

an angry snort; "she was a lady, if there ever was one. We don't see her sort every day, I can tell you that, Miss Esther; a pretty spoken, dainty creature, with long fair curls, that one longed to twine round one's fingers."

"She was pretty, then?" I hazarded, more timidly.

"Pretty! she was downright beautiful. Miss Carrie reminds me of her sometimes, but she is not near so handsome as poor Miss Rose. She used to come here sometimes with her mother, and she and Master would sit under that mulberry tree. I can see her now walking over the grass in her white gown, with some apple blossoms in her hand, talking and laughing with him. It was a sad day when she lay in the fever, and did not know him, for all his calling to her 'Rose! Rose.' I was with her when she died, and I thought he would never hold up his head again."

"Poor Uncle Geoffrey! But he is cheerful and contented now."

"But there, I must not stand gossiping," continued Deborah, interrupting herself. "I have only brought you the keys, and wish to know what preserve you and Mr. Allan might favour for tea." But here I caught hold, not of the key-basket, but of the hard, work-worn hand that held it.

"Oh, Deborah! do be good to us!" I broke out; "we will trouble you and Martha as little as possible; and we are all going to put our shoulder to the wheel and help ourselves, and we have no home but this, and no one to take care of us but Uncle Geoffrey."

"I don't know but I will make some girdle cakes for tea," returned Deborah, in the most imperturbable voice; "and she turned herself round abruptly, and walked out of the room without another word; but I was quite well satisfied and triumphant; when Deborah baked girdle cakes, she meant the warmest of welcomes, and no end of honour to Uncle Geoffrey's guest.

"Humph, girdle cakes!" observed Uncle Geoffrey, with a smile, as he regarded them. "Deb is in a first-rate humour, then. You have played your cards well, old lady," and his eyes twinkled merrily.

I went into the kitchen after tea, and had another long talk with Deborah. Dear old kitchen! how many happy hours we children had spent in it! It was very low and dark, and its two windows looked out on the stable-yard; but in the evening, when the fire burnt clear and the blinds were drawn, it was a pleasant place. Deborah and Martha used to sit in the brown Windsor chairs, knitting, with Puff, the great tabby cat, beside them, and the firelight would play on the red brick floor and snug crimson curtains.

Deborah and I had a grand talk that night; she was a trifle obstinate and dogmatical, but we got on fairly well. To do her justice, her chief care seemed to be that her master should not be interfered with in any of his ways. "He will work harder than ever," she groaned, "now there are all these mouths to feed; he and Jumbles will be fairly worn out."

But our talk contented me. I had enlisted Deborah's sympathies on our side. I felt the battle was over. I was only a "bit thing," as Deborah herself called me, and I was tolerably tired when I went up to my room that night.

Not that I felt inclined for sleep. Oh, dear no. I just dragged the big easy chair to the window, and sat there listening to the patter of summer rain on the leaves.

It was very dark, for the moon had hidden her face, but through the cool dampness there crept a delicious fragrance of wet jasmine and lilies. I wanted to have a good "think;" not to sit down and take myself to pieces. Oh, no, that was Carrie's way. Such introspection bored me and did me little good, for it only made me think more of myself and less of the Master; but I wanted to review the past fortnight, and look the future in the face. Foolish Esther! as though we can look at a veiled face; only the past and the present is ours, the future is hidden with God.

Yes, a fortnight ago I was a merry, heedless school-girl, with no responsibilities and few duties, except that laborious one of self-improvement, which must go on under some form or other until we die. And now, on my shrinking shoulders, lay the weight of a woman's work. I was to teach others, when I knew so little myself; it was I who was to have the largest share of home administration—I, who was so faulty, so imperfect.

Then I remembered a sentence Carrie had once read to me out of one of her innumerable books, and which had struck me very greatly at the time.

"Happy should I think myself," said St. Francis de Sales, "if I could rid myself of my imperfections but one quarter of an hour previous to my death."

