I BRING you the latest blossoms,
Which summer has given to me.
How white is her farewell token,
How pure she would have us be!
She has spoken to me in fragrance,
She has whispered to me in flowers,
In utterance sweet and tender,
Through the long bright sunny hours.
She had blooms of the deepest splendour,
But amid her gorgeous host,
I think that her fair white blossoms
Were cherished by her the most.

She sent the snowdrop and wind flower
To herald her happy reign,
And the hawthorn's crown of beauty
Was a fall of snow again.
And I heard the lilies murmur,
As they stood in their grace apart,
In the moonlight's quiet splendour,
"How blest are the pure in heart."
Oh! I graze at her latest blossoms,
And ponder her gentle speech,
And the voice of the passing summer
Her lowest thought shall teach.

A FEW QUESTIONS ASKED AND ANSWERED.

BY MEDICUS.

Our literary year has flown away. Another
goodly volume of our Girl's Own is finished
and closed; yet we trust—oh, and feel sure—
that for many and many a long year to come
it will grace the bookshelves of hundreds—we
might say thousands—of happy homes, not
in England only, but in every country where
our language is spoken or understood. Nor
will it be allowed always "to stand at ease"
on the bookshelf, for our stories are good,
and we will re-read, but apart from this the
volume will often be appealed to as a book of
reference. And so we—the Editor and his
hard-working staff—are contented, for though
modesty forbids us to say we have gained
success, we can, at all events, boldly declare
that we have done our best to merit it.

And so we shall in future. We have all
returned from our holidays recruited in
strength, and are once more at our tables, pens
in hand. Speaking now for myself, I sincerely
hope that the few hints on health which from
time to time during "the year that's awa'"
I had the honour and privilege to throw out,
have not been quite wasted on my fair readers.
During the months now before us, I trust to
be able to give much common-sense advice
that will serve to guide them safely through
many a weary little ailment or trouble,
and safely past the innumerable pitfalls with which
the paths of life are so freely strewed.

Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly
upwards. We cannot expect always to be
well; even those who live carefully and most
in accordance with the miles of health are sub-
ject to illness at times and liable to accidents.
Indeed, sickness itself an accident, but we
cannot too often call to mind the fact that
cold or infection prefers the weakly as its
victims—smites at them, and passes by the hearty
and robust. This shows us that we make a
very serious error if we do not so live as to
keep our bodies as near as possible the high
water-mark of health. And as the body so
will the mind be. A healthy body feels over
light, and in such a body a calm, contented,
happy mind is sure to dwell.

It has occurred to me that in this paper,
instead of taking as my text the symptoms and
treatment of any particular class of ailments,
I might do good by asking and answering a
few questions, which I know the sensible
portion of my girl readers must sometimes put
to themselves. I begin with one that was put
to me the other day by a mother.
"Do you think," she asked, "people do
well to use so much medicine in the nursery as
is generally done?"

"I consider it," I replied, "one of the
greatest mistakes out to turn a nursery into a
kind of fire-side hospital. The way our poor
little children are doctored and dosed by their
nurses and mothers is sad to think of. If I
had my will, I would clear out every bottle
with a label on it from the nursery. Away
with your syrups of seens and rubarb, away
with your still-waters, your slops and your oils.
Stick a thermometer over the mantelpiece;
keep the temperature equable night and day,
never too hot, never too cold. Keep baby
warm, but do not sweat him; if you do he
will grow up a puny peevish lad, and probably
into a miserable man, with whom nothing will
seem to go right, because he is not healthy.
So if you love him do not over-clathe him in
bed or bassinet; but give him wholesome
food and fresh air, and look upon sunshine as
life to him. If he does all at any time, believe
me, rest and gentle, soldiering, soothing treatment
is likely to do far more good than any drug
or medicament you, with your mother's heart
but blind skill, are able to choose for him."

