

Uncle Tom is in his bunk, his big eyes bright, his head hot as a coal of fire. Eliza sits on the floor, her hands clasped round her knees.

"Uncle Tom he go die; he say, send missie."

"Well, Uncle Tom?"

"Missie! plenty good, all a same missionary man."

She held up the rude light burning in a pannikin of fat. Uncle Tom had adorned himself for the end—it is their custom—he had on a gaudy shirt; in his ears were great shell earrings, round his neck a string of shark's teeth—a strange picture, the slight, girlish, white-clad figure, the compassionate face bent over the dying boy in his barbaric trappings. She put her hand in his black palm and let it rest there.

"Boccus? boccus?"

Liza rose and drew the clumsy box to the bedside, and opened it for him to look upon his treasure.

"Ten fellow moon no come. People cry, 'Towewa!' all same Uncle Tom. He no come; no go home." Then his mind wandered, and he muttered, "Nea, Tacomala, Iela all along a beach, plenty my people. My mother she say, 'Where Wanukata?' Uncle Tom

say, 'Wanukata he no come any more.' She cry very strong, 'Oh, Towewa! Towewa!'"

When he awoke he turned to his mistress. "Missie, all same missionary fellow say God."

With broken voice she murmured, "Our Father, which art in heaven"—the familiar words of the prayer fell with little meaning on the ears of this poor dying creature, but he had heard them on his island, and had been told they were good words, a sort of white man's fetish against the evil one—"God bless Uncle Tom."

"God, He good master?"

"Very good."

"I go work along His plantation." He moved weakly and gazed with fast-glazing eyes on his box of treasure-trove. "Missie she have boccus. Now I go die."

I lifted her from the bunk at the side of which, sobbing, she had knelt. No more moons need pass for Uncle Tom. He is free. He has gone home, home to an island that lies beyond the cane-brake, beyond sun, moon, and stars.

THOS. B. CLEGG.

TO A GIRL NAMED MAUD.

MAUDIE, those wondrous eyes of yours
 Have held my heart in thrall;
 Their light has called me to her feet,
 Whose charms can never pall;
 The sweetest, fairest of her sex,
 A queen among them all.

Maudie, that soft brown hair of yours
 Has won my heart from me;
 That walk so graceful all admire,
 So natural and so free;
 Those tiny shoes which hide your feet,
 I love as part of thee.

If one poor poet chance to love,
 And that dear maid be thou,
 If he should bend in worship near
 The shrine where all men bow,
 If he should dare to whisper, sweet,
 What other lovers vow—

Will you be kind and let him plead?
 If it perchance be wrong
 To love where all the graces blend
 That to the sex belong—
 Will you forgive, and, sweet, accept
 His poor heart with this song?

CLARA SAVILE CLARKE.

IN TIMES OF SICKNESS.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.

LAST night, about half-past nine, I was leaning over my gate, looking at the newly-risen moon that, slowly ascending through the haze which lay low on the horizon, appeared for all the world like a huge blood orange. But there was something remarkable about the sky itself, for although the stars were all visible, none of them could have been truthfully addressed in the words of the poet—

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

Twinkling was out of the question, for a gauzy veil

was spread all over the firmament; and, strangely enough, this was blood-red. The phenomenon did not last long, but long enough for others as well as myself to notice it.

A weird-looking, lanky, dark figure came down the road, beneath the whispering limes, and presently stood near me. Old Elspit M—, crawling home to bed. Though over ninety, Elspit is tall and straight, and has a face like what Irving's would be if he were an oldwife.

She placed a bird-like claw on my biceps—it put me in mind of having my parrot perch on my finger—then pointing to the moon—

"You see it, sir, you see it? Isn't it wonderful?"

"It looks somewhat erysipelatous," I replied unromantically.

"And behold the sky. What does it bode? War—war—war!"

"I tell you what it bodes, Elspit: rheumatism to your old limbs if you're not in bed in half an hour."

Elspit bade me good night, and disappeared under the limes, muttering, "War—war—war!"

I watched the moon rise higher and higher. The blood-red veil melted into thin air, and both moon and stars shone brightly down, making the night more pleasant than the summer's day had been. Presently the moon neared the only black cloud in the firmament. She could not shine through that, I thought. But she did. She silvered it and gilded it, and it scattered before her just as grief and trouble scatter when met manfully.