Well, if a saint could say that, why should I lose heart thinking about my faults? What was the good of stirring up muddy matter to try and see one's own miserable reflection, when one could look up into the serene blue of Divine Providence? If I had faults—and alas! how many they were—I must try to remedy them; if I slipped, I must pray for strength to rise again.

Courage, Esther! "little by little," as Uncle Geoffrey says; "small beginnings make great endings." And when I had cheered myself with these words, I went tranquilly to bed.

(To be continued.)



THINGS THAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD LEARN TO DO

By MEDICUS.



LEARN to do, I must be supposed to mean, for the sake of her own comfort, health, and happiness in life, and for the comfort and happiness of those she may come in contact with, not only while still

young, but after she is grown up.

"Ought to learn to do? Ought to?" Yes, I confess that the very words are enough to make some wayward girls fight shy of advice. Life, in the private opinion of this class, should be something like the "steam circus" children delight so much in at fairs, all one pleasant merry-go-round. To do things not personally pleasurable, or at all inconvenient, would be entirely against the creed of such girls as these. Born probably with no great share of real goodness in their natures, they degenerate rather than improve as they grow older, for the simple reason that that great social reformer—self-sacrifice—finds no foothold in their narrow minds.

Now, I feel pretty sure that one of woman's missions in this world is to soften, refine, and ennoble it; but, alas! a man might listen for a week—or for a year, if he had the bad taste—to the conversation of girls of the kind I am talking about without finding himself one whit morally improved at the end of the time. Some physical beauty of form they without doubt often possess, and to this they take care to add the worldly witchery of over-dress and outside show. Only fools are fascinated by these alone; the wise among mankind can see through them, and look deeper for evidences of soul and truth and that grace of mind that shall last till hair grows grey and white. Admiration they may gain, if this be all they look for, but I doubt if it be ever of a very lasting or permanent order. Is it not, to give a homely simile, too often of the ~~boy-and-butterfly~~ description? Young curly-poll will chase the lovely moth over hill and dell, lured onwards by its gaudy colours. There is fun and excitement in this, and much satisfaction to curly-poll when he has run it down at last. But when he has done so, and admired it for a little while, he invariably either throws it up again into the blue sky and sunshine, or throws it down, and goes away and forgets all about it.

It is good for human beings that girls are not all of this thoughtless, frivolous nature; and thousands among our readers—nay, I trust the majority—really do possess consciences, have minds refined and pure, and warm hearts. Life to them is real and earnest, and the grave is not its goal. They cannot look around them in the world without seeing much pain and suffering and sorrow that their lighter-minded sisters are blind to. It is really a great and true honour to be able to pour the oil of consolation and kindness on the troubled ocean of life. A woman is a queen who can do that, and, in my opinion, all women ought to be queers, and if spared in health and blessed with strength they may be so.

"What! Then," some may ask me, "would you make every girl a kind of home missionary?"

If you care to put it in that way, I reply "Yes, certainly; and no girl or woman has to go beyond the circle of her own friends, acquaintances, and neighbours to find plenty of good to do, and that too all unobtrusively."

But—and here I take my standpoint, and you will find it is truly that of your physician, after all—I wish our girls to do good, if good there may be done, because it is everyone's duty so to do, because the sense of having done your duty causes happiness, and because happiness begets health, and health beauty.

I am not going to advise you to be preceptorial, which means to preach. A girl has seldom any business to preach, even to her juniors, but a thousand times more good, as far as you are concerned, may be done by example.

Well, now, I do not think that any girl can do her duty, either to or by the society in which she moves, unless she pays the utmost respect to her own personal appearance; and this, in my opinion, includes, among other things of greater or less moment, attention to toilet, comportment, conversation, and politeness.

A few words on one or two of these may form a suitable introductory paper to our series.

HOW TO BE HEALTHY, HAPPY, AND WISE.

First, as to the toilet. You arise from your bed of a morning, it is to be hoped, both refreshed and full of life and spirits, and with a wish to commence the duties of the day as early as possible. If, however, you have not enjoyed the beauty-sleep, you will feel neither refreshed nor comfortable, but, on the other hand, probably somewhat cold, and with little desire to get up.

