

kindness as he would to any other tired woman, and as for that expression of his countenance that had set my heart beating, it must have been the figment of my brain; for how could I possibly have distinguished anything through the gathering darkness, and a thick veil? With such arguments I tried to soothe the inquietude I could not altogether dispel, and which

would, at moments, give place to an exquisite sense of rapture, to be succeeded by a double portion of despondency. To-day was Saturday, the last of the holidays, and on Monday I trusted that, with renewed work and concentrated attention, my mind would recover its balance.

END OF CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

"MY EYES ARE SO BAD!"

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



TRUST that no one will be offended if I say that we human beings possess many feelings, and failings as well, in common with that portion of God's creation we somewhat haughtily style "the lower animals." One of these failings is that of extravagance. If we were to analyse this particular weakness, we should find it to be made up of, and caused by, a good many others.

We have only two eyes, but, nevertheless, we are as extravagant as regards our "powers" of seeing, and take as little reasonable care of these eyes, as if we had the same number as a butterfly.

What a terrible affliction it is to lose the sight! We cannot fathom nor realise it. Most of us in this busy, toiling world are dependent on our own exertions for the maintenance of ourselves and families in a condition of respectability, but what should we be without eyesight?—A burden to every one about us, and no longer able to hold our heads above water, as it is expressively phrased.

I do not mean to say that those people who have had the misfortune either to have been born blind, or to have lost their sight in infancy, are invariably helpless or unhappy, but how would it be with you and me, reader, were an accident to deprive us suddenly of light?—no longer able to read or to write, or to follow the avocations we delighted in, or the business that used to engross our attentions by day, unable even to leave our chairs or beds with safety, dependent upon the assistance of others—sometimes, alas! begrudgingly given—for the performance of the most trifling actions, shut out from the world, shut in with our poor selves in the dark chamber of our consciousness? Pray Heaven to avert such a calamity from all we know and love!

"Do you see that gentleman walking slowly along the pavement yonder, led by a little girl?"

This is what an acquaintance of mine said to me one day last summer while I was on a cycling tour.

"What, that benign-faced old man across the road?" I made answer.

"Yes; but he is not very aged. Barely sixty, though his head and beard are so white. They turned colour in a single night."

"Do you tell me so?"

"I but tell you what I have heard, and have no reason to doubt the facts, which are somewhat remarkable. Twenty years ago he was one of the handsomest and smartest Government officials in India. He had been out for ten years, and only home once. During his visit to the old country he fell in love with, and became engaged to, a very charming girl of good family. The engagement would be a somewhat long one, however. It would be two years before he could get home again. Well, he went back to India, high in hopes and ambitions now, because he would have some one to share his life with him.

"The time seemed very long to him, but the two years came to an end at last. Bidding his friends a joyous good-bye, he started by train for Bombay, there to catch a P. and O. steamer for England. He felt strangely nervous as he took his seat, but put it down to the effects of the heat, the hurry, and excitement of starting.

"There was only one other gentleman in the same seat with him: an officer going on furlough; and the two got friendly. By-and-by they came to a tunnel, and for a time there was a lull in the conversation. The officer was the first to resume it, and had been chatting on very pleasantly for at least five minutes, when Mr. R— observed, with a laugh, 'Why, this is a very long tunnel. Is it never going to come to an end?'

"'What do you mean?' replied the officer; 'I don't understand you. We have left the tunnel long ago.'

"'Oh, man, man!' cried the other, clutching at the officer's arm. 'Say not so. We are still in the tunnel, are we not?'

"'No, no. You know we are not. You are joking, surely, my friend, or practising for the stage. Come, which is it, eh?'

"'It is this,' cried the poor fellow, with an agony of expression that no actor could have imitated—'*I am stone-blind; I shall never leave the tunnel!*'"

"How terrible!" I said.

"It was indeed terrible. He dropped down in a fit almost immediately, and was afterwards insane for a time."

"Did the young lady marry him?"

"Everybody asks that. Yes; like a true-hearted English girl. She is living now, and the child who is leading the gentleman is their youngest daughter."

Such cases of sudden deprivation of sight are, of course, exceedingly rare, but we all have an interest in preserving the eyesight, not only our own, but that of those dear to us.

Well, I do not mean to give space here to a description of the various diseases of the eye, for they are all so important as to demand the very best assistance we can procure, and they should never be neglected even for a day.

