

exploded within a few yards of him, and the entire charge entered the stem of the tree some foot or eighteen inches above his head. For some seconds there was the silence of consternation, then a voice exclaimed in the most matter-of-fact tone, "That's a rattling good gun o' yours; it shoots *uncommonly close*." I do not think any one saw the joke, but one of the beaters muttered to the head keeper, "It's a sight too good for him!"

It was a shocking business when old Buddicombe's bank failed. Nearly every one in our little town was in the mess; and those who were not pretended to be. Lipscombe, the lawyer, lost £15, and nearly lost his head; and Dipscombe, the tallow chandler, was in for £12 10s., and "rose" the price of candles a halfpenny per pound. They were both substantial men, however, and I felt no particular sympathy with them; but poor T. M., &c., had all his savings in the bank,

and would feel it very keenly. The day after the bank closed I went over to see him, prepared to sympathise with him, even, if need were, to the extent of borrowing money for him from some other fellow's relation, when, before I could get out half I was going to say, he exclaimed, "Look here, old fellow, I'm going down to the workhouse this afternoon to take a few things for the old folks. Fact is, I want to see what it is like, in case I have to take up my residence there!"

Was this levity put on, or was it natural? I looked at him attentively. His eyes were not heavy with unshed tears, nor had his hair turned suddenly white. Certainly he was growing bald, but even about that little bare spot there was an air of contentment! In short, his manner was so unexpected, that I ended by congratulating him, which did him more good than the loss of his money.

J. T. BURTON WOLLASTON.

HOW TO TREAT EMOTIONAL NERVOUSNESS.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



Over the large majority of mankind the words "nerves," "nervous tissue," and "nervousness" are merely indefinite terms. Of brain and brain matter, almost every one has some solid notion, just as he has of the heart, lungs, or liver. In the same way we all of us have a good idea of the actuality and substantiality of the veins and arteries, that carry the blood to and from the heart, the latter getting smaller and smaller, and ever more beautifully less, as they penetrate the minuter tissues, until they end in a perfect network of capillaries, small enough to enter and supply the most delicate gland or organ of the body with the vital fluid. We are well aware, too, that the veins begin where the arteries leave off, also in a capillary system; that the flow of blood in them is retrograde, as they are bearing the stream, laden and dark with effete matter from the tissues, back through the lungs—in which it is purified—to the heart; and that they unite with each other as streams and brooks unite with rivers, getting fewer and larger as they journey on to that great force-pump of vitality which lies in the chest, and which never ceases from its work day nor night, resting only between its beats.

This is all patent enough to every one who reads, but the nerves themselves as an actual system of vessels—I speak advisedly when I say vessels, for do they not hold and convey electric fluid, or force?—are not so easily nor so clearly comprehended.

By way of giving a simple illustration, I stretch out my hand towards this old poplar-tree, near which I am

seated enjoying the November air and sunshine, and I pluck therefrom an ivy-leaf. If the reader will also take a leaf of any kind—that of a geranium, for instance, though the *venation* in the ivy-leaf is far more beautiful and distinct—and hold it between him and the sunshine, and look through it, he will readily understand something of Nature's plan of blood distribution. Imagine all those midrib in the leaf to be vessels conveying arterial blood from the heart, notice how they divide, and re-divide, and sub-divide until they end in a reticulation of venation, so minute that they can only be distinguished by good eyes in a very perfect light. And each artery, however tiny, has a retrograde vein. Now, if you will imagine another system of vessels, quite as palpable, following the course of those arteries or veins, surrounding them and giving off filaments to every portion of the mesh-work, you will have a very good idea of the distribution of the nerves—in other words, of the nervous system. Do I make myself understood? I hope and trust I do. What I want to impress upon the reader's mind is the fact that nerves are positive and tangible portions of our anatomy, and, therefore, subject to actual disease—as much so, indeed, as any other and visible part of the human frame.

Bear this also in mind, that, while every artery, however tiny or hair-like, is supplied with a nerve to sustain it with force, so, on the other hand, the nerves are nourished by blood from those arteries. It is fair barter, fair business—blood is bartered for nervous force, and if the blood so received be poor, or impure stuff, the nerve force, or animal electricity, given in return will also be below par.

