



"BICYCLING TO HEALTH AND FORTUNE."



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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

OUR BEAUTIFUL FURS, AND WHERE THEY COME FROM.

PART II. THE COMMON RACCOON.



Of all the fur-giving animals, perhaps the raccoon is the most widely known. The raccoon is exclusively an American animal, and as it is one of the most valuable fur-bearing animals, it is much hunted in consequence. Raccoon skins were formerly used as a recognised circulating medium in the States of Mississippi, and fetched about twenty or twenty-one cents apiece; it takes two of these animals to make a muff, and nine or ten to a boa; it is unfortunate in one sense that these valuable fur-giving creatures should be so small; but on the other hand, had they been larger and not so prolific, the chances are they would have long ago been exterminated. Raccoon is a lovely fur for winter, and many people prefer it, as I do, to any other, and it is not so expensive.

Genus Calobus (the ursine calob).—Now you all know the long hair muffs still in vogue with black hair trimmings; all these come from the calobus, a thumbless monkey. The fur is also in much request with the natives of Africa,

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who use this particular fur as a skirt, and other decorations. I suppose one monkey would make a good muff, but that, of course, depends upon the size of the monkey. Calob is the generic term of this group comprising three species, calob in Greek meaning maimed or deformed, because they are all three without thumbs.

The Mink.—The subject of our valuable furs is of so much interest that we illustrate a few more of those interesting little creatures that go so far to supply us with such comfort and give value to our dress. Such furs, many of them, must of necessity be costly, as I mentioned before, the animals themselves being so small, considerable havoc is made among them to supply the constant demand. One of many interesting little animals,



GUERZA MONKEY.



THE MINK.

the mink, is now as valuable as ever, although at one time it was not considered so, but certainly of late it has been in urgent request, and its numbers considerably reduced. The length of the mink from snout to root of tail is fifteen to eighteen inches. I believe in the early sixties as much as four dollars was given for a skin, and as many as five or six thousand of these skins were annually exported; and from America in about 1888, as many as three hundred and seventy thousand. The Russian mink skin from all accounts is not so valuable as the American by some shillings. The little animal is aquatic, as can be seen; wherever there are webbed feet rest assured the animal, or bird, is a half land and water being.

The mink is much used for muffs, carriage rugs and gentlemen's overcoats, ladies' capes, and Idalia and Stuart collarettes.

Chinchilla.—A truly lovely little animal this; it very much resembles a little mouse, only it uses its little hind legs like a kangaroo. I suppose there is not one of my readers who has not

heard of the valuable chinchilla fur. Fancy what a number of these poor little creatures have to be slaughtered to meet the constant demand, and it is in consequence fearfully persecuted; the fur is the softest of all furs. Fortunately the animal is pretty prolific, having six young at a birth, so it will take plenty of hunting before it is quite exterminated. For

fur ties, muffs and ladies' capes the fur is very much in vogue. The little animal only measures fourteen or fifteen inches in length.

It is also particularly cleanly in its habits, like most beautifully furred animals. It is also a vegetable feeder.

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—";

OR,

MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.

By GERTRUDE PAGE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST STRAW.

WHO was to tell Madge?

This was the question that filled the minds of the three stunned occupants of the breakfast-table a few hours later.

No one had attempted to taste any food or seemed likely to do so, yet they sat on in silence.

Upstairs lay the still form that had been brought to the house nearly three hours before, and the hardest task of all, a task they all shrank from with fearfulness, remained unfulfilled. Every moment they expected to hear a footstep on the stairs which would make the necessity to speak immediate, and yet no one knew how to do it, nor who should bear the burden of it.

At last Mr. Harcourt pushed away his untasted breakfast, and in a trembling voice exclaimed, "No, I can't do it, it will nearly kill her. I couldn't bear to see her face, I must leave it to you;" and with bent head and wavering steps, he went into his library and shut the door after him.

Guy turned anxiously to Mrs. Harcourt and asked in a hoarse voice, "Who shall it be?"

"If you could?" she answered hastily, "It will not be so bad from you as from me."

Just then a door upstairs opened and someone crossed the landing. Instantly Mrs. Harcourt started up, muttering, "Yes, yes, you, not me!" and before Guy could speak she had gone.

As Madge entered the room she commenced an apology for being so late, for she had slept heavily after her restless night and was much beyond her usual hour.

But she broke off suddenly on seeing the unoccupied table and untasted food and raised her eyes with an exclamation of surprise to Guy, who was standing before the hearth with a white, fixed face.

Instantly a presentiment of evil came over her, and grasping a chair-back she asked fearfully, "Where are the others? what is the matter?"

Guy remained silent, with his gaze on the ground, utterly unable to meet her eyes, and in accents of deepening dread she continued, "Why is no one having breakfast? Why do you look so—"

She paused, then suddenly stepped close up to him, and leaning forward, gasped in a low, horror-struck voice, "Is it Jack?"

But words would not frame themselves in Guy's tortured mind, and it was only after a tremendous effort he was able to begin nervously, "You must prepare—"

But here Madge interrupted him, and with a quick, frightened movement clutched his arm, exclaiming breathlessly: "Don't keep me in suspense; what is it? Is he—hurt?"

The touch on his arm, and the sight of her straining fearful eyes, seemed suddenly to put a new strength into him, and taking her hand between his in a strong clasp, he said, in a low, pitying voice, "Worse?"

"Dead?" and her voice rang out through the room with a strange, hollow sound, while her lips grew white and drawn, and her eyes dilated with suppressed anguish.

He stroked her hand soothingly, while he answered in a voice as gentle as a woman's, "Yes, he met with an accident last night on his way home, and they brought him here three hours ago."

She drew her hand from his and pressed it to her head, a dazed, stunned look resting on her face, but no sound broke from her parched lips.

Guy tried to speak, but the words stuck in his throat; he could only stand and gaze at her helplessly. Then gradually the full extent of the truth seemed to dawn upon her, and with something like a groan she turned and walked unsteadily to the door.

Guy hurried after her and sought to detain her, but without looking up or heeding him, she said, "Tell them I don't want anyone to come near me."

Then she passed slowly upstairs into her own room, and locked the door behind her.

What passed in the girl's heart through that awful day no one ever knew. Alone, in a desert of almost intolerable anguish she went through one of those "temptations in the wilderness, which, in succinct or loose form are appointed for every man that will assert a soul in himself and be a man."

God's voice pleaded, "My child, give



CHINCHILLA.

Me thy heart; only trust Me for a little time, and in the end thou shalt understand."

And the voice of the tempter said, "Be hard, be callous, be indifferent. The light and joy have gone out of your life; the days as they come will bring you neither hope, nor love, nor happiness; therefore drown feeling; stem the tide of anguish by the force of your will; there is no rest for man but in the cold torpor of absolute indifference. If you have a God, He does not care. He has other and weightier matters to attend to than the little affairs of men."

In the evening, as the sun was setting in stormy, blood-red splendour over frowning hills, Madge drew up her blind and looked out.

But the sight did not stir either wonder or admiration in her breast, neither did the garden beneath, with its thousand recollections, soften the set lines of the young face.

For as we administer chloroform to numb the pain of the body, so already had Madge begun to drink deep of the fatal draught of callousness and forced apathy to numb the anguish of her soul.

The voice of God had pleaded in vain, and unconsciously the poor tempted soul had fallen down and worshipped the arch-fiend.

A few minutes later, as Guy was sitting alone in the little smoke-room, with his elbows on his knees and his face buried in his hands, striving likewise to master the strange, deep, soul-stirring questions that filled his mind, he heard the door open and someone enter.

He rose hurriedly and turned to meet a pair of dark eyes, whose very calmness sent a chill through his heart.

"Oh, Miss Harcourt, I am so glad

you have come," he said quickly. "I'm sure it is bad for you to be shut up alone; I have been so anxious. I can't tell you how I feel for you."

"Hush," she murmured, half-fiercely. "Not one word of sympathy; I can't bear it, it mocks me. I have come to know what happened. Tell me quickly, you needn't be afraid. I am quite equal to it."

He placed a chair for her, but she refused to sit, motioning to him impatiently to go on.

"We don't know much," he said, "but Dr. Hills says death was caused by suffocation after he had been stunned by a blow. He was found in a ditch with the trap on top of him, so he must have got off the road in the dark and been overturned. We have heard from Mr. Haines that he left there as right as possible about eight o'clock. He must have been stunned when he fell, and the cloak having blown tightly round his head, he must have been suffocated almost immediately."

A violent shudder ran through her and she bit her lips as if to prevent herself crying out: then, quickly regaining her composure she remarked, "No doubt you are right, but after all it doesn't much matter how it happened; where is he?"

"In his own room."

"Take me to him," she said briefly, and stood aside for him to pass and lead the way.

In the chamber of death, they stood side by side and gazed on the still form they had both loved so well, but it was in the man's eyes that tears gathered and it was the man's lips that trembled—the woman stood calm, dry-eyed and seemingly passionless.

Presently she bent forward and pressed her lips to the cold forehead, but she drew back hastily with a shudder, for the icy touch chilled her to the marrow. It seemed to break down her unnatural manner, for a vacant look crept into her eyes, and she pressed her hand to her head and knit her brows as if striving to remember something.

"I wish I could cry," she said in a hoarse whisper. "There is a weight like lead on my head."

She swerved a little and he turned to her quickly.

"Perhaps you won't let yourself," he said soothingly. "Shall I go away and leave you for a little while."

"No! no! don't go," and she clutched his arm with a sudden fierce grip. "I feel as if I should go mad; why doesn't he speak to me or look at me. It can't be Jack, he was never

like that; he was scarcely ever still a moment. It is a mistake," and she gazed at him with wild, imploring eyes. "Jack could not look like that, he was so full of life and spirits. Tell me it is all a mistake and I have been dreaming," and her voice had a piteous wail in it.

Guy moved his lips and tried to speak, but a sob choked his utterance and he turned his head away, for he could not bear the look in her eyes.

She turned again to the silent figure and leaned over it. "Jack," she breathed, "Jack darling, don't you hear me? I'm Madge, your own Madge. You can't go away and leave me; I haven't anyone else. You wouldn't be likely to go and leave me all alone. They told me you were dead, but it must have been because they were jealous; they knew I loved you better than anything else in heaven or earth. Say they only did it to frighten me, Jack."

"He doesn't speak or take any notice," she continued fearfully, the dazed look in her eyes deepening, "Can—it—be—true."

"Then suddenly, with a low cry which Guy never forgot, she threw up her arms and fell forward across the dead man's body.

(To be continued.)

NO. 22.

CHAPTER I.

"CASE coming in, Sister."

"Not another fracture, Mr. Lee, I hope?" "No, it's a head case. The poor chap was brought into the surgery insensible. He will be in here in five minutes," and the breathless young dresser, who had been sent to prepare the ward for the coming of its new inmate, dashed off again.

The tall Sister to whom he had spoken moved quietly down the long ward when he had gone, giving a few quick orders in her low pleasant voice and with the sunny smile which made all her subordinates her more than willing slaves. And by the time the five minutes named by the dresser had passed, a bed was ready for the new patient; whilst the occupants of the other beds were awaiting eagerly the little excitement of seeing a new case brought in.

"Where's 'e goin'?" one man asked, a man who had been nearly a year in the ward and was thoroughly *au fait* in every item of its management. "22 bed? Oh, that's a good bed that is, just at the corner where you can see both ends of the ward."

"'E won't care about that, 15, don't you be afraid," called the neighbour in the next bed; "'e's bad, 'e is. Mr. Lee, 'e says, 'head case—in-sensible.' I heard 'im. 'E won't care for no odds of wards, nor nothin' o' that!"

