

DREAMS ON THE SHORE.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.



SHE sat her down where the rocks are low
 (The sun made a pathway across the sea),
 And she sighed, "Though the ships go to and fro,
 Is there ever a ship will come to me?"

"There is daily duty and daily care,
 But nothing happens in glad surprise;
 Shall I never gain my woman's share—
 A beating heart and two dewy eyes?"

"My mother folds her hands on her knees,
 And sings, 'God gives to us in our sleep.'
 Oh! I could wait, with a heart at ease,
 Was I sure the future has aught to keep!"

So young hearts chafe through the summer hours
 (Yet ships sail on down the golden way),
 Wasting their season for gathering flowers
 (The storms will break in the winter day)!

She sits her down in the dead of night
 (And one star peeps through the tiny pane);
 Her face is worn and her hair is white,
 But she smiles, "We shall surely meet again!"

"For a ship came safe o'er life's pathless sea,
 My heart beat high and dew filled my eyes;
 Why had I doubted God kept for me
 All I could crave of a glad surprise?"

"And so when the tides of life rolled out,
 And took my ship to an unknown shore,
 I learned to trust from my ancient doubt,
 We shall meet again as we met before!"

"There's always work while we have to wait
 (All ships are safe in the Master's hand);
 The day is short, and it soon grows late.
 (Who sails to-night for the far-off strand?)"

SOME SIMPLE FACTS ABOUT MEDICINES.

By MEDICUS.

THE bravest soldier in the field of battle is he who thoroughly understands the amount of danger he is called upon to encounter, but who, nevertheless, fearlessly faces it; the boldest sailor on the ocean is he who is well acquainted with the various difficulties and dangers that surround him, and holds himself well prepared to meet them; who never runs needless risks for the sake of gaining glory and a purpose; who is never rash, but always willing to do his

duty, steadfastly and quietly, even in dilemmas, leaving the rest to that Higher Power who guides and rules everything.

The science of medicine and art of prescribing are beset with a host of laborious perplexities, and the boldest surgeon or physician is he who, though well-grounded in the rudiments of his profession, is always on the outlook for obstacles to be overcome—who, to use the language of the seafarer, though well

knowing where rocks abound, is not above "heaving the lead" in places where shoals may possibly be expected; who is keen in eye, kind in heart, but quick in hand to act whenever duty points to danger.

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing,
 Drink deep, or touch not the Pierian spring."
 There is truth in these lines of the bard of Twickenham. Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well, but in this art of

home-prescribing, which, in my homely way, I am trying from month to month to teach my readers, cases are constantly occurring in which a lady may often be a bulwark against danger without possessing the wisdom of a Syme or an Astley Cooper. And I think, too, that there is hardly anything better calculated to please a right-minded physician, who has been sent for to treat a difficult case, than to find that some simple, well-considered remedies have already been applied with the view of reducing the most dangerous and painful symptoms; unless, indeed, the case has been rendered worse by a too meddling medicine or surgery.

Therefore it may well be said that a family medicine-chest in a house is a source of safety, but at the same time a source of danger. If the remedies it contains, however harmless in themselves, be not used with caution, with cool judgment, and some degree of knowledge of their virtues, 'twere better far to lock the box, and throw the key into the nearest canal.

Now, I do not think I am wrong in saying that it is the mother, rather than the father, who ought to be the medicus (or medicatrix) in the family. He has to bear the brunt of outdoor and away-from-home worry and toil. Were he ever so willing to doctor his children when sick, he can ill spare the time to "think out" a case of sickness—and there is a deal in the words "think out;" but she, the mother, knows, or ought to know, the probable cause of it, and all the outs and ins about it; and she is in a better position, also, to make herself acquainted with the constitution of each child, whether sick or well.

Besides, whatever we men-people may advance to the contrary, Nature undoubtedly intended the gentler sex to be the nurse in times of trouble; a woman's hands are softer, and her heart is more tender than that of a man. "Her heart is too tender," some may say. Ah! no, for in cases of real danger from sickness, if she is a woman worth the name, her courage rises to the occasion, she sees more clearly what is right and what is wrong than she could have believed it possible for her to do, just as the helmsman at sea on a night of storm and tempest can plough his way in the darkness through driving foam and breaking waves.

When seeking to prescribe for the relief of some little sufferer or inmate of the nursery, a mother should bear in mind, to begin with, that, in nine cases out of ten, the illness is caused by some error in feeding or diet. Symptoms of burning fever, flushed face, brightness of eye, unnatural heat of skin with dryness of surface, and moaning and tossing may be produced by over-eating. One little excess will do all this in a child; children are soon up and soon down. Well, the nurse, whether mother or elder sister, will be anxious to relieve this state; it is sad to see and dangerous as well. Perhaps she has a peep into the medicine chest and the companion thereto, and she will find mention in the latter of a class of remedies which are called *febrifuges*, in other words "fever dispellers." Or these may be called refrigerants. The safest by far of these is a mixture of chlorate of potash in water, with the addition of a little sweet spirits of nitre and sugar or syrup. Or the well-known antimonial wine may be chosen. This last is used both as a diaphoretic (or sweat producer) and an emetic, according to the dose administered. It ought to be borne in mind that it is a solution of tartar emetic in sherry wine, and therefore not so safe as the others, for it is of a lowering or depressing nature. As a diaphoretic it is useful in inflammatory cases, especially in chest complaints. Another thing that ought to be known about antimonial wine is this: it does not keep well when mixed in solution

with water; a mouldy, pasty-like mass grows on it, which is, in fact, a plant to which naturalists give the high-sounding name of *Siroccoris Stibica*. On the whole, antimonial wine is a medicine which, owing to its very unsafeness, I do not care to see in the hands of any but chemists or doctors. It would be well to mention here that many medicines spoil by keeping. Never use a mixture, therefore, which has changed appearance in any way. But it may not be a *febrifuge*—so called—that a feverish wee patient needs at all. In the fruit season, at all events, and about holiday times, it is more often one of the class of medicines called

