

GODMOTHER'S SECRET.

By LIZZIE MILLER PENGELLY.

DEAR Godmother Dorothy Grant is dead,
 And a year has passed since she went to rest;
 Just a long, long year since her will was read—
 A year since she left me her old oak chest.
 I opened the lid and I peeped inside
 Full many a time in that long, dark week,
 While the clouds of November, dark and wide,
 Frowned on the wild wind's shrill whistle and shriek.

And then, when I emptied and searched it through—
 The old chest, rubbed bright by the hand of Time—
 Quaint, curious relics were brought to view
 Of godmother's girlhood, godmother's prime—
 Bright pieces of satin and old brocade,
 A high-heeled slipper, an ivory fan;
 And, deep in a sandal-wood box inlaid,
 A note to her grandsire from Good Queen Anne;

Some gems, and a wimple her mother wore,
 With a silken jess, and a falcon-ring;
 A Bible of sixteen hundred and four,
 And a song that godmother used to sing;
 An embroidered waistcoat, last of all—
 Unfinished, and wrapped in a silken square—
 With a string of pearls in a casket small,
 Old letters, a ring, and a lock of hair.

They were grandfather's letters! Through and through
 I read them, and scanned the waistcoat again.
 If all that my grandfather wrote were true,
 Then how came grandmother Grandmother Frayne?
 Gentle and good was grandfather's wife—
 She was Godmother Dorothy's dearest friend.
 Did grandmother know why godmother's life
 Was lived all alone to its sweet, bright end?

And the half-wrought 'broidery seems to speak
 Of godmother's grief-stricken, tearless eyes,
 Of the chilling blanch on each wild-rose cheek,
 And the sobs she never allowed to rise.
 "Ah! Godmother Dorothy, sweet and mild,
 I fear I could never be true like you!"
 I murmured; but Cousin Irene smiled—
 "True love must for ever and aye be true!"

And her fair face shone with a happy light.
 "Love could not die in a year and a day,"
 She thoughtfully said, as her eyes grew bright;
 And methought that tears were not far away.
 Fair Cousin Irene's white finger bears
 A big signet ring, with a queer old crest;
 And methinks I see in the smile she wears
 A shadow of godmother's old oak chest.



PRACTICAL POINTS ABOUT CLOTHING.

By "THE NEW DOCTOR."

"You should always wear flannel next to your skin, as it prevents consumption."

"You should never wear flannel next to your skin, for it produces eczema."

These two "commands" were given on the same day to the same lady by two physicians. The man who gave the first advice was a chest physician, the other a skin specialist. Which was right? I don't know. But I do know that both were wrong; not in the nature of the advice itself, as this was right enough from the very limited point of view of each, but in the positive way in which they gave it. Opinions are known to differ, and in nothing do they vary so greatly as in medicine.

If the first physician had said, "I advise you to wear flannel next to your skin as it reduces the liability to consumption;" and if the skin specialist had said, "In some people flannel produces great irritation, and for them it is better not to wear it," nothing more would have been required. The lady would wear the flannel, and if it caused no irritation, she would continue to wear it; if it caused inconvenience she would discontinue its use. She would have received good advice, and in either case she would have acted rightly.

As it happened, however, she was, as was not unnatural, rather doubtful as to whether

she should or should not wear flannel. Thinking that if she got a third opinion, she would have, at all events, two against one, she asked my advice about the matter. I felt very much inclined to suggest a compromise and advise flannelette! But one must never joke in medicine. If I had given her this advice she would have told her two colleagues. The first would very likely have said that flannelette is no good for the purpose, the other that it produces worse irritation than flannel. So I should have had to answer both.

The truth is this, that what suits one person, does not necessarily suit another. It is therefore useless to lay down laws about every article of dress. But there are certain articles of attire about which there are no two opinions. These are what I am going to talk about to-day. At another time, perhaps, I will go into the question of the more disputed points about dress.

Have you ever heard of growing pains? Perhaps you have had personal experience in this matter. But did it ever strike you as peculiar that pain should occur especially during growth. But these growing pains do not stop when the body is full grown. I know an old lady of seventy who suffered from "growing pains" (according to her own

statement). The truth is that these pains are not due to growth although they may occur during youth. "Growing pains" was the name used by our grandmothers for a great variety of affections, especially rheumatism and flat-foot. This latter is the commonest condition that gives rise to pain in the legs during youth; especially is this the case in large cities which are paved with flag-stones.