This beauty-sleep, then, is somewhat essential; for, although fresh air may subsequently remove, in some measure, the jaded feeling which the absence of healthy sleep has engendered, it will not do so entirely. You will, unless very young indeed, feel tired and worn before the day is over, and have much difficulty in suppressing an inclination to yawn. Yawning is generally supposed to be but a vulgar habit, but to us medical men it is one of the signs of a wearied and labouring heart.

Very likely it is your own fault if you have not slept well. Supper may have been too late, too heavy, or too sloppy, or consisted of indigestible food; or, perhaps, you have gone to bed without any supper at all, which a young person never should do.

Sleep may have been banished and toilsome dreams induced by a fatiguing weight of bed-clothes, by a too-soft bed, badly-arranged pillows, closely-drawn curtains, or an ill-ventilated apartment.

On the other hand, neither of all these may have had anything to do with it. You may not have been enough in the fresh air on the previous afternoon: you may have neglected exercise, or caused a too great flow of blood to the brain by excited conversation before going to bed. This last I look upon as one of the great causes of want of sleep. There should always be a period of calm, quiet, and meditation before lying down. If you wait for the brain to settle or the blood to adjust itself after lying down, you may hear the cocks all crowing before sleep seals your weary eyes.

But enough said on the subject. Sleep, you know, is all important, if only for the simple reason that the want of it is a beauty spoiler. But you must get up at all events, and try to do better for the day that is before you.

Now for the reason that one wants to be clean all over and refreshed as well, and that it is difficult to obtain these results by cold water alone, I always recommend the soap bath to those who wish to retain health and beauty. Simplicity itself—a wash with warm water and soap, then a cold sponge. If anyone has a difficulty in obtaining a small canful of hot water in the morning, and I know such difficulties do obtain in some households,

where Mary Jane brings it lukewarm and keeps you waiting for that, then the expenditure of a shilling or two on a kettle and lamp, and a farthing a day—how well laid out!—for methylated spirit makes you as independent as you need wish to be. And when you come out of your bath, you will begin to sing if there be any music in you, so refreshed will you feel.

The hair should never be washed in the morning. It takes up too much time. The face should be washed in hot water and afterwards laved in cold, especially before going into the bath. More delicate girls should use lukewarm water, instead of the cold, but the vigorous by all means the cold.

Well cleaning the teeth with a moderately soft brush and innocuous powder should never be neglected.

I may here mention parenthetically that, although I have never hitherto given the readers of *THE GIRL'S OWN* many useful recipes, I have considered the matter carefully, and mean this year to be more liberal, and will let them into the secret of easily and cheaply compounding many a delicious little knick-knack. One girl wrote Our Editor, asking for instructions in making flower waters. I have not forgotten it.

Not only in the morning, but after every meal, should the teeth be brushed, if only with soft water and soap alone. For decay of the teeth comes on much earlier if they are not properly attended to, and bad teeth not only look unsightly, but positively injure the health.

If you cannot wash the hair every morning, and once a week is enough, you can well brush it; but do not use oils or pomades. They are both vulgar and uncleanly. Good health alone will keep a gloss on the hair. I shall have more to say about this another day.

The finger-nails want seeing to every day, and the greatest care should be taken to preserve the colour and delicacy of the hand. I am sometimes asked for recipes for whitening the hands. Well, I can give one or two. Not to-day, excuse me; but the skin of a girl's hand is naturally soft and white, and it can be retained so. No need to expose it to the rays of a summer's sun, or bronze it by exposure to wind and weather; gloves are cheap. So are rainwater and mild non-alkaline soap.

Underclothing should be light but warm, and worn as free from wrinkles as possible. The corset should on no account be too tight. Mothers should see to this. Very young girls require none, but the framework of a growing girl needs support—but not modelling, remember!

The feet require as much attention if not more than the hands do. A neat and pretty boot should be worn, but not a pinching one, and not a high-heeled one.

