

in my power. I am sure you will understand this."

A little later on she tells her mother that she was with another poor woman even worse off than the one just related, so you see it was not an isolated act of kindness, but, as I know from those who worked with her, a constant habit.

I think we always look upon it that a good daughter makes a good wife and mother, and there can be no doubt about it in the case of our princess. How devotedly she loved her children, and yet stopped short of spoiling them. It happened to her as to many among ourselves, her trials chiefly came through her great love.

In April, 1866, she was beginning to dread the war, and lived in a constant state of anxiety and alarm. It was, as she said, a war fearful to contemplate—brother against brother, friend against friend. She was expecting the birth of a little one, and in great fear lest she should be left alone in her time of sorrow, and her letters to her mother at this period were so full of fear, sorrow, and passionate longing for her husband's safety, that one even now cannot read them without eyes overflowing and a longing to go and help her, forgetting for a moment that she is now at rest.

It is touching that when the certainty of war was announced and her husband received his order to depart, he hurried to Berlin to tell Fritz how circumstances forced him to draw sword against the Prussians in the service of his own country. The Queen (our Queen, I mean) took charge of Princess Alice's children at this time, and thus took a load of anxiety off her mind. Poor princess! she had enough to bear—her own trouble drawing near, her husband leaving her for what looked like certain death, and a man who built her house appealing to her for money owing to save him from ruin, and she without the means of satisfying his demand. She went to Frankfort with other poor wives to visit her husband good-bye the day they marched forward.

In announcing the birth of her little daughter she is able to speak of the great blessing she enjoyed of having her husband with her, who had been able to get a few days leave of absence.

When he left her to move on to Aschaffenburg her longing was to be able to follow him, watch and help him. Well for her she could not; it would have crushed all hope out of her. I was there, and shall never forget the sight. I never think of it without a choking sensation, nor have ever quite lost the smell of blood, which sickened me as I moved about on that field the morning after the battle.

God heard her prayer, and brought back the prince, her husband, to her. In memory of having fought side by side, he asked the two regiments of the cavalry brigade officers and men to stand sponsors for his little baby-girl. They called her *Irene* in memory of the peace.

Time went on and brought, as it does to all, many trials to our princess, but it pleased God to keep her family circle unbroken until the year 1873, when an overwhelming sorrow came upon her in the death of her little son Frederick (Fritz), who fell out of the window and died in her arms. She never recovered from this blow. In writing to her mother she says, "There are days which seem harder than others, and when I feel very heartsick prayer and solitude do me good. He (little Fritz) seems near me always, and I carry his precious image in my heart everywhere. That can never fade or die. You ask me if I can play yet. I feel as if I could not. . . . It seems to me as if I never could play again on that piano where little hands were nearly always thrust into mine when I wanted to play. I could cry out for pain sometimes," she says, on returning to the place where her

child died, after being in England a short time. You who read this and have had sorrow cannot you sympathise with our princess?

In the year 1878, diphtheria attacked Princess Alice's household. She lost her little May, the sunshine of the home, the rest recovered. She herself, however, was a victim to the disease, and died on the 14th of December exactly seventeen years after the death of Prince Albert. She died so peacefully, like a child going to sleep, murmuring softly the names of "May, dear papa."

WORK VERSUS IDLENESS.

By MEDICUS.

If I were writing for matured minds, grown-up understandings, so to speak, I should commence this paper with a few well-chosen sentences about the muscular and nervous tissues, their development, their consistent and judicious nourishment, and the duties they have to perform in the animal economy. I should also have a little to say about the brain itself, and a few words about that wonderful muscular double-force pump the heart, that never for a moment ceases to beat from the moment life is vouchsafed to the babe, until, probably, three-score years and ten after its birth the old man or woman finds rest in death.

But my *clientèle* of readers is for the most part young, and physiology in any shape or form is but a dry subject. I therefore avoid it all I can.

The remark, however, I have just made about the heart cannot but afford some food for thought to some sensible girls, whose bright eyes scan these columns. The heart! what a wonderful thing it is, ever going on, ever working!—

"Our hearts, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

All through the busy day, all through the silent hours of the live-long night, whether we are awake, or whether our eyes are chained by slumber, beat-beat, and throb-throb goes the heart. Is it always working? Does it never, never rest?

Were the heart to stop beating for even a second or two, a strange, dizzy sensation of fulness of the head would take place, everything would become dark. You would have no time to gasp for breath, every feeling of sense would fail at one and the same time, and you would sink into insensibility, and mayhap into the arms of death.

Then the heart never rests? Yes, it does; it rests between every beat, and it gets more rest at night, because then the beats are fewer and further between, and it gets more rest when one is sitting or lying prone, than when walking or working in the erect position.