Let us talk about flat foot, as there is no condition which is more common amongst girls of all ages.

The shape of the natural foot is very curious and has little resemblance to that member as it occurs in most boot-wearing persons. If you look at the foot of a classical figure you will see that only the heel, the outer border of the foot and the balls of the toes touch the ground, while the greater part of the sole is above the level of the ground. The inner border of the foot does not touch the ground anywhere, and forms an arch with the convexity looking upwards. The four outer toes form a straight line, but the great toe turns inwards towards the middle line of the body, that is away from the other toes. All the toes are straight and the second toe is the longest. What a contrast to this is the foot of an ordinary English girl who has worn

ill-fitting boots from infancy! Usually, if not invariably, the feet of Londoners are more or less flat. The inner border of the foot instead of forming an arch with the convexity upwards forms an almost straight line, often descending right on to the ground during walking, and occasionally showing a slight projection in the centre. This is the condition of flat or splay-foot.

If we were to examine the feet of every inhabitant of London we would probably not find that the great toe turned away from the others in more than a dozen at most. In a large number this toe is forced against the others, often overlapping or being overlapped by them. Sometimes a "bunion" becomes developed upon the ball of the great toe. One of the toes, most often the second is very commonly bent up and squeezed between its two fellows constituting "hammer toe."

These are some of the "peculiarities" of the civilised foot, and I will proceed to inform you how we have acquired these various modifications.

There is simply no question, that the shoemaker is responsible for the shape of our feet, and a very serious responsibility rests upon him for the evil he has wrought by his various "improvements" upon nature.

Take the foot of a classical statue and place by the side of it a boot; let it be square-toed, round-toed, pointed-toed; high-heeled, low-heeled, or heelless, a man's boot, a woman's boot, a girl's boot, a boy's boot, a child's boot, an infant's boot, a golosh, a dancing shoe, a slipper, a shoe, a boot or a Wellington, and you will be at once struck by the fact that not one of these various orthopædic instruments bears the slightest resemblance to the shape of the foot it is intended to "strengthen." Yet notwithstanding their various names, they are all made on much the same pattern, which is the foot of the shoemaker's imagination.

Now take off your boot and look at your foot whilst you move it about in all possible ways. You will observe there is very free movement at the ankle and at the balls of the toes, but that the whole of the sole of the foot is practically immovable. Now take your boot in your hand and try and bend it. With the slightest touch the boot bends in two at the waist, but there is no movement elsewhere. Here we have a boot, a support for the feet, in which the only movement allowed is one which the normal foot cannot perform. What do you suppose will happen in this struggle between boot and foot. Unfortunately the foot gets the worst of it, and for the following reason. Although there is no movement at the waist of the foot there is a joint there which allows a slight gliding movement. When a person walks with boots on, this joint is dragged open at every step and the sole of the foot instead of being a firm arch to support the weight of the body becomes a weak yielding pad. I do not mean to say that every boot bends at the "waist," for occasionally one meets with boots that do not do so. But these are great exceptions.

Now look at the toes of the statue and at the extremity of the boots. In the former the toes do not form a straight line, like the tip of a square-toed boot, nor a rounded summit as in round-toed boots, nor an acute angle as in pointed-toed boots, but a line gradually rising from the little to the second toe and then slightly decreasing again towards the great toe. The inner border of the foot is perfectly straight.

As I was writing this morning a girl came to see me who was very flat-footed, and I advised her to have her boots made with some resemblance to the member they were intended to hold. She answered: "People would think I was mad if I walked about with such odd-looking things on my feet."

The shape of the boots is responsible for most of the deformities of the toes which are so common. The bent-in great toe, hammer-toe, corns and bunions are all due to wrong boots.

Personally I believe boots with pointed toes are no worse than those with square toes.

I have not yet finished with boots. There are other points about foot-gear that require to be looked into. There are tight boots, loose boots, high-heeled boots and others which must be criticised.

