

Athelstan's face caught a reflection of his smile, as Edith rose too, and he folded her in his arms.

"You will be good, and careful, and obedient," murmured Athelstan, "that you may get strong quickly, for all our sakes—for mine. And then," he could not help adding in a whisper, "what shall we have to wait for? Tell me there is nothing."

"Oh, Athelstan!"

"Can't you say that one word—nothing—before I go? Let me take that word away with me to remember, until we meet again."

It seemed to Dr. Frost as if there were only a silent pause after Athelstan spoke, before he released Edith, and allowed himself to be led from the room, but in the expression of his face there was no evidence that any wish of his had been thwarted—rather the reverse. And Dr. Frost, as he and Athelstan descended the stairs, felt that he had no reason to regret the action he had taken.

* * * * *

Maynard and Hester, now that all those troubles were over which had made Hester shrink from leaving Athelstan, had no more to wait for than the others, and it was arranged that Hester and Edith should be married on the same day. One of the last evenings before the event, all the Yorkes and Maynard, besides Aunt Valentine, who had not yet left the Frosts' house, were assembled in the drawing-room, probably for the last time before the coming changes. But the sense of its being the last was not made painful by the anticipation of any partings, as both Athelstan and Maynard were going to live in London.

"Which *shall* you be living with in the end, Gerrie?" asked Lina, as she and Gerrie stood talking in one of

the windows—"Athelstan and Edith, or Hester and Mr. Cray?"

"I really don't know," answered Gerrie, with a happy smile. "They say I must divide my time between them."

"No, Gerrie," said Athelstan, drawing her more within the circle of talkers. "I think Edith and I have quite settled that you should live with us until, perhaps, you are taken away by somebody who would have more right to keep you than a mere brother and sister."

"Until!" repeated Gerrie, with something in her answering smile besides its brightness. "There will never be any 'until.' I mean to be a sort of Aunt Valentine if I can," she added, raising her eyes to Aunt Valentine's, which were fixed upon her face. "If that ambition of mine is satisfied I shall be more than content."

Somehow, nobody present felt as if Gerrie's idea of her future were likely to be radically changed, and half carelessly as her words were uttered, they brought to all a sense of conviction.

Maynard was the first to speak again. "I am afraid we are all of us inclined to be very selfish over Gerrie," he said, with a grave smile. "But I cannot help thinking that the best and happiest decision we can come to is to leave her free to choose herself. Only I am sure she will always remember that she has a home with either of her brothers."

Hester's eyes were wet like Gerrie's as she raised them to Maynard's face.

"I think I am the best off of all," said Gerrie, laughing off the seriousness of her feelings, which she felt dangerously strong at the moment; "for you will only have one home each, but I shall have two."

THE END.

THE VALUE OF SIMPLE REMEDIES.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



JUST stand aside a wee bit, sirr; there's twa doctors here." The speaker was a policeman. I was the individual who had gotten inconveniently in the way of the "twa doctors," and the scene and circumstance were as follow:—

I had been on a walking and fishing tour up Donside, and had returned one afternoon to the Granite City. I suppose that, in my suit of humble tweed, and boots rendered less imposing from a coat of dust, it did not strike the policeman that I was a person of very much consequence, hence his remark. A gentleman had suddenly dropped insensible in the street, and a little mob, which I helped to compose, had gathered around him.

The "twa doctors," whom I hastened to give place to, were evidently fledglings, if not indeed merely medical students. They were dressed in the excess

of fashion, with hats and collars of unexceptionable shape, and boots—Oh, dear! I felt quite ashamed of mine. But the dandy doctors had the poor man carried into a shop, I following, partly out of curiosity, and partly in the hope that I might be of some little use. Now of all preposterous positions in which to place an insensible subject, what should the "twa doctors" do, but stick their patient upright in a chair with his head on his breast, and in well-mouthed English, coolly begin to learnedly discuss the probable nature of his seizure. "It might be apoplexy; or it might be syncope; but then, on the other hand, it might be heart complaint." And so on, and so forth.

But, as it so happened, my interference was not wanted. From a back room, in bustling the shop-keeper's wife herself, a kind-hearted, true woman evidently, and evidently too a born nurse. She took in the situation at a glance; in a few moments the sufferer was conveyed into an inner room, and