"'E will soon, 16, soon as 'e's a bit better," retorted 15, the first speaker (using, as hospital patients do, the number of their neighbour's bed instead of his name), "'ere they come," and pulling himself up in bed he watched with the keenest interest the small procession which entered the ward, bearing a silent form upon a stretcher.

The little bustle attendant upon its arrival was quickly over, and in what seemed an incredibly short space of time, the new patient was lying in his bed, whilst the rest of the

ward chatted and chaffed and laughed over its tea.

No place in a hospital can be so lively and bright as the accident ward. The patients for the most part are suffering from some injury which does not materially affect their general health, and they are generally as merry as heart could desire. To-night the customary jokes and laughter went on as usual. Only by that quiet bed where the new patient lay in absolute unconsciousness silence reigned. The Sister looked down at the still form, a little puzzled frown puckering her forehead.

"He looks like a gentleman," she said to the staff nurse; "I wonder how he met with this accident, and who he is. Will you see if he has any card or any means of identification in his pockets? We ought to communicate with his friends directly," and she glanced curiously again at the white face on the pillow. It was a well-bred, rather than a handsome one, but the clear cut lines of cheek and jaw, the broad sweep of the open brow, had a distinctive beauty of their own.

"There is nothing in his pocket," the nurse said, returning to the bedside, "but a handkerchief, a gold pencil-case, some loose silver, and this letter," and Nurse Evans handed it to the Sister.

"No envelope, nurse? And the letter simply begins 'Dear Guy.' Then we are no nearer to the poor man's identity than we were before." She glanced from the address at the top of the paper to the signature at the end. "Oh, it is his wife," she exclaimed, "it is signed, 'Your affectionate wife, Grace Warden'; then I can telegraph to her at once and write as well. What a relief!" and moving from the bed she went quickly to her own small room at the end of the ward, and wrote a telegram which she addressed to

Mrs. Warden
Higham Court,
Senley, Cornwall.

CHAPTER II.

LADY WARDEN came down to breakfast on a morning in July decidedly out of temper. Her maid had discovered the ominous fact at an earlier hour; her sister-in-law was made aware of it when the two ladies met on the great staircase of Higham Court. Lady Warden's first words were pettish; there was a frown on her face.

"It is too annoying of Guy!" she exclaimed, as soon as she caught sight of Miss Warden. "What in the world was he thinking about to allow me to go through such a night? He vowed he would be home by the nine o'clock express, and then not to come, and to leave me in suspense! It is thoughtless of him."

"Perhaps there is some explanation this morning," Miss Warden said gently; "it is not like Guy to put anyone to inconvenience, much less his wife," and she smiled down upon the pretty, petulant face upturned to hers. The evening before she had had to listen *ad nauseam* to her sister-in-law's fretful complaints, and it needs all her patience to endure with equanimity the renewed grumbling in the morning. Lady Warden only shrugged her shoulders at her companion's last words and laughed pettishly, as she swept on down the stairs to the dining-room, "spoilt child" written large in every movement of the small graceful figure, in every line of the lovely face.

"Letters late too!" she exclaimed, as she seated herself at the end of the table; "how I do hate this horrible hole, and how I do wish Guy were not so passionately devoted to it, and that his uncle had never left it to him."

"I don't think you would really care very much for any place in the country, would you, Grace?" her sister-in-law said smiling.

"I don't think I should, but I couldn't detest anything more than I do this. One feels buried, and there is nothing in the wide world to do except to play Lady Bountiful,

which I loathe doing. I was never intended by nature to play the part," and she laughed a little silvery laugh with a hard note in it that grated on the other woman's ear.

"Do you never go and see the people in the village at all, Grace?"

"Never, if I can by any possibility avoid it. I leave all that sort of thing to Guy. He really seems rather to like it, he is so dreadfully fond of poor people. No, Helen, it's of no use to lecture me, I am a hopeless subject," and again she laughed.

"I wasn't going to do anything so audacious as to lecture," Miss Warden answered; "I was only thinking how pleased the village folk would be to see you. I expect you would find them more interesting than you think, and they would find you charming."

"Would they? No, it is of no use, Helen. I simply can't do it, and I certainly should not find them interesting." Lady Warden gave a small, ladylike shiver. "I can't bear the cottages—they smell stuffy, and the people don't understand my point of view any better than I understand theirs. We have nothing in common, absolutely nothing."

"Only common humanity, and a few odds-and-ends of that kind." Miss Warden's tone was a little dry. "I never think the clay is so very different, when one gets down to it, after all."

"Oh, yes it is, Helen. Those people don't feel things the least as we do, indeed they don't. They have neither as strong nor as deep feelings as we have. Do you suppose that dirty little Mrs. Smith, the undergardener's wife, would lie awake half the night if her husband did not come home as I did last night? Ah, the letters at last, and a telegram. Oh, Helen, I hate telegrams!" and the flush faded all at once out of the pretty face, as the butler handed her the silver salver, piled high with letters, on the top of which lay an orange envelope.

Miss Warden rose and took the telegram in her hand.

"How funny," she said, "it is addressed to Mrs. Warden, and this letter is the same," and she pointed to the envelope which lay beneath the orange one, a quick foreboding of evil passing through her mind. "Let me open this for you, dear," she went on, tearing open the telegram which had arrived too late the day before to be delivered in the remote village of Senley, where Lady Warden lived, and reading it, whilst Lady Warden almost mechanically opened the letter addressed to "Mrs. Warden."

"Oh, Helen, what is it?" she said, in a little pitiful whisper, "here is my own letter to Guy sent back to me. What does it mean?"

"I think, dear, that Guy has had an accident—this telegram says so, and he has been taken to a hospital in London. The letter enlarges on the telegram. See, I will read it to you," and Miss Warden put her arm tenderly round the small trembling figure beside her as she read these words—

"Accident Ward.

"Guy's Hospital.

"July 1st.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I am sorry to have to write and tell you that a gentleman has been brought into the hospital this afternoon in an unconscious condition, apparently having had a bad fall. He was found at the bottom of the steps close to London Bridge Station, but has not recovered consciousness, and can therefore give no account of what had happened to him. The only clue to his identity is the enclosed letter. I have just telegraphed to the address upon it. The visiting surgeon has not yet arrived, but the house-surgeon fears that the gentleman is suffering from a severe injury to his head. In

any case you would of course like to come up at once to see him.

"Much regretting the news I am obliged to tell you,

"I am, yours truly,

"Kathleen Slater,

"(Sister of the Ward.)"

"Do you mean to say they have taken Guy to a common hospital!" Lady Warden exclaimed, springing to her feet. "I must go at once to town and get him moved to somewhere decent; and oh, what can have happened to him? 'Unconscious,' the letter says. How horrible—oh, how horrible! My poor old Guy!" and all at once the little lady broke into a storm of tears.

"Let me go at once," she sobbed; "tell them I must catch the very next train to town. I want to go to Guy, and I must get him out of that dreadful place."

In spite of her own grave anxiety about her brother, Miss Warden smiled a little at the curious combination in her small sister-in-law, of genuine trouble about her husband, and indignation at the idea of his being in such a terrible place as a hospital.

"Poor little Grace," she said to herself, as she hastily packed her own bag, "her saving virtue is her love for Guy. It is the one depth in her shallow little nature. I wonder if it will succeed in deepening the whole? It surely must! What a strange apparition she will seem in a hospital ward! How will she affect it? And still more, how will it affect her?"

CHAPTER III.

It so chanced that Mr. Hancock, the famous surgeon, was "going round," that is to say, paying his visit to the patients in the wards, when Lady Warden and her sister-in-law reached Guy's.

Her little lady-ship shuddered more than once as the two ladies walked across the colonnade, where a few students were lounging, to an open door, pointed out to them by the porter at the gate. And when Lady Warden glanced through the door, she shrank back with a renewed shiver.

"I never went inside a hospital before," she whispered, "and it looks quite dreadful."

Miss Warden smiled as she too looked down the long ward, where the late afternoon sun poured in upon the rows of beds with their clean red and white quilts and general air of trim neatness.

"I don't think it looks very dreadful, Grace dear, I only see very clean nice beds and lovely flowers on the table, and I don't think you need be frightened."

"Frightened? I'm not in the least frightened, but I think the whole place is disgusting," and raising her head with a little haughty gesture, she picked up her dainty skirts rather as if it were a muddy lane she were entering instead of an immaculately clean hospital ward.

The hush and silence, upon which hospital etiquette insists during the doctor's visit, lay over the ward; but as the imperious little lady walked down it, glancing at the beds with a certain disdainful expression, one man said to another in an audible whisper—

"Looks as if she thought we was some new kind of an insect—don't she, 15?"

"And so we are, to 'er sort. She ain't never bin in a 'ospital before, you mark my words, 16. And whatever she's come for now beats me."

Lady Warden's face flushed a little as she caught the words, but she walked quickly on to the corner where the ward turned and another vista of beds met her eye.

A screen was at the foot of one bed, and round this a group of men stood silently, beside them a tall woman in blue uniform, and one or

two nurses. To this group Lady Warden made her way without hesitation, and being entirely unawed by the majesty of a surgeon's "going round," touched the arm of the tall woman in blue. Like the rest of the group round the bed, the Sister was absorbed in listening to Mr. Hancock's words and had not heard the approach of the visitors. She turned with a start and uplifted finger.

But Lady Warden, unaccustomed to hospital discipline or indeed to discipline of any sort, exclaimed impatiently in her clear voice—

"I have come to fetch my husband, Sir Guy Warden. Is he here? And is he better?"

The men round the bed turned quickly at the novel sound of the imperious voice, whilst the Sister said quietly—

"Perhaps you will kindly come to my room, until Mr. Hancock has finished going round, and then he will come and tell you about your husband."

"I shall go nowhere till I have seen my husband," the little lady answered angrily; "where is he? Take me to him, please, then I can see the doctor and arrange to have Sir Guy moved."

"A little less noise, please," a quiet voice intervened, and the group of students divided to make room for the surgeon who came forward, and looked gravely down at the little indignant lady with the flushed face and beautiful clothes.

"Is this lady a friend of the patient?" he asked the Sister shortly.

"She is 22's wife, I think," the tall woman answered, and the surgeon turned again to Lady Warden and looked at her closely. Those keen eyes of his gauged pretty rapidly the nature of the woman before him; but there was kindness as well as keenness in the shrewd grey eyes that looked into her blue ones.

"Your husband is going on satisfactorily, madam," he said. "If you will be good enough to go with Sister to her room for a few minutes only, I will come to you; I cannot talk to you here," and he turned back to the bed again.

Lady Warden opened her mouth, but no words came. Sheer, ungovernable astonishment had silenced her, and also to her own no small surprise it made her walk down the long ward again to the Sister's room and recklessly take the seat offered her there, and with equal meekness listen to the few courteous words in which Sister told her of her husband's condition.

No one—no one in her whole life had ever spoken to her as though there were no doubt of her obedience, and she had hardly even recovered her breath again before the surgeon reappeared.

"Forgive my abruptness," he said courteously, "but I am sure you will understand that in a place like a hospital certain laws must be obeyed or we should have anarchy. Now I am glad to be able to tell you that your husband is going on satisfactorily, though he is very, very ill. He was conscious this morning, and has been able to tell us that he thinks he slipped on the steps close to London Bridge Station, but he remembers nothing after that. I will gladly allow you to see him, on condition that you are perfectly quiet and in no way excite him."

"Allow me?" Lady Warden's small proud head became very erect; "he is my husband. Of course I shall be with him. I must be with him."