Tight boots do not in themselves do much to deform the foot, but when the boots are both tight and misshapen they work havoc in a very short time. The special danger in tight boots is that the foot is liable to be pressed upon and little blisters to make their appearance at the point of pressure. These blisters protect the foot, and so far are of service, but if they burst dirt is liable to get in and produce very serious mischief. If ever you get a blister on your foot leave it alone until it bursts and then keep the place scrupulously clean and apply some antiseptic preparation every night. New boots even if they are not tight often produce blisters.

It is almost unnecessary in a girl's paper to say anything about boots that are too large, except that these are really much worse for producing blisters than those that are too tight.

I would not say much about high-heeled boots even if I dared, for it is useless for a physician to tell women not to wear high heels. He will simply be disobeyed; so he must put up with what is insisted upon and make the best of it. When all has been said against high heels there is not much fault to find with them. They do help to produce flat-foot; but what boots do not? There is, however, one great objection to high heels—not so much in boots as in shoes—that is that the heel is liable to give way and wrench the ankle, giving rise to severe strain of that joint which tends to weaken the ankle, especially if it is often repeated.

As we are on the subject of flat-foot, let me just say a word or two about treatment. I have not told you everything about its cause, but I will do so at another time when talking of exercise. If you have flat-foot which really gives trouble, such as the "growing pain" mentioned above, or inability to walk far, it will be advisable to do something to prevent it going any farther. First look to your boots—if they bend at the waist, discard them and get others in which the waist is especially strong, if possible strengthened with steel bands. If your feet are very flat a pad may be advisable. These pads can be got at almost any boot-maker; but it is difficult to get them to fit exactly, and unless they do so they are very uncomfortable. As a general rule I do not advise them. The second point is exercise. As I shall say more about this at another time, I shall only briefly state that walking, running, dancing and jumping intermittently with periods of rest with the feet elevated are good. Sitting and, far more so, standing are bad. Walking on tip-toe is very beneficial in the early stages of flat-foot.

The next articles of attire that I am going to talk about are garters. I have heard that lately these "constrictors" have given way to suspenders, and I am very pleased that they have done so, as you will see what unpleasant conditions they may cause.

Somebody (who I have not the least notion, but I sincerely hope that he was not a physician) lately circulated the idea that garters should be worn below and not above the knee. This is a very curious mistake. Garters above the knee do little or no harm, whereas if worn below the knee they impede the circulation and produce varicose veins and other highly undesirable conditions. The

circulation in the legs at its best is the weakest in the whole body, and in those whose occupation necessitates much standing is extremely liable to become incompetent. It then only needs the help of garters below the knees to press upon the veins of the leg to set up a very serious state of things, which renders the leg so feeble that the least injury results in great ulcers which do not readily heal.

If garters are worn at all they should be worn above the knee, and they should be very loose and elastic. They should be white in colour by preference, or else dyed by aniline colours, not by mineral substances, as these often set up irritation which may go on to eczema.

I now come to the everlasting cause of feuds between women and physicians. I refer, of course, to corsets. The other day I was talking with a celebrated "fashionable" doctor, who told me that he had fought against the practice of wearing tight corsets for years and that during the "wasp days," as he expressed it, he lost many patients through his determined stand against the fashion of the day. But, he added, chuckling, I have got the best of it at last.

With all due deference to this most able physician, I cannot help thinking that the edict of fashion has had far more influence on the circumference of the waist than all the warnings and prognostications of the medical faculty. In no case can a man convince a woman against her will, and a doctor is by no means an exception to the rule. But by gentle advice one may be heard when stronger measures would be resisted.

There is no doubt that very serious conditions often follow from tight lacing. If one were to take a circle round any part of the human body none would include more vital organs than the waist. The lungs, liver, stomach, and great masses of nervous matter which innervate the abdominal organs are all included by the waist. None of these organs will stand pressure. Yet but a few years back it was the custom to force the waist into the smallest space for the sake of fashion. Serious results often followed the practice, and most fortunately it was always painful, and rendered both eating and digestion difficult. The very natural result of this is that the fashion is gradually dying out, and how fortunate it must be for those fair ones whose appetites are ordinary and not birdlike!

I do not wish you to think that I condemn a waist on principle or object to the use of corsets. I only crave for half an inch more for the poor organs that are kept working all day and night and receive no better treatment than to be squeezed out of all resemblance to their rightful shape.

