

HERB-PATIENCE.

By NORA HOPPER.

"Herb-patience grows not in all men's gardens."—*Danish Proverb.*

LAS, that sweet herb-patience grows
No more in every garden-close!
We set the rose and gather rue,
And for each weed we sow grows two.
But though we seek with eager pain,
We find not under sun or rain
Herb-patience!

We do not know what tint or weed
Herb-patience weareth, nor indeed
If green her leaves, or gold, or grey,
Can any cunning gardener say.
She grew in Eden garden: Eve
That sowed her, stole, we half believe,
Herb-patience.

Herb-patience, does your blossom grow
From grass that Adam lies below?
Or do you open flower and leaf
In the walled garden of grey grief?
Or seeking, will you not be found
In any earthly garden-ground,
And only in the fields of heaven
To seeking hands there shall be given
Herb-patience?

OUR MUTUAL FRIEND THE "BIKE."

By "MEDICUS" (DR. GORDON STABLES, R.N.).

If the hints on cycling which follow are worth anything, it is because they are written by a man who has been a devotee to the wheel for more years than he cares to think about, and who has studied anatomy, physiology, and medicine. That is all I lay claim to, for of course a mere man is nobody nowadays. The ladies are cropping up and coming to the front every day, and doing something fresh and startling, so that we poor little chaps of men-people have to take a back seat, or about three inches each of the outside of a front one—by permission only.

Well, in this paper I believe that some useful hints may be found. Not on the bicycle itself—O, no, I wouldn't dare to lecture a lady on that subject, for although I have ridden for twenty years and over on all sorts of machines, my youngest lassie Ida thinks she knows a good deal more than her daddy. Heigho! perhaps she does. But I'll tell you what I have done, girls, which I am sure you haven't. I have studied cycling from a health point of view, and I am going to impart a little of the knowledge I have gained to you, in the hope that it may be of use in the coming cycling season.

Well, now winter is passed, at all events, and although the roads may not have dried up everywhere, they soon will, so it is time for you to see to your cycle. I don't suppose, however, that in the end of autumn you rolled it up in cotton wool and stowed it away in a drawer or in the wardrobe. It is so hard to give up cycling even for a few months and be reduced to walking again. If one is going anywhere, even if only a distance of two miles, it seems such a long way to walk; the trees won't meet you fast enough, and the silly sticky road seems bent upon stopping your progress, and you are certain you shall feel terribly tired and absurdly stupid, when you do reach your destination. But mount your dear little wheel, and, hey, presto! you are there.

Yes, indeed, the cycle is a glorious institution, and we may thank, not only the man who invented it, but the men who are constantly improving it. I daresay that, in one form or another, it is as old as the Highland hills, though I never read anywhere that Adam went out for an airing on one. But I'll warrant that if *he* rode one *she* wasn't going to be a long way behind him. If *he* was going to be the peacock, *she* would be the peahen. For Eve was a woman, you know.

Somewhere in the haystack of my library I have an old book in which two exquisite, dandies or "mashers" (horrid word!) are depicted riding a bicycle of a bygone age. How gay they look in their long-tailed coats, knee-breeches, and faces beaming with smiles beneath their broad silken hats! And they wear their beards and moustachios in precisely the same style as that which seems now becoming fashionable, that is, nowhere at all. But their bicycle? Why, a boneshaker much the same shape as ours, that is, it went with one wheel in front and had another coming up behind, the saddle in the centre, and no gear or machinery of any kind bar a rudder. Their lordships' legs are on the ground. They just give a kick first to one side and then to the other and off they go. Cycles have improved since then.

But regarding your own particular bike, unless it is especially good, send it to be overhauled. Ask the man what it will cost, else—well, he won't cheat himself, anyhow. But it is better to start your season with a neat turnout, and when you get it home do please take care of it. A new bicycle is as handsome and pretty as a new binnacle, but both need attention, which the binnacle always gets, the poor bike all too seldom.

Last summer two "G. O. P." girls visited my caravan, and one asked if I could tell her fortune.

"With pleasure," I said.

I examined the lines on her lily hand, and gave her a fortune that I thought was sure to please her, even throwing in the tall dark woman that was to cause some little trouble, all in true gipsy fashion.

"Now," she said, "can you tell Letty's character and mine?"

"I have invented a new science," I replied, "and I call it 'Bikeology.' Show me your bike and I'll read you your character."

But it was a dusty day and neither she nor Letty would.

WHO SHOULD RIDE THE BICYCLE?