"Yes, madam, he is your husband, of course, but he is also my patient," the surgeon spoke drily, "and it is my business to cure him. I will arrange that you shall be here as much of the day as can be managed, because your husband is seriously ill; but you will kindly recollect that, as I said before, a hospital has its laws."

"Oh, but you are making a mistake," his listener broke in: "of course my husband will not stay here! It is quite impossible that he should stop in a hospital and in a ward with common people too. I want to arrange to have him moved at once into comfortable rooms."

The surgeon smiled.

"My dear lady," he said, "I am sorry to say that what you wish is quite out of the question. It is absolutely impossible that your husband should be moved! The risk would be far too great; I could not sanction such a step, his life would be seriously endangered. I assure you it is not possible to move him yet. Pray believe me he is being well taken care of here. I do not think he minds his quarters at all."

The little lady, with the pretty haughty face, looked up into the kindly capable one of the great surgeon, and suddenly, and for the first time in her life, felt herself to be a person of small importance. This man was a king here, it was his domain! She was of no account! It mattered to nobody in that great busy ward that she was Lady Warden, to whom everyone in the village at home courtseyed and bowed almost reverentially. Here she was only "22's wife." It was very strange, and strangest of all, she found herself assenting meekly to Mr. Hancock's words and agreeing to take rooms in the nearest hotel, and to come in and out of the hospital as much as she was allowed.

So it came to pass that she was soon a familiar figure in the ward, and the patients grew keenly interested in her goings and comings. To her they were at first only, as 15 had justly remarked, like a "new sort of insect!" It was deeply rooted in her mind that they were of different clay from that which had gone to the moulding of her own dainty personality; and it never for a moment entered her head that their feelings could in any way coincide with hers.

To them she was like a being from another world, and her lovely face and dainty clothes did not at first impress them altogether favourably, and they called her "erly." But her love for her husband, her intense, overwhelming anxiety about him, made a fresh impression upon them. The sight of her pretty wistful face and small patient figure sitting quietly by 22 bed for as many hours as she was allowed to do so, made the rough men round the ward talk softly of "22's wife." He was so very, very ill that she was allowed to be with him nearly all day, and each evening when she went away her small face looked smaller and whiter, and there were darker lines under her eyes.

The interest in 22 was enormous.

"Pore 22, 'e's bad," the men said to one another, "and 'is wife, she's breakin' 'er 'eart, pore thing."

It was Wednesday, and visiting day in the big hospital. Lady Warden sat silently watching the visitors making their way to the different beds, their hands full of flowers, their faces beaming. Every bed in the ward had its share of two visitors, except 21, the one next to her husband's, in which lay a man who had been brought in only that morning from the great railway station close by, badly injured.

Guy was asleep, and his wife, as she sat and watched, began to grow faintly interested in the little scenes being enacted round her; and then she fell to wondering why no one had yet come to the patient in 21 bed. She marked the deathly whiteness of the patient's face, the deep lines that pain had carved in its youthful good looks; and then something made her aware of the anguished watchfulness in the eyes that were turned wistfully towards the door. But the stream of visitors all seemed to have entered by now; no one was moving in the ward except the nurses on duty, and the

wistful eyes turned from their patient watching whilst a great sigh broke from the white lips.

"She ain't 'a comin'," Lady Warden heard him whisper, and a look of weary disappointment settled down over his tired face as the minutes passed swiftly by.

Then all at once, only twenty minutes before visiting time was over, a swift step sounded on the boards and a slight woman's form came hastily to 21 bed.

"Why, Jem lad," the woman said, and her voice was hoarse and broken by a pitiful sob: "why, Jem lad, I've been achin' to come to yer since they sent and told me, and I couldn't get away nohow."

Lady Warden's eyes suddenly filled with tears, and to the end of her life she will never forget the joy that came into the face of the man who looked up into the small woman's face.

"Well, Lizer, old woman," he said softly, "well, old woman," and the little woman stooped over him and wrapt her arms round him as though she could never hold him closely enough, and showered passionate kisses on his white face and tired eyes, and the mouth that was drawn with pain and yet had a smile of love for her.

Then she sat down by his side and took his hand in hers, but they did not talk; the man was too ill for that, and the little woman could only sit and look with wistful yearning eyes at the grey, tired face upon the pillow.

Lady Warden glanced from that bed to 22, and the white face there, the face that was all the world to her. And all at once the tears in her eyes brimmed over and fell in great, heavy splashes upon her clasped hands.

The eyes of the little woman by 21 bed left her husband's face for a moment and fell upon the dainty lady so close to her, and on the tears streaming down the lovely young face. Lizer's dress was coarse and worn; her head was covered only with an ancient shawl that had long ago seen its best days. She had come straight from her work in the great chocolate factory close by to see Jem, and had come in her working clothes.

But Lizer's heart was very tender, even if her dress was shabby and her shoes full of holes. And though the time in which she could sit by Jem was so very, very short, she got up from her seat and stole softly to the other woman's side.

"'Is 'e bad, ma'am?" she whispered sympathetically, touching Lady Warden's sleeve with gentle hand; "is 22 your 'usband?"

And Lady Warden forgot that the woman standing by her was poor and shabby and not particularly clean. She forgot that, according to her, she and Lizer were made of different clay and could not at all understand each other's feelings! She only saw the honest, kindly tenderness shining out of the sorrowful eyes that looked down at her; only felt the sympathy of the touch of her arm; only remembered that this woman would comprehend what Guy's illness meant, because her husband was ill too.

"Yes," she said with a little sob, "he is all I have got, and—"

"It do seem bad, that it do, and 'e so young and all. It is 'ard on a pretty lady like you, ma'am."

Something in the words, something in the dry tearlessness of the eyes above her suddenly arrested Lady Warden's tears.

"Why," she said impulsively, "it isn't a bit worse for me than it is for you. That is your husband, isn't it?" and she looked at the grey face in the next bed.

"Yes, that's my Jem;" a little quiver came into Lizer's voice. "'E's bin a good husband to me, 'e has, and it do seem 'ard as 'e should 'a bin hurt. But it don't seem so bad for me like, ma'am, as it do for you. I'm more used to trouble like."

The words were simply said. They were merely the statement of a profound unanswerable truth. But they startled Lady Warden. A flash of illumination came to her shallow little soul.

She took Lizer's hand into her own small white one.

"You don't deserve it a bit more than I do," she said, "and it is a thousand times harder for you than for me. You can only come to him for such a short time, whilst I stay on here. Oh, it isn't fair."

"I could stay too, ma'am, now Jem's so bad. They lets yer stay; if yer sick folk's awful bad, but I can't leave the work, not for long, else where 'ud the money come from now Jem's took? And when the work's done, there's the children. It do seem 'ard, but there, there's lot 'o things to put up with in this world."

"Oh, I am sorry for you!" Lady Warden said impulsively, "and I do hope your Jem will get well."

Lizer's eyes grew dim as she turned and looked at her husband.

"Pore chap?" she said, "pore chap, 'im and me, we've 'ad a good time together, though there've bin troubles enough. 'Eve bin good to me, and we've loved each other faithful. 'E ain't never beat me nor nothin' 'o that. If Jem don't get well, it'll be like as if the sun was gone! But your 'usband e'll get well, ma'am, never you fear," the little woman added cheerfully; "'e ain't got death in 'is face."

And Lizer's words came true. Sir Guy did get well, though it was by very slow degrees, and to this day he has never been able to remember any details of his fall. He became a great favourite in the ward before he went away, and what was perhaps more strange, his wife became a great favourite too.

She and Lizer had many more talks after that first breaking of the ice, and Guy used to lie and watch—with much amusement and very great delight—the growing friendship between his fastidious and exclusive little wife and the small factory woman from the Boro'.

Jem too got better, contrary to every prophecy, but it was a very white, tottering Jem who began to crawl about the ward on a day in August, and the doctors said that he would never be able to do his heavy railway work again.

It was when Lizer heard that that she broke down for the only time in all her long strain and anxiety.

"For," she said to Lady Warden, "I dunno whatever 'e will do, pore chap. 'E ain't used to no other kind of work, Jem ain't, and there's the children to think of and all."

Yes, "the children to think of and all." Lady Warden knew what that meant now. She had been to see Lizer in her own home; such a home as the small dainty aristocrat had never even dreamt of in her wildest dreams.

The one bare almost unfurnished room, for which Lizer apologised with the explanation that was Greek at first to Lady Warden—"I 'ad to put away all our bits of things, ma'am, when Jem was took; some day I'll get 'em out maybe." The three small children, the eldest scarcely more than a baby, the other two who were babies indeed; the utter heart-breaking misery and poverty of it all touched a new chord in the hitherto selfish little heart. And what perhaps impressed Lady Warden more than anything, was Lizer's unflinching cheerfulness, her pluck, and the brisk readiness she showed always to look on the best side of everything.

"I don't know how she does it," she said to her husband; "why doesn't she just sit down and die—give it all up?"

"She is a plucky little soul," Guy said. "Plucky? She is just simply wonderful!"

I always thought before, Guy, that pluck went with breeding, but it doesn't. Lizer has got more pluck in her little finger than I have in my whole body."

Needless to say, Lizer's "bits of things" speedily came home when Lady Warden discovered what "putting away" meant. Needless also to add that many comforts came into Lizer's hard life, undreamt of before by the "game little woman" as Guy called her. And when it was decreed that Jem's work must henceforth be confined to the very lightest labour, Lady Warden said to her husband—

"Oh, Guy, can't we have them somewhere on the estate? Those little white children and Lizer and poor Jem. Can't we, Guy?"

Guy smiled at his wife's eagerness, and his heart rejoiced over it. Had he not longed with all his soul that his dear little Grace should interest herself in something and somebody other than her butterfly life and her fashionable friends—with a longing that had well-nigh sickened into despair?

And it has come about that a certain tiny cottage on the edge of Sir Guy Warden's park is occupied by a most beaming and radiant family party, who feel that their dwelling is absolutely palatial after the one room in the Boro'.

Jem does odd jobs in and about the garden and park, and already looks a different man; and Lizer's anxious face has grown younger and less worn, whilst she seems to live in a state of one broad smile. She—indeed the

whole family—almost worship Guy and his wife, and the other poor people in the village find a curious difference in Lady Warden since her long sojourn in London.

"She do seem to have learnt summat as she didn't know afore," one old man said to another the other day.

"Ees, so she do," his friend replied; "seems to me she've a-learnt as there's some things as is the same atween us and her, and she didn't use to think so afore. That's where it is, Joe; she've a-learnt as natur' is natur' all the world over."

Which lucid explanation perhaps conveyed to Joe's mind what a greater than Joe has conveyed to ours that—"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin."

L. G. MOBERLY.

BICYCLING TO HEALTH AND FORTUNE.

By LAWRENCE LISTON, M.D.

PART II. THE RIDER.



HERE must be very few girls indeed, except those whose state of health prevents outdoor exercise of every kind, to whom bicycling is impossible or undesirable. It must be borne in mind, however, that to a beginner it is a new form of exercise, calling in to play muscles otherwise little used, easily inducing weariness of those muscles and of

the body generally, and demanding at first frequent periods of rest. Hence the exercise is not adapted for very young girls of imperfect muscle development and unstable frame. However light the machine may be, I do not think that girls under the age of fourteen or fifteen should cycle. It is positively painful to watch young girls striving with all their might to keep up with their seniors, straining every muscle that they should strengthen. No ordinarily intelligent person watching such a sad exhibition can for a moment doubt that harm is being done. Such a child never becomes a graceful rider, but rather perpetuates the ugly habit of evident over-exertion.

