

musical critic for the *Athenæum*; had got worse on his way, and worse, and on October the 18th, when he should have been preparing for the grand concert, was lying restless in all the fulness of wretchedness in his little room high up in the crowded hotel. Mendelssohn had looked for him, inquired for him, and heard he was a prisoner, unable to move or to come, and quite miserable. There were new compositions by Mendelssohn, and a new duet with Moscheles, to be done in the even-

ing. Lying helpless and quite hopeless, he was roused by a strange bustle below, the noise of heavy feet, a bumping of something heavier than feet coming up the stairs, then a knocking at the door, and strange voices, and in came, bumped and thumped, a concert Fleigel (or grand piano), by Brütkopf and Hartel; in came, laughing and energetic as ever, Mendelssohn, followed by Moscheles.

"Now," they said, "you shall have an evening's music, and have all the new com-

positions, and the new duet, in spite of everything."

What an evening they had! While the room was so small that, unless at the piano, one of the friends had to abide perched upon the bed beside the poor invalid. And do you wonder that Mendelssohn was loved, and that Moscheles left a princely income to go and work with his friend at Leipsic for £120 a year?

(To be concluded.)

THE POSITION OF BODY AT WORK OR STUDYING.

By MEDICUS.



WHILE doing my annual summer tour this year through England, in my own travelling carriage, going here, there, and everywhere, out of beaten tracks and visiting all kinds of little villages, towns, and hamlets, I was pleasantly surprised to find—not THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER on so many tables, for that I had fully expected—but that so many ladies of all ages read our periodical.

This fact gives me heart, and it teaches me also that I need not constantly imagine myself writing for young girls only.

The present paper, I feel sure, will possess a good deal of interest for all. I shall endeavour to cover as much ground as possible, and be as concise and practical as I can in my remarks.

The enemies to health that the constitutions of our working girls have to contend against are very many.

There is, to begin with, fatigue. This they have to bear up against as best they may. The worst of it is that the back is not always fitted for the burden, and that quite as much hard labour, quite as much running about and unremitting exertion is expected from the weakly lassie as from her who is robust and strong. The weakly, too, are usually most full of nerve; they will not give in. This may or may not make matters worse. Their will and determination may enable them to tide over a tiresome time, but if that tiresome time be of too long duration, health may fail and never come again.

The practical question in this case comes to be, what is best to be done? Well, girls themselves, who have to run about all day in shops, cannot expect much actual rest during their hours of employment; they must take that rest whenever they can find it. And it is best taken out of doors, not by sitting down, but by quiet walks in the open air. You see, I wish you working girls to harden yourself to your work, and if after a tiresome day you are not painfully fatigued, you will freshen yourselves up and strengthen both nerves and blood more in one hour out of doors than in three sitting in a chair, in a probably not over well-ventilated room.

To shop-mistresses—and shop-masters, if they happen to see this—I would say, would it not be kind, think you, to provide small light chairs or seats of some sort, that your young employées might rest a little at times, just, you know, when nothing is doing? Girls always standing may impress buyers with an idea that your business is large, but, on the other hand, I do not believe that an over-tired feet-weary or limb-weary girl can push business half so briskly as one who is fresh, and therefore happy. This is a hint which I believe is worthy of some consideration.

Can medicine, I mean tonics, do any good to the over-worked? Very seldom, I believe. Though, if pale and bloodless looking, a fortnight's course of tonics, about once in two months, may be beneficial. In such cases the new tonic syrup, now so largely used in medical practice, is, perhaps, the best thing; I refer to Fellows's syrup of the phosphates. The dose is a teaspoonful after breakfast and dinner, and it is most pleasant to take.

In addition to this tonic, brace your system by a cold sponge bath every morning, after a quick wash with hot water and a mild transparent soap. Go early to bed if at all delicate, and be most careful to have your room sweet and neat and well ventilated.

But your health will, to no inconsiderable extent, depend upon the position of your body while at work. If you are very young, more than actual health will depend upon this, namely, a good figure, and a healthy complexion.

