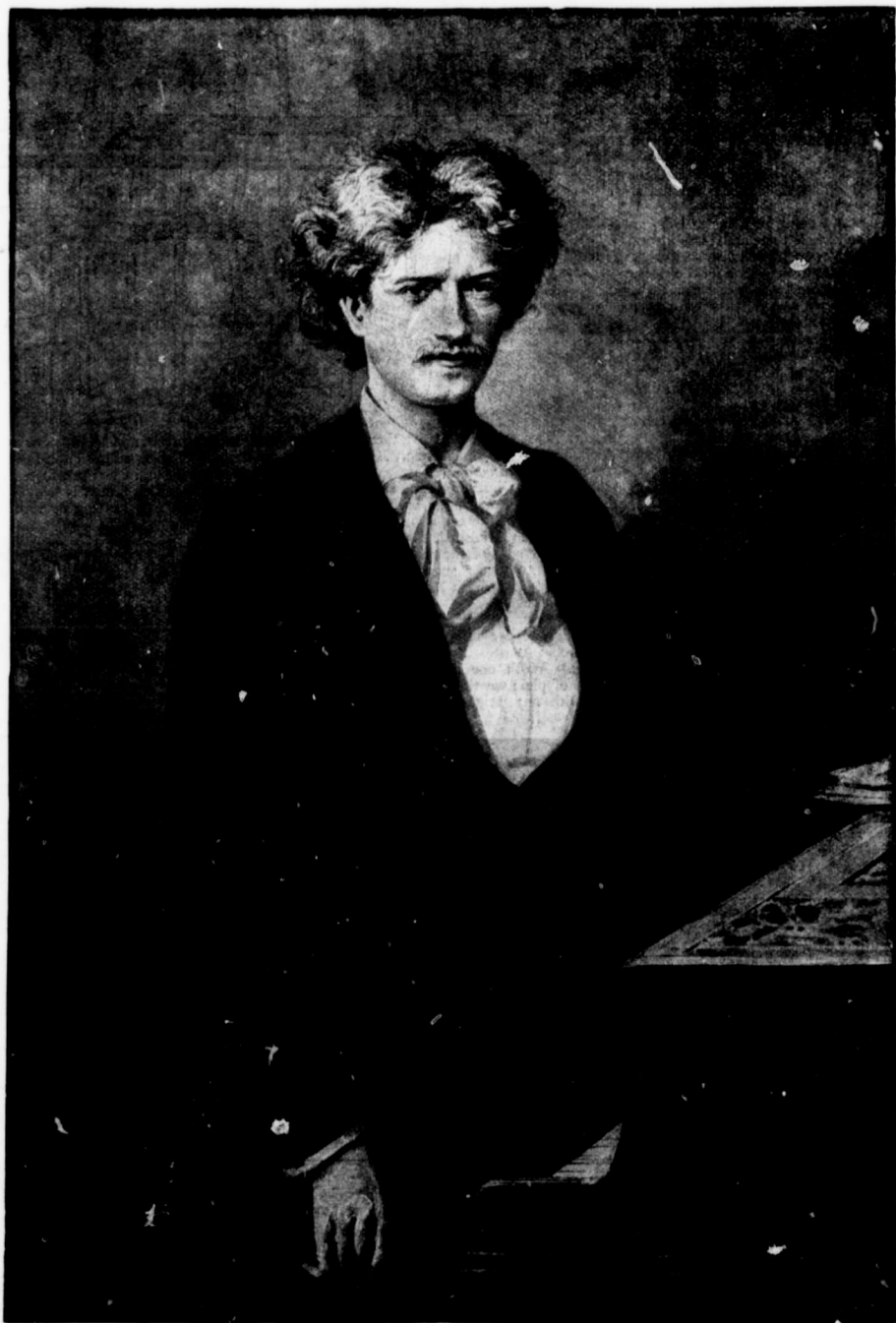
“I will follow you to the uttermost ends of the earth!” hissed the villain.

“No, you won't,” said the heroine calmly.

“Why won't I?” queried the villain, aghast at her coolness.

“Because I am not going there,” she replied.

WITHOUT RELIGION.—People without religion are like horses without bridles.



M. PADEREWSKI.



PADEREWSKI* AS A COMPOSER.

THE "happy medium" people (with whom perhaps the world is chiefly populated) are spared the deepest phases of sorrow certainly, but they are also debarred from feeling pleasure so exquisite as to be almost akin to pain, for humanity is so constituted that the power of experiencing the keenest joy is always found side by side with the greatest capacity for suffering; by the latter is meant of course something entirely different from the self-centred pessimism which finds exponents in the literature, painting or music of every age. It is a capacity born of qualities widely opposed to egoism, a power indeed of "caring deeply," to be summed up in the one word—sympathy, and surely it is one of the highest attributes which either man or woman can possess. No one devoid of this dual gift of sorrow and joy, can ever adequately gauge the beauties of any branch of art, and no truly great artist, who is able to touch the very hearts of his fellow-beings is without it, the deeper its roots, the higher the inspiration. Job, the Hebraic poet, possessed it in a marvellous degree; it drew him down almost to the depths of hell, but it raised him again to the very gates of heaven; it belonged to Shakspeare, else how could he have created a Hamlet and a Puck? It pervades the writings of Goethe—we feel it in the music of Beethoven and Chopin, whose moments of happiness though fleeting, were yet intensely real, and it strikes us in the works of the greatest masters of painting. As examples in the modern school, the pictures of George Watts may be aptly cited, where tears and laughter so often meet, and in the realms of contemporary music it is wonderfully expressed by the compositions of Paderewski. Such pieces as his "Elegie" or his "Nocturne" reveal a depth of sorrow and regret before which the listener shrinks; his "Dans le Désert," if considered as something more than a mere virtuosity study, contains the elements of a tragedy; underlying the tenderness of his "Chant d'Amour" is a vein of deep sadness, and more than one number of his "Chants du voyageur" suggests that their composer has had a heavy price to pay for his impressions of the journey of life.

But in contrast to all these, he has written other pieces instinct with happiness, such as the "Humoresques de Concert," amongst which the well-known minuet in G cannot quite lose its charm of gladness even when caricatured by aspiring amateurs and enthusiastic school girls; the "Scherzino," Op. 10, is like a little ode to a sunbeam, and a "Valse caprice" has caught all the gaiety of youthful dancers. Nor is there anything sad about the brilliant "Polish Fantasia;" through all its hurrying clash and tumult of piano and orchestra run themes of irresistible triumph, it seems as if Poland had nothing less than her own again.

In all Paderewski's music, whether grave or gay, there are very marked characteristics; it

is first and foremost thoroughly national, its impetuosity and flashing changes of accent and rhythm, its waywardness and pride (beneath which there is nevertheless always a certain gentleness), all reveal Poland. It has moreover features peculiar to its composer individually.

Tonkünstler is a well-known German word applicable to no one more justly than to Paderewski. One of his greatest beauties as a player lies in his gift of graduating his tone; he is veritably an artist in tone, and it is particularly noticeable that all his compositions are primarily tone studies; for this reason they are not easy of artistic interpretation, and many of them present technical difficulties only within the grasp of an accomplished performer. But here again, just as he often touches us most at the piano by the simplicity of a Mendelssohn "Lied ohne Worte" rendered with exquisite charm, so some of his simplest music pleases best; as instances of this, may be taken the beautiful "Mélodie" (Op. 10, No. 2), or "Au soir," a sketch worthy to have found favour with that lover of the night, Schumann. Paderewski is one of the few who can either play or write a little piece, and herein perhaps lies his chief claim to the title of a consummate artist.

Nor is there any drawing-room atmosphere about this music; that it may be seriously studied without weariness is as good a test as any of its worth: it is pervaded with a certain manly earnestness, and it always bears evidence of careful writing, for never, either as performer or composer, does Paderewski offer his public anything slovenly or unfinished.

Amongst the national dances and Volklieder of his native country, the Polonaise, the Mazourka, or the Crakoviak, he is thoroughly in his element, much more so than when he deals with fugues and variations. Like Chopin, he has written a number of these presumably peasant dances, yet singularly aristocratic and graceful, now melancholy, now gay, and withal passionate and fiery; all those who are interested in Poland and things Polish should know them, particularly the Polonaise, Op. 9, the Cracovienne Fantastique, Op. 14, and the Tatra Album, Books I. and II., which latter, as well as his Mazourkas, lend themselves extremely well to various arrangements for stringed instruments, and form delightful pianoforte duets.

As may be readily imagined, such compositions as his two "Légendes" also illustrate him quite at his best; they are steeped in all the weird romance that enshrines the early history of every country, and as he presents them to our ears, seated at his Erard, their charm is enhanced by the fascination of a 19th century *raconteur*, who fully perceives the poetry of his native folklore, and enters thoroughly into all its mystery; it strikes the listener, moreover, that Paderewski must have a warm corner in his heart for the children; were he to interpret his legends in words

instead of music, it is easy to picture the young people, as well as their elders clustering round to hear these tales of some ancient superstition, in the telling of which, human emotions and mystic imagery are quaintly combined, with here a sigh, or anon a laugh, or a wild outburst of warring elements—symbolic doubtless of that conflict between good and evil, at the root of all legendary lore—followed again by calmer phrases, till the story waxes soft and faint, gradually dying away, as if hushed into silence by some enchanter's spell.

Several books of songs are full of an originality altogether out of the common run, and display a knowledge of the powers of the human voice, though English and German translations of various poems by Mickiewicz and others by no means do justice to the beautiful Polish language, so strong yet supple, still spoken and written by some ten millions of people. A more recent composition, "Dans la forêt," magnificently sung by Maurel, has the advantage of the untranslated words of Théophile Gautier, whose mood of autumnal sadness has been fitly wedded to music.

