your young plants have three or four leaves, prick them out an inch or two apart in good large pots, which you can readily place in a frame for protection against hot sun or heavy rain. Save for a little watering, they will not trouble you again until the autumn, when you will find them touching one another. They can then be planted out in the open beds, when at times, of course, a little protection against severity of weather must be given. Nothing much further, perhaps, need be said of them.

The roses must be carefully pruned this month, and also those long and thin branches which look so untidy, and almost serve as a sail to blow your standard about in the rough March gales; cut them off pretty nearly close to where they spring from, for they are certain to be of no use for bloom or growth, and their being allowed to remain only weakens the plant. Shorten the strong shoots as far as you can, being guided by the form you wish them to assume; and as a rule, the further back your roses are cut the stronger will be the shoot. Still, of course, there should be moderation in all things, and the pruning must not therefore be *too* close.

And our standard roses naturally remind us of the lawn on which we generally find them, but of which we seldom find it necessary to say much. Yet just now, or in a mild month of March at all events, the grass begins to grow, and then the sooner the first mowing is given before the first use of the machine the better, and much trouble will be saved. Owing to the continuance of mild weather last autumn, the mowing machine was in use well into November. A good sweeping does the lawn good when it is partially dry.

In the flower-beds, the perennials will be showing their heads well through the soil, and any subdivision of them that you may still wish to make should not be delayed a day longer, while those that were sown last year may now be transplanted for flowering in this. The seed of biennials, such as Canterbury bells or Sweet Williams, &c., may be sown by the end of the present month, though you know they will not bloom until next year. For this purpose you want to prevent too free a growth this year; sow, therefore, somewhat thinly, and not on a fruitful soil; while, as in the case of your perennials just mentioned, your biennials sown last year can now be also transplanted to where they are to bloom.

The kitchen garden work this month is heavy. Our soil having been during the winter that has left us well turned over and exposed to the action of the frost, we have it now, let us hope, in a good pulverised condition for the reception of our main seed and planting crop. Foremost, and perhaps most necessary of all, comes our potato crop. This we finish off entirely this month, but recollect that too early planting, when it is followed by a late and severe spring frost, frequently involves the after-destruction of your entire crop just as it is well above the ground. But potatoes should not be planted too deeply.

THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.

EVERY one will be ready enough to admit that to preserve health, to prevent disease, is far better than to cure disease, to restore health; and yet, until within recent years, few persons have been aware to what a great extent the preservation of their health and the prevention of illness depend upon themselves. The laws of health are daily becoming more widely known—with what beneficial effects the annual mortality tables plainly show—and the growing estimation in which the subject is held is evidenced by the forthcoming International Health Exhibition, the successor to the International Fisheries Exhibition at South Kensington. It was fully time, therefore, that a large and comprehensive work, dealing with every branch of the subject, should make its appearance, as has recently been the case. The excellence and trustworthiness of this work—which may well lay claim to the title of "*The* Book of Health"*—are fully attested by the list of its contributors, numbering as it does some of the most eminent men in the medical profession, of whom Sir Risdon Bennett, Sir Joseph Fayrer, Drs. Crichton Browne, Lauder Brunton, Bristowe, Cheadle, Savory, and Weber may be quoted as examples.

Glancing at its main features, a man's health may be said to depend very largely upon his food, his work, his rest, and his surroundings. All these things are therefore very fully treated in the book under notice, "Food and its Uses in Health" being followed by "The Influence of Stimulants and Narcotics," "The Influence of Exercise," "The Influence of Dress," "The Influence of our Surroundings," and "The Influence of Travelling." "Education and the Nervous System," "Health in Infancy and Childhood," and "Health at Home and at School" are other general subjects, followed by special articles dealing with "The Eye and Sight," "The Ear and Hearing," "The Throat, Voice, and Speech," "The Teeth," "The Skin and Hair," "Health in India," and

*"The Book of Health" (Cassell and Company, Limited).

"Climate and Health Resorts." A veritable *vade-mecum* this!