stretched on the sofa, with his head on a level with his body, the windows were thrown wide open, collar and necktie were loosened, water was dashed on the face, ammonia, in the humble garb of smelling-salts, held to the nostrils, and a little brandy and water allowed to trickle down the throat; and in a very short time I had the satisfaction of hearing the poor man sigh, and after a time he opened his eyes. I likewise had the satisfaction of seeing the "two doctors" take their departure, looking so absurd and foolish that I almost pitied them. I trust it was a lesson they did not soon forget. But I thought, as I walked back to my hotel, how invaluable that cleanly, bustling, smart, wee lady would be in a sick-chamber, and what a blessing for a medical man to have a second lieutenant like her to carry out his orders; for be it remembered that in sickness, scientific, sensible nursing is one-half the battle. "I am pretty sure," I continued to muse, "that everything about a sick-room would be as cheerful as cheerful could be, the bed spread tidy and straight, the patient kept tidy and clean, the linen aired, and the windows down without a draught. She herself, I am sure, would never wear a gloomy dress of black, nor a gown that rustled, nor shoes that creaked, nor would she whisper, nor ever look sad and mysterious, nor ever seem to doubt the efficacy of the treatment, but ever seem confident of a quick return to the pleasant paths of health. No food would be cooked in the room; the bed-room utensils would be always kept covered, and no slop-pail ever appear inside the doorway. Nor with all this would she be over-indulgent, and the doctor's word would be law, and his orders carried out faithfully and to the letter.

Now by beginning my paper in this fashion, I own I have taken an unaccountably roundabout way of getting to the text of my present sermon, which is merely this: never despise simple measures and simple remedies, for they have saved many a valuable life. I say this without prejudice to the value of more scientific remedies in more skilful hands. By all means in every case of illness, that looks in the least serious, call in a regular practitioner, but nevertheless there are many things connected with medicine and the treatment of disease, that every wife or mother ought to know.

When our first parents, on account of their own pride and disobedience, were expelled from the gates of Eden, and were obliged to earn their bread with the sweat of their brows, it was not long, you may be sure, before sickness followed on the heels of sorrow. None, probably, of the more terrible diseases that decimate the ranks of people now-a-days, diseases that have grown out of ages of disregard or ignorance of the common rules of health, but troubles and complaints of a lesser order; yet had they all around them, presented to them by the bounteous hand of Nature, every requisite in a simple way for the prevention or alleviation of bodily distress. It could not have been long, for instance, ere they found out the medicinal value of fruit, or the life-reviving, health-giving virtues of water. Ripe fruits, eaten before breakfast

of a summer's morning, form a most delightful and cooling aperient. A few stewed prunes, eaten after dinner on a winter's afternoon, are often better far than the best of pills. Indeed there are no medicines that are more abused than purgatives. Necessary they sometimes are, but only when exercise, with a due supply of fresh, well-cooked green vegetables, has failed to give relief. It should not be forgotten, either, that the habit of using aperients is one that grows upon the system, a state of matters that should not be tolerated. The simplest aperients are the best. Blue pill and podophyllin are in my opinion undeservedly favourites, and their use ought often to be discarded, in favour of mild doses of castor oil, the disagreeable flavour of which may be disguised by taking it floating on some cordial spirit, or else on well-spiced beef-tea. A dessert-spoonful of cream of tartar, with half the quantity of carbonate of soda, in a tumbler of water, is a gentle laxative if taken before breakfast. Some of the bitter waters, as those of Püllna or Friedrichshall, as imported and sold by chemists, are in many cases very valuable aperients, and always certain in their action.

Of all diseases incident to our country at this season of the year, those to which the generic name of "colds" is given are the most common. And yet, if taken in time, nothing is more easily got over. As soon as the chilliness, with the slight fever, the aching of the bones, and general feeling of illness, appear, no time should be lost in driving the enemy from his stronghold. A full dose of quinine can do naught save good, a mustard foot-bath, ten grains of Dover's powder, and a nice warm ginger drink with a glass of sherry or claret in it, will generally induce perspiration, and even sleep; and the patient will awake in the morning a little weak, but well. What an amount of good a large mustard poultice often does when applied to the chest, when it feels tight and dry, or simple friction with turpentine poured over a morsel of flannel wrung from hot water! Colds may usually be prevented by ordinary care; those subject to them should always have dry warm feet, and protect the arms and chest by flannel. Cod-liver oil in moderate doses, with a short course of syrup of iodide of iron, or some simple bitter tonic, taken in November, is a good protection and shield against the rigours of the coming winter.

I believe that persons who are in the habit of using the cold bath every morning regularly, as soon as they jump out of bed, seldom suffer from colds, or from cold itself—that is, they can bear the latter better than if they took no bath. The ordinary matutinal bath is of great service in old-standing cases of asthma; if the water is mixed with a portion of sea-salt it will be all the more valuable. Nervous diseases and hysteria are greatly benefited by the use of the shower-bath, or sponge-bath, and so is nearly every ailment in which there is a want of tone in the system, always provided that there is no internal disease.

There is a class of cases with which we medical men not unfrequently meet, the sufferers in which are young men of the ages of from seventeen to twenty or over,

who have, perhaps from over-study, fallen into a state of nervous and mental depression, and are but little able or willing on that account to follow their usual avocations. They suffer occasionally from dimness of sight, noises in the head, loss of memory, transient giddiness, headaches, and a variety of mental distresses too tedious to name, while at the same time their digestive organs are much out of order.