Now, the first piece of advice I beg to give to one and all, to young and old, is this: never be wasteful of your powers of sight, never fatigue your eyes if you can avoid it. But this advice requires some qualification, for exercise of the eyes tends to keep them healthy and young. On the other hand, want of bodily exercise tends to age them, so do indigestion, however caused, intemperance in anything, whether in eating, drinking, working, or thinking, a disposition to the formation of adipose tissue, and neglect of the skin. Of course these are only a few of the causes of early dimness of sight and senile long-sightedness.

As to the latter, it is natural enough in advanced life. I was amused one day while travelling by train. I had entered a carriage where sat two gentlemen, who were earnestly discussing their remarkable juvenility. Their united ages would have amounted to about one hundred and fifty. But, nevertheless, by their own account, there was very little that a young man of thirty could have done which would not have come easy enough to them also.

"And," said one, "I can see better now than I could at forty."

"So can I," said the other, "*much farther away*. I can read a paper at arm's length."

No doubt he could. But not within a foot of his nose.

Some people have naturally weak, or, I might say, tender eyes, that are subject to occasional attacks of slight inflammation, styes, neuralgia, &c. Such people must be extra careful of their sight, and this includes carefulness of the general health as well. Let them avoid every sort of diet that is likely to disagree, live well, but plainly, and make a practice of sponging the brow and closed eyes every morning with cold water, before taking the bath. Cold, weak green tea makes a good eye-lotion. The eye-douche sold in chemists' shops should be used for its application. However, this is only needed when there is some slight degree of inflammation from *external* causes, such as glare, fatigue of sight, &c.

What about *coloured glasses*? Well, these are of infinite advantage sometimes. Especially should they be worn at the seaside, where the glare is reflected by both the water and houses; also indoors by people who read much. Again, they ought to have protected

sides, to keep away dust, if worn by people much exposed to wind. The best colour is said to be blue. I own to a partiality, however, for neutral tints, and these are certainly not so unsightly. Whatever be the colour chosen, see it goes right through the glass, and that the spectacles are well polished.

Those who write much indoors should see that neither the carpet nor the wall-paper is of a disagreeable or puzzling design, nor should wire gauze blinds be used on the windows. The same rule applies to the wearing of veils. But these have one advantage, and only one: they keep out the dust and insects. They should be of simple dark blue or black net, without spots or beads, and never worn down except when absolutely required. For remember, the eyes require to be kept cool, and the breath under the veil is in itself injurious to the eyesight in more ways than one.

Those who are much exposed to wind and dust, while driving or riding, should wear neutral-tinted glasses of large size, especially if the light be strong and the roads white. Often after a long day on the road I have suffered from fatigue and uneasiness in the eyes, and found relief from using a simple lotion, such as can be obtained at any chemist's.

Being a hard student myself, I have a fellow-feeling with those who have to write or read much, by day or night. The following advice will be found invaluable to all such, and if adopted, will greatly tend to preserve the sight:—

I. *Sit erect* in your chair when reading, and as erect when writing as possible. If you bend downwards, you not only gorge the eyes with blood, but the brain as well, and both suffer. The same rule should apply to the use of the microscope. Get one that will enable you to look at things horizontally, not always vertically.

II. Have a *reading-lamp* for night use. N.B.—In reading, the light should be on the book or paper, and the eyes in the shade. If you have no reading-lamp, turn your back to the light, and you may read without danger to the eyes.

III. Hold the book at *your focus*; if that begins to go far away, get spectacles.

IV. Avoid reading by the flickering light of the *fire*.

V. Avoid straining the eyes by reading in the *gloaming*.

VI. *Reading in bed* is injurious as a rule. It must be admitted, however, that in cases of sleeplessness, when the mind is inclined to ramble over a thousand thoughts a minute, reading steadies the thoughts, and conduces to sleep.

VII. Do not read much in a *railway carriage*. I myself always do, however, only in a good light, and I invariably carry a good reading-lamp to hook on behind me. Thousands of people would travel by night rather than by day if the companies could only see their way to the exclusive use of the electric light.

VIII. Authors should have *black-ruled paper* instead of blue, and should never strain the eyes by reading too fine types.

IX. The *bedroom blinds* should be red or grey, and the head of the bed should be towards the window.

X. Those ladies who not only write, but *sew*, should not attempt *black seam* by night.

XI. When you come to an *age* that suggests the wearing of spectacles, let no false modesty prevent you from getting a pair. If you have only one eye, an *eyeglass* will do; otherwise it is folly.