With the exception of his concerto for piano and orchestra, the "Polish fantasia," his songs, and a sonata for violin and piano dedicated to Sarasate, Paderewski has so far only composed for his own instrument, and the superlative greatness which he has attained as a performer has greatly tended to overshadow his worth as a composer; but it must be remembered that he did not suddenly jump to his present unrivalled eminence amongst pianists. He was never, in his earliest days, weak or commonplace, but evinced intensely interesting possibilities of something greater in the future; his would appear to be a never stationary ideal, always leading him to something higher, though the time is not so very remote when he only just hinted at his actual grandeur. How immeasurably nobler are his conceptions of all the great masters, but of Beethoven in particular, now, than they were only five years ago, and how much he has gained in control of himself and his audience, those alone can fully realise who have carefully followed Paderewski's triumphant yet gradual progress; and much the same may be said about his compositions, for beautiful as they are they constantly impress one with the idea that he has by no means reached the complete measure of what he can achieve in this direction; of his two most important works, the concerto in A minor and the Polish Fantasia, the latter *opus* is in every respect the most *bedeutend* (to borrow an expressive German word), and judging from what he has already accomplished, it is quite evident that should his ambitions lead him still further—rumour suggests an opera—the results will always merit respect and interest, and never prove unworthy of the art to which Paderewski devotes his life.

A. E. KEETON.

* Pronounced Paderewski.

DICK HARTWELL'S FORTUNE.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

CHAPTER III.



AFTER Tom had left him Dick did not go straight home to his lodgings. His feet seemed to be drawn by some mysterious fascination to the quay. Great piles of red pine had been left by the Danish schooner, and as he touched the wood, he thought of the far-off Northern forests where it grew. A sudden longing seized him as he looked out across the quiet sea;

he wished that he could escape from his present life, with all its perplexities, and sail with Peter Jensen to the shores of the Baltic. At this very hour, perhaps, that dark-eyed girl was sitting on the deck, and looking up at the stars. Yes; he was absurdly romantic; he had always had dreams and fancies which Minnie had never been able to understand. Nearly a month went by; and Dick, bent on saving for the piano-fund, lived as frugally as a hermit, while Minnie spent all her salary on the adornment of her pretty person. Her moods changed very frequently in these days, she was scornful and kind by turns, and her lover felt that she was restless and dissatisfied. It was a great relief to find a letter in a strange handwriting on his table one morning. His letters were so few that he was sure Miss Bendon had written to him. Besides, there was the Danish post-mark.

As soon as he had opened the envelope, he found an English bank-note for five pounds—the very note he had given the skipper.

"DEAR SIR," (the writer began), "I thank you heartily for your kindness, but of course I cannot use the money. Yet it has cheered me, and helped me to struggle on. No kind act is ever wasted; it is the expression of a good heart, a sign that human fellowship is not a mere fable, and so it always lightens some one's burden. May the gipsy's words prove true, and your good fortune come to you from the sea! The bread cast upon the waters shall be found again after many days. Yours gratefully,
"FORTUNE BENDON."

In all the six-and-twenty years of his life, Dick had never had such a letter as this. His mother, a quiet, hardworking widow, had died when he was a lad of sixteen, and brothers and sisters he had none. He had always led a clean life, loving right for right's sake, and gathering thankfully the few flowers that grew in the dusty path of duty. And then he had met Minnie Brace, and her smile had gladdened the whole world.

But the light of that smile had soon begun to wane, and Dick, as an engaged man, was lonelier than ever. Minnie never cared to talk about any of the things that interested him; the progress of the age did not matter to her in the least. She was deeply absorbed

in her charming self, and saw in Dick a way of escape from the drudgery of her life. And in his simplicity he often wondered why he did not get more joy out of her love. He was always seeking honey in the cup of his pretty flower, and coming empty away.

When evening came he carried the five-pound note to Myrtle Terrace, leaving the little letter locked up in his desk. He did not want to show that letter to Minnie, just because she would not understand that it had done him good. It is not always wise to pass our blessings on; the handling of certain people takes off their bloom.

Miss Brace was sitting at the piano when he went in, and he had never seen the little room looking so gay. There were flowers in all the vases; Minnie herself wore a bunch of heliotrope tucked into the belt of a delicate lilac dress. She was quite a bewildering vision of beauty.

"I didn't think you would come this evening, Dick," she said. "You told me that you were going to Mr. Hedley's."

"So I am," he answered. "I just dropped in for a minute to bring you this. The five-pound note was never used at all; it came back in a letter this morning. And here are four sovereigns more to add to the fund."

Minnie flushed as she took the money. She shot a furtive glance towards the window.

"You look as if you were dressed for a wedding," he said. "That's a wonderful frock, isn't it?"

"Oh, no; it's only a cheap thing. You are such a duffer about dress, you see."

He stood still and surveyed her; and the charm of her presence, so flowery and sweet, made him feel as if he could not tear himself away.

"Well, I may be a duffer," he said slowly. "But I never saw you in anything so lovely. It's a pity that I have to go. I should like to sit here, dear, and just look at you for hours."

She laughed, and called him a silly old boy. But when she added that Mr. Hedley must be considered, he knew she was right. Mr. Hedley was the junior partner in the firm for which he worked, and the interview might be important. So he kissed her and departed.

After he had gone a few paces he looked back at the house, and saw Tom grinning in the front garden. A minute later he turned the corner of the road, and nearly ran into the arms of a good-looking fellow in a light overcoat. The man regarded him unfavourably with a pair of bold black eyes.

He had a satisfactory talk with Mr. Hedley, and then went straight home to his lodgings. To get to his rooms he climbed a flight of stairs, and the window of his little sitting-room commanded a view of the sea—a wide, grey sea this evening, save where a glittering pathway seemed to lead to the west. Dick sat down in his usual seat, and let the soft breeze blow upon his face. Its freshness always revived him, body and soul; it was like a greeting from an old friend, strong and true. Now that he was away from the spell of Minnie's presence he was almost glad to be here alone, and let his thoughts roam freely. Her beauty filled his eyes, but his spirit always asked for something which she did not give. The sea was more satisfying; it was full of deep, rich meanings; it shadowed forth that vast To be which held all the knowledge that he sought—yes, and all the love.

He sat there until the western glory grew dim, and the evening star came out over the vanishing light. And before he went to bed he opened his desk, and read Miss Bendon's

note again. He had helped her to struggle on; it was good of her to write those words, they meant so much to him. The sense of having helped some one was like a trusty staff to lean upon. He was one of those who are born helpers, silently lightening a burden wherever he could; but it was not often that he had a "thank you" for his aid.

All through the next day's business he was haunted with restless thoughts about Minnie. Something, he knew not what, seemed to be coming between them; when he called up a vision of the lovely sylph, with her pale lilac robe, he always felt that she was drifting farther and farther away. At six o'clock he came home, and found a little mauve letter lying beside the tea-tray. He knew the handwriting at once. Minnie's colour was heliotrope; and the perfume of that flower filled the room when he opened the envelope.

"DEAR DICK" (she wrote), "I do not feel strong enough to see you this evening. But if you will call at ten on Sunday morning, we can have a talk before service. I have something very painful to say to you.

"Yours sincerely,
"MINNIE BRACE."

Of course, he knew that this was the beginning of the end. To-day was Friday; Saturday would give him time to prepare his mind for the parting scene. There was nothing for it but to take his dismissal quietly; but at this moment he was feeling anything but quiet. His heart was brimming over with passionate anger and pain. Minnie was his first love, the only woman he had ever asked to be his wife; and memory told him that she had given him plenty of encouragement. If there had been a mother or sister at hand, his trouble might have been easier to bear. But there was no one—no one to whom he could turn in the hour of bitter need.

As usual, he was drawn to the sea by some strange influence which could never be explained. Still in a fury of grief and rage, he took up his hat, and walked down to the quay at sunset. And while he stood there, leaning against a pile of timber, staring out seaward with miserable eyes, someone touched him lightly on the arm.

"It's me, Dick," said Tom Brace. His voice was curiously gentle, and his small, sharp face wore quite a new expression. "I thought I should find you here. You've had a note from Minnie, I know; she told father to leave it at your diggings."

"Yes," Dick answered sullenly. He wished the boy would take himself off.

"You don't much like me, Dick. You think I'm an interfering kid, and you want to tell me to mind my own business. But I don't exactly know what my business is, and I must speak my mind to-night. Just listen for once, and I'll shut up for ever after."

Dick still stared at the sea, and was silent.

"She's going to throw you over for another man. Dobb, the new shopwalker at Faymond's, has taken a fancy to her, and she's wild with delight. He'll marry her out of hand, and they'll live in London, because this place isn't good enough for him. They settled it all yesterday evening. You must have met him when you turned the corner."

Dick remembered the man in the light overcoat, and thrilled with fury.

"I should like to smash him!" he muttered under his breath.

There was a faint return of Tom's grin. "And you could do it, too!" he said. "But just let him alone. He's done you a good turn. If I say much more I s'pose you'll

be wanting to smash me; only I know the truth, and you don't. Minnie would have made you the most miserable beggar that walks, if you'd married her. She couldn't have helped it—she's built that way."

"Shut up," growled Dick.

"I will, in a minute. Many a time I've

wished I could give you an eye-opener, old fellow. Why she's kept us all under her feet at home; the gov'nor's afraid of her temper, and mother trembles at her look. As for me, it doesn't matter; but it was too bad that you should be taken in. It's the good fellows, like you, who—"

"Shut up!" Dick's growl was ominously deep.

"Very well. I know you don't like me. Minnie always said I was the sort of chap to be hated." There was a sound like a sob as the boy turned away.

(To be concluded.)

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—";

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

BY GERTRUDE PAGE.

CHAPTER XXV.

MADGE GETS HER LETTER.

It was with a strange, unnatural feeling, that Madge awoke next day. She felt that a great change had passed over her; that something unusual either had happened, or was going to happen in her life.

What it was, and whether she felt happy or sad she could hardly say, being conscious as yet of nothing but a vague sense of change.

On going downstairs she felt relieved at finding a letter addressed to her in Guy's handwriting. She did not open it at once however; she thought she would wait until after breakfast. It was the first letter she had ever received from him as his wife, and somehow she did not feel inclined to treat it as an ordinary letter. Left alone, she settled herself in an easy chair and broke the seal. She was surprised to find quite a long epistle and wondered what he could have to say, after only one day's absence. This is what she read.