About hats I have little to say except that I could never understand how it was that more people were not injured by hat-pins. I have noticed that, if a tall man and a woman of middle height are standing together, his eyes are on a level with her hat-pins. It wants little in a crowd for an extra-far projecting hat-pin to do very considerable injury to those standing by. Surely sheaths can be obtained for the points of hat-pins, and it is the duty of every woman to use them. I lay particular stress on this subject, as I have lately seen a woman whose eye had to be removed owing to damage done by a hat-pin.

Whilst on the subject of hats one might refer for a moment to baldness. As everyone knows, this is very much more common in men than in the opposite sex. The reason for this, I feel almost certain, lies in the head-gear. A man usually wears a stiff hat with a hard rim, which he rams down on his head, while the hats usually worn by women are soft and fit loosely.

The great blood-vessel that supplies the scalp, namely, the temporal artery, lies against the projection of the temple. If you force a stiff hat on your head this artery gets compressed between the hat rim and the bone. More than this, the veins are also pressed upon, so that the blood supply to the scalp is seriously interfered with. The result is that the hair is not properly nourished; it becomes brittle, or very thin and soft; the hair follicles strike work, and baldness ultimately ensues.

The fact that some men who wear top-hats become bald while others do not, though at first apparently contradictory, the above statement really goes far to prove it. Those

whose heads are broad—that is, those in whom the temples are prominent and the temporal artery exposed—are the more likely to become bald. The fact that baldness is common amongst the “top-hat-wearing” class and comparatively rare among “cap wearers” also favours this view. There is another point that I have often observed among gentlemen who are not bald; that is, that there is often a distinct line of demarcation in the hair corresponding with the rim of the hat. Above this line the hair is soft and thin, below it is thick and hard.

When I went out yesterday afternoon I saw a woman with a veil of a most remarkable pattern. It represented a web spun by a

spider. Two flies and a something—I do not know what—were represented on that part of the veil that covered her right cheek, whilst an enormous spider quite concealed her left eye. Now this may be a great novelty, and perhaps an object of admiration and envy for some of her friends; but, as far as I am concerned, it was the ugliest thing I ever saw disfigure a lady's face. But it is not for its beauty or ugliness that I call attention to it, but because the great spider over one eye is injurious to the sight. It is often stated that veils are bad for the eye-sight, but this is not the case, a simple, slight veil doing no harm to the sight if it is not worn too close to the face.

HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By “A GIRL PROFESSIONAL.”

CHAPTER V.

TURNINGS AND SEAMS.



It may pass by a few months, as, though full of many changing and varied experiences there were few of them that need to be recorded here. The most noteworthy of these changes was the bachelor's loss of her

post, which happened in the early part of that summer, and so cut off one of the few resources we had, and made it more than ever necessary to bend every energy to maintaining the house and keeping its inmates. Feeling how greatly we depended on it for the chief part of our income, I endured many smaller trials and put up with a good many things of which no one else knew; it was worth something if only to preserve a home, at least until other ways and means of maintaining one should open out.

There was no thought of taking holidays that year; a Saturday to Monday trip to the seaside had to suffice; indeed we had no opportunity for holiday-making, as early in August Mrs. Norris received the visit of another son, a student in Germany, and his “visit” was prolonged until the beginning of October. He added considerably to the work of the house, and only very reluctantly could be persuaded to add to its funds, indeed, if he had not been cornered and forced to pay up, we should have been left with nothing but the doubtful honour of having entertained a defaulter—unawares.

The other ladies were both away for a short time, and their board money was accordingly stopped; but as our receipts had been fairly regular up to this time we were able to lay in a few tons of coal in August before the prices were raised. It gave one a certain feeling of security to feel that the coal cellar was so well stocked, and it was fortunate for us we had it so, as the winter proved to be exceptionally severe. After Christmas the weather set in for keen frost that intensified every day. One after another the pipes were attacked, and the water-supply gave out as the main became frozen in the road. We were compelled to have our water brought by cans from the stand-pipe in the road at stated hours in the day, employing a poor man for the purpose to whom the few pence he could earn in this way represented his whole living. There was much distress abroad in those weeks, and if we could keep a warm fireside and a well-supplied table, we had cause

to be thankful. We were well into the middle of February before the frost broke up, and it was March before our pipes were restored to use again; like every other householder we had a plumber's bill to pay, but our damages were less serious than might have been expected.