As for dress, it has no need to be expensive; one should see the girl, not the dress. Well, that is only perhaps a man's way of looking at the matter; but I think there is some little grain of truth in it, because if it is becoming and non-obtrusive in every one part, if gloves and boots be faultless, with hair and hat to match—why, then it strikes me that dress seems really part of the person.

But there is another thing about dress which as a medical man I may be allowed to point out. If a girl be permitted to assume any extreme of fashion, she cannot really disabuse her mind of the idea that she is causing attraction and inviting criticism. In society, therefore, or even in the street, if at all modest she cannot feel perfectly at ease, perfectly calm and self-possessed; and not to be so is, pardon me, not to appear a lady. And it is within reach of even the poorest girl to be a lady, both at heart and in appearance and manner.

The very first signs of a love of *outré* finery in a child-girl should be checked by the mother; older girls should check it in themselves, as they would the thoughts of a deadly sin. It often leads to the utter ruin of all correct deportment in society, and causes the girl to be looked down upon even by people of both sexes. Remember, I speak as a medical man, and not as a connoisseur of taste in dress. I have no desire to blame a girl for coming out in a new hat or bonnet that might terrify a Frenchman, although I might object to be seen much in her society; but I insist that no girl possessed of a mind many degrees above that of a Chak-chak Indian would feel altogether at ease in such a head-dress, and her uneasiness, although it may not amount to actual nervousness, may be the very first thing that shall lead up to that disease. I call it a disease plumbly and plainly, because it was one of the ailments of modern life, born in one often, and oftentimes associated with febleness or positive disease of heart.

The effects of mind over matter are too well known to need description. Sudden bad news, for example, instantly takes away the appetite, and in some cases induces nausea or positive sickness; a fright or shock shall fur a tongue that was as pink and pretty as a pet dog's a moment before; a single thought shall set the heart palpitating, or bead the brow with perspiration, and hair has been turned grey in a single night from fear.

Can you not understand, therefore, that even the combined little shocks to a girl's nerves, caused by her not feeling at ease in society, may tend to enfeeble a not over-strong heart and induce the disease we call nervousness? Is not modesty and unaffection in dress, then, not a thing to be studied? I say it is.

A modest girl that feels herself faultlessly dressed, who knows she is looking her best, and who neglects no part of her toilet, has an immense advantage over a more careless sister (I mean sister in the wide acceptation of the term). She will feel perfectly at home, delightfully at ease, she will take a delight in listening to or joining in the conversation going on in the room, she will be positively happy, and the happiness will do a thousand times more good to her nerves and health than all the medicine in the British pharmacopeia could. No fear of a girl like this taking the fidgets, or twirling her hands about, or throwing her eyes in the wrong direction when talking, or swaying her body backwards and forwards, or moving a toe needlessly, or doing anything in fact to annoy anyone that sees her; on the contrary, she will feel so quiet that she will be able to study the very poetry of motion.

Girls even at home, if they care for retaining good health, should never sit, or stand, or walk in a position that is in any way constrained.

There are a variety of things that every girl should learn to do, because they increase the strength of the muscles, the power of the lungs, and even the heart's action. Now, for example, there is calisthenic exercise—. Hullo! I cannot complete the word, much less the sentence, for a friendly hand is laid on my shoulder and our Editor's kindly voice says:—

"Doctor, how about your space?"
I throw down my pen, merely waiting to express the hope that, gossipy and homely though this paper may be, it may contain some hints worth remembering and some food for thought.

(To be continued.)



OUR BODIES ARE OUR GARDENS.

By MEDICUS.

"OUR bodies," says the greatest of English poets, "are our gardens, to the which our wills are the gardeners, so that if we plant nettles or sow lettuce; set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills."

Shakespeare spoke very truthfully when he penned these lines, and, without doubt, when he speaks of our bodies, this great master includes also our minds.

