

sun, and the increasing force of the wind, which every now and again compelled her to lift a hand to steady the flying pennon of her gauze veil, at last aroused her from her reverie. She turned and paused a moment, with her gloved fingers resting on an outjutting grey crag. To her intense astonishment she was almost face to face with Cuthbert Leicester. How changed he was even in the short space of these two months! He was paler, graver, worn by work and anxiety—perhaps by both.

"This is a surprise, and to me a glad one, Miss Keene," he said, warmly clasping the involuntarily offered hand. "You are staying in Bordcombe?"

"Yes; with Miss Thornham and her father—mamma is here, too."

"Indeed! Mine is just a fleeting call on a week's holiday jaunt. I knew the place in years gone by. My cousin, Clive Burton, resided in Elton Crescent once."

"It is a lovely nook."

"Very; and to me it has never seemed fairer than to-day."

It was the language of compliment, and there was that in the poise of Isabel's shapely head, and in the momentary upward flash of two swiftly-averted eyes, which gave the young man courage to ignore the past and to proceed.

"I cannot help it; I cannot alter it," he said, hoarsely, brokenly. "It must always be an earthly

paradise to my apprehension where Isabel Keene is. Mine is no longer a butterfly existence, Miss Keene. I have found a vocation in supervising my own affairs, and in labouring to lift my own mechanics, and others, to a higher, nobler level. Isabel, I will be greatly daring, and ask you to share my lot. Must I ask in vain?"

The hand a second time appropriated was not withdrawn, and Cuthbert Leicester knew that he had won.

"Mine was a mistake—that day—in the conservatory," the happy maiden whispered shyly; and her confession was a very humiliating one.

"But if spoken, as they clearly were, under a misunderstanding, your words none the less saved me; and to-day, with this new light, I can be grateful for them," he replied.

"How, Cuthbert?"

"Thus: I was ashamed of my lotus-eating—that was the phrase I used to Clive—and when you rejected me I left for Holton. My arrival was in the very nick of time. My manager was a swindler. In another month his plans would have been consummated, and I should have been ruined. As it was, the loss proved heavy, and it has been a hard pull to round the financial corner."

"Then, perhaps, a rich wife——"

But it was Cuthbert's turn to interrupt now.

At Christmas there were two marriages, and to-day the Limes has its mistress.

W. J. L.



## THE BODY'S INVISIBLE ENEMIES.

### THE FORTRESS OF LIFE.—II.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



**I** BELIEVE my friend Captain Horton was feeling about fifteen years younger as he came rushing along the surface of the moat, on that bright and bracing January morning. Now, the officer I call Captain Horton was never a very brilliant skater, partly probably owing to the rotundity of his figure and a natural nervousness on the ice, born of a consciousness of the fact that he carried far more weight than, talking as a medical man, his inches entitled him to. But of late he had been, as he termed it, "going in for kinds

of processes of reduction"—dumb-bells, cycling, calisthenics, brisk walking, early rising, and total abstinence from butter, starch, and sugar. I believe he had come to consider himself rather elegant than otherwise.

The moat all around the green ramparts was frozen black and hard; you could skate for a mile and a half right on without turning. The captain is not married, and when he observed the Misses Dove sweeping gracefully towards him, I think he must have tried an extra flourish. Anyhow, while I was still beholding him, I could perceive a widening of his limbs



that looked awkward, a wild swerve half round to the right, with arms extended like a marionette, and next moment my gallant friend was on his back.

"Am I hurt?" he said, in answer to my query. "My feelings are hurt. And I believe my ankle is sprained. So awkward!"

The ankle was sprained. I helped him to hop to the bank, and finally saw him to barracks in a cab—he belongs to the Artillery, and lay then at S—s.

"That's your bugbear cold that you talk so much about, *mon ami!*" he said to me next day as he lay on the sofa, with leg on a rest. "I haven't been a bit afraid of your bugbear all through the frost; I'm sure my rooms have always been well ventilated, and I've stuck to the cold bath, and taken exercise even in the fog; and now it ends ignominiously thus: I'm on my back, with an ankle as big as a four-pound loaf, and no doubt I shall regain rotundity. Bugbear cold indeed!"

"Don't worry yourself, Horton," I said. "I shall be here for weeks, and every day I'll bring you all the news, play chess with you, and talk."