"Marseilles.

"MY DARLING MADGE,—Although I know you will not have missed me much, I can't help thinking you will have wondered a little why I went away so suddenly without saying good-bye. I hope you didn't think it was because I didn't want to; I don't think you would, for you must know by now, that in spite of my boasted carelessness, I worship the very ground you walk on. It was because of this, dear, I couldn't trust myself.

"I have now to make a confession to you and it will be better for me not to beat about the bush. I have behaved like a scoundrel, and have gambled away all my capital in a blind, foolish, and disgraceful way, leaving myself a beggar and disgraced. But I have still enough honour left to see the meanness and despicableness of living with you on your money after what I have done, so I am leaving you and going away for a long time, though hoping still to earn the right to come back again at some future day.

"Thank God, I have never been such a cur as to touch a penny of yours, everything is just as it was when you inherited it, and you will be able to live very comfortably and happily. If I had thought you would miss me much, I don't think I could ever have had the strength to leave you, but because I feel sure you will not want me, but will despise my weakness and look upon me as a disgraced man, I have forced myself

to give up my right to stay beside you always. I dared not come and say good-bye, because I was afraid I couldn't go if I looked into your dear eyes once again. You are capable and self-reliant and will not be afraid, and if I stayed I might only be a source of annoyance to you.

"I'm no hand at letters, as you know, and I can no more tell you all that is in my heart than I can fly, but I want you to remember me, and not be harder on me than you can help. I should like to tell you how I love you, but I couldn't express it in words, and perhaps if I could, it wouldn't interest you.

"Only don't hate me Madge; I couldn't bear that. When you get this, I shall be on the sea, sailing to a far-off land, and I shall think of you all day and all night, and it would break my heart if I thought you didn't care the least little bit, but only despised me.

"I can't give you any address, because I don't know where I'm going, but I will come back some day, when I feel I may, and then, if you will let me, I will try and make up to you for everything.

"You may be quite sure I shall come back, unless I find out that you don't want me, because I love you better than all the world. If I didn't love you so much, I couldn't go away now, and of my own accord endure the agony of separation, just because it seems the only right thing to do. Good-bye, dear, I hope you will keep well and happy; if I could be sure God cared to hear prayers from such as I, I would ask this continually. I must close now or I shall weary you. I feel as if I should like to go on writing for ever, just to keep the link between us from being finally broken.

"Good-bye again. For Jack's sake, if for no other, don't be hard on your loving husband, "GUY FAWCETT."

As Madge read the letter through, a strange pallor spread over her face, and when she had finished, her nerveless hands let it fall to the floor. For some minutes she sat quite still, not a muscle moving, gazing vacantly at the fallen letter. The suddenness of the blow seemed to have stunned her.

Presently she picked it up and read it through again, with a bewildered sense of some great calamity having befallen her, but what, she hardly knew.

Suddenly she looked up with incredulous wonder in her eyes. "He has gone away from me," she told herself, "my husband, Guy, has left me, He thinks I shall be happier without him,

and I do not even know where he has gone. I was going to be kinder to him, but now it is too late—too late."

She got up and paced the room with agitated steps, murmuring, "too late—too late."

Suddenly she paused.

"Why should I care?" she asked; "a week ago I should not have felt like this. After all, he is better away from a heartless wretch like I am. I could not have made him really happy if he had come back. He is better away—better away. I used to be hard enough, I will be hard again. I could not have made him happy as I did not love him; he is better away."

For half-an-hour she paced the room with clenched hands and set face, repeating to herself—"He is better away; I did not love him."

Again she paused in her aimless walk and her eyes fell on her work-basket. Half-unconsciously she opened it and then the unspoken truth began to dawn upon her. She picked it up, the favourite pipe, that she had put away so carefully. She handled it tenderly, almost reverently.

"I was going to give it to him," she murmured. "He would have been so pleased, and now—and now?"

Ah! what now? She tried to think, but her brain seemed dazed. Slowly the words of his letter passed through her mind; she remembered whole sentences; they seemed branded on her heart.

Then silently and pitilessly it all became gradually clear to her; how that he had gone away and perhaps she would never see him again.

She looked at the pipe. "It was his favourite," she murmured, with great tears gathering in her eyes; "I was going to give it to him myself, and now—"

A sudden rush of feeling overwhelmed her; the dread truth stood revealed; she understood it at last. Falling on her knees, and burying her face in the sofa-cushion in a passion of pain, she moaned, "Oh, God, I loved him! I loved him, and I have ruined him! Now I am alone indeed."

We must perforce draw the veil over what followed. At first she seemed to be struck with blindness even as St. Paul. But straightway there fell from her eyes "as it were scales."

And as she rose she recalled the lines—

"If loving hearts were never lonely,
They might be glad, but not in Thee."

(To be continued.)

ODE TO KITTENHOOD.

KITTEN mine! how full thy face is
Of the most perplexing graces.
Wingless butterfly thou art,
Lightest throb on Nature's heart.
When I o'er thy sweetness rave,
Or of thee affection crave,
Thou dost give a toss of scorn,
Followed by a—rosy yawn!
I could censure if I would
Such coy pranks of kittenhood!
Life is a chromatic scale
Of scampers after mouse and tail.
And thy gladness never wavers,
Breaking out in sharps and quavers.
For thy days together flow
One perpetual Allegro!
Oh! that Music's measure could
But describe thy kittenhood!

Then that sidelong pirouette,
Dancer never rivalled yet!
And my poet's tongue must fail
To convey that witching tail.
Now a note of exclamation!
Now a curved interrogation.
Point, to indicate each mood
Of a changeful kittenhood.
What a serpentine emotion
Thrills thee at some novel notion;
Head to tail there runs that shiver
In an undulating quiver.

Then to roll—a ball of fur
With a liquid, crooning purr.
Life to thee is all so good,
Optimist of kittenhood!

Thou art but a Merry Thought,
Luring pleasures out of nought.
Shivering shadows thou dost woo,
And the dancing sunbeam too;
For all shadows are to thee
Potent deep reality!
And all the trees in every wood
Just made for blithest kittenhood!

Was thy little silken gown
Spun from floating thistle-down,
With its rings of light and dark,
Each a tiny water-mark?
Wavelet thou from Fairy ocean,
Ever in a bright commotion.

Thou, for wonder, daily food,
In thy dainty kittenhood.

What a spell of witchery lies
In those wide-orbed saucy eyes!
Magic little mirrors blue
That the sky has looked into,
Art thou fay or prison'd Peri,
Thou that never seemest weary?
Not yet art thou understood
Through each maze of kittenhood.
Shadeless glancing kittenhood!
Blue-eyed dancing kittenhood!

V. R.



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF OUR SIGHT.

By "THE NEW DOCTOR."

THE friendships made at school sometimes last throughout life, but too often they cease to exist when schooldays are passed.

When I was at school I had one great friend, and for the six years during which we were at the same school we were inseparable. The day came when we had to leave and henceforth we followed different paths in this maze of life. My friend moved to Edinburgh and I remained in London, so we did not see each other for many years. Later he went to Sandhurst to study for the army, and about the same time I entered upon the study of medicine.

The other day, whilst walking in Regent Street, I met this man, who had been so dear to me at college. He had altered a good deal—he is past thirty now, and very careworn. When he had spoken on indifferent matters I asked him how he had got on in the army. He was a clever man and I felt sure that he had been successful. He told me that he went up for his examination, passed high up in the list and was highly delighted with his success. But he had to pass the physical examination, and here he failed; his eyesight was not sufficiently good for the service. He failed, the whole of his special education had been wasted, and unfortunately, as so often happens in such cases, his career was hopelessly ruined.

I had noticed, when I first saw him, that he wore glasses, and on looking closer at them

I could tell that he had a high degree of error of refraction. He was so short-sighted that without glasses he was unable to read.

Why had he not found out that he could not pass the physical examination, and so saved himself from the expense and trouble of an education that would be useless to him?

I did not tell him how foolish he was not to have had his sight tested before he entered Sandhurst, but I shall say now that no one should enter for the services without being certain, at the time he enters, that he can pass the physical tests.

This is a girl's paper, I know, and girls cannot enter the services, but nearly all of you have brothers, so that this subject will not be without interest for you.

Having given this caution for your brothers and sons I will now give some other warnings which, I hope, will be of use to yourselves.

How terrible it must be to be blind! But it is not so hopeless as it was in the time of our fathers. The science of ophthalmology, that is the study of disease of the eye, has advanced by more rapid strides than any other of the varied departments of the art of healing.

The result of this increased and gradually increasing knowledge of the eye is having great results. Blindness itself is very much less common than it was formerly, and now most cases of incipient blindness can be

stopped, if timely steps be taken; and complete blindness cured when it has once developed. Let us look forward to a time when blindness will be no more.

We all love our eyes. Let us not abuse them. They are given to us to use, and to use carefully. What is their chief use? Undoubtedly to enable us to educate our minds by reading. So many books and pamphlets are published nowadays that no one can have any difficulty to find matter to read. But the material at hand must be sifted; it is wrong to read everything. But it is not my place to tell you what you should read, but how you should read.

A few points about reading are not out of place here, as it is very necessary to attend to them, which most of you do unconsciously.

Never read in a bad or flickering light. Always have the light at your back so that it may shine upon the book and not into your eyes. Hold the book you are reading at the distance from your head at which you can read best. This distance will depend upon your age and whether or not your sight is perfect. Never read very small or blurred print—there is no necessity to do so now that paper and printing are so cheap. Never under any circumstances read with one eye-glass, and do not read for too long at a time, so as to tire your eyes.



KITTENHOOD.

[From photo: Photographic Union, Munich.]

Your eyes may not be quite perfect, and therefore you may experience difficulty in reading. Find out what is the matter and have it remedied at once.