Now, many people are precisely like old Elspit in their imaginings. They are constantly prophesying ill to come, and if sickness be on ahead, they go right away out to meet it; they fear it, and bow down before it as if it were a nightmare bogie; and then this particular sickness, whatever it is, seems to know it has an easy victim, and claims its pound of flesh. Were they to meet it cheerfully, as the moon did the cloud, it would break and scatter before them, or at all events embrace them but lightly.

"That may be true enough," some will tell me; "but," they add, "I am nervous, and one cannot help one's constitution."

"This," I reply, "is but begging the question. I hope to show you in this paper that, in times of epidemic, one may do much to ward off the attack of the prevailing trouble, or to lighten the force of the blow if fall it must and does."

It has been often asked if medical men have or use any prophylactic, going so much among infectious diseases as they do, and seeming to bear a charmed life. They do not use any prophylactic strictly so called, but they do all that human nature can to cultivate the *mens sana in corpore sano*. You will never find a medical man during epidemics—and very seldom, indeed, at any other time—making any mistake in taking stimulants. He rises early if he has been "all night in;" if not, he does not begrudge himself an extra hour or two in bed, knowing the extreme value of sleep. He knows well that good, solid, refreshing slumber is one of the pillars that support life—one of the keystones to the arch of existence.

Then, as a rule, the doctor has a bath every morning; in all probability a cold sponge or shower. He does not dress as if for a wager; well he knows that hurry of all kinds means excitement, and that excitement means temporary congestion of the brain, and a consequent burning off and wear of more nerve-cell power than there is any necessity for expending. So his toilet is made leisurely, and if during the process there are any worrying thoughts, or any anxiety obtrudes itself on his mind, they are quickly banished. Hurry and worry claim a hundred times as many victims every year as consumption itself.

The doctor having slept well, in a large, cool, pleasant room, having bathed and dressed, has begun his day well. Perhaps he has a turn round the garden before sitting down to breakfast. He will eat heartily *if he can*. Mark these three last words, for he is too wise to force nature, and so, should there be any languidness and feebleness of appetite, his morning meal will be a spare one: toast, eggs, not over-strong tea or coffee, with probably a morsel of whole-meal bread and fresh butter. When one is languid of a morning, strong tea may suggest itself, but the inclination to take it should be resisted—for bear this in mind: it is a stimulant, and the tannin it contains is somewhat constipating; well, reaction will follow its use, and in summer greater heat and thirst will be felt about three hours after. Cocoatina is less objectionable. The fault with this, if taken too strong, is that biliousness may follow.

But should the doctor feel the need of food or sustenance between breakfast and lunch, he may eat a biscuit, drink a glass of milk and soda-water, or even swallow a raw egg.

To continue our doctor's day: while doing his duty faithfully in times of epidemic, he will guard against undue fatigue and all approach to worry. When attending infectious or contagious cases he will take every reasonable precaution for his own safety; there need be no necessity for bending too much over a bed or inhaling unhealthy vapours, and he will see to it that the rules of disinfection are most rigidly carried out, that the sick-room is well ventilated, and everything kept sweet and clean, even to the dress of the nurse.

Nor will the doctor expose himself to the risk of infection when faint and hungry. It is well that every one should know this: a prevailing epidemic seems like a thief on the watch, quietly biding his time to spring upon and overpower his victim. That time comes when the victim is weak and off guard. On the one hand, then, hunger may open the door for disease to come in, while on the other over-eating by fevering the system simply makes a bed for the ailment to lie upon.

When the cholera was raging in Egypt some time ago, many of the surgeons proved themselves perfect heroes. Death was in every ward. Death's darts flew here, there, and everywhere, but for a long time the doctors went scot-free. It was want of rest, and fatigue inducing debility, with depression of spirits, that told at last, and proved that even medical men were not invulnerable.

Well, then, our doctor has managed to keep his system up during all his weary day, and he is glad to return home with an appetite and ability to enjoy a well-cooked and nicely-served dinner. Over-indulgence he will carefully avoid. He will not commit the foolish error of reasoning thus: "Wine is good to sustain the system, therefore I'll take a glass or two." No; but if he feels that sparkling ginger-ale will suit his palate better, why, he will take that. In fact, the man eats and drinks to live. He does not regard dinner as a luxurious repast so much as a

necessity. Then if after dinner he rests in his easy-chair with a book or newspaper, surely we will not begrudge him that repose.