Assuming that there is no special reason why a girl should not cycle, it is well that while she is learning to ride she should go into a mild form of training. The cold morning bath in the summer, the tepid one in the winter, with plain, wholesome food and regular walking exercise (preferably up and down hill) will form admirable preparations for cycling.

This preliminary course of training is not of trivial import, especially to those who have, up to the time of learning to ride, led sedentary lives. How many people are yearly injured through rushing straight from their offices and studies to the Swiss mountains? A little of this mild preliminary training at home and the calamity of over-exertion is avoided.

One of the most important considerations for a cyclist is that of suitable dress. Perhaps the greatest danger to health in this exercise lies in the possibility of an over-heating of the body followed by a rapid cooling. Much can be done to avert this particular

danger by the choice of such materials for dress as maintain the body as nearly as possible at a constant temperature. The under-clothing, which must be made of wool or flannel, should completely cover the body from wrists to ankles, thus excluding draughts and absorbing perspiration. It is, however, important that this woollen or flannel under-clothing should not be too heavy, for if it be so the rider will incur the very danger she is seeking to avoid—that is overheating.

Nobody can ride a bicycle properly in boots. The action of the ankle, which, as we shall presently see, is the secret of graceful and easy riding, is almost annulled by any attempt to do so. The right things to be worn are shoes with gaiters. The stockings worn whilst riding should vary in thickness according to the period of the year, great care being taken that, in winter, they are not too thin.

The question of the skirt is one that demands careful attention on the part of the girl rider. What can be more annoying than a skirt which is at the mercy of every little puff of wind, or more dangerous than one which catches the pedals or any moving part of the machine, and so gets wound up? A skirt well cut and of proper material will not only look well but, by impeding the rider in the least possible degree, aid in the attainment of speed with small exertion and save her from the dreadful danger of becoming entangled in her machine.

The skirt that is to fulfil these requirements must not reach lower than the ankles, and should be of about sixty inches in circumference at the bottom. Many tailors, in order to ensure the proper hanging of the skirt, put in metal weights. This is a mistake; it often causes an incessant and most annoying knocking against some portion of the machine which it may tax the ingenuity of the rider to explain, and for which I have known a machine to be sent back to the agent who sold it, for the purpose of having it pulled to pieces to discover the cause. All such devices are quite unnecessary in a well-cut skirt.

The skirt should be of light cloth, brown holland or linen for summer wear, and a thicker cloth or serge for winter time; they should not be lined, and the best colours are brown and grey. All cycling skirts should, of course, be provided with elastic loops to go round the instep and so prevent the dress from being blown about. The ever useful blouse is of the greatest service to the girl who cycles, but she should exercise moderation in the width of the sleeves, as the wind catches them sometimes unpleasantly.

A matter which deserves a little careful attention is the question as to what is the right thing to wear if there is rain. In my opinion all forms of mackintosh or india-rubber coats or capes are not only inefficient, but actually harmful and dangerous. Even at the end of a short ride in an india-rubber cape the rider is simply wet with perspiration. The wet which you certainly keep in is worse than the wet which you may or may not keep out. Far better to ride through the rain, if the distance be short and a change of raiment await you at your destination. Assuming, however, that you must ride a considerable distance in the rain, it is best to have a cape made of a cloth treated so as to keep out all but the heaviest rain, and so cut as to extend well over the handle-bar; the edge of the cape which hangs over the bar should be weighted so as not to be easily blown up (loops are not usually satisfactory), and in this way not only the arms and trunk will be kept dry but the legs also.

Method, as in many other things, is of great service in riding a bicycle; the girl who does not use her bicycle for days together and then makes a sudden call on its resources is certainly doomed to discomfort and disappointment. Unless the weather should absolutely forbid the attempt it is a good rule to ride, if only a little every day; once you have "got into condition" it is a pity to be obliged to attain that state all over again every time you venture out. Besides this you will find that regular riders avoid occasional riders, as they are prone to be rather a nuisance to their better seasoned companions. Ride regularly and you will ride pleasantly, easily and without effort; in no other way can the joys of cycling be reached, and everyone must go through the necessary drudgery of getting into condition with its attendant weariness and muscle pains before she can ride without conscious effort.

At first the beginner should ride out on a straight country road, choosing one as free from hills and traffic as possible, and one having a good smooth surface; she should ride out for about two miles and then return to change her clothing at once and have a rub down with a good big bath-towel. First rides should not be taken except in company with some one experienced in riding, who should keep a short distance ahead during the whole time. The next venture should take the form of a circular ride of about six miles, the object of this sort of ride being that the cyclist should not stop anywhere and so suddenly cool down after becoming hot from

her exertions. Heat and damp are of comparatively little moment so that you keep moving, the danger lies in standing or sitting still.

Attention to certain details ensures the ride being a source of health; carelessness in little matters may convert a health-giving pastime into an injurious labour. This remark has especial application in the matter of posture when cycling for health. No leaning over the handle-bars can be for a moment tolerated; the rider should sit erect on her machine; should you find that you cannot get up an incline without stooping over the bar—get off. Some girls, though they sit in a very fairly upright position, repeatedly pull hard at the handles in order to get up a hill. If you do this you do two things, you strain your machine and you strain yourself. It is a wise rule to get off if you find yourself pulling at the handles. A discreet rider should never allow herself to be taxed to the limit of her powers but should always have some reserve force in hand.

Economy of strength is really one of the great secrets of success in pleasant and healthy cycling. It is one thing to merely sit on a bicycle seat and propel the machine, and altogether another to "ride" it.

Foremost among the ways of economising strength is the proper use of the ankles; the rider who "ankles" well will cover more ground in less time and with far less effort than her uninitiated companion. This anklng is by no means an instinctive action, it requires attentive and assiduous practice for its proper attainment, but it well repays the girl rider for all the trouble entailed. Briefly put, it means pushing the pedal at the earliest possible moment after it has attained its highest point and dropping the heel directly it arrives at the lowest point. Once get complete command of this knack, and the disparity between you, if you are a weak rider, and your strongest friends will be almost unnoticeable. Anklng is a great leveller of riders, and a wonderful remover of the terrors of hills. Limit as much as you can the action of the knees and hips and you will, to a certain extent, force your ankles to do their proper work; the gracefulness of the action is, of course, obvious and undeniable.

Moderation must be the key-note of all beneficial cycling for girls; there must be no feeling of being done up after a ride, and if after riding, there is disinclination for food, that ride has not done the rider much good. Riding at too great a pace is a fruitful source of discomfort and injury and it is a tendency which must be carefully repressed; when a rider is in training fatigue is but little noticed until the end of a long ride, then there may be

disinclination for food, and at night, restlessness with actual fever and inability to sleep. A girl who has gone through this experience during the night is not fit for much in the morning, and all the trouble might have been avoided by a little moderation in pace.

The distance ridden during each day is hardly of the same importance as the rate at which the miles are covered. I do not think that a girl of ordinary strength does herself much harm if she rides an average of a hundred miles a week at the average rate of nine miles an hour. I am, of course, speaking of fine weather riding on reasonably good roads. The three things which modify these averages are wind, rain and hills; most of the high roads of this country are kept in such a state of perfection that the question of surface may be ignored in this article.

The greatest enemy of all is wind; the resistance offered by a strong head-wind may be enormous, and great harm may be done by the rider attempting to face it. If you particularly wish to indulge in your exercise on a windy day and your purse will permit it, the best thing to be done is to take your machine by train some miles out against the wind and then to ride back in the direction in which it is blowing. Do not start off to ride from home with the wind and train back, for you may be over-heated when you enter the train and so easily catch cold.

Nervous tension completely negatives any possible benefit in a ride, and one should therefore strive in every way to avoid everything that may produce that condition. The unpleasant and sometimes disastrous manœuvre familiarly known as "side-slip" or "skidding," holds a foremost place among these things to be avoided. I know of nothing which will daunt a timid rider more than skidding. The chief factor in its production is a greasy or sticky road, the result of rain, and I do not recommend the girl who hears her brothers or friends say that the roads are causing this misery to take her machine out for that day. With reference to this topic of nerve-strain it may as well be stated now that town riding in dense traffic should be rigidly avoided; the worry, even though it be an unconscious worry, of steering through a crowded thoroughfare must be harmful, quite apart from the physical danger incurred. Such a performance must be classed with gymkhana or trick riding, with the added danger of the surrounding vehicles.

Though it is desirable to maintain as far as possible a level pace throughout your ride, some variation must be made in the ascent and descent of hills of varying gradients. Should you come to a short hill, a gradual acceleration of pace for some little distance before its

commencement will often enable you to climb it with ease. The acceleration, like all changes of pace, must be gradual; no sudden tugs or jerks can be recommended on a bicycle. It must be carefully remembered that this method of climbing is only applicable to short rises in the road. For longer hills zigzagging may be tried, but if the rider finds that she is stooping or pulling at her handles or in any way unduly taxing her strength, she had far better walk; the walking in such an instance is doubly beneficial in that it rests one set of muscles and exercises another.

"Coasting" or riding down hill with the feet on the foot-rests of the machine is best confined to male riders in a country with which they are thoroughly familiar. When a girl rider goes downhill she should see that her brake is well in hand and she should never allow the machine to get away from the control of the pedals on any hill. It is well to be more especially careful in an unfamiliar country and not to relax your attention until you see the bottom of the hill. Taking into consideration the possibility of entanglement of the skirt in the pedals, it is perhaps safer and wiser not to coast at all.

Touring is not dealt with in connection with health riding as it is only girls blessed with exceptional physique who can indulge in it. The large majority of girls will do better to make some place their headquarters and take rides in various directions. The necessity of getting to a certain place by a certain time and the possible fallacies in the transit of luggage are thus avoided.

Apart from considerations of health this modern cycle is of inestimable use to working girls; the teacher can get with ease to far distant pupils and extend the area of her labours whilst economising time. It is no unusual sight to see a district nurse in the country places visiting her widely-scattered patients on her machine. The seamstress, the girl clerk and the workers in shops are all the better fitted to be bread-winners by their brief but happy glimpses of the country, if it be but once a week that they escape from their enforced confinement.

Surely then every encouragement should be given to the rational use of this great outcome of clever minds, for who can doubt the benefit and profit to be obtained from the inspiring and exhilarating exercise which brings us to the sweet smells and sights and sounds of the country where the evidences of the working of the great Creator are least obscured by monuments to the effort of man.

Truly the girl who takes advantage of these opportunities and uses them will soon realise that she has bicycled to health and fortune.

VARIETIES.

IN SEARCH OF HEALTH.

We have boiled the hydrant water,
We have sterilised the milk;
We have strained the prowling microbe
Through the finest kind of silk;
We have bought and we have borrowed
Every patent health device;
And at last the doctor tells us
That we've got to boil the ice.

SEASONABLE.

Last summer a dealer in fuel in the West End of London, being unable to clear out his stock, posted the following notice on his door:—
"Good firewood for the summer season, giving out very little heat."

A TALE OF THE TELEPHONE.

An old farmer was in a merchant's office and asked if he could supply the merchant with some fresh butter.

The merchant told him that he would inquire if his wife needed any. So he stepped up to the telephone, called her up, and talked for a few seconds through the instrument. Then, turning to the countryman, who was standing with his hands in his pockets, his eyes dilated, and his face very red, he told him that his wife said she would not need any butter.

The indignant countryman blurted out, "Look here, mister, if you don't want any butter, why didn't you say so? I ain't such an idiot as to think that you've got your wife shut up in that little box."