The commonest conditions which give rise to difficulty in reading are "errors of refraction." By this term is meant that the optical arrangements of the eyes are not as they should be. Errors of refraction can hardly be called diseases, though if neglected they may cause disastrous results. There are three common errors of refraction which I will now describe in detail.

Long-sight (scientifically called hypermetropia) is one of the commonest errors that are met with in the eye. The name commonly given to this condition, long-sight, is rather misleading. The individuals with this error do not see farther than those whose sight is correct. Our eyes could see to infinity except that the size of objects very far off is too small to be perceptible to our vision.

What is really meant by long-sight is that the near point (that is the nearest point from the eye at which a person can read) recedes from the eye, so that a long-sighted person cannot read a book placed near her eyes, the distance, of course, varying with the amount of error present.

Long sight is met with in two very different conditions. The first is that which is so common in children and young adults; the latter (known as presbyopia) is the normal condition of the eyes of old persons. Nearly everybody becomes long-sighted at fifty; this is the reason why nearly all old people wear glasses.

The first kind of long sight is due to the eye being shorter than it ought to be. It often exists at birth, but usually does not become apparent until the child begins to read, when it is noticed that she holds the book as far away from her as possible.

Other symptoms may be present. The child may complain of headache, difficulty in recognising persons, and sometimes, not by any means rarely, she may develop a squint; the squint usually being "convergent," that is, both eyes looking inwards at the nose.

How common this condition is, can only be appreciated by those who are accustomed to examine eyes daily. A slight degree of this error gives rise to practically no symptoms and is usually not discovered except by accident. It is consequently of little importance.

But the higher degrees of long-sightedness are also very common and imperatively call for glasses. If the higher grades of long-sight are left untreated many serious effects may follow; reading being rendered impossible, education suffers to a great extent; and, as I said before, a squint may develop and often, after a time, the squinting eye may become quite blind.

The second kind of long-sight is that met with in old persons. Here is a typical case:

"Mr. H—, sixty years of age, came to me yesterday afternoon. He gave me the following history. He had always been healthy and until he was forty-nine his eyesight was perfect. Since then he has noticed that he has had to hold his newspaper farther and farther away from him until he found it necessary to hold it at arm's length. Just lately he has found this insufficient and so has had great difficulty in reading his paper.

The treatment for both forms of long-sightedness is the same, it is glasses. The spectacles used for this error are bi-concave, that is the same shape as a magnifying glass.

As individuals with long-sight can see distance plainly, glasses are not needed for distant vision, unless indeed the error be exceedingly great. Persons with long-sight, therefore, only need glasses for near vision—writing, reading and working.

The treatment of squint I will refer to later on.

The other common error of refraction is the reverse of this, it is short-sightedness. In this condition the eye is longer than it should be and the head is often of an elongated shape. This error is perhaps even more common than long-sightedness.

A person with short sight can see things near her eye tolerably distinctly, but the distance is blurred. In a slight case the person could see to work or even to recognise the faces of her friends she meets in the street, but the horizon is always indefinite. We meet with grades of this affection from as slight a case as I have described above up to almost complete blindness. People with this condition are liable to various serious diseases of the eyes.

The treatment here is, as in the former condition, glasses. But for short-sighted persons the glasses must be of a different shape; they must be concave, that is hollowed out. Such lenses as these, instead of magnifying, diminish the size of the object looked at.

In the milder grades of short-sightedness spectacles are only needed for distant vision, near vision not being very much interfered with. If, however, the error is excessive, glasses will be needed both for near and distant vision, but those for the former should be less strong.

Squint is not such a common complication here as it is with long-sight; when it does occur it is usually of the divergent variety, that is, both eyes look away from the nose.

The last error of refraction that occurs is known by the name of "astigmatism." In this condition the surface of the eye, the transparent surface or "cornea" instead of being rounded equally in all directions is spoon-shaped, being curved more in one direction than in another. Everybody has a more or less spoon-shaped cornea, but it is only when this defect is exaggerated that the possessor is aware of its existence. The symptom is that it is impossible to see horizontal and perpendicular lines at the same time. Thus, if a person with a normal eye looks at a slated roof, she will see lines crossing each other at right angles; but, if she has a spoon-shaped cornea she will not be able to see the crossing lines. She could see, either the lines parallel with the street or those going in the opposite direction, but she would be unable to see both these sets of lines at the same time.

The treatment for this is also glasses; but glasses of a peculiar shape; they must be in the form of a cylinder, convex or concave in one direction, and straight or with a different curve in the other direction—something like a rolled-up sheet of paper.

Now let us talk about squints. These are very much more common than is usually supposed. They are due chiefly to two causes—errors of refraction and paralysis of the muscles of the eye. I am not going to talk about those due to paralysis, they do not come within the scope of this paper; but I am going to tell you about those squints due to errors of refraction.

As I have told you above, the imperfections of the optical apparatus of the eye can be remedied by means of glasses. Squint never results from these imperfections if proper and suitable glasses are worn. Consequently, every one with long or short sight of severe grade (the slighter grades rarely produce squint) ought to wear spectacles. More than this every mother should find out whether her children's sight is correct, and if it is not, she should see that any fault is corrected. It is the duty of every mother to do this.

I lay particular stress upon this subject, because a week ago a woman brought her daughter to see me because the child could

not read. I examined her eyes and found that she was very long-sighted and had a tendency to squint. I told the woman what the condition was and that her daughter must wear spectacles, she replied, "If it has pleased God to make my daughter with defective eyes they ought to remain so, for no one has the right to interfere with the works of the Almighty."

I almost fell down when I heard this statement, and I must confess that, for a time, I was dumbfounded. I did not need very many minutes, however, to collect myself, and then I replied: Have we not the Divine example to cure the sick? Did not Christ Himself remove disease from the afflicted? and did He not give His apostles power to do so after He had left them? Surely this argument is sufficient to show that we have the right to do what we can to remove or remedy the diseases of our bodies. If you refer to Genesis you will see that man brought death and sorrow into the world by his fall. Hunger and thirst (as actual suffering, not the desire to eat, for this was created in man in the beginning) were also brought into the world by sin. But were our first parents to starve? Certainly not. "By the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." Not only were they not left to die of hunger, but they were commanded to appease their hunger at the cost of severe trouble. Is not a man also commanded to take care of his body and to do all in his power to remove another of the curses that resulted from the sin of Adam? Surely it must be so.

A physician is no magician or wizard. His knowledge is not the outcome of occult science or dealings with Satan; it is obtained by "the sweat of his brow," as truly as is the work of the labourer. By his study he fulfils his duty, and in the practice of his profession he follows as far as he is able the example of his Divine Master.

The idea held by this woman is so common, that I have given the above proofs; and surely, there can be no gainsaying that they are proofs that the idea held by her and by many others is contrary to the teaching of religion.

It is as much a duty for parents to see to the physical defects of their children as it is for them to educate or feed them.

To return to the case I was talking about; the woman was not convinced and would not let her daughter wear spectacles. Although only under very exceptional circumstances, it is right to do so, I wrote to the girl's father and told him the circumstances of the case, and he at once obtained glasses for his child.

Here is another strange popular delusion. People have an idea that looking at the tip of your nose is squinting. This is absolutely wrong; we have a special centre in the brain to enable us to converge our eyes so as to look straight in front of us. Perhaps you will say: "Oh, you must be wrong, because I knew a girl whose eyes became 'fixed' from looking at her nose." I do not doubt your word, but if you were to examine the girl's eyes you would find that she was very long-sighted, and that she converged her eyes in her violent struggle to see objects near her.

Now let us return to squints. I have said that all squints that occur as the result of errors of refraction are due to neglect to treat the cause. It must, however, be said, that sometimes in a child the squint is the first symptom which attracts notice.

The treatment is to correct the error of refraction that caused the squint. If this is not sufficient (and it is not always in old squints, especially when the squinting eye has become blind) some operation will be necessary.

Let us leave the subject of refraction and talk about an injury which, I think I may

safely say occurs to everyone, often many times in the course of a year.

Foreign bodies on or in the eye are the only injuries to that organ which are at all common. Bits of dirt, especially coal dust, are the usual things that get into the eye, but eyelashes, flies and the points of needles are also frequently met with in this situation and are often very troublesome.

Whenever you get anything in your eye endeavour to get it out again as soon as possible. The popular method of removing bodies from the eye is with the corner of a pocket-handkerchief, and if this is attempted at once with a reasonable amount of gentleness it very rarely fails. If you cannot get the object out of your eye by this method, bathing

the eye with warm water may remove it. If this does not succeed, there are two alternatives, one, is to sweep right round the eye under the lids with a camel-hair brush. Be very careful that the brush is absolutely clean and that there are no loose hairs. This is a rather painful but often very effectual proceeding; or, you may evert the eyelids and examine the ocular surface. If this is done, any object, however small, can be discovered and removed. Though a trivial manoeuvre in the hands of one accustomed to the work, it is not at all an easy thing to do at the first attempt. To examine the part of the eye hidden by the lower lid is easy; tell the person to look up and then pull down the eyelid. Unfortunately foreign bodies usually ascend and so are not often found here.

To see the upper part of the eyeball tell the person to look down; place a penholder or some such object across the upper lid; take hold of the margin of the lid and turn it over. Anything that may be lurking here will be discovered. It seems easy enough in theory does it not? but—well, wait until you have occasion to try it.

If a body is left on the surface of the eyeball it may cause terrible damage, but usually it gets swept away by the drainage system of the eye.

If you should ever be so unfortunate as to get the tip of a needle or other object imbedded in the eye, do not try to remove it yourself, but go immediately to the nearest surgeon, as this is a very serious accident.

SO EASY.

By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

PINS AND NEEDLES.