If space permitted, and if I were quite certain that, to a large number of my readers, the introduction of lessons in physiology would not be dry reading, and very likely to be passed over or slipped, as little boys and girls slip big words they do not understand, I would endeavour to prove to you that in this life, mind and matter cannot be logically considered to have separate existences. The mind preys upon the body, or nourishes it as the case may be, and if the body be in health the mind catches the reflection, and, if rectitude be guiding the helm, sails along happy and cheerful also. But though, supported doubtless by Divine aid, there have been many people in this world whose minds have triumphed and rejoiced despite the tortures of the body, and who have died even at the stake with songs of joy on their lips, still, as a rule, only those among us who are really healthy are really happy.

If our bodies and minds are our gardens, the days of our youth are as springtime to nature, and believe me, girls, what you sow now, you will reap in the summer and autumn of your lives. It is now you must cultivate what you wish to grow, and root out from your minds, while yet it is possible to do so, the very germs of everything that mars the purest feelings of your nature.

Evil habits, like evil weeds, grow apace. There is one bramble, some plant that grows in the sluggard's garden, which usually goes by the name of the iron weed; the two little leaflets with which it begins life are no bigger than a baby's finger nails, and baby herself could easily pull up the weed at this stage; but leave it alone, and ere the summer has waned, it stands nine feet high at least, it has stems in which birds may perch, and its dark shadow keeps the sunlight from and destroys the life of every good vegetable on which it falls. If the sluggard tries to pull it up now, he may fail; strong though he be, it may stick to the ground, and if at last the stem snaps, "There," cries this unwholesome weed, "you have scotched, but you have not killed me; my root remains in the ground, and I'll flourish green again."

And just as difficult is it to pluck out from the mind evil habits, whenever they have taken firm root.

And evil habits of all kinds militate against our happiness and health, and against our success in life.

The bright eyes that are now scanning these words may belong to some one who is very young. The bad habits that she has to guard herself against, and fight and strive against, may seem to many not very evil ones. Little fits of jealousy, little outbursts of bad temper, a habit of exaggeration when conversing, an inclination to idleness, etc.—not very heinous in appearance, any of them, *at present*. Ah! but think how much may lie behind these little, wee words, *at present*. The first young shoots of the giant iron weed look as innocent and are quite as tender as those of the fairest flower that grows; but

think what it comes to. And so little fits of jealousy or outbursts of temper may lead, in after life, to results too awful to contemplate. An inclination to idleness often leads to moral ruin, while the habit of exaggeration when conversing may teach you habits of untruth, and bring upon you misery and wretchedness untold.

And I know of no habit more likely to lead to the loss of friends than that of untruthfulness. And just think for a moment what a blank and weary world this would be for you and for me if we were utterly friendless, if even our own relations held aloof from us, because we were untrustworthy; if we had no one who cared for us, no one to comfort us in sickness, or smile with us in gladness, or mind whether we died or lived. Could we be happy under such circumstances? No. So I say, for sake of your future health and comfort in this life—to say nothing of the great Beyond—struggle to leave off bad habits. Fight with them, resist the temptations they hold out, even if you have to run away from them. And if you are beaten once or twice, or a thousand times, let it only make you the more eager to return to the fray. You have right on your side, and you will triumph soon, be assured.

Those among us who have a complete mastery over their tempers are very much to be envied. A wonderful power is theirs. They can conquer where others fail and fall; they gain for themselves both respect and love. Think well then always before you speak. An ancient philosopher, although but a heathen, spoke words of truth when he remarked, "They are nearer to heaven who can restrain their tongues, even when in the right." Golden words these, and worthy to be graven on the tablet of the mind and remembered for ever.

Happiness is health. Seek happiness in good habits and virtues of the mind. Hear what a great man says: "Every virtue gives one a degree of felicity in some kind. Honesty gives one a good report; justice, estimation; prudence, respect; courtesy and liberality, affection; temperance, health; and fortitude a quiet mind, not to be moved by any adversity."