In youth the bones are green—I, of course, speak figuratively—and the body will take the position to some extent that it is most often in.

Nothing, I think, detracts more from the elegance and grace of a young girl's figure than a semi-bent neck, high or rolled shoulders, or arched back.

But not the bones alone suffer, but the internal organs. If you constantly lean forward while at work, you press upon these, the stomach and liver will assuredly suffer, and, to some extent also heart and lungs. What is the consequence? Indigestion in some form or other is sure to follow; and what will follow that? Why, any ailment to which a girl is constitutionally subject! But I will simply tell you some of the numerous symptoms of this indigestion, which is caused by stooping habits.

I will put them in the form of a case, or two cases. Two young girls, then—let us call them Annie and Bertha—have not been born into the world with silver spoons in their mouths. Their parents are not over well-to-do, so they bravely determine to go out into the world and work. Both are fairly well educated, but so are thousands and thousands besides, so after trying in vain for something good and easy, they have to lower their ambition, so that three months afterwards we find Annie behind

a counter, and Bertha a nursery-governess at the West End. Not high positions, certainly; but if we only do our duty, work of any kind is something to be the reverse of ashamed of. Annie has some home-work also, and of an evening she may be seen bending—though she could easily sit erect—over the sewing machine.

So the time flies on and a year passes. Now, when they both went out into the world both were rich in complexion, clear in eye, and cheerful in disposition, because healthy and happy.

Bertha is still so, and sighs and wonders to see her dear sister "fading away," as she poetically phrases it.

But how does Annie herself feel? Well, if Medicus was to question her, it would be some little time before he got the truth or half the truth out of her. Very likely she would hardly confess to being ill at all, and if he did get her to admit that she was neither so well nor so happy as she once was, she would still be unable to inform him when the first deviation from the straight path of health took place. She supposes, and naturally enough, that such a state of being and feeling as hers are is inseparable from a life of hard worrying work.

Yes, though she does bend forward a deal when working, sewing, or even reading, she has become naturally careless of position of body; and if pressed to give a reason for it, she will say she feels tired and languid, her back often aches, and it is really a trouble to sit erect.

I wish I could get Annie to believe, even now, that it is in a great measure her stooping habits that are causing the languor, and back-ache, and weariness. But things go on and get worse, and a month or two afterwards Annie confesses now that she really is not well, and perhaps some of her symptoms are among these that follow:—

1. No heart to work, but must plod wearily on.
2. Little appetite in the morning; perhaps the appetite at all times capricious.
3. Feeling of fulness or uneasiness at times in the pit of stomach.
4. Heartburn or acidity.
5. Palpitation on any sudden excitement, or without any apparent cause.
6. Backaches and weary pains about limbs.
7. Occasional headache, and hot, tired feeling about the eyes.
8. Perspiration easily brought on.
9. Bad sleep, restlessness, or troubled, tiring dreams, and a feeling of unrefreshedness in the morning.
10. Low spirits, nervous, hysterical feelings, and general depression of mind or body.

Now, I need not pursue Annie's case further, but my experience tells me that it is not an uncommon one, and due more often than

anyone could believe to bad position of body while at work.

Let this be remedied by all who suffer so, and let them attend to digestion at the same time.

No new bread must be eaten; no pastry or cheese, no overdone meat, and no raw vegetables, even celery and salads must be avoided, and so must pickles and hot sauces, and even too much pepper.

Change in diet is essential, and so is regularity in the times of taking food.

Eat only that sort of food which you know will agree with you.

Plenty of fresh air is most essential to all who are obliged to retain an uncomfortable position of body while at work.

Now a word to school-girls. I am sure you wish to grow up straight and well-formed, for you can never be graceful nor even beautiful else. I advise you, then, from the very day you read these lines, to determine with yourself that you will both sit and walk erect, and that you will conform to the ordinary rules of health as regards fresh air, exercise, the morning cold-bath, and well-ventilated rooms.