THE two following experiments seem eminently suitable for girls, as they are performed with articles which are regarded as belonging to their particular province, viz., pins and needles. We will take them in this order. For the first we require two kinds of pins, a hatpin and a hairpin, a ring and a penny, and let the hairpin be one of the straight kind without any crinkles in it. Open out the legs somewhat wider than they are naturally, and form the end of one leg into a hook, and bend the other into the form shown in Fig. 1, then insert the penny in the fold, pressing the pin on to the two flat sides, so that it holds the coin tightly, hang the ring on to the hook, or should you find it necessary for the purpose of balance, two or three rings; place the coin near its edge on the point of the hatpin, as in the Fig. 2, and, if you have arranged matters properly, you will find it will balance there, apparently fixed on the point, and yet



swaying about. You can then give this superstructure a circular motion so that it revolves on the hatpin point, and if you allow this motion to continue long enough, you will find that the pin will bore a hole right through the penny, seeing that the steel of the pin is a much harder metal than the bronze of the penny. The more neatly you bend the hairpin in the first instance the more effective will be the experiment; and mind the two legs when bent for the reception of the penny and ring are still in a line as they were before you commenced operations on them. The figure No. 2 of course represents the left hand of the performer as seen by herself.

The second experiment can, with a little arrangement, be made into a kind of mild conjuring trick, it will afford greater amusement this way, and I believe that it was in

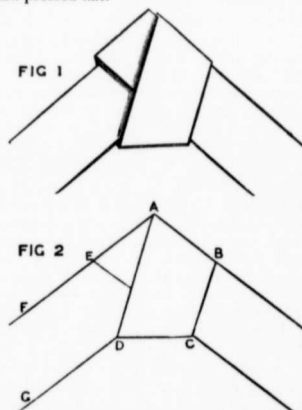
this form that it was first exhibited by the great Dr. Comus. All you require is a paper of medium-sized needles, with good points, and a few pieces of different coloured sewing cotton, about three inches in length. Place the person about to try the experiment some two to two and a half yards in front of the closed door of the room you are in, and request her to select a needle from the paper and throw it at the door, making it stick in. She may throw every one of the needles in the paper, but she will not succeed. When she is tired of trying, offer to show her how it is done and in order to convince her that there is no trick about it, ask her to select any needle she likes for your use, and so that you may not change it, and that she may know it again to thread it with one of the pieces of coloured cotton. On its being handed to you thus prepared, you have but to throw it with some force towards the door and it will stick in without any difficulty. The secret of success lies in the fact that the needle is threaded, the cotton acting as the feathers do on an arrow, and keeping the point to the front; so that by the very means you take to apparently avoid deception, you provide the deception itself. On withdrawing the needle from the door be sure to unthread it, otherwise should other experiment with it they would quickly discover your seeming skill was but "a bubble reputation." You must do all in your power to draw attention from the thread when in the needle, merely treating it as a means of identification. Your secret will no doubt be discovered before long, and if so you can still obtain further amusement by marking a target on the door with soft chalk, which will rub off, leaving no mark, and using the needles threaded, as arrows. If you would score largely at this game aim low, for you will find that in throwing sharply, the needles have a tendency to rise, and more darts will be found above the bull's-eye than below it. It will be as well if you lay down a sheet of white paper in front of the door for the needles to fall on. You will easily find them again on that.

LIGHTNING GEOMETRY.

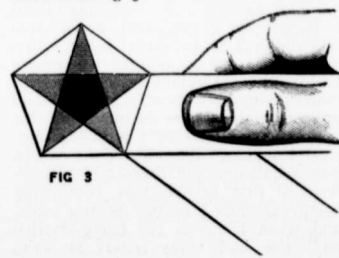
To draw a perfect star of five points is a lengthy and a no slight undertaking even for a person armed with rule and compasses and a knowledge of geometry; but without the one or the other it is practically an impossibility, and yet by the means I am about to describe you can manage one that will answer all your purposes very easily:—

If you want a small one take a strip of cap paper or any other paper which is thin, and will let light through it, and yet at the same

time is tough, and will not tear easily. Let the strip be about a foot long, and an inch wide, and mind that the two long sides are perfectly parallel. (If you wish for a bigger star you must take a broader strip, but as you increase the width you must increase the length). Tie this strip into an ordinary knot, the commencement of which is shown in Fig. 1, taking care as you pull it tight that the edges shall meet each other exactly at A B C D E, Fig. 2, which shows the knot pulled tight and pressed flat.



Now double the part of the strip E D G F across the figure so that the edge D G shall exactly coincide with D C, when the edge E F will cut the point B, and your work is done for if you hold this up to a strong light you will see your five-pointed star in shadow with a perfect pentagon in darker shadow for the centre as in Fig. 3.



SISTERS THREE.

By MRS. HENRY MANSERGH, Author of "A Rose-coloured Thread," etc.



CHAP. XXIV.

WEEK before the wedding
M i s s
C a r r
e c a m e
d o w n
f r o m
L o n d o n,
and with
her came also
Mr. Herbert
Rayner who
had paid frequent visits to

Westmoreland during the last few years, and was now regarded as a family friend who could not be spared on such an historical occasion. His lameness was not any better for the lapse of time, but Hilary's exhortations had taken effect, for he was much less sensitive about his inability to do as the other men did, while as for the rest he had every reason to be cheerful nowadays, for his writings were so highly praised that Mr. Bertrand affected jealousy, and declared that his own sun was eclipsed. There was a very warm friendship between the two men; both declared that they gained inspiration from the other, and Raymond dubbed them "The Mutual Admiration Society," because Mr. Bertrand was wont to declare that Rayner was an infinitely finer writer than himself, while Mr. Rayner in his turn despaired of ever accomplishing anything fit to compare with the work of his friend.

With Miss Carr arrived a cart-load of boxes containing bride and bridesmaids' dresses, feathers and furbelows of all descriptions, and a number of presents from acquaintances in London.

The other girls were full of excitement over the opening of these treasures, but Lettice herself was silent and indifferent, and hardly troubled herself to look at the beautiful gifts which were showered upon her. She excused herself on the plea of a chronic headache, and lay half the day on the sofa in the schoolroom, while Miss Briggs fed her with beef-tea, and fussed over her in kindly, motherly fashion. Everyone petted her and treated her with consideration, but no one said a word to suggest that she was unhappy in the thought of the coming marriage. It was too late for that; she had determined to keep to her engagement, and it was only natural to account for her indisposition on the ground of excitement and fatigue. Circumstances combined moreover to keep Lettice a good deal apart from the others during these last busy days. Miss Carr's maid was employed making the alterations which were requisite in the dresses from London, so that Lettice was continually being summoned to the sewing room, and when she was not being "tried on" she had many letters to write

acknowledging the gifts which arrived in such numbers.

Hilary was too busy to have any time for confidential talks, and when Norah had a moment's leisure, her thoughts were far away from Westmoreland, journeying over foreign lands with a certain tall young Englishman with grey eyes and a crop of close-cut, curly hair. Even Lettice herself was apt to be forgotten in this all-absorbing occupation!

The Newcome contingent, and those London friends who were to accompany them were to come down on the day before the wedding, and to put up at an hotel in Windermere, and every day brought with it a host of preparations which kept the little mistress of the house busy from morning until night.

Hilary showed to advantage under these circumstances. Always brisk, alert and smiling, never worried or unduly anxious, she shared a good deal of Rex's boasted "gift of management," and contrived to keep the house comfortable for the visitors, despite the general disarrangement, and the everlasting arrival of packing chests and boxes. Hampers of flowers, hampers of fruit, crates of china and glass, rolls of red baize, boxes containing wedding-cake, confectionery, dresses, presents—in they came, one after another, in an unending stream, until to get across from the front door into the dining-room was like running the blockade, and wisps of straw were scattered all over the house. Norah and Hilary swathed themselves in big white aprons and unpacked from morning till night, a more interesting task than it sounds, for the boxes were full of pleasant surprises, and Mr. Rayner, Raymond and their father played the part of "dress circle," and kept everyone laughing with their merry sallies. It was a cheery, bustling time, for everyone was in good spirits and prepared to enjoy the happy-go-lucky picnic life. Lunch and dinner were movable feasts, held either in dining- or morning-room, or in the garden itself as proved most convenient, and when afternoon tea was served three days before the wedding, the cups were scattered about on the top of packing chests in the hall, the cake basket hung on the hat rail, and the tea-pot was thrust out of reach of harm, beneath the oak bench. Lettice was lying down upstairs, but all the rest of the household were gathered together, the visitors provided with chairs in honour of their position, Norah seated on the stairs, Raymond, straddle leg over the banister, Mr. Bertrand and Geraldine lowly on buffets, while Hilary was perched on the top of a huge packing chest, enveloped in a pink "pin-afore," and looking all the prettier because her brown hair was ruffled a little bit out of its usual immaculate order.

"I wish we could have tea like this every day!" cried the Mouse drawing a long breath of enjoyment. "May we

have it like this every day, father, instead of properly in the drawing-room?"

"Ah, Mouse, I see you are a Bohemian at heart, for all your quiet ways! I agree with you, my dear, that it would be quite delightful, but the difficulty is that we could not persuade people to shower presents and hampers upon us in the ordinary course of events. It takes a wedding, or some celebration of the kind to start such a flood of generosity."

"Well, may we have tea like this when Hilary is married?" insisted Geraldine, with a gravity which caused a hearty laugh.

"Ask Hilary, my dear!" said Mr. Bertrand mischievously, and Hilary tossed her head and said that one wedding was enough at a time—she had no strength to think of two.

"Indeed, my dear, I wonder you are not laid up as it is," said Miss Carr kindly. "You are on your feet from morning till night, and everyone comes to you for directions; I am afraid you will break down when the excitement is over. There is generally a collapse on these occasions. Have you any idea what you are all going to do after the young couple have departed?"

"Get the house in order, and go to bed for a week," said Hilary brightly, flushed with pleasure at Miss Carr's words of praise, and at the murmur of assent which they had evoked from her companion, but it appeared that other people were more energetically inclined than herself, for both Miss Briggs and Raymond seized the opportunity to air secret plans of their own.

"I wanted to speak to you about that, Mr. Bertrand! My sister in Scarborough is most anxious that I should pay her a visit, and take Geraldine with me, and I think the sea air would do us both good."

"And I should like to have some shooting with Ferrars in Scotland. He has asked me so often, and I could just fit it in this year."