It is no part of my intention at present to enter into any physiological description of the nervous system, or to trouble the reader with a statement of the chemical

composition of its tissue. I may state parenthetically that there are two sets of nerves—two nervous systems, I might almost say—in the human body, one presiding over the voluntary movements, and the other—over which we have no direct control—dominating and determining the motions of the internal vital economy, such as the heart, lungs, and the great glands. These latter might be called nerves of constant action or constant motion—they never rest, never sleep. The heart goes on beating, and the lungs go on breathing, while we lie unconscious in bed. *But* both systems of nerves are supplied with blood from the heart, and in the ailment to which I give the name of emotional nervousness both systems are out of order.

When the involuntary nerves are weakened from any cause, both heart and mind are affected, and a host of most painful and disagreeable symptoms is the result.

The disease or ailment to which this paper principally refers may be either hereditary or acquired, or it may be congenital without being actually hereditary; for there are many people of the nervous temperament, as it is called, and if these suffer more in life they doubtless also enjoy more. They are more delicately constructed in every way; their nerves and systems respond more quickly to extraneous influences of any kind. But they are also more easily thrown out of gear than men cast in rougher moulds, or made of harder metal, and their chances of long life are hardly so good as those of others; although there are many terribly painful and dangerous diseases—such, for instance, as inflammations of tissue—from which they can usually count upon a happy immunity.

Perhaps there is no ailment in the world from which any one could suffer that secures less sympathy from friends and relations—ay, and even from most medical practitioners—than nervousness. The best-natured doctor in the world cannot help feeling annoyed at times in the presence of symptoms which he feels powerless to combat, and strangely tempted to put down as mere “whims and fancies” of his patient. Doctors hate what they term “unsatisfactory cases.” They like a disease to be of a very decided kind of character, and to run a course, then they have a pleasure in doing their very best to conduct it to a successful termination.

But apart from what we may term congenital nervousness, which requires life-long attention if the patient would enjoy fair health and comfort, ailments of the nervous system—or nervous debility—may arise from a variety of causes, though, for convenience sake, they may all be grouped under two heads—(1) defective nutrition, and (2) nerve-poisoning.

If for some reason or other the nerves are not supplied with a sufficient quantity of life-giving blood, or if any drain upon the system exists, they will degenerate. And if, on the other hand, the blood is impure, or if it contains either free bile or carbonic acid, the nerves will suffer in consequence.

I need hardly add that the circulation in the blood of a larger amount of alcohol than can very easily be burned off is a frequent cause of nerve degeneration,

so is intemperance in eating, or intemperance in anything.

Grief, worry, over-much thought and care, or too much brain-work are other common causes.

But be the causes of emotional nervousness what they may, the symptoms themselves are familiar to thousands. Because they are so, and because they differ in different individuals, are my reasons for not dwelling on them.

Their treatment is of greater importance. And I may say at once that no general rule of treatment to suit every case can here be laid down, and no harsh self-doctoring is applicable to cases of nervousness, whether it be of an entirely emotional nature, or complicated with actual neuralgia, and general bodily or muscular weakness.

There is no mistake more commonly made by the patient himself, who attempts self-treatment, and none likely to have worse consequences, than that of pouring into the system indiscriminately *drugs* and *nutriment*.

The former generally do more harm than good, the latter nearly always; for you cannot force the body to accept more nourishment than it can easily do with. By swallowing food you do not determine its digestion, and if it leaves the stomach unreduced to chyme, there is no end to the trouble it may effect before it is finally dislodged.

But a small portion of well-chosen food, easily digested, will generate pure blood, and calmness of mind and comfort of body will assuredly follow.

The common-sense treatment of nervousness would seem to me to be as follows:—

I. HYGIENIC.—As more carbonic acid is evolved in light and during exercise, than when the body is at rest in in-door gloom, the more the nervous or emotional patient is in the open air the better, and, within certain bounds, the more exercise he takes the easier will he be. But that exercise must never be fatiguing, and always pleasurable. No aimless strolling about is of any good; it must be exercise with an object.

Change of scene and change of climate are also of very great advantage in the treatment of all such cases.

Perfect daily ablution of the body is imperative; but remember that while a cold bath is a tonic to the nervous system, it must never partake of the nature of a shock. The strong and robust may benefit even by a shower-bath in winter, but it might be death to the nervously delicate.

Nervous people are constantly under the impression that they do not obtain sufficient sleep; they may be right, but they must cease to worry over the matter. If proper rest cannot be got at night in a well-ventilated, moderately warm room, on a moderately soft mattress, they must make a habit of taking an hour or two hours' siesta in the afternoons as soon as lunch is over.