But I must say a word about dumb-bell

exercises. The best of this is that it trains all the muscles of the body alike, only it must be taken with great regularity twice a day for months and months; and it must be taken scientifically. What I mean to say is this, that a simple swaying about of the dumb-bells for a certain time every day is folly; it is madness without a method. Take lessons how to use them properly, and follow the plan out most carefully, and very great benefits will result.

Corsets should be worn, but never tight ones; they should be so made as to rest and support the back, but assuredly never to compress the chest.

Position of body is to be studied in every action.

While sewing, knitting or reading, do not stoop the back, and do not stoop the neck.

On the other hand, the eyes must not be strained. Therefore the work or the book should be held well up. But this is fatiguing. Is it not, therefore, possible to rest the arms on some support in front of you? Anything rather than that the internal organs of the body should have their actions interfered with, or that the back and neck should be encouraged to assume a premature stoop.

A word to mothers.—It is for you to take care that your girls shall assume no unhealthy positions of body at work in the house, or while studying. It is for you to respectfully remind school teachers of the fact, which I could bring a thousand cases to prove, that stooping habits are accountable for an incalculable amount of evil and ill-health.

Do you ever notice that your children "go over" their boots as it is called; in other words, wear them all to one side? This is brought about in many cases by a careless habit of holding the feet while sitting or standing. This habit must be corrected, and if there seems to be really a weakness of the ankles, this must be remedied first by boots of a peculiar construction which any intelligent bootmaker can manufacture, and secondly by giving strengthening food, wholesome exercise, and a course of Parrish's chemical food.

The dose of the latter syrup will depend upon the age. It contains the phosphorus of iron, lime, with potash and soda, and is really an excellent bone and blood tonic in many cases of debility, especially in young people. The dose is from half a teaspoonful to two teaspoonfuls in a little water twice or thrice daily after food.



SHADOWS OF THE PAST.

By ISABELLA FVIVIE MAYO.

I'M sitting in a shady room,
A dainty scent pervades its gloom,
The perfume from a withered flower
Gathered—who knows in what sweet hour?
Or pressed by what fair lips which must
Have mingled long ere this with dust?
The relic of a grandsire's love
Stored with a letter and a glove!

And all about the room are spread
The handiworks of ladies dead:
A great aunt's miracles in lace,
A Dian coming from the chase
Worked by great-grandmothers of mine
While great-grandfathers sipped their wine;
And here's a valentine so torn
I think it was received in scorn.

And from the wall the pictured face
Of one, the glory of our race,
Looks down at me with earnest gaze,
As if he wondered at the ways
By which the old world rumbles on,
Though all he counted best is gone,
And that old fealty is dead
For which he bravely fought and bled.

And in yon ancient chest there hide
Charters of farms and acres wide,
Traces of what we once possessed.
Well, perchance poverty is best,
And we can still afford to keep
(Since harmless pride is always cheap)
Our boast that those lost lands were due
For packs of wolves our forbears slew.

And have they left no more behind,
These soldiers brave, those ladies kind?
Of beings vanished like a dream
How little do such relics seem!
And what of those who strayed and fell,
Records of sad defeat to swell?
Or those who only loved and prayed,
'Mid homely duties on them laid?

There seems a whisper in the air,
"We're there, and here, and everywhere!
Why need you wish that you had more
Of these poor shadows which you store,
When all the life in which you move
Is outgrowth of our life and love?
The very thoughts you call your own,
But flowers from seeds which we have sown!"

"And none have left a stronger trace
Than some who lived in silent grace;
The maid who faded in her bloom
Brightened the pathway to the tomb,
With hopes from soul to soul which flow
Like streams whose sources none may know,
And he who perished at his post
Inspired the leader of a host!"

"The dead are nearer than some say
(Stars shine on through the sunshine day!),
Nor must we chain the Present fast
About the ankles of the Past,
For both are living, and most move
In step to God's great march of Love.
We need not fear that any soul
Can leave but rose leaves in a bowl!"