Mr. Bertrand looked at his two daughters—at Hilary, bright and natty, but with shadows under her eyes which spoke of the fatigue she would not acknowledge; then, with an anxious tenderness, at Norah, whose unusual quietness for the last few days he understood better than she suspected.

"Really," he said, "if all the world is going off pleasing, I don't see any reason why we should be left behind! What do you say—shall we all go off for a tour on our own account? I think we deserve a holiday after our hard work. A little run on the Continent would do us all good. Helen, what do you say? Will you come and take care of the girls? Rayner, I can't tackle three ladies unassisted. You will have to come and take care of me!"

"I should certainly not leave the

girls to your tender mercies, you scatter-brained man," said Miss Carr, smiling, as though well-pleased at the suggestion. "You might forget all about them, as you did on another memorable occasion, and the consequences would be disastrous. Yes!—if you take plenty of time, and don't rush about from place to place, I should be glad of a change myself. This wedding—"

"It is too good of you to include me. Wouldn't I like it!" cried Mr. Rayner, with a smile which made him look quite young and boyish. "September is lovely in Switzerland. The rush of tourists is over, and the autumn tints are wonderful. But we ought to get off as soon as possible. You will have to give up your week in bed, Miss Hilary!"

"I may as well give up bed alto-

gether, I think, for I shall not sleep a wink for thinking of it. Oh, father, dear, you are good! I drink to you!" and Hilary held up her teacup, bowing and smiling, and looking so bright and pretty that it was a pleasure to see her.

Well, it was a happy hour, and the memory of it remained all the more vividly, because of the contrast which it afforded to the dark days which followed. At twelve o'clock the same evening, Mr. Bertrand took up his candle and went the usual tour of inspection through the house. He peered into the drawing-room, fragrant with plants and cut blossoms, into the dining-room where the village carpenters were already putting up the horse-shoe table, into the pantry, where the more valuable presents

were locked away in the great iron safe. All was quiet and secure. He returned to his study and was just settling down for a quiet read, when the sound of footsteps smote on his ear. He opened the door and started back at the sight of a white figure which came floating towards him, with flowing locks and outstretched hands.

"What is the—who is it? What is the matter?—Lettice!"

The next moment two arms were clasped round his neck; he felt the heaving of breathless sobs, and an agonised voice called on him by name—

"Oh, father, father, save me! save me! I can't go on! I can't marry him! My heart will break—!"

(To be continued.)



A CHARITY GYMKHANA: HOW TO ARRANGE AND MANAGE IT.



ow that cycling has become so universally popular gymkhanas have been added to the list of summer *fetes*, which, when well-managed, give a large amount of pleasure to both those getting them up and those taking

part. At most country houses impromptu events are arranged for the amusement of visitors, and the bazaar (now somewhat tiresomely uniform in idea) can, where a charity is to be benefited, be superseded by the more modern bicycling *fete* often with advantage.

The first thing to do is to arrange for a suitable ground. This should be as large and as level as possible; not certainly less than three or four acres of flat. The committee is also an important item in the programme. A large one is not necessary; but it should be both representative and efficient. The chief people of all classes in the district should be invited to promise their support, and in obtaining such promises young ladies of the committee will find plenty of outlet for their energies in the early stages of the arrangements.

Prizes are another important item; and here a word or two may be said against the practice of canvassing tradespeople (who are under obligations) for them.

The patrons of the proposed gymkhana will generally be found ready to subscribe to the prize fund, or to give prizes in the various competitions which have been decided upon. Do not permit the prizes to be overvalued. It is a practice which leads to nothing save grumbling on the part of the competitors.

The stewards of the course and ground stewards should be selected at least three days before the gymkhana is to take place,

and should be prepared to give themselves up entirely to their duties of showing the spectators to their seats, giving information to competitors and inquirers, and seeing that matters go smoothly.

The stewards of the course should see that each competitor has his or her distinguishing number or colour allotted and displayed in a prominent place, so that the spectators may not (as they unfortunately so often are) be left in doubt as to the identity of the various persons taking part.

Some satisfactory arrangement should also be made for the proper announcement of the winners in each event as soon after they are settled as possible. This matter is frequently overlooked, and disappointment and annoyance is caused thereby.

On the day itself all arrangements for marking the course should have been completed, and the various boundary lines, pegs, posts, etc., have been put in. It is a good thing to mark the sides of the course with a broad chalk line, such as is used in the tennis court, and this, for several reasons, is preferable to pegs, stakes, or tape lines.

The judges and timekeeper should be chosen, if possible, from amongst those who have no particular interest in any one of the competitors.

Ample time should be allowed for the competitors in each event to assemble; but when the time appointed has elapsed the delay should be proceeded with without the delay which so frequently spoils the interest of onlookers.

Let it be understood that the judges' decision is final, and that their having given impartial consideration to the event makes it impossible for them to reconsider the matter.

A word or two as to the programme of competitions. This should be arranged with a due idea to the probable number and sex of competitors. On more than one occasion, for

want of a little thought, at gymkhanas where lady competitors have outnumbered the men by three to one, the events have been those suited to the latter in two cases out of three.

Nowadays, when gymkhanas are so popular, it should not be a difficult matter to arrange a satisfactory programme. The egg-and-spoon race is both a popular and amusing competition; but past experience has pointed to the desirability of substituting potatoes for the eggs. The Jack and Jill race is somewhat novel, and usually leads to a large amount of fun. In this competition couples enter together; their object being to ride to a given spot, where several buckets partly filled with water are placed, the gentleman dismounts and hands the bucket to his lady partner, who remains on her machine; half-way back to the winning post she has to pass the bucket to him, the winners being those who "get home" first, and spill least water. The fan and butterfly race is another comparatively novel competition; the object being to fan a paper butterfly to a given spot at the end of the course. The threading of bottles (without knocking any over) placed in concentric circles is another good event, bottles of the strongest kind, such as champagne ones, being of course chosen. The ribbon-tying race is another favourite, consisting of knotting three or more parti-coloured ribbons to the handles of one's machine whilst riding. The blindfold race should only be started with one competitor at a time; the object being to ride to a point whilst blindfolded, the winner being the competitor who goes farthest towards the goal without crossing over the chalk-line marking the boundaries of the course. These are some of the events which have proved suitable and popular for charity gymkhanas. Others, to make up a good programme, with plenty of variety, will easily suggest themselves or be doubtless brought forward by the various members of the committee.

Odds and Ends.

ALTHOUGH Russia is rapidly advancing in civilisation many barbaric customs still exist, and that of choosing a wife is amongst the most curious. It is chiefly prevalent in country districts, and is really a game played at Christmas-time. A prominent person in a village announces that this annual feast will take place in his house, and all the young men and women of the place flock there at the appointed time. First there are dances and songs and games just as at any other ordinary party, but when these are over the hostess takes all the girls into one room where they sit upon benches round the walls, and are completely muffled up in large white sheets. In the meantime the young men have been drawing lots, and when the girls are all rolled up in their sheets, and looking more like mummies than human beings, they enter the room one by one, their order being decided by the number each draws. It is impossible to distinguish any one girl, and the young man, having finally made his choice, unveils her, and then the unwritten law that he should marry whomsoever he may pick out. If either the girl or the man refuse to marry, they must pay a heavy forfeit. Strange as it may seem, this extraordinary game of marriage is said to lead to many happy unions.



ENGLISH needles are now sold all over the world, but their manufacture, after being kept secret for many years, was taught to us in 1650 by Christopher Greening. At Redditch alone twenty thousand people make more than one hundred million needles in a year, and, as they are made and exported so cheaply, England has no rival in the industry, and to all intents and purposes monopolises the trade. In the old days needle-making killed tens of thousands of operatives owing to their inhalation of fine particles of steel, but an invention, by which an air-blast drives away the filings from the grindstone, has removed this danger, and the occupation has in consequence become absolutely safe. One of the most interesting of the processes in needle-making is the drilling of the eye, and it is the boast in one factory that one of the drillers is so expert that he can perforate a hair and thread it with itself. Another very interesting fact in connection with the industry is that whilst at the ordinary needles used in America are supplied by Great Britain, nearly all the sewing-machine needles used in this country come from America.



BABIES and little children were at no time so much considered as at the present day. The newest addition to the comfort and joys of babies is the shell cradle, which is made of real silver, metal silver plated, or aluminium. This cradle, made in the shape of a shell, all in one piece, is hung upon two rods in such a manner that it swings at a touch or at the least move of the infant inside, or when it is awake it can amuse itself by swinging the cradle from side to side. A lace canopy is supported over the shell by a light wire framework surmounted by two metallic Cupids who hold the lace in their hands. This lace canopy can be drawn all over the cradle when the baby is asleep. Wicker baskets can be swung upon upright poles in the same way, but it is always advisable to employ a carpenter to fix the basket-work firmly, as rapid movement might bring about an accident.

THE reason why rain falls is that whenever warm, vapour-laden air arrives in positions where it gets rapidly chilled, the vapour falls through the cold air to the earth, cold air being unable to support as much floating vapour as warm air. A hundredth part of a grain of aqueous vapour over the amount that the air will support is sufficient to cause rainfall. Any chill will produce rain. It occurs when a moist warm wind blows in from the ocean upon cold stretches of land, where dense vapour-laden winds are pressed up the slopes of abruptly-rising hills, and whenever warm ocean winds are mingled with cold blasts in the various movements of the atmosphere. Even a cold dry wind may bring on rain, if it blows suddenly upon a mass of warm and vapour-saturated air.



ONE would scarcely think that it would be worth anybody's while to tamper with flowers and sell them as other than they really are. But it is an elaborate art. For instance, a matured tulip can be turned into "a young thing just on the point of blowing" by carefully plucking off the bloom, and leaving the bulb with its few leaves beneath. "Only two shillings, sir; it'll bloom in a week, sir," and the uninitiated buy and wait vainly for the promised blossom. Owing to the popularity of the parsley fern, the "flower dodger" has found a most efficacious and cheap method of supplying customers. He plants a carrot in a dark place, with the consequence that its leaves at the top become fine and of a very delicate green; then cutting off the crown of the carrot and putting it in a pot he sells it as a "parsley fern." As for scented flowers all the neglect of nature is supplied by these people with a scent-bottle, and they do not hesitate to produce "new and strange varieties," by subjecting well-known flowers to the action of aniline dyes. With flowers that absorb a large amount of moisture, their work is very easy, as they change their colour with extraordinary rapidity.