Probably some might be inclined to take pity, as it were, on their hearts, and think that the more rest it had the better, and the less one works one's heart the more chance of long life would there be. But this is a mistake, for the more work—up to a certain degree—a girl gives her heart, the better it will be for her own health and happiness.

And the reason is not far to seek: the heart is like the forearm or calf of the leg, a muscular organ; in the very act of working it is drawing towards it nerve-power and nutrient blood, and keeping up its own strength by this means, and enabling itself to send the red stream of life with honest force to the most distant parts of the body. A feeble heart could not do this. I sometimes hear people complaining of cold feet and cold fingers, although the temperature of the air is but

little under summer heat. This proceeds from enfeeblement of the heart, it cannot send the blood along through feet and fingers with sufficient force. Such people are only about half-hearted; let them go to work in the open air, and take abundant exercise, and gradually the heart will strengthen itself and grow, even as the forearm and biceps of the brawny blacksmith grows from wielding the hammer. On the other hand, if you permit the heart to indulge in idleness, if you lie too much in bed or on the sofa, and nurse your heart, if because you feel tired when you exert yourself to any degree you get afraid to work, then you are making your heart weaker and weaker every day; it will degenerate into a poor, useless, pale, flabby morsel of muscle that will be of no more genuine service to you than you yourself are to the honest work-a-day people in the world around you.

An idle heart is not only a weak one, but the place that it should have occupied and filled with good, sound, muscular tissue is apt to be clogged with useless fat, and the possessor of such a heart is very much to be pitied indeed, being feeble in body, a prey to a thousand weaknesses, and often vacillating in mind, and entirely destitute of strength of mind and will.

One of my favourite authors, Charles Lamb to wit, was a very hard-working man in the heyday of his life, but he grumbled a great deal at having to work. The following alliterative line is Lamb's:

"The dry drudgery of the desk's dull wood."

It was Lamb who asked—

"Who first invented work and bound the
fre

And holiday-rejoicing spirit down?"

Ah! but when Lamb retired upon a pension adequate to his simple needs, he looked back often and often to his working days as the happiest of his life, and would have given a good deal for a sufficient excuse to return again to the "desk's dull wood." If Lamb had asked me who first invented work, with all reverence, and with a thankful ring in my voice, I should have answered, "God!"

* * * * *

"Whoso works not, neither shall he eat."

There is far more truth in these words than most people imagine, and they seem to ring through all nature. The birds of the air who do not work starve and die; the beasts of the field, if they get lazy, grow thin and other creatures devour them; the little fishes that prefer to sulk under stones in the brook, or lie in sunny days in midstream, under the shadow of a floating weed, never grow, and by-and-bye bigger brothers gobble them up. But, to come nearer home, even those portions and organs of our own bodies that are not exercised get puny. I have already told you what an idle heart soon becomes. Well, look now at your little finger. Why is it so small and useless? Because it is so little used by mankind. Why is the left arm more feeble than the right? Because it works less, and therefore has to eat less—in other words, it does not, by exertion, draw to itself so much nutritive blood as does the right.

Well, but rich people in this world, you may tell me, do not have to work in order to eat.

"Whoso works not, neither shall he eat."

I repeat the words, and an idle man or woman, be he or be she as rich as a Croesus, has but little heart or natural appetite to eat. Idle people do not live long, and when they die they are never missed, for the simple reason that they are not the salt of the earth and nobody ever really loves them. I would far rather be a poor man and break stones by the wayside, and dine off bread-and-cheese, than I

would be a millionaire with nothing on earth to do and no inclination to do anything. The life of a hard-working, honest poor man is happier than he thinks it is—he has little brain-worry; he never suffers from that moral cancer called *ennui*; his appetite is a good one, and his sleep is sound, be his mattress and pillow never so hard,

But very few of us are born into this world with silver spoons, filled with jam, in our mouths. Even when young, many of us have to work hard enough, and when we grow up we nearly all have to work in some way or other; and happy indeed is the lot of that girl or woman who can look upon work as the blessing which it really and truly is.

Work is the lot in life, not only of human beings but of every creature—I might almost say of every tree and plant we see around us.

Well, then, I would have every girl follow the example set by Nature all around her. I would have every girl banish sloth, and idle feelings in every form, and work with a will at whatever are the duties her station in life makes incumbent on her. Are you aware, reader, that idleness is a kind of disease, that grows upon one, and feeds itself upon the very flesh of the people who neither work nor take exercise? Idleness, indeed, is a kind of a moral cancer that eats away all nervous power, and ends by totally destroying both health and happiness. And yet this disease, idleness, is fed and fostered and petted and made much of by thousands to their eventual ruin.