The treatment to be adopted is simple enough: the bath every morning, beginning with the tepid and getting gradually down to the cold; enforced exercise, but exercise with an aim, consequently the best form is some kind of manly game; early hours, and temperance in everything. Cod-liver oil, taken for months, does great good in such cases, and an occasional course of tonics—not iron—probably the best is the hypophosphite of soda, with phosphoric acid, and a bitter tonic—in fact, the prescription I gave in my *Advice to the Consumptive* in the September Number of this Magazine. The compound infusion of oranges, which forms such a pleasant and useful adjunct to many tonic medicines, is easily made as follows:—Take of bitter-orange-peel cut small a quarter of an ounce, lemon-peel fresh and cut small a dram, bruised cloves half a dram. Infuse like tea in half a pint of boiling water for fifteen minutes.

Every housewife should know, or does know, the value of what is called "a good sweat," especially when followed by sleep. An easy way of securing this is to wring a blanket out of hot water, and wrap it round the patient's body, packing him round with three or more dry blankets. After he has lain in these for half an hour, he must be rubbed dry with hot towels, and afterwards tucked up comfortably for the night.

The mustard foot-bath is a well-known remedy and a very useful one in cases of headache, congestion of the head or of the chest, as at the commencement of common colds. About two ounces of mustard are mixed with a bucket of water as hot as can well be borne, and it should be used the last thing at night.

In debility, nervousness, or chronic rheumatism, a quarter of a pound of bay-salt to two gallons of tepid water, as a morning sponge-bath, is often of the greatest utility. Fomentations are often of the utmost value in easing the pains of inflammation, either external or internal. They are at the same time free from danger. In fomenting any portion of the body you must have two pieces of flannel, one to put on immediately the other loses its high temperature. The flannels are thus applied time about, and are wrung from water as hot as the hand can bear it. Adding a handful or two of mustard to the water, causes the skin to become quickly reddened. The poppy-head fomentation is an old favourite. To make it, boil two ounces of bruised poppy-heads, seeds and all, in a pint and a half of water, for ten minutes. Strain it, then add as much water as will make it up to a pint. Alum is a very good astringent; one grain of it to an ounce of water makes a delightful eye-wash; as a gargle in sore throat, mix two tea-

spoonfuls in an eight-ounce bottle of water. Half that quantity of chlorate of potash to the same quantity of water is another nice gargle. What a nice cooling fever-drink does this chlorate of potash make! For this purpose, add sixty grains to a pint of pure water, and this may be drunk in the course of twenty-four hours. It not only cools the blood, but quenches thirst, and cleans the tongue.

In some cases of sore throat, with much swelling and difficulty of swallowing, a leech or two applied under the angle of the jaw may act like a charm. To apply a leech properly, you must first have carefully washed the part, but leave no soap on it. If he refuses to stick, coax him to bite, by moistening the skin with a little sweet milk. Let him remain on till he drops off, then encourage the bleeding by putting on a nice warm poultice. But it is not every one, by the way, who knows how to make and spread a poultice. Poultices ought to be of proper consistency and spread thickly, and always covered over with oiled silk to prevent them from drying, if meant to be worn any length of time. Simple remedies are often called for, to relieve "pain, that perfect misery, and worst of ills, that, excessive, overturns all patience." I should think it did. Burns the poet, when suffering from the toothache, overturned the chairs—

"He kicked the sma' stools o'er the mickle."

Quinine in two-grain doses thrice a day gives great relief in neuralgia. So does a course of cod-liver oil if there be debility, or any lowering of the nervous system. Three or four twenty-grain doses of sal ammoniac in water, one being taken at the end of every hour, often act like magic in curing neuralgia. If it does give relief, it should be taken three times a day for a fortnight after. This sal ammoniac is useful in another way; it makes a nice cooling lotion to inflamed surfaces, thus: dissolve two tea-spoonfuls of it with the same quantity of saltpetre in a pint of water, add a little vinegar, and apply by means of one layer of rag, but do not cover up.

Emetics are medicines that cause vomiting. They are by no means to be despised, although they may be abused. It is no doubt well known to my readers, that they are very useful in clearing the stomach of indigestible matter. But they are also very successfully used early in the commencement of febrile ailments, and the shock they give to the system often succeeds in cutting short an attack.

Just one word of warning with regard to tonics. Although they take some time to do their work, they are notwithstanding powerful remedies if judiciously administered, and just as powerful for evil if indiscriminately used. Their chief virtue lies in their capability of restoring diminished tone and vitality, but if the secretions are out of order, or the stomach is irritable, these matters must first be put straight by a gentle course of simple aperients, or the giving of tonics will do more harm than good.