And you doubtless remember what Shakespeare says about adversity—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

I would have you, however, to remember that you must not dignify with the high-sounding name of "adversity" all the little troubles and worries you encounter in life. Adversities are to human beings as the surging waves to a storm-tossed ship; she did not cause them; she has no control over them, and no power over them, except the power to do battle with and overcome them by calmness and perseverance. But most of our trials we bring upon ourselves, and they must not be looked upon in the light of afflictions.

Adversity ought to be borne bravely and put to good use, but the miseries we entail upon ourselves are those we ought to be ashamed of—we have got to bear them in silence, and we have got to think back, so to speak, to commune with ourselves, and try to find out what caused the troubles to come on us, so that we may guard against their recurrence.

Comparing a human being to a ship at sea, care, and worry, and adversity might be likened to the ballast. A light ship is in danger of being capsized; one that is well-ballasted moves steadily through the water, and is in less danger of coming to grief. Looked at in this way, affliction would seem to be really a blessing. Moreover, we know very well that there are thousands of lives

shipwrecked, morally speaking, every day, simply for the want of this ballast of care.

But no matter how troubles come, we must try never to succumb to them. Indeed, as to little worries, we can always forget them by engaging in wholesome exercise or, better still, in work. Do not fret because something has gone wrong with you. Go into your own room, if you like, and have your cry out; it may do you good and help to freshen you up. But

"Folks who cry
Seldom die."

So, as soon as you are done, instead of locking your door and throwing yourself on your bed, as I know you do sometimes, just lave your face with cold water, and go out into the fresh air, and if you do happen to meet anyone who has vexed you, be brave, make it up on the spot.

It does take a deal of good solid courage, not to say heroism, to own yourself in the wrong, and make it up with a friend; and the nearer and dearer that friend, strange to say, the less you may be inclined to give in. But do so, if only for sake of your own happiness and peace of mind.

"I went," said a lady to me once, "a good long journey to make it up with a friend with whom I had had a few hasty and angry words, followed by a long period of estrangement. I gave no notice of my coming. I knew the surprise of seeing me would be a very delightful one to her. Alas! alas! when I arrived at the house, it was only to be told she was dead and gone. I would have given all I possessed in the world at that moment to be able to recall the past. The anguish of my mind was so great, that I was ill for weeks, and will never be quite the same as I once was."

Much of our happiness in life rests in the power we possess of being contented with our lot as a whole, and with whatever share of blessing we may be vouchsafed from day to day, or from hour to hour.

My advice to the discontented in life is, to compare their lot in life with that of thousands of less fortunate girls they see around them.

I believe every one of my readers has a great deal to be thankful for, especially those who enjoy the blessing of health. Think if you can what a sad and terrible thing it would be to be always ailing, and without that hope in the heart which sweetens even the bitterest drop in the cup of life. You envy the wealthy sometimes? Ah! but remember what Emerson says.

"The first wealth is health . . . Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yield their tributes of delight. Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. Cheerfulness should be the gift of the sunlight, the air should suffice for inspiration, and radiance of wisdom, in the lonely waste of the pine woods, making us dance and run about as happy as little children."

Do you think you would like to be more beautiful than you are? Silly thought—you have health. Health can make the plainest girl pleasant to behold, if her mind be pure and innocent. Health causes the rich blood to mantle in the cheeks, brings the gladness glitter to the eye, brightens the complexion, gives music to the voice, a charm to the smile, liveness and vigour to the limbs, and sprightliness and grace to every motion. So if you have beauty and purity of mind combined with bodily health, it is indeed impossible you can be ugly.

Possessing health, you ought to do everything in your power to retain it. Health should neither be squandered by thoughtlessness, nor hazarded foolishly. It is apt to slip from one's grasp gradually, or it may

leave us suddenly, when we least think of it; we should never therefore open the door for diseases to march in.

All those habits that tend to keep up the health of the body should be carefully studied and self-enforced, such as early rising, the use of the bath and personal cleanliness, temperance in eating, exercise, fresh air, and simplicity in living.