Sir Risdon Bennett gives some much-needed advice as to the times and frequency of meals. In his opinion the present more usual practice of three meals a day has good reason, as well as custom, in its favour. When work of any kind is being done, whether mental or bodily, the intervals between taking food should not be so long as to entail demands on the system when its store of material for the generation of force is exhausted. An ordinary full meal, in the case of a healthy man, is generally considered to have been completely digested and to have passed out of the stomach in four hours. A period of rest should then be granted to the stomach. Assuming that two hours are allowed for this, the interval between one meal and another would be six hours; and this accords with the experience of most men. During rest and sleep there is less waste going on, and especially during sleep there is a greatly diminished activity of all the functions of the body. The interval, therefore, between the last meal of one day and the first of the next may be longer, as it generally is, than between the several day meals. Assuming that breakfast be taken about eight or nine o'clock, there should be a mid-day meal about one or two. The character of this must depend on the nature of the day's occupation and the conveniency of the individual. With women and children this is generally their hungry time, and the mid-day repast, whether called luncheon or dinner, is the chief meal. So is it with the middle and labouring classes, for the most part. But for merchants, professional men, and others, whose occupations take them from home all the day, this is inconvenient, and moreover, it is not found conducive to health or comfort to take a full meal in the midst of the day's work. There can, however, be no doubt that much evil arises from attempting to go through the day without food, and then with exhausted powers sitting down to a hearty meal. Something of a light, easily digestible, but sustaining character should be taken towards one or two o'clock."

"Meat teas" are a very common institution among the middle classes, but in Sir Risdon Bennett's opinion the practice of taking tea with a principal meal is not to be commended. Tea does not promote digestion of the food in the stomach, and especially is not adapted to accompany meat, but rather bread and farinaceous articles. Meat teas, as a daily habit, are calculated to promote dyspepsia. The best time for tea is an hour or two after food.

While fully recognising the value of alcohol and other stimulants under special circumstances, and while admitting that their moderate use is comparatively harmless to health, Dr. Lauder Brunton speaks very forcibly on the subject of intemperance, and points out the evil effects of stimulants upon the health of persons who cannot be called intemperate, yet who are in the constant habit of taking very small quantities of wine, beer, or spirit at all hours throughout the day. The following table of comparative mortality is instructive:—

An intemperate person's chance of living is:—	*A temperate person's chance of living is:—*
At 20—15·6 years.	At 20—44·2 years.
,, 30—13·8 ,,	,, 30—36·5 ,,
,, 40—11·6 ,,	,, 40—28·8 ,,
,, 50—10·8 ,,	,, 50—21·25 ,,
,, 60— 8·9 ,,	,, 60—14·285 ,,

In these days, when there is so much talk about over-work of the brain, it is not a little encouraging to find an eminent authority stating that for one instance in which the brain is over-worked there must be many hundreds or thousands of cases in which it is not used enough, even for the ordinary conditions of health. And yet, although the brain may suffer from want of exercise, the evils of over-strain—especially in the case of young people—must be fully recognised. Evening preparation of school lessons is not without its dangers: night-work often induces sleeplessness and a long train of attendant evils, and contributes largely to the nervousness and debility which are becoming so common amongst school-children, particularly in towns, while it fails in securing advancement at all equal to what might be got from much less strenuous and protracted study earlier in the day. The most arduous mental work required of a child ought to be imposed on it when mind and body are in their prime vigour, between 9 a.m. and noon, and certainly nothing but the lightest work should devolve upon it after 5 p.m.

Questions of food, drink, and labour naturally lead on to another important health consideration—rest and sleep. It cannot be denied that, as a rule, the largest amount of the best work in life is done by those who can sleep well. Nor to a healthy man is any amount of work—apart from worry and anxiety, perhaps—injurious which is followed by a due amount of *sound* sleep. What is a due amount varies widely in different persons. "This is due in part to the varying degrees of activity of the vital changes. Thus, although these are most active in the young, the young require much sleep, because the rapid rate of repair during that period is met by the rapid rate of waste during the day. Both by day and night the changes are then most active. The aged also require much sleep, because, although there is comparatively little waste during the day, the process of repair is slow also."

Harassed brain-workers should encourage sound sleep as much as possible if they wish to preserve their health and strength. Late meals should be avoided, and mental work should be put aside at least an hour or two before retiring to rest.

To sum up the whole matter: how is health to be preserved? By temperate and discriminating use of food and drink; by due exercise of both mind and body, but with the avoidance of worry, and of haste to get wealthy or to acquire all knowledge; by attention to all natural health laws, such as the need for pure air, clothing adapted to climate and the body of the wearer, &c.; and by paying due regard to the necessity of sleep and rest. From such things result "a sound mind in a sound body," and a healthy and vigorous old age, with all the faculties unimpaired.