Should soothing medicines be given when
a child is restless, in pain, or cannot sleep?
Never, unless prescribed by a medical man.
They are poisons, and of those children who
have been accustomed to them, I have but one
remark to make. It will be better far for them
if they die while young; if they do live it will
be with broken constitutions. Do you know
what one of the best remedies for the little
ephemeral fevers, the nodescript attacks of
nervousness, the day-old dyspepsias and in-
cipient insomnias of babylon consist in (I
am speaking to mothers at present)? Why,
in nothing else but this: allowing him to roll
and tumble on bed or on nursery floor, and do
as he pleases, with just as much clothing
on, and not a vestige more, than he himself
desires to wear. Meanwhile, if he takes food
kindly, let him have it; if not, let him go with-
out for an hour, or even for two.

A great many mothers are positively pre-
sumptuous in their treatment of ailing infants.
Not only would they take the case out of the
doctor's hands, but out of Nature's as well.
They want to force the child to get well, and
they try to do so on principles most unsound.
Far better if they would try to be guided by
the apparent feelings of the little sufferer.
If they did err then it would be on the right side.

Should the education of children be com-
enced when they are very young?
As I may return to this subject another
day, I shall merely say at present that,
although the education of children cannot be
commenced too soon, it should not be al-
together of a scholastic nature. Confining
them to the table or desk too many hours
a day is a mistake, and a very cruel one:
I think children ought to learn to read
and write in the nursery, and that their
books ought to be of a kind to interest them,
and the sentences they write and copy be also
of a kind to give pleasure. As with their
bodies so with their minds. You must con-
sider and study their feelings. Education
should never be of the nature of a penalty
or punishment. Don't force. You cannot bene-
THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

officially spoon-feed the mind any more than you can the body, the self-control and self-culture must begin at a very early age, and habits of industry, not inculcated but fostered. Inculcation has little effect on children; they forget the instruction as fast as you put it in, and as fast as you take it out. We should remember that a child's eyes are very wide open, and his ears are very impressionable. He is for ever wanting to be taught, and he wants to know. We should be ever ready to ask questions, and willing to explain the answers to him. A good teacher or thoughtful mother takes advantage of this, and ~ in a certain kind of paper bag a lighted unlighted cigarette, and gives it to a certain child, who can't help being interested. He is more likely to be interested in another child, who has come to him with a proper accent, or sing or play with taste. I will not answer this question, but repeat it. Are there?

But leaving the education of girls alone, I think they are often harshly dealt with at schools. For instance, a certain girl, whose name 11 not be mentioned, was made to give up all her after-school work. She was punished for doing her work, and she was punished for not doing it. The punishment was, I believe, more severe than the work. It is a great evil to have such a system of punishment, and it is a great evil to have such a system of work. The punishment should be light and gentle, and the work should be useful and interesting. The punishment should be such as to teach the child that it is wrong to be lazy, and the work should be such as to teach the child that it is right to be industrious. The punishment should be such as to teach the child that it is wrong to be lazy, and the work should be such as to teach the child that it is right to be industrious.

You must interest before you can educate with good results, and you must keep up the interest all along, as the process of educating proceeds. Remember that there is such a thing as beginning at the wrong end with a child's education. There is a parable, it may be, that is not to be true, only it will help to elucidate my meaning. A certain kind of paper bag was given to a certain boy, who was a lighted cigarette, and the boy was made to give it back. He was punished for not giving it back, and he was punished for giving it back. The punishment was, I believe, more severe than the work. It is a great evil to have such a system of punishment, and it is a great evil to have such a system of work. The punishment should be light and gentle, and the work should be useful and interesting. The punishment should be such as to teach the child that it is wrong to be lazy, and the work should be such as to teach the child that it is right to be industrious. The punishment should be such as to teach the child that it is wrong to be lazy, and the work should be such as to teach the child that it is right to be industrious.

The boy had already begun to yawn and look drowsy and uninterested, and at last he said:

"But when will we get to the biscuit, papa?"

Then his father laughed, and took him straight away round to the wonderful toastring machine, and the boy could see the rows of crisp biscuits tumbling off, and he got one, and smiled, and ate it. This interest was at once awakened in his own mind.

"I want to know," he said, "what moves that great grindon.