CLAIMING KINDRED WITH THE KING.

A poor man presenting himself before Philip II. of Spain asked for charity, telling him he was his brother.

"How do you claim kindred?" said the King.

"Oh," replied the man, "we are all descended from one common father and mother—Adam and Eve."

On that the King gave him a small copper coin.

The poor man then began to grumble, saying, "Is it possible that your Majesty will give no more than this to your brother?"

"Away with you," replied the King; "if all the brothers you have in the world give you as much as I have done, you will be richer than I am."



A HOUSE DRESS AND AN EVENING GOWN.

FROCKS FOR TO-MORROW.

By "THE LADY DRESSMAKER."

ONE of the great regrets that we have this season is to find that skirts are to become longer, and that our comfortable short ones are to be declared unfashionable. Such an alteration should have been made at the beginning of the summer, not at the moment when we have to encounter London mud, country roads, or the unswept streets of small towns. The skirts of very smart gowns quite touch the ground, or even rest on it for over an inch; a wretched length for walking, and so difficult to hold up. However, I feel inclined to think, from my own observation, that the many who have to go to and fro without carriages will continue to like, and wear, the short skirt. We are more independent in our ways of dressing than we were; and, though the advance is not great, still we can hold our own opinions in some degree. Of course, so long as we have the bicycle to ride, we shall be compelled to have the short skirt; and I notice that most women of moderate means content themselves with a bicycle costume, which will answer for walking as well.

There is no doubt at all of the popularity of tartans this winter; and for blouses they are immensely used, both in silk and woollen fabrics. The wide box-pleat is again to be seen, and it has, of course, fancy buttons in the centre as of yore. Tucks also remain in fashion, but many of the newest blouses are made on the cross, especially if the tartan used be a large one. Here quiet colours are preferred; but in Paris the largest-sized tartans and the brightest colours are used, and no doubt look charming under that clear sky, where they would keep clean much longer than in dirty London. The Russian blouse shape is the one most liked, and it is made to bag over the waistband all round, in the prettiest new blouses. Velvet of the prevailing hue of the tartan is used for waist and collar-bands; and this is an excellent addition, and improves the appearance very much, besides taking off a little from the rawness of the tartan. This rawness or glaringness of it has been the reason, I believe, why it has never had any great popularity in England; and it is strange that everyone has a feeling of it, though few people go further than to say it looks too showy and bright.

The fashionable tartans are not Scotch, but are those for which the French have always been fond, namely, fancy tartans; and they are certainly, some of them, very pretty and even mellow in their colouring.

The Russian blouse is, of course, the thing to wear; but the ever-useful cape has by no means disappeared, and there is no fear that it will, in view of the numbers of handsome ones that have been prepared by the furriers and are worn by the best-dressed women. These are mixtures of fur and velvet, with handsome *passementerie* and lace. In fact, nothing is more remarkable than the manipulation of fur this year, and nothing shows the pitch to which the tanning and preparation of all kinds of pelts has been brought, and their wonderful suppleness. The fur flounces are as soft, or softer, than cloth would

be, and when put on over the shoulders yield as easily as if they were made of velvet. The improvement in electric seal this year

is very great; and I was surprised to see the prices asked for capes made of this material at the West End shops. Of course they



A RUSSIAN BLOUSE AND FUR CAPE.



A LONG MOUJIK JACKET.

looked nearly as well as the real thing, and were beautifully lined, and finished with equally good materials and work.

We illustrate a velvet Russian blouse, trimmed with a narrow edge of chinchilla fur, and with it a fur cape. These represent the last ideas in London, though it is said that the next idea is already in existence and will be seen at no very long distance off, and that is the three-quarter length coat, which, perhaps, my readers will remember was depicted in the last number of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. I heard that many of them were already worn; but amongst the well-dressed people in the Park, I cannot say I have seen any, but I have no doubt that some kind of tight-fitting coat or jacket will make its appearance soon, as they generally come in after a reign of loose-fitting coats. Meanwhile, we who have Russian blouses or capes need not be uneasy, for we are quite up-to-date. The bands worn at the waist of some

of the handsome Russian blouses are very handsome, but rather too bright; and I am glad to say that I have seen some very handsome leather belts, which seem more suitable.

Just now the small fur necklets are worn outside the high collars, not inside—where really there seems no room for them. The feather ruff is very fashionable, more so than the short feather boa, and it is a very becoming finish to the costume.

And now a word must be devoted to skirts, about which so many stories have been told; but which seem to have settled down, and show no remarkable change after all. We have not lost the stiffening and the horse-hair, for all skirts are stiffened quite as much as ever, and even silk petticoats are stiffened to the knee. This is so much the case, that there has arisen a talk of crinoline; but I do not think this is more than the irresponsible

chatter of a few fashion scribblers, who bring this threat up periodically, when the times are dull and there is nothing to say. The new skirts are fitted most carefully round the waist and the hips; and no good dress-maker now neglects this part of her duty, which is as important as the fitting of the bodice. The fitting of all the new skirts is also tighter, probably, down as far as the knee, and there is a tendency to return to the old-fashioned umbrella cut. Indeed, many things are now cut on the bias, including tartan bodices and blouses, which are considered to look better in this manner.

In the way of trimmings, there are quantities of ruffles still to be seen; and I also notice that knife-pleated or kilted flounces begin to show themselves, and the pretty accordion-pleated skirts are as much used as ever. In one of our illustrations a very pretty evening gown will be seen, made in thin China silk, with lace insertions. Evening blouses are also made of this silk, and are girlish and pretty. I think that blouses are really more popular than ever, and amongst the very nicest may be reckoned those of tartan velvet, which have made their appearance in the West End shops. White linen collars and cuffs are still worn with velvet, and even silk blouses, as well as woollen ones, and no doubt they are becoming to many young faces, but not, I think, to anyone past girlhood. The lace blouses are very pretty. White lace over black, and black lace over a colour, are both decidedly elegant; and the sleeves of all of them are made of the lace alone, which gives them a transparent, dressy appearance, suitable for evening wear. Large buckles of paste, jewelled and gilt, are now

placed at the back of the bodice, on the waistband, and not in the front. Cut steel are, perhaps, the most fashionable, and they are a long square in shape. Buckles are in great favour for putting in everywhere; into the centre of bows of ribbon and rosettes on millinery and evening dress.

All millinery may be described as rather gorgeous in colour, and exuberant in decoration. However, as it is pretty, we can afford to overlook some of its drawbacks. The toque is everywhere, and is worn like the straight-brimmed sailor hat, straight over the forehead, while the large hat, and the torador are much slanted on one side. Bonnets are smaller, and nearly all have two or three feathers upstanding at the side; and one marvels to see the art of curling applied to every kind of feather, even cocks' feathers, which seem so handsome as they naturally are.

It seems as if all one's clothing, both masculine and feminine, had to pass through the hands of the scientists, and prove its right to be called healthy and hygienic in wear. The last thing that has fallen into the hands of the enemy, is starched clothing; and I quote from a recent newspaper account as to how it has fared in their examination of it.

"Prof. Max Rubner, who lectures on hygiene at the Berlin University, has published a very interesting article on the use of starched underlinen in summer. After extensive and careful investigation he has come to the conclusion that starched linen forms a very strong obstacle to the discharge of heat, an influence that becomes stronger in proportion as the outside temperature rises. In winter, when we try hard to retain our bodily heat, the protection given by starched linen is very small, on account of the low temperature on the outside, and in summer, when we try as hard to cool off as much as possible, starched linen energetically keeps the heat in. It is true enough that with the rising temperature perspiration will dissolve the starch, but even then it is very disagreeably felt. In this condition it closes up the pores of the linen, and renders difficult the entrance of dry air to the skin, and it is just the fresh and dry air that gives us coolness in summer."

I have recently mentioned that linen underwear, for ordinary use, has again returned to fashion; but it is not low enough in price to become possible of acquirement to the ordinary purse. The German Father Kniepp is the person to bring its benefits into general notice; but the linen he accepted as good was so porous as to be lace-like in its appearance; or so thick and heavy, that it seemed impossible to bear such a thing near one. This peculiar linen is "made in Germany," but Father Kniepp advocated linen because it dried more quickly than woollen; and he considered the retention of moisture by the latter an effectual bar to its use. And as you may be interested to hear it, I will further mention that the advocates of the linen garments have found a text to enforce their beliefs in Ezekiel xlv. 17. "They shall be clothed with linen garments, and no wool shall come upon them." When you go a little further, however, and look up the text for yourself, you will very quickly see that the ordinance had nothing to do with the ordinary Israelite, but was applied to a different class altogether. The thick and heavy linen was the first that Kniepp recommended, the open-work linen was an afterthought; and he believed that the warm air surrounded the body, and was entangled in its meshes. Thus it was warmer and dried more quickly than any other material. At any rate, the tremendous craze for woollen seems to be passing away in Germany, and perhaps a fresh craze will take its place.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PART III.

SOUPS AND SOUP-MAKING.

"Nothing surely is so disgraceful to society as an unmeaning wastefulness."

Count Rumford.

It has been said—we will hope for the sake of our national credit that the statement is not true—that what one-half of society wastes would be sufficient for the other half to live upon. Even if this be not a "true bill" to bring against the wealthy as a class, it is unquestionably true that in the kitchens of the rich waste exists in a deplorable quantity. Unfortunately for us, the "unmeaning wastefulness" against which Count Rumford inveighs, is not confined to the rich; it exists in the middle-class households, and, for lack of knowledge, it exists largely amongst the working class, and even the very poor.

Only nature is untouched by this vice. She wastes nothing; even for "refuse" she has a use, and many uses. Never a plant grows but what has a function to fulfil; and if in some places she grows an abundance and in others allows a dearth, she but calls upon man to exert his powers and bring about the interchange that shall equalise the distribution. The world holds an ample provision of foods of all kinds for all creatures, but there is none to spare. We learn this latter fact when we go into a few statistics concerning the provisioning of a city like London.

In a useful book called *How London Lives*, the writer, who has collected his information first hand from reliable sources, tells us that out of the thousands of tons of fish alone, which come into the central markets and also direct to consumers, counting the whelk and the mussel as equally a unit with the salmon, the supply is not quite one fish per day per person, in this city. Of game and poultry, including the extra supplies at Christmas, the supply is not one bird per week per head, and we know there are thousands who never taste bird-flesh at all during the year, while there are a few hundreds who regard game and poultry as absolutely indispensable to their table. With meat the same rule of proportion exists, there is something under a pound per head per day brought into and distributed in the metropolis. Of milk, fruit, vegetables, bread and other "necessary" things the same may be said, in a slightly varying degree. What then becomes of the margin of surplus which we suppose exists when we see waste so lightly regarded? The fiction vanishes when we realise that the smallest waste means the direct robbery of one of our fellow-creatures—perhaps of many.

In wealthy households the food passes too frequently into the care of servants; these, springing from that strata of society which causes waste because of ignorance, have less regard still for that which is paid for by another, and are reckless in their use of it. Too much in quantity is ordered, and what is not used is thrown aside or suffered to rot; nothing can be made except by buying ingredients expressly for the dish, the "leavings" are always too insignificant to be of any account, and the very suggestion of economy is scouted by those who reign belowstairs.

If there is no excuse for such a state of affairs in the upper strata of society, there is still less excuse for those of the middle rank, for these have matters largely in their own hands to make or to mar. They have intelligence too, and books and papers that can help and instruct; if they will not see evil it is because they are willfully blind. The wealthy are largely in the power of their

servants, the code of their society prevents them from coming very closely in contact with these even when they have the will, and one establishment is much like another in the order of its maintenance, but for the middle-class household such a position is quite untenable. Although waste is not so noticeable amongst the latter, it is impossible to say that it does not exist.