To add to the difficulties of this time, which now, as we look back upon it seems like a nightmare, the influenza claimed us amongst a host of other victims. Mrs. Norris was the first to be laid up, and she kept her bed for a fortnight, and her room for nearly a month; requiring our constant attention by day and her son's devotion in the evening.

She was barely convalescing when our mother was attacked and took to her bed, and the very next day I succumbed myself. The bachelor, who had a temporary appointment in the North of London, was compelled to give it up and act as nurse and housekeeper, and for convenience sake mother and I shared one room and one fire. Our doctor was called in and seemed to find it rather a joke at first and chaffed us on our miniature hospital. But by the third day it was no joking matter as far as our mother was concerned, and I was compelled to leave my bed and take up the reins again, as she required constant watching and care. When the crisis was past there followed seven long weeks of anxiety; such very slow progress was made, and what was gained one day seemed to be lost the next. It was close upon Easter before she was able to come downstairs again, and so soon as she was fit she left us to pay a long visit into the country; this, happily, putting the final touches to the cure. As I accompanied her down and stayed a few days, the rest and change completely restored me also.

After this long and trying winter the house needed a thorough turning out and spring-cleaning. We were fortunate in having met with a woman for day-work who proved a veritable treasure, and has been a stay ever since. We called her *La dame Blanche*—a play on her proper name of White—and she truly worked like a good fairy, quietly, unobtrusively, and conscientiously. Under her care we speedily regained spotlessness, and when the summer sunshine came were able to enjoy something of a respite, especially as Mrs. Morris departed with her married daughter and children to a house by the sea, leaving us her son-in-law as her representative, and he, being most frequently out in the daytime was less trouble than herself. We rather enjoyed the three months of his stay with us; he was very good company at table, and made a better balance of parties, as young Mr. Norris brightened up when supported by one of his own sex, and the other ladies, though professing to think Dr. A. a humbug, were on

their mettle with him, so to speak, and exerted themselves to be as charming as they could. We ourselves, as lookers-on at the play, often found it highly diverting.

Both gentlemen took their holidays in the month of August, and as the ladies also happened to be away by the middle of the month I was persuaded to join my brother's family at Deal, and spent with them a very happy and restful week. The bachelor kept house meanwhile, and at the beginning of September went down to the country to spend a few days there; thus we both had a break in the routine of daily life, a much needed one too.

With mother's return a new difficulty arose. Having a servant to sleep indoors had, of course, taken off one of the bedrooms on the top floor; we did not wish to lose the maid as she suited us very well and wished to stay; but mother's comfort must be studied too.

Mrs. Norris had been very trying lately, and had taken advantage of us in so many ways, that as we happened then to make acquaintance with another possible tenant—through a mutual friend—we thought seriously about giving her notice to quit.

The new applicant was a single lady of very uncertain age but of good family, a family of whom we had had some previous knowledge, and when she finally agreed to terms and settled to come to us we approached the difficult task of telling Mrs. Norris to go. I should explain that by taking one tenant in place of two our difficulty about rooms became settled, as the two sisters moved on to one floor, and left us the top of the house entirely to ourselves; as this arrangement was also made with but a slight reduction of terms in the case of the new-comer, it was apparently a very wise move. I say apparently, for alas, it proved a very mistaken move and one we had sincerely to regret ere we were much older. But though wisdom comes to all with experience, we can only pursue what seems the best course at the time.

Mrs. Norris was much aggrieved and taken aback by such an unexpected move, she professed herself utterly *désolée*, as indeed I truly believe she was. Doubtless she foresaw that her easy times were drawing to an end, as she might not meet with a home so much to her mind again; moreover, having been born and bred in this neighbourhood she had a genuine affection for it. When she finally departed it was with tears in her eyes, but after we had got rid of the last of those debatable goods of hers and swept up the *débris*, we on our side heaved a deep sigh of relief. Altogether there could not be much regret for us to feel.

The new inmate began to prove less eager to come after the coast was clear; she was touched