SPEAKING of flowers, there are certain species which bloom at every hour, and even at every half-hour of the day, and a botanical instructor of the University of California has carried out a very fanciful idea of making a flower-clock. In order to do this he has planted the necessary flowers in a circle like a dial-plate. The first flower would open at daybreak and the last at nightfall, when all the flowers would be in bloom. This is not the first garden of the kind, Linnaeus having originally invented the idea, but California is so favourable to the growth of flowers, that the instructor hopes to make a more perfect clock-garden than any of his predecessors.



"A LITTLE space of pleasure,
A little space of pain;
And then the solemn darkness,
And then—the light again.
A little song and story,
In sunlight and in rain;
A little gleam of glory,
And then—the dark again.
And so it goes—the darkness,
And then the gleam of light;
And so life is good-morning,
With sad thoughts of good-night."

THE washing of clothes varies in every country in the world, but the hardest-worked washerwomen are the Koreans, for the Korean men wear voluminous pantaloons and dresses. The women wash the clothes in cold water, generally in running streams, and pound them with paddles until they shine as if they had been starched. In Egypt the men usually do the washing standing at the edge of a pool or running water and slapping the wet clothes upon round smooth stones. French women wash their clothes in the same way, although, as a rule, they kneel to their work. This beating upon stones makes many holes in the garments, especially as the dirt is frequently literally pounded out with other stones or wooden paddles. The Japanese method of washing clothes appears as singular to us as do the majority of their customs, for they rip their dirty garments apart for every washing, while their ironing consists of spreading the clothes out on a flat board which is leant against the side of the house in order that they may be dried by the sun, which takes all wrinkles out of the thin material. Washing in the land of the chrysanthemum is done out of doors, the Japanese washerwomen using a tub that is about six inches high and is about the size of an English dish-pan. As a rule the clothes are simply rubbed by the hand until they are clean, but when they are particularly dirty soap is used—and Japanese soap is full of grease—and the clothes are stamped upon with the bare feet. Chinese girls wash in the same way, as also do the Scotch washerwomen, although in larger receptacles.



SOLDIERS' beds differ in every European army, and in each kind national characteristics are very clearly shown. In England the soldier's bed is hard, the man lying on thin mattresses that rest on canvas stretched over a wooden frame. In the German and Austrian armies the bed is of straw with only one or two covers and no sheet or mattress. Until quite recently the soldiers of the Czar slept in their clothes upon camp beds, but now ordinary beds are being introduced and the men undress. The Spanish soldier has only a straw bed, but he is allowed a pillow, two sheets, two blankets and a covered quilt, with sometimes a cover for his feet. The French soldier has the best and most comfortable bed, being allowed a wooden or iron bedstead, a straw bed, a good mattress, sheets and a brown woollen coverlet, to which is added an extra quilt in cold weather.



"OVER-WORK and under-exercise result in nervous diseases," said a physician recently. "Preventive measures may be summed up in two words," he continued—"physical development. Worry annually kills more people than work. One should strive, however, to avoid all things that tend to disturb the nerves. Throw away the pen that scratches and a pencil that has a hard spot in it. Discard a needle that squeaks and a basin that leaks. Use sharp tools, wear soft garments that do not rustle. Oil the hinges of the rheumatic door and fasten the creaking blind. These may seem trifles, but such trifles irritate the nerves as much as a piece of woollen does a sore. Charles Lamb once said that a carpenter's hammer on a warm summer morn would fret him more than midsummer madness."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

MEDICAL.

PANSY.—You can take "bismuth and soda" either in the form of a mixture or in tablets. The former is more efficacious, the latter more convenient. The prescription for an ordinary case is as follows:—

R Bismuthi Carbonatis ʒij
Sodii Carbonatis ʒij
Mucilag. Tragacanth. q.s.
Aqua ad ʒviij

Two tablespoonfuls three times a day twenty minutes before food. The tablets are—

"Tablet," Bismuth and soda 5 grs. (Burroughs, Wellcome and Co.). The dose is one to five. They can be obtained at any chemist.

CARY.—Chillblains are very troublesome things to deal with. Prevention is better than cure, but in this case is not any easier. Wear warm socks and warm gloves. Do not stand about much in cold weather. Beware of wet feet. Do not, when your feet and hands are numb with cold, half roast them in front of a fire, but let them recover their normal heat by degrees. When you have got a chillblain, gently rubbing the place with spirit or *rose-Cologne* and water is very efficacious. When the chillblains have burst, they should be dressed with an antiseptic ointment. General treatment may be necessary to improve the circulation.

URGENT.—Eyelashes, and eyebrows may come out, either as a result of affect of the skin surrounding them or independently of any disease whatever. In the former case one must treat the original condition of which the absence of lashes and eyebrows is only a minor symptom. In either case a wash of borax and water (Gr. ʒss to ʒij) may be used. Many girls are very nervous about losing one or two eyelashes, but it is quite healthy for the lashes to come out. The function of the eyelashes is to prevent dust, etc., from getting on to the eyeball. To do this they are very quickly, the places of the old hairs are rapidly filled up.

AN OLD BRIGHTONIAN.—You like bicycling, but it makes you breathless and tired and gives you pain in the legs. We understand that you are a novice, but that you wish to ride long distances. Well, you cannot ride long distances at present, and you ought not to try to do so. You must stop when you get breathless or the pain in your legs comes on. You ask us what you should do to overcome these unpleasant sensations. Well, the first thing in the treatment of anything is to try and find out the cause, and when you have found it to stop it if that is possible. We do not advise you to stop bicycling altogether, but to indulge in it in moderation. You will get used to it in time if you are cautious, and then you may try "records." It often happens that men companions are impatient with girls who cannot ride at their speed, but each girl must meet such unfair treatment with a distinct refusal to overtax her strength.

"ONE, TWO, THREE."—We are afraid that you will have great difficulty in getting rid of the smell of chloride of lime. Well washing your hands with soap after using the lime, and then sprinkling a little *eau-de-Cologne* over them may remove the smell. We do not advise you to use chloride of lime to bleach your hands with, for in the first place it is very caustic, makes the hands sore and cracked and very itchy; and secondly, it is not an agent likely to be of use to bleach the skin unless the skin be pigmented. It will only make "red hands" much worse. Peroxide of hydrogen does not produce the unpleasant symptoms, and is quite as likely to bleach as the chloride of lime. Habitually wearing gloves will diminish the redness of your hands. Take our advice, and do not use any bleaching preparation at all.

FIRELY.—1. Carbonated chalk does not whiten the teeth as well as most tooth powders. The carbolic tooth powder is the best of all for general use, but for very yellow teeth a compound, of which we have lately given the prescription several times, is better. You will find the description of this powder in the answer to "Troubled Nell" in the February number of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.—2. Sulphur soap should be used for pimples, but remember that many soaps sold as "sulphur soap" do not contain sulphur. Arsenical soap is useless for anything. Most soaps sold as "arsenical soaps" contain far too little arsenic to have any effect. If they do contain any appreciable quantity of arsenic, they might do harm. It is an absolute myth that arsenic improves the complexion; it does no such thing, but it may ruin the complexion by producing an arsenical eruption.

A DESERVING ONE.—You may suffer from disease of the kidneys, but it is absolutely impossible for us to tell you for certain what is the matter with you without a personal interview. You do wrong to allow your complaint to go on without seeking medical advice. If you cannot pay a private doctor, you can obtain advice at a hospital.

NEMSE.—Decidedly you ought to go to an oculist. The condition of your eyes must be seen to, and we cannot give you any help without examination.

MARJORY.—We can only add a few brief statements to our former advice. Indigestion is not a condition that is cured by drugs, it is more often produced, and nearly always made worse by them. Avoid tea, coffee, beer, wine, spirits, cheese, potatoes, pastry, uncooked food and soups. Take your meals regularly, let them be small meals, take little liquid food except milk, and rest for half-an-hour after every meal. The alkaline stomachic we usually advise is carbonate of soda and gentian. Half a teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda taken immediately before meals is quite as good, often better and costs very much less.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

EZRA.—1. We cannot admire your friend's "Ode to a Telegraph Wire." Why should "the passer-by look up with a sigh, and wish to be a toad"? It seems to us nonsense.—2. You will find the lines—
"To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die,"

in "Hallowed Ground," by the poet Thomas Campbell.

ASPIRANT.—We applaud your determination, but no book will quite remove the difficulty, in many cases the impossibility, of solitary study of Euclid and Algebra. In our own case we remember the difficulty of seeing any sense in the first proposition of Euclid, till a word or two from a master made it all perfectly clear. It is not of the slightest use to get propositions and theorems by heart without grasping the chain of reasoning. Cannot you have a few lessons from a friend, if in no other way? We believe Todhunter's *Elements of Euclid and Algebra for Beginners* are good, or Hamblin Smith's; but no book will take the place of *verba voce* explanation of difficulties.—2. You will find Smith's *Principia Latina*, part 1, a good Latin grammar.

HARRY.—We are glad you are so pleased with your well-earned prize, and wish you also a "happy new year." The new year of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER begins from the issue of the first monthly part.

HIGH SEA.—Why not present yourself at one of the Local Examinations held by the accredited Schools of Music? You would then be told whether your voice were being rightly trained. Address, for full particulars, the Secretary, Trinity College, Mandeville Place, Manchester Square, W., or the Hon. Sec. of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, 52, New Bond Street, London, W.