It is, too, in the days of your youth that you should endeavour to acquire all those mental and moral habits that will constitute themselves the safeguards of your health and your life itself when you grow older. Perseverance must be cultivated; for the want of this virtue many an otherwise good life has been ruined or cut short. Let no day pass without your having learnt something good. Let no day pass without your having entered into communion with your own thoughts. Never sleep until you have done so, never get up of a morning until you have done so, and made resolves and fixed your plans for the day. Try to do better each day than you did yesterday; so shall you be happier, so shall you be healthier. Study to be respectful, courteous, and truthful in your relations with friends, and companions, and parents. Determine never to lose your temper nor be annoyed at trifles that have no real vital import, and only serve to mar the tranquillity of your mind.

Learn also to be cheerful. You must even try to be cheerful when you are dull, for if you do so—strange it is, but true—the gloom will all disappear from your mind, like the dark clouds when the moon sits behind them.

Never be idle if you would be healthy and happy. What a noble thing labour is, and what a blessing to us all, and how very beneficial it is to the health. Man's lot is to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, and if labour was ever meant in the first instance as a punishment for original sin, heaven hath mercifully made the back strong enough to bear the burden, and sweeten and bless to us even toil itself. Were it not for honest work or labour, the mind would prey upon itself and prey upon the body, and life would become to us a very wearisomeness.

I could enumerate many diseases, including *emui*, dyspepsia, paralysis, hypochondria, melancholy, brain disease, and heart disease, that I have known to be induced by sheer idleness alone, or by idleness as the primary cause. Therefore, if you love your health, and have regard for your looks and appearances, I pray you be active.

Now, I never yet knew an idle being that was a happy being, any more than I ever knew any unhappy being who was healthy; therefore, it is evident that labour conduces to health.

Well, in this paper of mine, I have told you of a few useful seeds to sow in the garden of your mind and body, in order to be able to live healthy lives. I will only mention one or two more.

While activity is greatly to be desired in your daily labours, you must study calm withal. Avoid hurry and scurry in all your doings, for they are not only liable to lead to confusion, but they assuredly injure the nervous system, and tend to weaken the heart. Be steadfast then, and be punctual and orderly; if you are, you need never be in a state of hurry and excitement.

"Order is Heaven's first law,"

so said the poet Pope. I entreat you to remember this, for if you have neither system nor method in your labours, they will only be a plague and a worry to you, instead of what they ought to be: a blessing to yourself and to everyone around you.

PRESERVED PROVISIONS.

By PHILLIS BROWNE, Author of the "Girl's Own Cookery Book."

PRESERVED provisions have been a long time making their way amongst us, but I think that we must all acknowledge that now they have become firmly established. A few years ago they occupied a very anomalous position. Economical housekeepers appreciate them very highly, and thought they were delicious, wholesome, and excellent; the members of the family for whom economical housekeepers catered had a great scorn for them. I remember hearing an old gentleman say that he was of opinion that Australian meat constituted a most valuable article of diet, and he hoped he should never set eyes on it again. At the present day, however, the people are very few and far between who are not glad to make use of preserved provisions, and we generally find that the more experienced the cook the more acquaintance she has with the various preparations, essences, fruits, soups, jellies, vegetables, sauces, and meats which are sold under this general term. It is really wonderful what quantities of these provisions are now sold. You may go into the remotest part of the kingdom, into out-of-the-way villages where the butcher pays periodical visits only and every householder is his own greengrocer, and in the dusty window of a little shop which serves as "store" for the community, you will find tinned meats and fruits which would have excited the profoundest wonder in the bosom of our grandmothers. The good old ladies would have found it less difficult to believe that the end of the world was approaching than that their descendants would grow strong and hearty on the products of the orchards of America or the prairies of Australia.

The fact of the matter is that the food supplies of our own country are so inadequate to meet the requirements of the population that we have been compelled to use preserved provisions; and the probability is that we shall be compelled to use them much more in the future than we have done in the past. Would it not therefore be well that the girls of our class should learn what they are, and how they should be employed? If they would give a little attention to the subject, they would not only find that economy was furthered thereby, but also that many conveniences were close to their hands which would cost both time and trouble to make, but which when procured in this form are of superior quality and inexpensive.