Food.—This must not be in large quantities; too much sloppy food, and soups, wines, and beer should be avoided. Tea and coffee should be almost wholly

given up, cocoatina or cocoa being substituted; but one cup of good tea may be taken in the afternoon.

It is a fact well known to most practitioners, and to not a few nervous patients themselves, that fluid food is badly borne. A meal at which hardly any liquid is drunk at all will often lie easy on the stomach and be digested without causing any unpleasantness. Whereas, on the other hand, if two or three glasses of wine or beer be drunk, eructations, acidity, heaviness, and discomfort may follow. Nervous patients should, moreover, take plenty of time to a meal, especially if they be at all subject to attacks of dyspepsia. Dinner pills may be taken; rhubarb, ginger, and quinine make a good one; only—man was not meant to live on medicine alone, nor should he make a practice of always taking it.

Fatty foods are best for nervous complaints—if they can be borne—bread, potatoes (these last should be mashed, almost creamed in fact; no particle of whole potato should be swallowed), meat in small quantity, fish in plenty, oysters and other shell-fish in parti-

cular, cooked milk, and light puddings. Supper, small in quantity, but solid. Fruit always before breakfast, especially ripe pears, bananas, oranges, and roasted apples.

Stout people are often extremely nervous; this is more from impurity of blood than lack of nutriment. Let them take abundance of out-door exercise, but not to such an extent as to affect the heart, which may be weak and fatty.

II. MEDICINAL.—If fruit be taken no aperients will be needed. Tonics are much abused by the nervous, so are a variety of other medicines. Iron, in some form, occasionally does good, so does quinine, and some of the phosphates. But be at all times cautious in taking medicine if you suffer from emotional nervousness.

Lastly, take recreation systematically.

Let me close this article with the following remark, which contains a deal of truth: if people in general believed only one-half as much in the benefits of sensible recreation for mind and body as they do in drugs, there would be infinitely less nervousness in the world.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY.

BY STELLA ST. JOHN GARD.

[To this Story was awarded the Prize of Five Pounds, offered by the Editor of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE, for the best Domestic Story illustrating the Evil of Vacillation.]



HE sun had never shone upon so fair a June. The skies were never so blue, the flowers so sweet, the breezes so soft, the hours so rosy. So thought Lorraine Lorri-mer.

She lifted her eyes to her companion's face at that moment, and met his looking down at her. The eyes into which she looked were ordinarily laughing and blue, but their expression was intensified just now. Dark and

soft, there was an electrical fascination in their gaze that caused the warm blood to tingle in her cheeks and flush over her forehead. Her eyes drooped swiftly. He smiled, and passed his hand caressingly over the small brown one that lay on his arm.

They were not lovers, these two: they were "only friends," as Lorraine would have said, then.

They were pacing with slow, lingering footsteps a long country road, which was shaded by arching trees that met and embraced far above their heads.

The air was charged with the odour of honeysuckle, and vibrant with the song of a lark which had escaped the confines of mortal vision, and was beating its little heart out somewhere beyond the curtaining fringes of

foliage, in the depths of ethereal blue through which the setting sun was pouring a glory of gold and red; but these facts, though instinctively recognised as fragments of the general harmony, made no very distinct impression upon the consciousness of either of them.

That dusty highway, with its tall enclosing hedges and its whispering leafy avenue, might have contained the whole sum of life, so little they desired or thought of anything beyond it.

But life holds more than a succession of peaceful footsteps, even on a fair June day. A few steps more brought them to a stile, and it had to be crossed.

"You are tired," said the young man. "Sit on this stile and rest awhile. I will not let you fall."

He leaned on the stile beside her, and held her hands, until his eye was attracted by some flowers that grew luxuriantly in the hedge on the opposite side of the road.

"I must get you some of that woodbine," he said; "I like the pale-coloured bloom better than that tinged with red; it is sweeter. Do not move until I return."

She sat still and watched him. He came back soon, with a fragrant, cream-hued cluster in his hands.

"Do you like them?" he said, smiling up at her, and caressing her cheek with the dainty blossoms.

Between them they fastened them into the folds of her fichu. Lorraine tried first, but her hands trembled, and the flowers fell, and were scattered into her lap.