

"WHEN SUMMER COMES AGAIN."

By GERTRUDE HARRADEN.

WHEN snow lies deep upon the land,
 And bitter blows the wind,
 And Nature seemeth most unjust
 To all her shiv'ring kind;
 Then Hope to bird and bud this gentle tale doth tell—
 "When summer comes again
 Have trust—all will be bright and beautiful and well."

When sorrow lieth in our hearts,
 And every thought is chill'd
 And dull'd by stern and cold despair,
 And promise ne'er fulfill'd;
 Then Hope to us alike this gentle tale doth tell—
 "When summer comes again
 Have trust—all will be bright and beautiful and well."

And summer comes. To some she brings
 Rejoicing and relief;
 But cannot all her task perform
 In stay, alas! so brief.
 Then Hope to those who still must wait this tale doth tell—
 "When summer comes again
 Have trust—all will be bright and beautiful and well."

CAN'T WE MOUNT ABOVE IT?

By "MEDICUS."

ONCE upon a time there lived in the far north of Scotland a good old parson, or minister, as they term a clergyman in that country, and no one ever had the welfare of a congregation more thoroughly at heart than he had his. He was an excellent orator and a worthy exponent of Scripture; but he had one strange characteristic, for he would not hesitate to tell a good joke in the pulpit, or at least a good story. In fact, he was in this respect somewhat like the late Mr. Spurgeon. It may easily be believed that this peculiarity of his got him many enemies among the "unco guid," some of whom went so far as to ask him to resign. The minister's reply was on a par with all the good man's actions; he simply told them that he had no intentions of resigning as long as he could do any good. And he didn't. But he told his stories and cracked his little jokes with a purpose; for it was always in the beginning of his sermon that he did so, and he never failed thus to rivet the attention of his congregation. Having secured a hearing, he launched forth and preached a most impressive sermon.

Now, in one way, I humbly follow this minister's lead, and I dare say I often talk a good deal of nonsense at the commencement of my monthly health sermons; but the good advice follows after, as sure as winter follows autumn. If any of my fair readers object to my plan, she has only to write to our worthy editor and say so; then I shall at once lay aside my cap and bells, don my M.D. gown with its crimson-lined hood, and—just go on in the same old way!

After glancing at the title of this paper again, I almost begin to think I ought to change it to something else, calling it perhaps "On Being under the Weather." But as it is written, so it must stand. Indeed, it is probably better thus; else I might be inclined to blame the weather for a strange languor that is this morning hovering over my own nervous system. That the weather has an effect upon the spirits I am not prepared to deny. It is equally true, however, that the weather is often blamed for our troubles when it is either wholly innocent or only guilty in part. I believe that in course of this paper I will be able to prove this. Take my own case, for example.

The day, to begin with, is certainly not a very exhilarating one. There isn't a single blink of sunshine. The sun some hours ago did make a bold effort to break through those heavy battalions of dark and threatening

clouds; but he has now given up in despair and retired from the unequal combat. And now it is beginning to rain. Atmospherical gloom of this sort seems to penetrate into one's very soul and to dominate one's powers of mind. But ought we to permit our spirits to fluctuate with the rise and fall of the barometer? I think not. We should at least make an effort to mount above our seeming indisposition, find out other causes, and endeavour to remove these. When I got up this morning I felt as happy as the larks that soar, or as the nightingales singing on my lawn. I felt fresher still after my ice-cold bath; and, followed by my dogs, rode gaily off to the post-office. Among at least a dozen letters that gave me nothing but pleasure, there was one that was redolent of the basest ingratitude. That was the one grain of gall that embittered the whole cup.