In saying this I of course take it for granted that the goods of first-class manufacturers only have been purchased. This is a very important point. In old days housekeepers were advised to go to a highly respectable butcher if they wanted to get prime joints, or to a conscientious grocer if they did not wish to have their sugar sanded or their pepper dusted. The advice was accepted as the embodiment of wisdom and common sense. A precaution of the sort is much more imperatively needed with regard to preserved provisions, for imagination fails to give us an idea of what horrible enormities might be perpetrated by unprincipled meat preservers. There need be little fear, however, that manufacturers of established reputation will make use of any other than the best provisions, or adopt any but the best methods. Inexperienced cooks are sometimes heard to object to tinned meats, because they imagine that they are made anyhow. I fancy that if these people could go over one of the manufactories and actually see the process they would be slightly astonished. A little while ago I had sent to me a description of Armour's packing-house in Chicago, which had been written by someone who had just been over

it. It was something wonderful to read. The quantities of food used were enormous. As many as 11,500 pigs and 2,300 cattle had been killed in one day; and regularly 250,000 lb. of meat, enough to fill 60,000 cans, are steamed in a day. One of the most remarkable features of the whole business is the perfect cleanliness which is maintained throughout. The cans are thoroughly washed inside and out before the meat is put into them, and through all the processes the most scrupulous cleanliness is observed. The writer made the remark that if ordinary kitchens were one quarter as clean, food as usually served would be much more appetising than it is. The fact is, the operations in manufactories of this kind are carried out on such a large scale that everything has to be systematised, and skilled workpeople have to be employed, consequently the work is well done. I have no doubt that if exact statistics could be drawn up, it would be found that in cookery as performed by average cooks there is not only far more waste, but also far less cleanliness than are to be found in these large manufactories. Let the goods, therefore, come from a good maker, and no further uneasiness may be felt. For my own part, if I see on the outside of the tin, "Moir and Son," "Bovill," "Brand," or other well-known signatures, I feel quite easy in my mind concerning the reliable character of the contents.

I suppose that in these enlightened days no one imagines that preserved provisions consist simply of tins of Australian beef or mutton. Yet I should not be at all astonished to find that the majority of people have by no means realised what a variety of preparations are now being sold under this name. Meat cooked whole forms a very small part of the provision, and to my mind it is the least satisfactory of any, although even in this particular the preserved meat of to-day is much superior to the preserved meat of twenty years ago. Preserved fruits, and preserved vegetables on the other hand, are almost perfect. The other day some preserved asparagus was served to some friends of mine, and a gentleman who was present, and who professed to be something of an epicure, pronounced it superior to the same vegetable when freshly cooked. I should scarcely have gone so far as this, but I would certainly have said that it was equal in flavour to the average fresh vegetable, and superior to any but the high-priced bundles of asparagus. When asparagus is offered for sale, they are usually bundles containing stalks of equal size, large and firm throughout. These are expensive. There are other bundles, with large stalks outside and small stalks inside. These are less costly, though still dear enough, but they are unsatisfactory, because if boiled altogether they do not cook equally, and so they have to be picked over and cooked separately—the thick stalks at one time the thin stalks at another. Last of all, there are the bundles of long, thin straggling asparagus, commonly known as sprue, which is good for soup, but not to be recommended for the table. In all tinned asparagus which I have seen the stalks have been of equal size and first-class quality. Asparagus, like other vegetables, need only to be made hot by putting the tin before it is opened into hot water, and heating it for awhile, for this is the way in which experts tell us that the tinned vegetables should be prepared. Then it may be laid on toast in the usual way, and oiled butter or Dutch sauce may be sent to table with it.

As asparagus is excellent, so also are haricots verts (which may either be heated in the tin or tossed over the fire with butter and a few drops of lemon-juice and served as a course by themselves), broad beans, Lima beans, celery in