Well, there is a lady up north ninety years old who rides nimbly enough, and plenty of girls of nine ride. But only yesterday I saw a little tot of not over five mounted on a miniature machine. It is all downhill with the old lady, but to let a mere infant ride is the greatest of cruelty. It may banish her legs and deform her in ways worse than that. Really, no child should be allowed to mount till eight or ten.

All else who are in fairly good form may ride—nay, but ought to ride. I'd like the whole of Great Britain on wheels, and a beautiful cinder path to stretch all the way 'twixt London and Edinburgh. Ten miles might be laid down first on trial, and no doubt it would pay. No racing should be allowed on this splendid road of mine; the pace should be regulated; a fee charged, and cosy little inns erected here and there along the course where one could dismount for light refreshment; but—I fear the world is hardly old enough yet for such a dream. "The Anglo-Caledonian Cinder Course Company." It sounds well, doesn't it?

REMEDIAL AILMENTS.

The ailments which judicious cycling can either banish entirely or assist in curing are many and varied. I wish to head the list with chronic rheumatism, because but for the cycle

I should not be writing in my wigwam at this moment, nor able to get up at five on a dark snowy winter's morning and plunge into the coldest of baths. In the preface to one of my books on the wheel, I mention that, "after nine years of hard sea-service in the Royal Navy, including months in an Indian hospital suffering from acute rheumatism, I was a second time struck down with the disease in a chronic form, and left Haslar (invalided on half-pay) tottering painfully on a stick." This is only a portion of the truth, for I was weak all over. Soon, however, I took to gentle exercise on the cycle. In six months I was as strong as ever, and have never had a return of my old enemy.

Here is an anecdote which may seem astonishing. A man of fifty suffering from stiff joints took to our friend the bike. It was uphill work. His highest record a day during the second year was only seven miles. He grew rapidly well now, and in one year covered 4,000 miles, and in a single day did 80 miles. So there is hope for two classes of sufferers.

Nor would age seem to be a drawback, for we read of a man of seventy riding nearly ninety miles in a day.

People with delicate chests, if not consumptive, are often cured by cycling. My advice is first to consult a doctor, or, if not, to begin with very, very easy records and increase only as the strength increases. At the end of six months you may be astonished at your strength, the ease and freedom with which you can ride, walk, and breathe, and at your ability to sleep soundly. Yes, as a cure for *sleeplessness*, cycling beats all the medicine in the world, because, see, even the safest of sleeping draughts only removes a symptom, while riding strikes at the very root of the trouble.

Nervousness soon flies when one begins to cycle. In fact, you forget all about it. You ride right away from it, and it isn't fast enough to follow you.

Anæmia. This is another ailment which biking banishes. Of course a pale bloodless lassie must take care how she does ride at first. She must not attempt to go fast nor to go out with any companion who recklessly tries to break records. But the fresh air purifies and thickens the blood; the riding puts every organ of the body into gentle play, and in a few months she will be able, in all probability, to keep the pace with her neighbours.

In a word, there is no chronic ailment which I can remember at present, which cycling (always gentle at first) cannot remedy.

I have said already that the delicate ought first to consult the family doctor. If he is a cyclist himself he will let you mount. If not,

he may advise walking or carriage exercise. But who that can ride would care to loll lazily in the best carriage ever drawn by horses?

OPINIONS OF OTHERS.

Says Abbott Bassett, "Believe me, ladies, if your health and strength leave something to be desired, if you feel the need of exercise in the fresh air; if you suffer from that terrible scourge which overcomes your sex, sick headache; if you wish to strengthen yourselves morally, and accumulate a store of agreeable reminiscences, ride a cycle. Believe me, you will never forget it; from henceforth you will always be happy. You will laugh, eat, and sleep." (*Vide Cycling and Health*, by Dr. Jenner of Paris. Translation published by Liffie and Sons.)

"When one is in the saddle," says a Boston lady, "and flying over a good road, one experiences what a bird may feel; in fact, the weight of the body is so well disposed on the machine that it is not felt."

Says another lady, "Four or five years ago I was in very delicate health and unable to bear the slightest fatigue. Now I do seventy miles a day without fatigue."

One more quotation. It is from the pen of a lady-doctor. "Cycling is of the highest value to women from a health point of view, and is suitable for middle-aged persons bordering on stoutness and not able to walk far. Delicate girls also derive great benefit from the exercise."

These ladies speak from experience and quite bear out my own views.