GENTLEMAN READER writes to supplement the information quoted from Sir G. Grove's Dictionary of Music to R. E. C. (last in our December part). He says: "There were six clefs in use formerly, as may be seen in very old musical music, four of the C clef, as it is termed, and two of the F clef. The positions of the first mentioned were as follows:—on the first line of the staff for soprano, on the second line for second soprano, or mezzo, on the third line for alto or contralto, and on the fourth line for tenor; while in the case of the F clef it was used on the third line for baritone or first bass, and on the fourth line for the second or 'heavy' bass."

FIORENZA.—1. We should recommend for an Italian book, suitable for a girl of eighteen, *Le Miei Prigioni*, by Silvio Pellico; for a German book, *Undine*, by De la Motte Fouqué; and for a French book, one of Madame de Ségur's tales in the Bibliothèque Rose, such as the *Mémoires d'une Ane*.—2. Catarrh of the lungs is generally caused by a chill, or by the germ of influenza.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PRIMROSE.—It would be more seemly and self-respecting to refrain from sending cards to a man who has left your neighbourhood without proposing to you. Perhaps he thought better of it, and considered it an act of prudence and good taste to remove elsewhere; and to follow him up would be very ill-advised.

R. H. FLETCHER.—We recommend you to write to one or more of the great shops for musical instruments for information on the subject of aluminium or silver violins. We have never seen any.

E. PERRY.—We think that to obtain a second-hand bicycle you had better refer to the *Exchange and Mart* (70, Strand, W.C.), and the terms as to taking one on the hire system could be arranged without difficulty. A friend we know paid a third of the price in advance, as much again in six months, and the balance in a period of six months later. As to the cost of repair, that must depend on the age and condition of the machine when you get it; and the careful use of it, or otherwise, by yourself.

FRANCESCA.—You could not sign yourself by a nickname on any legal paper. You must inscribe your true name.

M. M. A.—You do not name your age, nor how much you or your family could unitedly give for your residence in a Home. Very few are free, and in these cases admission is by vote, which is a hopeless method. There is an infirmary at Brighton for aged and incurable women. You might write and state your case, age and means, and send letters of recommendation (or copies of them) from your clergyman, doctor, and present employer. There is also the Midland Counties Home for Incurables at Leamington, Matron, Miss N. Armit. Also at St. Leonard's-on-Sea there is a Home for Chronic Invalids, Alexandra House, Bohemia Road; the Hon. Treasurer, Miss Anne Hutchinson. If you fail in one try another, and ask them kindly to return the copies of your certificates.

NERVOUS GIRL.—We advise you to read the "New Doctor" in the Medical column. Do not give way to jumping and starting at noises which must continually take place. It is annoying to others to see a fuss made about what cannot be helped, and which people in general learn to bear without complaining or making themselves an object of notice. Your writing has, at least, the merit of being legible, if not pretty.

DARK CLOUDS.—It is very difficult to advise you; but as we feel quite sure, on reading your letter carefully, that your heart is not really engaged in the matter, and as we think the union will not lead to happiness, you had better be brave enough to put an end to your engagement. But if you hesitate to do that entirely, you might promise a renewal of it when your betrothed makes up his mind to take life seriously, and begin to make proper exertions to provide a comfortable home, at any rate do not drift on, feeling discontented and unhappy.

A FAITHFUL READER IN ITALY.—1. When books are published anonymously, and the secret is kept of the author's name, we should know no more than yourself of the real name of the writer.—2. We have not tried the road skate, but have seen it often, and it appears to answer very well.

LAUNDRY MAID.—Inquire at the Birkbeck Institute, Chancery Lane, and see whether they can give you information. That is the nearest place to your address that we know of at present.

JUBILEE.—Your inquiry is rather vague, but we think if you went to any well-known publisher of illustrated books, you might show your manuscript and inquire.

A. L.—The basilisk, employed as a crest in heraldry, is not an existing creature though it may somewhat resemble a prehistoric fossil. It is a mythical monster described amongst the ancients as a species of dragon, whose breath or even look was said to be fatal. The basilisk of the Middle Ages was reputed to have sprung from the yolk of a cock's egg hatched by a toad, and thus obtained the name of cockatrice. It had the body of the bird, and had a serpent's tail ending in three points, and wore a crown. It was also said of this monstrosity that only the sight of its own hideous appearance in a mirror could kill it.

J. L. WATTS.—If about to emigrate to Adelaide you could not have greater advantages for the education of your sons than are afforded in that city. The degrees conferred by the University in art, medicine, law, science and music on any person, whether male or female, are recognised as academic distinctions, and entitled to rank and precedence in the United Kingdom, and in all colonies and possessions of the Crown as fully as if these degrees had been granted by any university in the said United Kingdom. Adelaide University holds Letters Patent and the Great Seal to that effect.

PRINCESS.—1. We hope your good resolutions will be permanent, but we think you would be much aided in your studies if you joined the National Home-Reading Union for encouraging and directing home study. The central office is Surrey House, Victoria Embankment, London, W.C. The secretary is Miss Monday, from whom you can obtain all information. At your age education should be looked at seriously, and carefully guided.—2. We think that the head of hair you describe would be kept tidy, as well as made becoming, if it were slightly waved and then tied at the back low on the neck with a ribbon or black ribbon velvet.

IGNORAMUS.—1. Nearly all newsvendors keep Weldon's Practical Needlework series, price twopence each. You could obtain the edging and insertion in crochet in one of these. The London address is, Weldon's, 30, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C.—2. The Home Education Society, Hon. Sec., Miss Ralfe, 102, Eaton Terrace, London, S.W., would give you the help you need.

PRITHI.—We have never heard of a law to prevent anyone from calling their place of abode a castle; but as the word means a fortified residence, a fortress, especially of a prince or nobleman, it would be a misnomer to apply it to any ordinary house in modern days.

ROSE.—A shower bath could be arranged over an ordinary fixed bath, but you would certainly not be able to do it yourselves. You would find out the expense of the work by inquiry at any bath manufacturers in your city.

TYPICAL CHURCH TOWERS OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

PART VI.
ESSEX.

ESSEX does not bear a very good name for scenery, and few people would select the county for a walking tour. The "cyclist," however, may do worse than take a run through Essex; because although some districts are flat and ugly, and others devoid of wood, yet there are localities which are pretty, and the number of old manorial estates with fine parks, ancient mansions, castles, abbeys, and more than usually picture-que villages, render it by no means an uninteresting county.

Although ancient churches (some very old indeed) abound, yet it cannot be said that they possess the splendour or dignity which one would expect to find in a county which was a favourite place of residence for the aristocracy. Thus, although a rich field for the study of domestic and secular architecture, it does not offer the same scope for ecclesiastical architectural investigation. The

reason for this is not very difficult to discover. The fact is that before the Reformation the county possessed a more than usual number of wealthy monasteries; and no doubt the nobility subscribed generously to the building of their churches, which must have been very sumptuous. At the Reformation Essex suffered perhaps more in the way of destruction than any other English county. From some reason, which it is difficult to account for, the monastic churches were almost entirely demolished. Of those of Colchester, Walden, Stratford and Barking Abbeys, nothing whatever is left; of St. Osyth Priory little if anything; of the church of Colchester Priory a fragment of the west front and an arch or two of the nave; of Coggeshall some ruins of the choir and transepts. The only monastic church of which the remains are extensive is Waltham Abbey, the nave of which is converted into a parish church. The architecture is very fine Norman work. Now of course when these monastic churches existed entire

Essex would have passed as a county rich in architecture, but at present it may almost be said that there are only three really fine churches in the county, Waltham Abbey, Thaxted and Saffron Walden. Both of the latter have spires, but that of Thaxted is the only ancient stone one in the county; it is a good example, but with nothing very characteristic about it. In fact, the whole of this noble church is devoid of local peculiarities; parts of it look like the work of the architect of Henry VII.'s Chapel. Some of the Essex churches are remarkably interesting; Castle Headingham, Little Maplestead, Boxted, Hadleigh, East Ham, Rainham and St. Osyth are especially so.

The towers of the Essex churches are not particularly remarkable. They are generally rather squat, and although there is but one stone spire, the village churches are often crowned by small wooden structures, a kind of cross between a roof and a spire, which are frequently curious and certainly characteristic. One of the most interesting is at Upminster, near Hornchurch. The church has been almost entirely rebuilt, and the tower itself very much restored. Our drawing is copied from a sketch made some years back, when the tower was in its original condition; but at present, though the original form has been preserved, much of the work is new.

Hornchurch has a singular peculiarity; instead of a gable cross at the east end, there is a carved head of a bull in stone with the natural horns of a buffalo affixed to it. This remarkable "ecclesiastical feature" is said to have given the name of "Hornchurch" to the village, but of the origin or history of this strange object I could find nothing.

It may not be out of place here to put in a plea for the preservation of the ancient towers of the Middlesex, Essex and Hertfordshire churches. They are not grand or elaborate architectural structures, and may, in some cases, be inferior to the modern towers which replace them; but these far more pretentious modern works do not teach so much, because they do not speak either of our own time or of past days. How many of these old towers have been rebuilt of late years it is difficult to say, but it is sad to think that this work of destruction is still going on. Would it not be better to follow the excellent example set by the good folks of Stanmore, who, some years back, finding their old church past repair, built a handsome new one close to it, leaving the old church to become an ivy-clad ruin. These two churches in the same churchyard have always struck us as looking most interesting and appropriate; here you see, side by side, an old church and a modern one, both teaching a lesson, and looking well. If they had rebuilt the old church it would have possessed neither the advantages and convenience of a new one nor the historic interest of an old one. These quaint and singular old churches and towers should of course, if possible, be repaired, but if that is not possible, do not attempt to rebuild them; even in their ruined condition they are most valuable historical witnesses. What they tell us is certain to be true; they cannot lie, as written documents often do. They speak to us with a voice from out the past, and to thoughtful minds their grey mouldering walls and decaying stone-work teach lessons that are worthy to be learnt and handed down to future ages; lessons of patient toil and of pious endeavour, of man's weakness and God's strength; veritable "sermons in stones," though, like all man's works, bound to decay; yet, as long as they last, pointing to a hope, for that future peace which "suppasseth all understanding."

(To be continued.)



UPMINSTER, ESSEX.