Well, so far, then, the weather is not altogether to blame for my depression of spirits; nor is the disappointing letter either, for there is one other reason. Listen, and you shall be told what that reason is; and it is precisely here where the comical element comes in. I have invested in a type-writer. Pray do not make any mistake, reader; I have not hired a young lady to sit and type for me, while I loll luxuriously on the sofa with a shilling cigar in my mouth and dictate to her. No, I have not reached to that pitch of laziness yet. It is the machine itself, not the young lady, that I have invested in; though, for the matter of that, a good many working girls are themselves mere machines, all the more pity for them. Well, here am I, and here is the machine. But the worst of it is that I have commenced this paper with it, and feel that I am in honour bound to go on with it to the bitter end—although the editor can testify it is as full of droll errors as the sky this morning is full of murky clouds. I am a sort of wedded to the machine, and she and I have to pass our honeymoon in the best way we can. At the end of the month I have no doubts we will thoroughly understand one another, and shall be lenient to each other's faults. It would ill become me to begin to find fault with her on so short an acquaintance, though I may be permitted to say that, like many womenkind, she has a will of her own, and I have got to set my energies and tact to work in order to tame the shrew. The letters are all before me, upper-case and lower-case, pounds, shillings, and pence, commas, colons, periods, hyphens and all. The drawback at

present is that they will not always come when called upon; they go upon the system so popular in France during recruiting time, and send substitutes. Moreover, I do not think that my young bride has been educated at the very best of seminaries, for she cannot spell properly—or she won't. And when a bride says she won't, what is a poor masculine man to do? Tell me that. She is also erratic in the matter of stops and marks; if I want to print a dash, for example, she treats me to the figure 6. Owing to this peculiarity in my bride, while typing a letter yesterday to a friend, I dated it May 613th. He is a wag, and wrote back to say that it must be always May with me, and wants to know how I manage to make it so. My bride doesn't murder her h's; but I do believe that at some period of her life she must have been behind a counter, for a short time ago I had the ambition to print an inverted comma, and here is what she treated me to—@! Now, I have seen that very hieroglyphic in drapers' windows over their goods thus—"All @ 4s. 11³/₄d."

But I must not be too hard on my young bride; she will doubtless improve with age, like bad wine. Besides, it has just occurred to me that there may be faults on both sides. However, given a cloudy day, an ungrateful letter, and a disobedient young bride, who tries your sight and breaks your back bending over her, why, I think there is reason enough for depression of spirits. Can't I mount above it? Was that what you said, gentle reader? I am going to try as hard as ever I tried to do anything. First and foremost, as soon as I have finished wrestling with this mistress of mine—for mistress she is as yet—I shall walk about the garden for a short time to get all the kinks out of my back: then I shall go for a long ride on my iron horse, and return as happy as the traditional sand-boy, and quite oblivious to all the ills that flesh is heir to.

Now I hope that I shall not be considered unfeeling if I say that there are a great many troubles and ailments from which girls, whether young or not so young, may, if they try hard enough, mount over. This may be deemed equivalent to saying that many of the illnesses of girls are merely imaginary. I do not wish you for a moment to infer that such is my meaning; but sickness of any sort never yet was improved by dwelling on it. Human beings are so constituted that the act of thinking much about any ailment positively makes it worse. It should be our endeavour

while suffering in any way to give Nature all the chance we can to repair the injury. We do not do so, but rather retard her efforts if we keep worrying her with thoughts of the worst. This is true of the more acute and dangerous diseases, and it is none the less true of what are generally called trifling ailments. It is more particularly concerning these last I want to speak.

Never a day of my life passes that I do not hear the following remark: "The weather is very trying!" Believe me, this is not the way to get over any little ailment. To speak plainly, many of those little parties who are so ready to blame the weather are arrant little humbugs. They blame the state of the atmosphere when they as often as not ought to turn their attention to the state of their stomachs. Why blame the poor inoffensive barometer for making you feel low-spirited, jaded, and weary, with a trifling frontal headache coupled with a distaste for all active exertion, if, after all, it was that lobster-salad that did the mischief? There are actually people who so frequently credit the weather with putting them out of sorts that in course of time they come to believe that they are like weather-cocks, and affected by every blast that can blow. This is a dangerous state to get into, because whenever you are ill, you will lose sight of all other causes of indisposition except the hackneyed one.

The ailment called *ennui*, which really is a disease of fashionable life, is one that is almost constantly accredited to the state of the atmosphere. It is a strange complaint which comes on by fits and starts, not lasting long at a time at first, and too often, I am sorry to say, fostered by the individual attacked, who gives in to it all too easily, if not willingly. It becomes chronic at last, however, and than a man or woman suffering from chronic *ennui* I hardly know a much more miserable individual. Of course you may call *ennui* by a variety of other names, but the symptoms are the same, and when once fully developed, there is engendered a complete distaste for almost everything in life, which is very sad to see, especially in a young person. Does *ennui* lead to danger? Assuredly it does, and often to death itself. But I hasten to say that it is just one of those complaints that is very easily got over if taken at the commencement. In other words, you can mount above it.