Emetics. Relief from all feverish symptoms with refreshing sleep to follow often succeeds the giving of an emetic. The safest is ipecacuanha wine in suitable doses. This may be given to a very young child, and if warm water is drunk afterwards it is usually most effectual. Mustard and warm water (a teaspoonful or more) is the readiest to a child over five years of age. In cases where there is urgent need of instant vomiting, as in those where something has been swallowed, or the child is choking from something having gone the wrong way, sulphate of zinc is the speediest emetic; dose, two grains; if under five, in warm water; three, four, five and six grains, according to the age, from five to twelve years.

But seeing a young creature in pain and suffering from restlessness naturally gives rise in the mind of the kind-hearted beholder to a wish to relieve it, and a so-called anodyne or narcotic may be sought for. I believe I have before warned mothers against the use of murderous soothing syrups. No words of mine could express how strongly I feel on this subject, so I will use none, and say no more, and so save myself the trouble of deletion in this article when the printer sends me proof. There are cases in which I have known good produced from administering a very little warm wine and water to a child; but this needs to be done with so much caution, that I cannot recommend it, and stimulants to children should be prescribed by medical men, and medical men only. We have, however, in the warm bath a great reliever of pain and restlessness, which is always within easy reach of all.

I want now to say a few words about a class of medicines which are little understood and greatly abused; I refer to the ordinary *aperient* drugs of the shops. Their name is legion. The good they may do when taken in time and at the right time is undoubtedly great, but the evil they work among people who are in the constant habit of flying for relief to them whenever they feel in the least degree out of sorts is incalculable.

The temptation to obtain relief from the sufferings incidental to, say, a slight attack of dyspepsia, or that torpor of body and mind which people call *ennui*, is, to ordinary human beings, very great. They do not consider, however, that in obtaining this unnatural relief—for it is nothing else—they are weakening the system, and assuredly laying the foundation of future illnesses; ay, and invalidity, which is worse than even fatal sickness.

I have heard people talk in the following strain. I shall put it in the form of a conversation between a doctor and his patient:—

Doctor: "Do you know that you are doing yourself serious harm by having such constant recourse to that pill-box of yours?"

Patient: "But, doctor, the relief I obtain from my dyspeptic, liver, and other troubles is so great!"

Doctor: "Yes, and these troubles you speak of will return again and again with a shorter interval between each relapse, till, finally, you find yourself dependent for life entirely on

your pills. It is upsetting all natural system. Were I to tell you that you are shortening the period you shall have to live by substituting nauseous pills for healthful out-door exercise and the morning bath, with regularity in diet and sleep, you might be excused for saying 'that is little matter.' Well, in one sense, it is so. Forty millions of human beings die annually. Your life or mine is but a drop in the ocean. But instead of telling you of brevity of days, let me assure you that the pill-habit reduces people in time to wretched invalids, filled with racks and rheums, and heavinesses and pains, that make them long for the good time, so long in coming, when they may be allowed to lay down a life no longer a pleasure, but a burden to them. Has this picture no terrors for you? You must admit it has. Be warned in time, then."

And so, my dear readers, let me say to you, be warned in time, and never commence the habit of flying for temporary relief to medicine, if anything else will ease your trouble. And as I warn you, so I beseech you, for the sake of our poor suffering humanity, do you warn others. And do not forget that example is better than precept even in the matter of pills.

I have, in a previous number, spoken of the evil results sure to accrue from a constant habit of dabbling in tonics.

Tonics are very good in their way, very good at a time and for a time, if taken in small quantities while the system is kept open; but many are dangerous if persisted in. Iron will bring blood that is deficient in red particles up to the standard of health, but beyond that it induces congestions and all sorts of mental and bodily troubles.

Quinine, one of the best remedies in the pharmacopœia when used judiciously, will injure brain and nerve if persisted in too long.

Phosphorous is highly dangerous. During the intense heat of last summer I know of several cases where illnesses of a painful character were entirely attributable to the drinking of badly-prepared phosphorated aerated waters. Again I say, be warned.

Now, at the conclusion of this article you must begin to suspect that the writer has penned it with the good intent of preaching caution in the use and administration of medicines. You guess as much? You guess aright. To mothers of families I would say, remember the following simple facts and rules:—

1. Let nursery remedies be of the mildest kind, and as much as possible vegetable, instead of mineral, in their nature. Grey powder is an exception, but this should only be given once in a way.
2. Remember that it is Nature herself who cures. We do but assist her efforts.
3. Medicine is of no use without a difference in, and a regulation of, diet.
4. Never give medicine if other means will serve as well, and never give a child medicine who is not in need of it, with the idea of benefiting him.
5. Be careful of the dose. It should suit the age. There is a table of doses in every good guide to the medicine-chest.
6. Do not give or take quack medicines of any kind.
7. When a patient begins to recover it is often better to trust to diet alone, than medicine.
8. It is injurious to force food on the invalid.
9. Give medicine, if needed, with regularity and frequency.
10. Never attempt to prescribe for a case that presents either difficulty or danger.