"The hand of the diligent maketh rich," said Solomon the Wise. True, O king, but the hand of the sluggard never did. He is far too slothful to cull even the few flowers in his garden that the multitude of weeds permit to exist.

Now I am willing to grant that a mind tending to pleasure and idleness, or a body tending to slothfulness, may, in many instances, be the result of a naturally feeble constitution, but giving in to idleness weakens the body far more; and, on the other hand, work is a tonic and strengthens it, so much so that what that seems to-day to be hardship and toil, will be in a few short weeks performed with a positive sense of pleasure.

Work need not at any time be toil; you may prevent its being so by taking periods of judicious rest. But remember, that simply

"Absence of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed."

So the kind of rest you take must depend entirely upon the sort of work you have been engaged in. If it has been entirely of a bodily nature, all the muscles of the body need rest, and lying down for half an hour or an hour on a sofa with a pleasant book or *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER* to read would in this case be the best and most suitable kind of rest. After that have a walk in the open air, and twice or thrice a week a warm bath before going to bed. This warm bath conduces to early rising, because it begets good sound sleep.

Early rising, as I have said more than once, is a habit that should be cultivated by all. Eight hours' sleep is enough for even a young girl; but on getting up, let her not dawdle the precious time away in dressing or eating. To eat hurriedly is to encourage dyspepsia; to sit a long time over a meal is to foster sloth. When one begins work betimes of a morning, and carries it on systematically, everything goes well for the day, and the very thought that we have done our duty nobly is one of the best tonics to the mind that can well be imagined.

Good sleep is essential to health; but good sleep never follows a badly-spent day, or a day passed in idleness.

Another great advantage in working is that it increases the appetite and purifies the blood.

A girl who does not work is seldom really healthy; she may think so, but she is deceiving herself. Her complexion cannot be so clear as it might be, nor her eyes so bright; and with her body, so with her mind—it becomes a shallow one, and I might say a sallow one.

Study system in work, and do all you can to avoid worry. Do not be over-sensitive; do your duty, and you have nothing to fear; for nothing but good can follow, and nothing but healthfulness. Over-hurry and over-worry are very detrimental to the health, but both are usually the result of want of proper system. Procrastination is another fault, and one which breeds a deal of real misery to those addicted to it. Let every evening find the work of the bygone day finished and done with. Probably you may have unpleasant duties to perform; do not defer them, do not procrastinate; meet them boldly, disagreeable though they may be; if you don't, you will keep thinking about them, and this will be jading to the nervous system—besides, no cloud is so black as it appears in the distance. "Coming events cast their shadows before," it is true, but the shadow is generally ten times bigger than the substance.

Do all your work in as pure an atmosphere as possible and in as upright a position; never sit or stand in a bent or uncomfortable pose—as you stand, so you will grow. There are two stops that writers and printers use which girls should always keep in their mind's eye when working—one is *this*, the other is *that*, I Which of these stops would you like to grow like—the little crooked one that asks questions, or the tall, stately one that marks an exclamation? You have your choice!

Never work late at night. Exercise your eyes as much as possible by day, and as little as you can by gas or lamplight.

Be orderly, and your work will be far more easy and pleasant. Never neglect perfect daily ablution and you will seldom be troubled with colds, dyspepsia, or harshness of skin.

Exercise the lungs daily by reading aloud or singing, but at all other times restrain the tongue and think twice before you speak once.

In this short paper I have really and truly spoken words of wisdom; let every girl lay them to heart who would be healthy, happy, and wise.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WORK.

MOSSROSE.—You could use copal varnish for the cupboard. Cards painted for sale should be original if possible.

FLURRY.—Fleecy wool is used for door-mats; and you must match the needles at the shop where you buy the wool.

DOROTHY H., KITTY.—The present dimensions of a riding habit are two and a quarter yards wide, and five inches off the ground on the short side, and three or four inches over the foot when mounted. A straight band collar is worn, and a plain high linen one. An attempt is being made to introduce dark red habits just now.

A MOTHER has only to send to Mr. Tarn (56, Paternoster-row, E.C.) for the monthly number (price sixpence) for February, 1882. In this she will find an excellent article called "A Chat About Quilts."

DAISY had better get a "nun's cloth," trimmed with satin, for her wedding dress. A light shade of the colour called "London smoke," the bonnet and gloves to match, and a white bouquet. She might find a skirt ready-made, and have herself fitted for the bodice.