His father showed him, and showed him the biscuits sliding in, uncoiled, passing through the oven once, and tumbling out crisp and cooled. Then the boy must go farther back, step by step, and find out what moved the machine, and how it would be possible, and how the whole machine, learned the whole process, until he stood once more before the long running belt. Then he gave a big happy sigh, and said:

"Papa," he said, "I'll never rest content now until I understand all about the steam-engine itself.

The education of girls, as conducted at ordinary schools, sound and healthful?

As a rule it is very much the reverse. If all girls were turned out of the same mould, the public education might pass muster. Society, however, demands certain acquirements in a girl, which are dignified by the title of accomplishments. Among these, French, German, Italian, and music are first favourites, and to the study of these much time is devoted, which might be far more profitably spent more pleasantly, too, in learning arts that would be found useful in after life. And, after all, are there five per cent. of finished girls who can talk either French or Italian with a proper accent, or sing or play with taste? I will not answer this question, but repeat it. Are there?

VARIETIES.

Looking-glass.

When this crystal shall present
Your beauty to your eye,
Think that this lovely face was meant
To dress another by;
For not to make them proud,
These glasses are allowed.
To dress another by.

But to compare
The inward beauty with the outward grace,
And make them fair in spirit as well as face.

—James Shirley.

Joy as a Medicine.—Joy is one of the greatest purifiers and sanitizers. It is more healthful or better calculated to prolong life than that which is to be found in domestic happiness, in the company of cheerful and good companions, or in the sight of the brightest chimes in the world. Laughter, that external expression of joy, must not here be omitted. It is the most salutary of all the bodily movements.—Hudson.

PROFESSIONAL LACE.—Valenciennes is the cheapest lace in the end, for many reasons. It is made with a round, whole thread. Work carefully, not daily, it can hardly be washed. It can be washed any number of times, and not being so peculiar as the point or applique laces, the Mechlin, &c, all of which are much more fragile, it gives the softest touch of lace without attracting too much attention, so as to be recognised easily again.

The Whole Duty of Man.—Once a Gnome came to Signor Hille, a rabbi, and said, "Proselytise me; but on condition that thou teachest me the whole law whilst I stand upon one foot." Signor Hille drove him off with the builder's rule which he held in his hand. "Hence," he said, "do not to thy neighbour. This is the whole law, and the rest is its commentary."—The Talmud.

Healthy Laughter.—There is nothing so healthy as honest laughter. A woman who had recovered from a decline was asked what had cured her, and her reply was, "I stopped worrying and began to laugh, that is all."—A Word About Fashions.

Be not the first by whom the new is tried, nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

How People Dress in China.—The Chinese nation almost entirely clothes itself in the same costume, in one form or another, in winter being obtained by means of wadded garments, which are pined on until the wearer assumes sometimes the aspect of a stuffed doll. Hence the severity of the weather is not infrequently expressed in terms of clothing, as for instance, "a two-coat day," or "a three-coat day."

Common-sense in Love.—A girl may feel certain on this point, that, as a man treats his mother, so he will treat his wife. This is a wise rule, as it directs a young man in the first six months after marriage. This may seem cold-blooded, and very far removed from the tender feelings which courtship induces. But marriage has a clear reference upon which the happiness of her whole life will depend; and there is always a time, whether she notices it or not, before she parts with the control of her heart, at which she ought to listen to her judgment. Without better evidence than her own feelings, she is very likely to make a mistake; but if she can assure herself that her lover is a man who is respected and liked by his male friends, and is a favourite at home, she may be pretty sure that in listening to him she is choosing wisely.

The Days of the Week.—With the natives of Burmah it is a belief that people born on a Monday are jealous; on Tuesday, honest; Wednesday, quick tempered, but soon calmed again; Thursday, mild and kind; Friday, Saturday, hot-tempered and quarrelsome; while Sunday's children will be parsonious.

Peace and Joy.—Peace is better than joy. Joy is an uneasy guest, and it is always on tiptoe to depart; it tries and wears us out, and yet keeps us ever fearing that the next moment it may be gone. Peace is not so. It comes more quietly, it stays more contentedly, and it never exhausts our strength, or gives one anxious forecasting thought.