It is hours yet before bed-time. He may or may not take a biscuit or glass of milk before retiring, but if his body is heated with the hardly-yet-banished fatigues of the day, a warm bath, with a cold sponge to follow, will reduce the temperature, equalise the circulation, and induce calm, refreshing sleep.

A life like this is the only true prophylaxis, and in times of trouble and illness my readers cannot err in adopting it.

I sincerely trust that I have made myself sufficiently clear. While judiciously supporting the system, you are to steer a middle course, approaching too near neither to Scylla nor Charybdis. To force food and stimulants on the system is to fever it; to go long without food, or to permit yourself to get languid through fasting, is to open the door for the trouble to walk in. In the former case the armour you don against the epidemic is too heavy, and you will sink under it: disease will smite you when down; in the latter it is too feeble, and you lack the necessary protection.

So much for the body itself; now for the mind of the individual when sickness is all around him.

Well, to keep the body up to par is at least half the battle; an easy mind is almost sure to dwell in such a system, and the reverse is true.

Apropos of this, as President Lincoln used to say, I'll tell you a little story. It was out in Egypt—so they say, at least—after the fall of Tel-el-Kebir, and when plague was raging in the camp of the fallen foe, that Famine met King Cholera.

"Good morning," said King Cholera. "How are you getting on, friend Famine?"

"Well," replied Famine, "I've slain a few, anyhow, and I've paved a nice pathway for you to walk along. Why, King Cholera, you must be enjoying yourself immensely! What a holocaust you are having!"

"Not so fast, friend Famine," said the King. "I don't do it all; for, mind you, where I kill five, our dark-haired sister Fear kills fifty."

Now, how are we in times of epidemic to banish this Fear? It is natural enough, I own, still it is deadly enough. Well, we must first and foremost so live as to bring the body into the best working order. We ought to obey all the golden rules of health to the letter, and if we really feel considerably below par, we should take a carefully chosen tonic. Probably nothing can be much better than an ounce of quassia water twice or thrice a day before meals, with a teaspoonful of the compound syrup of the phosphates in it.

But, in addition, plenty of out-door exercise must be

taken—beware, however, of over-fatigue—and above all, recreation with amusement. Do not read heavy books. Get something to make you laugh, and find yourself some employment which shall not be a penance. That is the secret, and a valuable one it is.

In times of sickness or epidemic, even the healthiest among us may now and then feel depressed in spirits. Unfortunately, at such times stimulants often seem to suggest themselves to us, or are suggested by others. They really do not do the good they are usually credited with, so I beg to propose a plan which I think infinitely preferable. You must know, then, that much depression of spirits testifies to a body below par and nerves unstrung; well, I should simply take, three or four times a day, half a teaspoonful of the compound tincture of cinchona in a wineglassful of water, and my drink should be oatmeal water; the medium-sized is the proper sort. Steep a handful or two in a quart of water, add sugar and lime-juice to taste, and drink *ad libitum*. This is a true, not a false stimulant. It quenches thirst, calms the nerves, strengthens the heart, and braces the whole body.

I cannot close this paper without reminding the reader that times of sickness, whether caused by epidemic or not, come to all families sooner or later, and it should not find them unprepared. The father of a family, if he live in a house of any size, should see to it that there be one room therein set apart as a kind of hospital ward.

It should be as high up as possible, quiet, with a large window—not blazing directly on to the bed, however. It should be plainly but cheerfully furnished, though with no curtains either to the bed or windows. Ventilation should be studied by means of door-panel, fire-place, and window. A curtain of some soft, clean, washable material should hang in front of the door, to be kept wet with carbolic acid lotion in case a patient be inside with anything infectious. Remember that ventilation and disinfection are of very little use at all in a sick-room if not carried out generously and with a will. Half-and-half measures do little good.

The walls of this room should not be papered, but colour-washed. Pictures may be hung in it, but they must be representative of life and joy, not of death and gloom. Flowers should grace the table and mantel-piece, and whenever the weather is chilly, a bit of bright fire should be burned in the grate. The ordinary noisy coal-scuttle and shovel should find no place in the sick-room; instead of this, the coals, nice sizeable bits, should be placed in small paper bags, each containing enough to feed the fire once, so that they can be put on without noise.

Cheerful books and a few papers should also be in the sick-room, and last, and best of all, the book of Hope—the Bible.