Want of management, method, and forethought, are the causes of waste here, just as they are amongst the working poor.

Waste, be it noted here, is not simply an abusing of food, but it also includes that want of economy that is shown by not knowing how to extract the greatest amount of nourishment out of the materials that are used.

When we realise that it is waste of food and food materials that really impoverishes a country, we shall understand that the practice of economy in its preparation is not merely a saving to our pockets, but is a duty that we owe to our fellow-creatures. Those who now die—literally—from starvation might be saved from death many times over by the food that is—literally—thrown away.

Of all forms of economy in the art of preparing food there is none more striking than that which is illustrated by the soup pot. The French are a nation of cooks, and they cannot afford to dine without soup, for in nine times out of ten the soup represents a saving and not an extra expenditure.

It must be a small household indeed that has not trimmings, bones, and odd scraps enough to supply a small stock-pot, and even if stock of this kind be lacking, we have a score of soups that require no stock, no bones nor meat whatsoever in their composition, yet they are nourishing, satisfying and cheap; and because they satisfy they are economisers of the meat course which follows them.

Personally I do not favour the use of stock as a foundation for soups; I reserve it for gravies, sauces and the like. So also does the French cook. *Bouillon*, or the broth from fresh beef, mutton or veal, fowls, etc., after boiling, is the clear soup to which he gives preference, varying it by distinctive flavours, but never spoiling it by cooking it a second time over with other bones, thickenings, colourings, etc. To do this is, in his opinion, a grave error.

Vegetable soups, when properly made, require no stock, and *consommé*, a soup quite apart from all others, cannot rightly be made from stock. But, soups apart, a small stock-pot—preferably a brown stone jar with lid—is an indispensable adjunct to a kitchen. Bones left at the table, if washed in warm water, should all add their remaining juices to the stock-pot. Bear in mind, please, that stock should never be allowed to boil, but only to simmer, that long, gentle stewing may extract all the goodness from even the most obdurate bone. Chop all bones with a hatchet into quite small pieces. The stock that is made from bones will usually be found to be a firm jelly when cold, owing to the gelatine that is concealed in the bones, while that made from fresh meat rarely sets.

In hot weather stock should be poured off the bones as soon as it is well cooked, then it should be re-heated every day.

Soups in general we may divide into three classes, clear, thickened, and *purées*. The distinction between a thickened soup and a *purée* lies in the fact of the former owing its consistency to some thickening agent, such as rice, tapioca, potato or corn-flour, etc., while a *purée* is obtained by a careful rubbing of all the ingredients through a tamis or wire sieve. Peas-soup is really a *purée* of peas, tomato soup a *purée* of tomatoes, etc.

When rice, vermicelli or macaroni are added to a clear soup they should have been previously boiled in water, otherwise they will be liable to give a cloudy appearance to the soup.

It is not customary to serve the vegetables in the tureen when true *bouillon* is intended; they are generally passed around separately; if vegetables are added it is better to treat the soup as a *julienne*, and cut them all into small even strips.

If a clear soup is to be thickened use tapioca or potato flour (*féoule*) as the medium. When added early enough tapioca will dissolve and lose all its grain. A small teaspoonful of potato flour (dissolved in cold water first) is sufficient to thicken a pint of clear soup.

For thickened soup that is not required to be clear there are many agents to be employed. Bread is one that is largely favoured in France and Switzerland, either broken up and put into the pot with the other ingredients, or cut into dice and delicately fried in butter, then put into the tureen for the soup to be poured upon it.

The first desideratum for the making of a successful *purée* is patience on the part of the cook. Upon a patient rubbing of all the ingredients through the sieve will hang all the quality of the soup.

In the South of France a vegetable *purée* that is made of lentils, or peas, potatoes, or beans, will have no other vegetable save onion and perhaps a few herbs added to it. After rubbing these, together with the liquor in which they were cooked, through the sieve and bringing up to the desired quantity by adding milk or water, the *purée* is rendered much richer and smoother to the taste if one or two beaten yolks of eggs are added on taking the pan from the fire. If eggs cannot be spared use a spoonful of cornflour and one or two of cream.

Take care to season all soups and *purées* sufficiently before bringing them to table, remembering the poor man's axiom, "It's the seasoning wot does it."

To make a white soup use milk for the main part of the liquid and add a little cream at the last; turnips, artichokes (Jerusalem), vegetable marrows, white haricot beans, celery and parsnips, all make delicious white soups.

If green peas-soup is not sufficiently green, add to it a little spinach juice or a little harmless vegetable colouring.

In rubbing the ingredients through the sieve a portion will be found to adhere to the bottom; this must be cleared, and from time to time it will be found necessary to add a little water to the contents of the sieve in order to pass them.

You will generally find that in recipes, boiling cream is ordered. The distinction is important; not merely is the risk of curdling avoided, but the flavour is different. Most people know how different coffee tastes that has had boiling milk added to it instead of unboiled, so it is with cream; when it is to be added to soup of any description boil it previously.

For many of us cream is a luxury to be done without, in soup or out of it. As a substitute try the yolk of an egg added to milk, but in adding it be wary. Boil the milk, taking care not to let it boil over, and pour it boiling into the soup. Have ready a hot soup tureen and throw the beaten yolk of an egg into this. Remove the soup from the fire, let the first heat pass, then add first a teaspoonful to the egg, whisking all the time, then a little more, and gradually the whole. When cream or milk is used a suspicion, no more, of nutmeg is an improvement to the flavour. In conclusion, do not make too much soup; "little and good" is far better than much and poor.

L. H. YATES.

NOVELTIES IN CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S GIFTS.



FIG. 1.

THERE is nothing new to be said about the season of Christmas, so I am sure my readers will be grateful if I omit a long preamble and come at once to the consideration of the novelties in needlework which are here prepared for them.

The little handkerchief sachet shown in the first illustration is well worth their attention; when they shall have copied it exactly, it will be evident how easily this pretty variety of work can be adapted to sachets of other shapes and sizes.

The foundation is fraise-coloured Harris linen cut twice as long as it is wide (not than seven by fourteen inches), to form a square when folded in half. In the centre of what is to be the top part of it is laid, slantwise, a square of very delicate canvas embroidery. These sections can sometimes be bought ready worked, but those who like to do all for themselves, can contrive a pretty ornament from fine *à la* canvas, gold tinsel, and cream and pale fraise silk. The tinsel must be fine enough to pass through the eye of a needle, and is used to trace out the principal details of the design, and near the centre of the one here given, it is the working thread in the simple drawn-work pattern which adds so light and distinctive a touch to the whole.

The canvas is button-holed round the edges of the design with the cream silk in a series of vandykes which, when the embroidery is finished, are cut round as closely as may be without snipping the stitches. The canvas is then laid on the linen background and secured in position by fine stitches of cream-coloured silk or cotton.

Pale green ribbons are carried from back to front of the sachet, crossed at the hinge as shown in the sketch, and left, at the front edge, in two rather long ends one of which is to be passed through a loop of the ribbon sewn to the opposite flap. The ends are then tied in a generous bow and serve to close the case.

Within is a lining of cream silk and also a pocket, made of some of the same material; a sprinkling of scent-powder can be added if wished.

The sachet is finished off with fraise-

coloured cord carried all round it and twisted into loops at the corners.

Reticules are so universally useful that to describe one needs no apology. Continental ladies use them much more widely than do their English sisters; both out-of-doors and in, and always assorting with their costume; they are as ornamental as they are convenient.

Fig. 2 shows an elaborate one, well suited for a Christmas gift. The foundation is a reticule of dull green bengaline on which is a panel of satin worked in ribbon embroidery. This has for some time enjoyed great popularity, which as yet shows no signs of waning. The specimen before us is worked with shades of blue, pink, green, heliotrope, red and yellow ribbons on a reddish terra-cotta-coloured background. The colours sound daring, but as they were chosen together the effect is very harmonious and the few stitches of yellow silk seen here and there at the tips of the sprays also tone in well. Silk (*filoselle*) occurs again, used for the stems and centres

of the flowers.

In this rococo work, as it is sometimes called, a difficulty may be experienced in persuading the stitches of ribbon to set with a raised effect instead of sinking down into the satin. Cunning embroideresses now slightly pad each petal and leaf with a stitch of fine soft knitting cotton or tiny cord which is quite concealed by the succeeding stitch of ribbon.

Round the edge of our satin panel a line of fine medallion lace braid is sewn, which should be cream, not dead white in colour.

At the bottom left hand corner are bows and a slight drapery of striped ribbon of

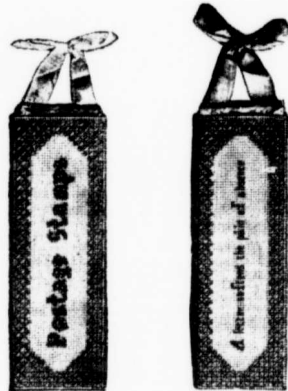


FIG. 3

colours—brown, pink, and faint greenish yellow—repeating and harmonising with those seen in the rest of the work.

Green silk cord is knotted in and out this ribbon and draw-strings of some of the same cord with ribbon ties hanging from them are run through small bone rings beneath the deep heading at the top of the bag.

Perforated cardboard is no longer considered fit only for the use of children, but is returning to favour and worked in very much the same way as of yore.

Fig. 3 illustrates two sides of a modern stamp-case adapted from an old-fashioned model. The finest make of card must be asked for, and the best quality. Two pieces, each measuring about five by two inches are required for such a case as this; also some blue *filoselle*, very fine steel beads, and a short length of blue ribbon. The border design is the same on both sections of the case, and in the centre of one piece are the beaded words, "Postage stamps," on the other side, "A letter softens the pain of absence." This motto is written finely in silk, the small characters being but two, the tallest capitals five squares high.

When both sides are worked they are sewn together round the edges with blue silk taken over and over very evenly through each of the outer holes in turn and so as to form little straight stitches on one side and slanting ones on the other.

Inside the cover is an oblong paper envelope cut with large flaps to contain the stamps and backed with white card to give it substance. Card and paper are bound together with blue ribbon at one end, and a bow of the ribbon is added to be used in pulling the envelope out of the case.

This may seem a simple piece of work, but it needs more time and attention than might be thought at first.

In Fig. 4 I show quite a new kind of work. It is suited for doyleys, chair-backs, cushion corners, and many other articles which I could not give completed, as I wished my readers to see the needlework in detail. It is lace braid embroidery on net and worked as follows. The patterns are lace or braiding patterns plainly traced with black or dark blue lines on firm white linen.



FIG. 2.

Over this coarse *àru*-coloured mosquito net is tacked, the pattern of course showing through this. Narrow lace braid, of the width indicated by the double lines of the design, is tacked down with large stitches of white cotton to both net and linen until the whole design is traced out.

Then, with cream-coloured linen thread, the extreme edges of the braid are neatly stitched to the net alone, so that when the tacking threads are removed the linen pattern is secured at the edges of the work only. At

this silk will be required to cover the ground sufficiently. The white is very pleasing in effect against the *àru* net and lace braid.