AMY J.—Many simple crochet patterns have been given in the "G. O. P." See index to vols. i., ii., iii., and iv. Your writing and spelling are both very much below par for your age. You had better "use up your spare time" for their improvement.

EFFIE PACK.—Many thanks for your kindness in sending us the design for a crazy quilt, which we shall use at some future time.

MARY B.—For a knitted infant's boot, see page 597, vol. iii. Try to round your letters. Your writing is too much cramped.

L. E. W.—1. To make a pair of men's socks you will require three ounces of blue, and two ounces of white Scotch yarn. The needles should be No. 15, five being required. 2. We have heard that beetles and crickets may be destroyed by strewing cucumber parings or strong snuff close to the crevices where they come out.

MISCELLANEOUS.

VERY.—Good, better, best. These are expressive of the "positive, comparative, and superlative." The word "very" does not denote the highest degree, and therefore could not be "superlative," nor does it denote the least degree, and thus it is not merely the positive. It remains, therefore, that "very" denotes the "comparative." The assertion that our missionaries are to bear the responsibility of "most of our foreign wars" is a daring and mischievous one. What have they had to do with Egypt and the Soudan? We have no doubt but that the first preachers of Christianity were accused of exercising all kinds of evil influences over the world.

E. M. DANSON.—Spectacles first came into use about the end of the thirteenth century. Some maintain that the idea was derived from the writings of Alhasen (eleventh century), or of Roger Bacon (1202). Others attribute the invention to Salvino Armati, a Florentine, who died in 1317, and that they were brought into common use by a Florentine monk, called Alexander de Spina, about 1285. You write very well.

LITTLE READER.—To be "narrow-minded" means to be incapable of seeing and weighing dispassionately the various sides of any question, only being able to see and accord its full and due importance to one side. A "narrow-minded" person is full of unreasoning prejudices. The term has nothing to do with "low spirits;" they may be purely physical; nor is it at all necessary that a person of "narrow" intellect and poor reasoning powers should be "mean-hearted" or low-minded.

HYACINTH.—Certainly, you should tell your mother what an evil thing you have done in going through the farce of "engaging yourself" to any man without her knowledge and consent, and humbly ask her pardon. A boy or girl under age is legally regarded as "an infant," and any who are so silly, as well as undutiful, as to engage themselves without the consent of their parents must be prepared for unpleasant consequences. How can we foresee whether you will grow any more? If fat and broad in make, probably but little. You would have a better chance if you emigrated to a new country.

SWEET SIXTEEN (?).—1. If you have several times spoken to any man on business (your equal), you ought not to pass him without a slight bow, more especially if you look in his face and see that he is expecting you to bow. 2. A boy of sixteen could not be expected to regard people or things in the same light as he would on attaining the age of five-and-twenty or thirty, and he would only then be old enough to undertake the care of a wife and family, and make a judicious choice for life.

WELSH HARP.—Procure a practical guide to gardening. Upcott Gill has one in his series (170, Strand, W.C.). We could not afford space in our correspondence columns for teaching the art of budding roses, although practically experienced in it.

MAY BLOSSOM will find that we have quite recently replied to the question she asks. Her writing is fairly good.

ALICE LISTER.—Your letter is so kind and grateful in its expressions, it well merits our warm acknowledgments. We regret that your former letters failed to obtain answers.

EILEEN.—St. Patrick destroyed, it is said, 300 books in the ancient Irish characters called the *Ogum*. He and other Christians imagined them to be magical, whereas it is believed that the books named were historical. The *Ogum* alphabet consisted of seventeen letters, and these were the names of trees. The name *Ogum* is Celtic, and originally signified "the secret of writing," but came to mean "the secret writing." It was the sacred and secret character of the Druids. After the introduction by the Christians of the Roman letters the *Ogum* became obsolete, and was only understood by antiquaries. Communications were made by means of stringing leaves of the alphabetical trees on thread-cord; and private information was rendered all the more difficult of explanation by duplicating them, or by the insertion of leaves having no signification, which did not interfere with the sense to those initiated.

DAISY.—You will have to consult a music publisher. He will show you songs within your compass. Not having heard your voice, we could not direct you.

AVRSHIRE LASS.—Game feathers are not used for bedding. Goose and swan are the best, after them those of fowls.

IVY.—German measles are accompanied by fever, and are considered, we believe, by medical men to be a mild form of scarlatina; but they derange the system, and cause gastric troubles after the patient is supposed to have recovered.

H. A. ROBINSON.—We should advise change of air, as "goitre" is supposed to be owing to the drinking water. Drink filtered rain-water, and paint the neck with iodine, or rub with iodine ointment night and morning for three days at a time only, or your skin will be sore and crack. It must be allowed time to recover.