Torpidity of the liver is all too common, even among girls, nowadays. It is characterised by headaches, low spirits, and a dull, sleepy feeling, with many more symptoms I need not mention, all of which soon disappear if a regular course of not too hard cycling be adopted. But one must be careful not to give in too much to the appetite the bike will create, else matters may become worse instead of better.

When the cycle is used as a curative agent, it is well to aid the remedy by the judicious use of medicines suitable for the complaint.

Anæmic or bloodless girls, for instance, may take tincture of iron, five drops in a wineglassful of water three times a day just after food. This is an almost homœopathic dose; but it can be continued for a month or two, whereas larger doses are apt to heat the blood. Remember, however, that a drop from a tiny bottle is not a full one. About eight or ten small drops would not hurt.

Aperients (Friedrichshall water or Pullna) will be needed in cases of threatened obesity.

In liver trouble these may also be used, and a tonic of quassia solution, with ten drops of

dilute nitro-murietic acid to each dose. This is a very excellent tonic, and should be taken about ten minutes before meals.

If a girl has a cough she must not ride too hard. Some chlorodyne lozenges are good things to take on the road.

HINTS ABOUT RIDING.

You will soon manage to adjust the saddle to a comfortable height. I myself would rather have this an inch too high than an inch too low.

From the very commencement cultivate a graceful pose. If you have a good bike, there is seldom any need to bend over the bar as men do. When you come to a hill that is difficult to negotiate, jump off and walk.

Spurting or going at a great pace is not for the fair sex. By doing so even once you may hurt yourself so that you will repent of it all your life.

If you do not feel over strong, never ride with those who are. You cannot keep up at their pace without danger, though the excitement may cause you to try.

Invalids should not talk much while riding with a friend; talking congests the head and undoes all the good the cycling may be doing them.

Girls do not care to enter inns on the road even for the questionable refreshment of ginger-beer or lemonade, but a glass of water from what the poets call a "murmuring rill" often does much good, and a portable paper folding-tumbler should be carried if the journey is to be of some length.

A few tiny biscuit-sandwiches, with bovine instead of meat, is a splendid pick-me-up.

Weakly girls perspire a good deal when riding, and this may prove a source of great danger if they dismount anywhere and stand in a draught. On returning, if the under-clothing be damp, it ought to be changed, and it is just then that a cup of good tea or coffee proves so refreshing.

I have nothing to say regarding dress except this, that tight lacing is dangerous. Only the lightest and easiest of clothing should be worn and nothing heavy.

Wool should always be preferred to cotton.

On the whole, and from all I have seen, I think the rational cycling dress has yet to be invented. It might be most graceful and becoming, as well as healthy, and I'm sure it would save many a life.

In conclusion, remember that our mutual friend the bike may be either a friend or a foe. It can kill as well as cure. The evil effects of hard riding are seldom felt at the time, but they may produce the bicycle heart, to say nothing of the bicycle face and a ruined complexion.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC I.

How much the first the second doth excel,
The student of the Bible knows full well.

1. Seek me through desert sands, 'mid treeless waste,
And let the traveller cooling water taste.
2. For miles when tracked the river's rippling light,
Through willowy meads, past many a
Opens this lake's calm beauty to the sight.
3. What is this light illuminating night?
So clear, so perfect, so intense, so white.
4. Here sit the conquering lords, and here receive
Their subjects' homage or their woes
And here assemble, for affairs of State,
The dusky, jewelled chiefs in high debate.
5. A secret Brotherhood in virtue's cause,
Ruled by morality and reason's laws;

Yet governments are often most unjust,
And ours looked on our meetings with distrust.

- The air was full of revolution's fire,
Men's hearts were trembling with forebodings dire,
And, from a terror deep but unconfessed,
Our Brotherhood by edict was suppressed.
6. A stormy reign was mine; my father's hand
Gathered the strife-rent kingdoms of the land
And held the reins; these cares devolved on me,
While, in addition, from beyond the sea
Adventurers came in swarms to claim my right,
And many a furious battle did we fight.
Little am I remembered now! My fame
(If any) centres in my son's high name;

Who, student, warrior, legislator, rose
Supreme o'er native chiefs and foreign foes.
Peace shed her blessings where his footsteps came,
And still his country cherishes his name.

7. An old French town, once fortified, whose name
Looks very English, and it sounds the same;
Before its walls in war, so histories tell,
The wealthiest reigning prince in Europe fell.
 8. A soft material, made for woman's use,
Named from the town whose looms the web produce.
 9. One of three sisters, shedding kindly words
With all the aid that sympathy affords;
In youthful loveliness, their looks benign,
With purest charity and kindness shine.
- XIMENA.