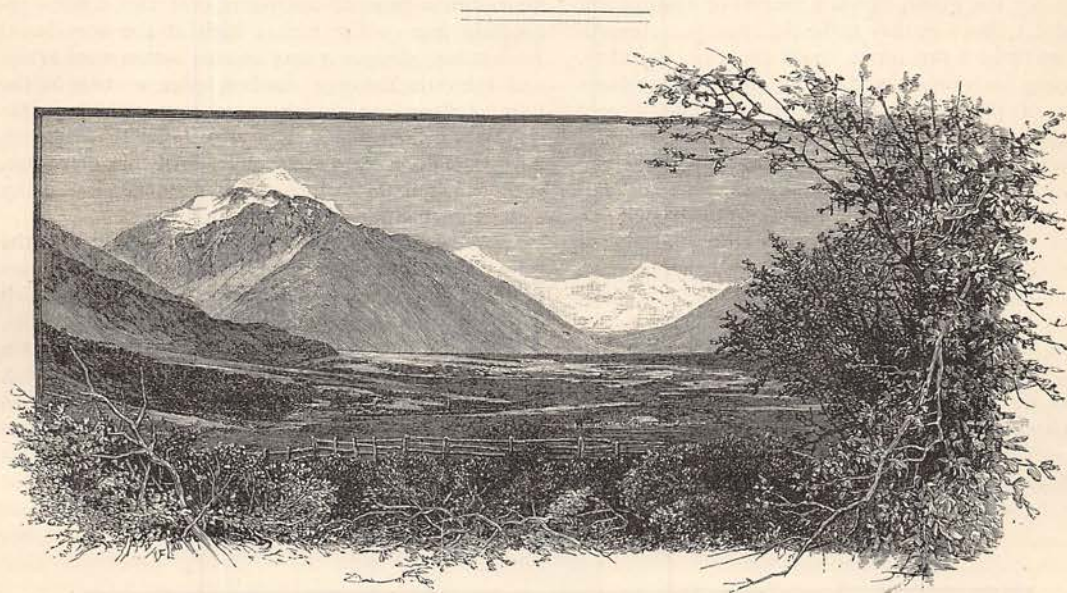
XII. Go to the wisest and best optician you know

of, and state your wants and your case plainly, and be assured you will be properly fitted.

XIII. Remember that bad spectacles are most injurious to the eyes, and that good and well-chosen ones are a decided luxury.

XIV. Get a pair for reading with, and, if necessary, a long-distance pair for use out of doors.

Let me add that it is the greatest mistake in the world to wait till your eyesight is actually damaged before visiting your optician.



A DISTANT VIEW OF MOUNT COOK.

A TRIP TO THE MONT BLANC OF NEW ZEALAND.

BY W. H. TRIGGS.

NEW ZEALAND is particularly rich in mountain scenery. A backbone of snowy Alps runs almost throughout the entire length of the South Island. And they are Alps worthy of the name. In whatever part of the South Island you travel, you are pretty sure to see on a clear day a background of mountains covered with perpetual snow.

There are scores of peaks ranging from 7,000 to 10,000 feet high. Mount Cook, the monarch of them all—the Mont Blanc of New Zealand—towers aloft no less than 12,375 feet, and one or two of his near neighbours, such as Mount Tasman, Mount Stokes, and Mount Sefton, are scarcely less imposing.

It may be, in the course of a few years, now that Switzerland has been “done” so thoroughly, and seeing communication with New Zealand is made so expeditious, that Alpine tourists, tired of going over carefully marked-out routes, will visit the Southern

Alps of New Zealand to strike out a new line for themselves.

Once in the colony, it is easy enough to reach Mount Cook. From either Christchurch or Dunedin excursion tickets are issued for five pounds, which cover the cost of a day’s travelling by rail and two days’ coaching. At the end of that time you find yourself at a comfortable hostelry, known as the “Hermitage,” and situate under the shadow of the southern spur of Mount Cook, from which it is separated by the Hooker River. You are in the very heart of glaciers, and ice-caves, and Alpine wonders of every kind. The house is built at the foot of the Mueller Moraine, and half an hour’s scramble over the large accumulation of rocks and *débris*, brought down by the Mueller Glacier, lands you at the terminal face. Here are cliffs of ice, in some places as much as 450 feet high. There is an ice-cave filled with a delicate light of shimmering blue, and looking for all the world like the enchanted grot of some magician. Above it is a sheer precipice of ice, 150