When the darning is completed the work can be freed from the linen pattern and the final decoration added by sewing down small sequins at intervals all along the course of the braid. Any coloured spangles can be used, but two kinds are usually chosen; blue and green hexagonal ones are seen alternately in our model. Each sequin is sewn down with a small white crystal bead which adds much

are then outlined with button-holing in pink flax thread, the stitches being put fairly closely together. When the whole work is thus over-sewn it is to be cut round, and where necessary the centres of the scrolls also taken out. The open-work band thus made is tacked on to a plain collar covered with silver grey silk and kept in place by French knots in golden terra-cotta flax thread made at intervals all along the centres of the scroll-work. This completes the embroidery, except that here and there a few lace bars made in pink flax

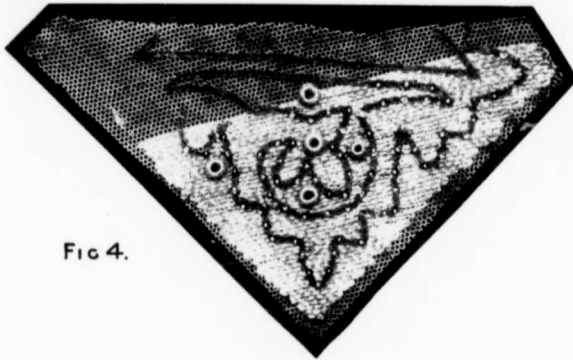


FIG 4.

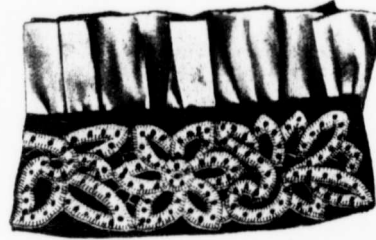


FIG 5.

intervals upon the design circles are marked. These indicate the positions of small rings or moulds which are supplied with the patterns and other materials all ready covered with *àru* cotton. They, like the braid, should be first tacked merely through both linen and net to secure them in the right position, then stitched carefully all round to the net only. The entire background of the net is worked over with white crewel silk, carried, in darning fashion, alternately over and under the meshes. In the coarser makes of net a double strand of

to the bright look of the work. This style of work is not very ambitious, but is quickly executed and very effective. The linen patterns can be used several times for different pieces of embroidery.

The last illustration (Fig. 5) shows a dainty collarette. It is made of cut-work executed on white linen. The linen, a fine make of which must be chosen, is first stretched in a frame. The shape the collar is to be traced upon it and within this the scrolls which form the design. All the outlines of the pattern

thread are thrown across the larger spaces to connect certain portions of the design.

The collarette must be neatly lined with pink and grey shot ribbon and a deep frill of some of the same be added at the top as a finish. The collar is closed by small hooks and eyes.

This style of work is very effective and by no means difficult to execute. Whatever colours are chosen for it must be carefully selected.

LEIRION CLIFFORD.

SISTERS THREE.

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

CHAPTER XII.

WHITSUNTIDE fell in the beginning of June, and as Hilary went a tour of inspection round the house and grounds, she was proudly conscious that everything was looking its very best. The rooms were sweet with the scent of flowers; the open doors and windows showed a vista of well-kept lawn, and in the distance the swelling height of mountains, beautiful with that peculiar rich, velvet green which can be seen in no other country in the world. Who would pause to notice the deficiencies of curtain and carpet, when they could look out of the window and see such a scene as that? As for the garden itself, it was a miracle of beauty—the flowering trees were still in bloom, while the wild roses had thrown their branches high over the tall fir trees, and transformed the drive into a fairy bow.

Hilary had special reasons for wishing everything to appear at its best to-day, for two visitors were expected to arrive by the afternoon train, Miss Carr, and the crippled author, Henry Rayner himself. Half-a-dozen times she made a round of inspection, each time finding some trifling alteration or addition to make to her preparations. At last all was ready; the tea-tray laid in the drawing-room; her own white dress donned, a bunch of roses pinned in her belt, and there was nothing left but to wait in such patience as she could command while Lettice and Norah exchanged glances of approval.

"Doesn't she look nice?" they whispered, and, indeed, Hilary was looking her best this afternoon, with the pretty flush in her cheeks, and her eyes alight with excitement. A few minutes after six o'clock the fly drove up to the door, and there sat Miss Carr, in her fashionable London bonnet, and, beside her, Mr. Rayner, pale and delicate as ever, but looking around him with an air of intense delight in the beautiful

surroundings. Mr. Bertrand was on the front seat, and Hilary came forward to do the honours with much less confidence than she would have shown six months earlier.

"My dear, good child, have you any tea? I am perishing of thirst!" cried Miss Carr, loudly. She was so bustling and matter-of-fact, that she was the best remedy in the world for shyness; and Hilary led the way to the drawing-room with recovered equanimity. She had only had time for a quick hand-shake with the other visitor, but the glance which had been exchanged between them was delightful in its memory of past meetings—its augury of good times to come.

"And here are your other big girls. Dear me!" said Miss Carr, bestowing a hasty glance at Norah, and staring hard at Lettice over the edge of her cup. "I remember them all in long clothes, but I shall make a point of forgetting them soon if they go on growing up like this. There is a limit to everything—even to the memory of an old

woman, like myself. The boys are at school, I suppose—but the little one—my baby—Geraldine?"

"Quite well, sank you, how are you?" said the Mouse, coming forward from her hiding-place, and holding out her tiny hand, with a sweet-faced gravity which was too much for the good lady's composure. Down went the teacup on the table, and Geraldine was folded in a hearty embrace. "Bless your innocent face! I'm well, my darling—a great deal better for seeing you. You don't remember me, do you?"

The Mouse put her head on one side as if considering how to answer truthfully, without hurting the visitor's feelings. "I sink I don't," she said slowly, "only p'raps I shall by-and-by; I'm very pleased to see you."

"There now! What do you think of that? She couldn't possibly belong to anyone in the world but you, Austin," cried Miss Carr in triumph; and Mr. Rayner held out his hand to the child with a smile that showed that the Mouse had added yet another to the long list of her adorers.

It was not until dinner was over and the whole party had strolled into the garden, that Hilary had a chance of a quiet talk with Mr. Rayner, but when her father and Miss Carr began to pace up and down the lawn, he came up to her with a gesture of invitation.

"Won't you sit down for a few minutes on this seat?" Then, with a smile of friendly interest, "Well, how goes it?—How goes it?"

Hilary drew in her breath with a gasp of pleasure. She had not realised when in London how greatly she had been touched and impressed by her meetings with the crippled author; it was only after she had returned to the quiet of the country home that she had found her thoughts returning to him again and again, with a longing to confide her troubles in his ear; to ask his advice, and to see the kindly sympathy on his face. The deep, rich tone of his voice as he said that, "How goes it?" filled her with delighted realisation that the long-looked for time had arrived.

"Oh, pretty well—better and worse! I have been making discoveries."

"About?"

"Myself, I think!" and Hilary stretched out her hands with a little gesture of distaste, which was both graceful and natural.

Mr. Rayner looked at her fixedly beneath bent brows. "Poor little Two Shoes!" he said, gravely. "So soon! It hurts, Two Shoes, but it's good in the end. Growing pains, you know!"

"Yes!" said Hilary softly. It was good to find someone who understood without asking questions, or forcing confidence. "And you?" she asked presently, raising her eyes to his with a smile of inquiry, "what have you been doing?"

"I?—oh! Making discoveries also, I fear; among others, the disagreeable one that I can no longer work as I used, or as other men work, and must be satisfied to be left behind in the race. But we are getting melancholy, and it's a

shame even to think of disagreeable subjects in a place like this. What a perfect view! I should never tire of looking at those mountains."

"Aren't they beautiful? That is Conniston Old Man right before us, and those are the Langdale Pikes over there to the right. I like them best of all; they stand out so well and, in winter, when they are covered with snow, they look quite awful. Oh, I am so glad you have come! We generally have good weather in June, and we will have such lovely drives."

Meantime Mr. Bertrand and Miss Carr were having an animated conversation.

"What do you think of my three little girls?" had been his first question, and Miss Carr laughed derisively as she answered—

"Little girls, indeed! They will be grown-up women before you know where you are, Austin. I like that young Norah. There is something very taking about her bright, little face. Miss Consequence has improved, I think; not quite so well pleased with herself, which means more pleasing to other people. She looks well in that white dress. As for Miss Lettice, she is quite unnecessarily good-looking."

"Isn't she lovely?" queried Mr. Bertrand eagerly. "And you will find her just as sweet as she looks. They have been very good and contented all spring, but it has been in the expectation of your visit, and the changes which you were to make. We are looking to you to solve all our difficulties."

"Very kind of you, I am sure. It's not an easy position to fill. The difficulty, so far as I can see, is compressed into the next three years. After that you will have to face it, Austin, and come back to town. You can keep on this house for a summer place, if you wish, but the boys will be turning out into the world by then, and you ought to be in town to keep a home for them. Hilary will be twenty-one, the other two not far behind, and it is not fair to keep girls of that age in this out-of-the-way spot all the year round, when it can be avoided. For the next three years you can go on very well as you are—after that—"

"I'm afraid so! I'm afraid you are right. I've thought so myself," said Mr. Bertrand dolefully. "I can't say I look forward to the prospect, but if it must be done, it must. I must make the most of my three last years. And, meantime, you think the girls are all right as they are. I need make no change?"

Miss Carr pressed her lips together without speaking, while they paced slowly up and down the lawn. "I think," she said, slowly, at last, "that three girls are rather too many in a house like this. You have Miss Briggs to look after Geraldine, and three servants to do the work. There cannot be enough occupation or interest to keep three young people content and happy. I have thought several times during the spring, Austin, that it would be a good plan if you lent one of your daughters to me for a year or two."

"My dear Helen! A year or two! One of my girls!"

"Yes—yes! I knew that you would work yourself up into a state of excitement. What a boy you are, Austin. Listen quietly, and try to be reasonable. If you send one of the girls to me, I will see that she finishes her education under the best masters; that she makes her entrance into society at the right time, and has friends of whom you would approve. It would be a great advantage—"

"I know it, I feel it, and I am deeply grateful, Helen; but it can't be done. I can't separate myself from my children."

"You manage to exist without your boys for nine months of the year, and I would never wish to separate you. She could come home for Christmas and a couple of months in summer, and you yourself are in town half-a-dozen times in the course of the year. You could always stay at my house."

"Yes, yes; it's all true; but I don't like it, Helen, and—"

"And you think only of yourself. It never occurs to you that I have not a soul belonging to me in that big, lonely house, and that it might be a comfort to me to have a bright young girl—"

Mr. Bertrand stopped short in the middle of the lawn and stared into his companion's face. There was an unusual flush on her cheeks, and her eyes glistened with tears.

"O, my dear Helca!" he cried. "I am a selfish wretch. I never thought of that. Of course, if you put it in that light, I can say no more! My dear old friend—I accept your offer with thanks. You have done so much for me, that I can refuse you nothing. It will be a life-long advantage to the child, and I know you will make her happy!"

"I will, indeed; and you may trust me, Austin, to consider more than mere happiness. I will do my best to make her such a woman as her dear mother was before her."

"I know you will. Thank you, Helen. And which—which—?"

"Nay, I am not going to tell you that." Miss Carr had brushed the tears from her eyes, and with them all signs of her unusual emotion. She was herself again—sharp, decisive, matter-of-fact. "I must have my choice, of course; but I will take a week to make up my mind. And she must be left entirely in my hands for the time being, remember! I shall look after her clothes, education, pleasuring, as if she were my own child. There must be no interference."

"Obstinate woman! Who would dare to enter the lists against you?" cried Mr. Bertrand between a laugh and a sigh. "Heigho! Which of my little lasses am I going to lose? Whichever it is, I shall feel she is the last I could spare, and shall bear you a grudge for your choice. Can't you give me a hint?"

"No! and I wouldn't if I could. I'll tell you when I am ready," said Miss Carr, coolly. And that settled the question for the time being.