My friend's sprain was a bad one; but it was treated scientifically by the regimental surgeon: cooling, soothing applications laid gently on, elevation, warmth enough and no more, a somewhat reduced diet, and *perfect rest*.

"Put away the chess-board," he said one day, "and let us chat. I hear there is a case of typhoid in the barracks. Typhoid is what you call one of the invisible enemies to your Fortress of Life, isn't it, doctor?"

"Yes," I assented. "When enemies appear in a questionable shape it is bad enough, but when they are invisible it is worse."

"Hum! yes," he said thoughtfully; then, after a pause, "as a soldier and an artilleryman, I am rather taken with your Fortress of Life notion. Indeed, since your bugbear cold has laid me on my back, I've had time to think. Life, it seems to me, is somewhat like our military game of war. Seen it?"

"No, but heard of it. The simile will suit: life is a game of war—to the bitter end."

"No use thinking about it, though, is there?"

"There you are mistaken, my dear friend. No use *always* thinking about it. You set your pickets, when on field duty or in presence of an enemy, before you go to dinner, don't you?"

"Yes; and then we can sit down to mess with an easy mind. But that typhoid is a fearful thing; those invisible enemies are bad to battle against."

"You may think so; I don't. Obedience to the ordinary laws of cleanliness is sufficient to keep them at bay, and after awhile to destroy them when they arise."

"Typhoid," I continued, "is a terrible disease; but cholera is more terrible. It is harassing to read in the daily prints of its ravages. It is a plague, a scourge: Nature's vengeance upon humanity for laws outraged. And yet methinks the word 'vengeance' is too strong an expression to use in this case. Call it rather 'just punishment.' Nevertheless, who shall dare

say that the Hand which wields the scourge is not moved by Kindness?—that, terrible though the calamity is, it may not be for the world's future weal?"

"We certainly ought to learn a lesson from these constantly recurring and frightful epidemics," said Horton.

"And a lesson we should not forget—a lesson, indeed, that will be forced upon us: a lesson that nations and peoples will be obliged to learn if they would continue to exist; for personal and domestic particularity in the matter of cleanliness, and wholesale systematic sanitation in towns and villages, guided by scientific legislation—these, and these alone, can eradicate plagues. We must carry the war into the enemy's camp; it is dangerous to wait until he comes thundering to our gates."

"Scientific men, doctor," said Captain Horton, "especially in that land of queer experiments, France, are trying to find out, or render visible to the naked eye of the inquirer, the *germ* of the cholera plague. It floats in the air, I suppose, or rather they, the germs, float in the air in clouds, and when you breathe them, they find their way into the blood, and, like a ferment, multiply a million-fold, producing symptoms that result in speedy death."

"You talk like a book, my friend," I replied. "Yes the French are great germ-hunters, and their experimenting medical men have done a deal of good for humanity. Still, I doubt whether the discovery of the cholera germ or any other plague germ is likely to do much good. I maintain that the lower forms of sporadic life and disease-germs are not invariably born, as it were, of germ parents. I believe that while, on the one hand, once in existence, they may breed and multiply indefinitely until they meet with some atmospheric check, still, on the other, their birth and subsequent multiplication may be, and is, determined by poisoned states of atmosphere favourable to their formation."

"Some hold," said my friend, "that if it were possible to destroy cholera entirely, to thoroughly eradicate it, to banish it from the earth's surface, and the seeds of it even from graves, it could never come again."

"And I hold that this belief is absolute nonsense. I hold that plague germs may be bred or developed from combinations of gases and fluids inimical to the higher forms of animal life, as certainly and as simply as I could, by uniting a gas and a fluid, bring into existence a deadly explosive."

"While wishing every success to all lawful scientific experiments, we must not lose sight of the fact that cholera, typhoid, and all kinds of plagues, are diseases that either arise directly from overcrowding in cities and camps, or that find in the results of overcrowding the awful hot-bed, the deadly swamp, in which they may increase and multiply."

"Cholera," said Captain Horton musingly, "seems to me to be a disease of so terribly infectious a character, that whatever the municipal authorities may do to stay the progress of the epidemic, the individual



himself who lives where it is rampant is powerless to defend himself."