(To be continued.)

A GROUP OF SCHOOL-BOYS.

CHAPTER IV.

"BEG pardon, young gents," said the landlord, who overheard the remark, "but them cliffs ain't safe, and you'd best go back by the road. A lad nearly lost his life there only two days ago."

"Which makes it all the safer for us now," said Robin, whose philosophy of life was amazingly optimistic. "One accident a week's as much as even a newspaper reporter could expect."

"I don't know nothing about newspaper reporters, young sir, but I do know as them cliffs ain't safe, especially after rain, and you'd best mind my words, and go home the other way, like good lads."

"Thanks," said Fergus, "we will." But he reckoned without his host; for, as soon as they were out of the man's hearing, Robin broke out in open mutiny against this decision.

"It's all rubbish!" he said. "You don't really believe such old wives' tales, do you, Ferg? I vote we go home by the cliffs as we planned."

"Hear, hear!" cried Jimmy Short, a boy after Robin's own heart where danger was concerned.

"The man knew what he was talking about," said Wilson. "I agree with you, Hume."

"Let's put it to the vote," cried Robin, and Fergus agreed.

"Hands up for the cliffs!" he said. Robin, Jimmy, young Dobbie, Percy Young, and Spider held up their hands.

"The contrary thereto," and only Wilson responded.

"Well, you've got your own way, and I hope we'll none of us repent it," he said; "but upon my word I think we're pretty considerable idiots."

"You needn't come if you don't want to," said Percy Young. "If you and Wilson really think it's dangerous, you'd better go home by the road."

"No, we'll all stick together," replied Hume. "There'll be more of us to carry back the pieces," and they set out on their dangerous enterprise.

The charm of the cliffs to these adventurous spirits lay in the fact that here and there great slices of them had fallen away in previous landslips, and while the regular path made a considerable *détour* inland, rough steps had been cut along the face of the chalk, which made it possible for a good climber to scramble down and up again at the risk of his neck.

The first of these dangerous places was successfully passed over; but at the brink of the second the boys paused with one consent.

Deep, ominous fissures streaked the face of the chalk, and in one place the surface earth had crumbled away, leaving a very insecure foothold.

"I say, it's won't do," said Fergus Hume. "We shall have to go round."

"Rubbish!" cried Robin. "A child could scramble down there!"

"Possibly; but he wouldn't get up again. Look here; if you're tired of your life, I'm not, and I don't see the fun of risking it for nothing. Do you, Wilson?"

"Well, I rather agree with Robin that it's possible," said Wilson. "Look here, I'm just going down a little way to see."

He climbed down the first step as he spoke, and cautiously made his way along the shelving face of the rock. The others watched his progress breathlessly.

"It seems all right," he shouted, and even as he spoke he put his foot on a loose stone, slipped, and disappeared from sight.

"Great Scott—old Wilson's done for!" cried Fergus.

"He may not have fallen all the way. Let's shout!" said Robin. "Wilson! Harry!"

To the intense relief of the watchers above, a feeble voice replied.

"Where are you, old fellow?" called Hume.

"On a jutting bit of rock that broke my fall. Make haste and bring help. I've hurt my arm, and I've only just got room to stand."

"There's a farm we passed on our way," said Fergus. "Here, Percy and Dobbie, you're both good runners, go as fast as you can and bring men and ropes."

The two lads went off like arrows from the string, and there followed a weary time of waiting to those left.

Presently Wilson called again. "I say, how much longer will they be? I'm getting dizzy."

"Shut your eyes and hold on tight," replied Fergus. "Hallo, Robin, what are you after? We don't want two fellows to come to grief."

"I'm just going down a little way to see if I can see where old Wilson is," and Robin scrambled cautiously down, until he had almost disappeared from sight.

"I can see him now," he called; "and, what's more, I believe I can get down to him."

"Don't be so unwise, Robin," cried Fergus, almost angrily. "Whatever is the good of risking your life like that?"

"Wilson's dizzy, and I can hold his hand," was the answer. "Hold on, Harry, I'm coming!"

But alas! even as he spoke the words, he slipped, and shot past Wilson into the gulf below.

There was an awful silence. "Robin! Robin!" cried little White, in an agony of fear; but this time there was no reply.

"It's no good," called Wilson mournfully; he's gone right down, and must have been killed. I'm afraid old Robin's done for this time."

At that moment Young and Dobbie, accompanied by two labourers, came in sight.

"What's up? Where's Robin?" inquired the two boys, as they approached.

"He went down to try and help Wilson, and he's fallen over," replied Fergus, in awestruck tones, while little White lay face downwards on the grass, sobbing out: "Oh, Robin! Robin! you can't be dead!"

"If he's fallen over there, there's not much hope for him," remarked one of the men, beginning to let down the end of a long coil of rope over the cliff's edge. Wilson caught it, and was soon hauled up into safety.

Then the younger of the two men fastened the rope round his waist, and was let down the side of the rock. It seemed a long time before his shout of "He's here!" told them he had reached the bottom.

"Pull up!" he called, after about a minute, and those at the top hauled by main force, till he reached the summit with Robin in his arms.

The boy was unconscious; at first sight they thought him dead. But his heart was still beating faintly, and a sad little procession carried him back to his mother, knowing that if he died it would almost break her heart.

The doctor was summoned, and after he had examined him, he shook his head sadly.

"His back's broken," he said; "he can't possibly recover."

"Will it be long?" asked the poor mother. "It's only a question of hours. He'll probably die before night. There's nothing to be done, poor little chap."

The doctor went on his way leaving the poor mother alone with her boy; her whole soul centred round one passionate longing, that he should speak to her before he died. And her prayer was granted. Robin opened

his eyes, and fixed them wonderingly on his mother's face.

"Where am I? What has happened?" he asked.

"My darling, you have had an accident; you fell down the cliff."

"Oh, I remember. Was Wilson saved?"

"Yes; he helped to bring you home."

"That's all right. I say, mother, I feel rather bad. Shall I have to lie in bed long?"

There was no reply. His mother's heart failed her. How could she tell him the truth? But her face conveyed more than she knew.

"What's the matter?" he said. "Why do you look like that? Am I really ill?"

"Very ill, my darling."

"Is my back hurt? Shan't I be able to walk again?" asked Robin, his eyes wide with terror.

"Oh, my darling, my darling, you can't get better," she sobbed.

But still he did not understand.

"Don't cry, mother!" he said gruffly. "It will be awful to be a cripple; but I'll try and be brave for your sake."

"My Robin, you will not be a cripple."

"Do you mean I'm going to die?" he asked, a light breaking in on him.

She nodded, unable to speak.

But to her surprise his face lighted up.

"Oh, I am glad," he said; "it would have been too dreadful to be a cripple."

He lay silent for a few moments; then he said—

"Mother, I've been an awful trouble to you. Will you forgive me for all the naughty things I've done?"

"My Robin, my darling, there is nothing to forgive."

He smiled up in her face, then: "Mother," he said, "do you think God will be hard on a fellow? If I could have my time over again, I'd try to be very different; but do you think God will forgive me as easily as you have done?"

"My darling, God will be infinitely more tender and loving than I am. I know He will forgive you."

"Yes, I think He will," said Robin, and he closed his eyes and lay silent for a few minutes.

When he next spoke it was of earthly matters.

"I'd like my friends to have something to remind them of me," he said. "There are my rabbits: Wilson would like them, and I should like old Fergus to have my knife that Uncle Jack sent me last birthday: it's a beauty, and he's always envied it; and you might give Percy Young and little Dobbie and Jimmy Short a book each, and any other fellow you think would like one; and I should like Arthur White to have the rest. And mother, dear, I want you to be kind to poor little Spider for my sake. He's such a little chap, and some of the fellows bully him, and if you'd ask him in to tea sometimes, and take notice of him, it would cheer him up. I'm afraid there'll be no one to look after him when I'm gone."

He lay silent after that, and presently lapsed into unconsciousness; and at eventide, as the doctor had prophesied, the spirit of Robin King passed into the presence of his Maker.

A wasted life! I think I hear someone say. Perhaps so, and yet I do not think it was quite wasted. True, his death was quixotic and unnecessary; but surely the memory of that brave, cheery life was of service to the boys who loved him and stood weeping round his grave. For surely no true life—whether it be that of an aged saint or of a little school-boy—is ever wasted, and this, at least, I know, that it was many years before Robin King was forgotten.

K. E. COLEMAN.

OUR NEW PUZZLE.

58 G

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** PRIZES to the amount of six guineas (one of which will be reserved for competitors living abroad) are offered for the best solutions of the above Puzzle Poem. The following conditions must be observed:—

1. Solutions to be written on one side of the paper only.
2. Each paper to be headed with the name and address of the competitor.
3. Attention must be paid to spelling, punctuation, and neatness.
4. Send by post to Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. "Puzzle Poem" to be written on the top left-hand corner of the envelope.
5. The last day for receiving solutions from Great Britain and Ireland will be February 15, 1898; from Abroad, April 18, 1898.

The competition is open to all without any restrictions as to sex or age. No competitor will be awarded more than one First Prize during the year (November 1897 to October 1898), but the winner of a Second Prize may still compete for a first. Not more than one First and one Second Prize will be sent to any one address during the year.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE of one guinea will be awarded to the competitor, not a prize-winner, who shall receive the highest number of marks during the year for Mention. Very Highly Commended to count 10 marks; Highly Commended to count 7 marks; Honourable Mention to count 5 marks.

This will be an encouragement to all who take an interest in the puzzles and who cannot quite find their way into the front rank of solvers.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

STUDY AND STUDIO.

SWEET SEVENTEEN (Shanghai).—You will find the reply to your first query under "Questions and Answers." As to your second, we know of no receipt for erasing ink blots from paper, save the use of a good ink eraser, or a very fine penknife. We prefer the latter, rubbing the erasure afterwards with an ivory paper-knife or anything hard and smooth.

EXILE (Basutoland, S. Africa).—Read our answer to Madeline in the November part (p. 63). We may repeat here that we think the best way to obtain a situation *au pair* in a Continental school is to advertise in such papers as the *Journal de Genève*, *Feuille d'avis de Vevey*, or *Gazette de Lausanne* (Switzerland). A 1d. postcard may be first sent to the editor to inquire the cost of such an advertisement. You might also write to the Governesses' and Artists' Institute, 18, Rue de Milan, Paris.

POPEY.—1. In your inquiry for shorthand and other classes you omit to give your address, so that we do not know in what part of England you live. If you are in London, you may find information from Mrs. Watson's recent article, "What is the London County Council doing for Girls?"—2. You should certainly learn drawing before learning painting. There are Metropolitan District Schools of Art all over London, at low fees. Inquire at the nearest to you.

SOMERSET.—Certainly the young girl you mention can enter for the Queen's Scholarship examination, which is the examination for admission into Training Colleges. If she passes, she will enter a teachers' training college for two years. She will have to pay an entrance fee, but in most cases this is only nominal, and bears no proportion to the cost of board and education for the time. On leaving the college she will, if her course has been creditable, be tolerably sure to obtain an appointment as an elementary teacher. Apply for full particulars to the secretary, either of the British and Foreign School Society, Temple Chambers, London, E.C.; or of the Home and Colonial School Society, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C. You may also write direct to the Education Department, London.

B. BAILEY and RAINBOW both kindly inform us, in response to recent inquiries, that Susan Warner (Miss Elizabeth Wetherell) wrote sequels to her books. *Doisy* is a sequel to *Melbourne House*, and *Doisy in the Field* is a sequel to *Doisy*.

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