"Here, again, I think you err. It cannot be too well known that the choleraic germ—and the same may be said for other plague sporules, typhoid included—cannot exist where there is abundance of pure air. The dilution, medical men tell us, of poisons of this kind renders them inert. I do not think it is dilution that effects this. In my opinion, just as there is a deadly serpent—an ophiophagous reptile—which eats deadly snakes, so there is a gaseous poison that destroys plague poisons, and that is oxygen gas, which in its diluted form we breathe, and cannot live without."

"Then," said Captain Horton, "if I understand you aright, you would defend the Fortress of Life from the attacks of invisible enemies by means of disinfection."

"Call it rather by perfect purification of all our surroundings, and the maintenance of complete and thorough cleanliness. I do not quite like the word 'disinfectants:' for many reasons. A disinfectant is never needed when there is pure air and wholesomeness. You *may* destroy dangerous emanations and foulness in the air by the use of disinfectants, but the best plan is to remove the cause. A person by constantly using disinfectants might manage to live—hardly in health, though—in a room permeated by the vapours from a cesspool. Removal of the latter would be the wiser way of going to work.

"Again, a disinfectant may be itself a poisoner of the air, and often it is a mere make-believe. You smell the odour of the chemical, whether it be chlorine, or carbolic, or anything else, and you say to yourself, 'Why, this disinfectant is doing its work nicely. No impurity can exist in the air where this is.'

"So, I say, do not trust altogether to disinfection: it is a good servant, but wants careful guidance and watching, and must not have more work to do than it can accomplish."

"Some men," remarked Captain Horton, "can move in the midst of pestilence and miasmata, and

never seem any the worse. How, for instance, do you doctors defend your fortress?"

"I'm glad you asked the question. We defend the fortress first by using ordinary precautions. We will not, if possible, breathe more infected air than we can help. We will not be stupidly rash. Depend upon it, my friend, that when Dr. Abernethy kicked his foot through the pane of glass in his patient's room, because he couldn't get him to have his window down, the excellent physician was thinking as much about his own safety as that of his patient. Secondly, physicians know that they must live by rule when attending cases during a pestilence. The body must be kept up to the health standard. In times of epidemic let every one see to himself, attend to every rule of health, live regularly, and keep the stomach most carefully in order, and be abstinent. There is no other way of defending the Fortress of Life against invisible foes."

"This living according to rule," said my friend musingly, "is a terribly hard thing to have to add. At least, I am sure most people find it so."

"Few people," I replied, "think of doing anything of the sort, until actual danger to life stares them in the face. Some one else, I believe, has made a remark similar to this before now, but it is worthy of being repeated."

"And it is true," added Horton. "I have been thinking a good deal lately——"

"Most people who are laid low do think," I said.

"I have been thinking," said my friend, "that most of us err by eating more than is necessary."

"How *very* true that is, Horton! Why, in careful regulation of diet—a diet that should incline to the abstemious—we have one of the best defences against invisible foes of all kinds. This is one of our posts, and should be held at all risks, if we care for life at all—and not for life only, but comfort while we do exist. It is a fact which all should bear in mind, that over-eating not only corrupts the blood, but destroys nervous energy."

---

## SHAREHOLDERS' MEETINGS.



HE meetings of shareholders are one of the products of this age, for although in the past there were companies, and occasionally meetings of their members, yet it is within the last threescore years that shareholders' meetings, as we know them, have had their development. Capital has long been drifting into the hold of companies, and at recurring periods the furnishers of that capital must meet to fulfil such functions of oversight as they exercise. From the semi-private "limited" company with less than a dozen members, to the great railway company with its thirty thousand shareholders, the gatherings are those of capital in conference. Those who have had the duty of attending

such meetings go to them and listen much as the Northern Farmer did:

"Proputty, proputty, proputty,  
That's what I hear them say."

There is variation in the scene, in the speaker, in the extent of the success, but the tone is the same, and there is one string usually played. The attenders, too, differ: at the meetings of some of the ship companies, there enter those whose rolling gait, sun-tanned faces, and hands that, like Lady Macbeth's, will "ne'er be clean"—from tar-stains—tell of the sailor of the past, who will be found the keenest critic of the doings of our ships. The mining companies bring up at times "Tre, Pol, or Pen" from Cornwall's