But this ailment is not the only one that can be nursed and fostered till, from being a mere trifle, it becomes a very formidable enemy to peace and life itself. In fact, there is not a minor trouble exists that cannot be made ten times worse by letting the mind dwell on it and thinking the very worst about it. I do not think that children and young girls can be taught too early the advantages that accrue from a habit of making as light as possible of any ailment whatever. Let me quote a very familiar example of the power of the mind over the body for good or for evil. If, when a child who is just learning to walk falls down and hurts himself somewhat, you rush sympathetically to pick him up, and kiss and comfort him, ten to one he will begin to cry. If, on the other hand, you take the wiser plan and laugh at him, he will not feel his hurt; he will get up smiling and go on as before. The boy who is always petted and comforted by a foolishly fond parent in all his little mishaps is made a mollycoddle of, and rendered a coward for life. Boys of this kind never become great soldiers or statesmen, and never by any chance set the Thames on fire.

I can assure you, reader, that if I could only get you to thoroughly believe that the mind has a most wonderful power over the body for good or for evil, in the cure of all ailments, I should consider that I had performed a very meritorious task indeed; I should be correspondingly happy, and inclined even to look

with a lenient eye upon the faults of my taskmistress, the typewriter.

Have ever you heard the old Scotch saying, "There ne'er is an ill but there might be a waur." Well, there is some little consolation for you when ill, even in that proverb; but whenever you are languid and out of sorts, with perhaps that little frontal headache, you must do more than simply seek consolation from a proverb. To begin with, you must cheer up. More easily said than done, is it? Certainly if you keep the house, and give in to it. If possible, get out of doors, not for a quarter of an hour, but for a whole hour or two hours. Seek for relaxation, and very likely the headache and the weary feelings will all have vanished by the time you return. But there is one kind of training that you should especially inure yourself to, namely that of lowering the diet for a day, or, at the very least, half a day. It is truly astonishing what a power in the regeneration of health is a whole day of almost total abstinence. Nor is it so very hard to abstain after all. I am convinced that if you once try this plan, so light and fresh will you feel next day, that abstinence will not seem such a penance to you next time you require to try it. Abstinence from food gives the whole system a rest, and nature is not slow in taking the advantage of this. She rolls up her sleeves, as it were, and goes in for a kind of spring cleaning.

Nervous persons—and nowadays their name, unfortunately, is legion—often think, when a little out of sorts, that they are taking some severe illness. This thought, as a rule, does not trouble young girls, but their elders. I should advise all such to possess themselves of that tiny instrument, the clinical thermometer, the physician's fairy, and to study the temperature of their bodies. The instrument will tell them in a moment if anything serious is the matter, and if there be any necessity for calling in the aid of the family doctor, or whether a little judicious rest, a walk, or ride out of doors combined with abstinence, will not suffice to put them all to rights again. If the temperature is but a very little above normal, a lessened diet, moderate exercise, and above all, a good night's rest, will be the great desiderata, and the individual will awake next morning feeling all over fresh and happy, and determined to act in the same wise way again whenever the occasion demands it. Should the temperature be still higher, and especially if there be any pain and some degree of restlessness, then it will be well to take skilled advice, remembering the old proverb that "A stitch in time saves nine." But even in such a case as this the patient is not to let down her heart, for the girl who is cheerful and tries to mount above her troubles has a far better chance of speedy recovery than one who hangs her head and mopes. Some people, you know, are dead before they are half sick; but these are not the sort of patients that a doctor cares for, the very gloominess of their dispositions often affecting even his spirits; for a doctor after all is only a human being.

I should like the readers of the GIRL'S OWN PAPER to be, as far as little illnesses are concerned, laughing philosophers, but at the same time never to neglect these. It is oftentimes only a momentary spurt that Dame Nature requires; she is at times like a lame dog that you have to help over the stile. Once over the stile she will trot on again easily enough so long as she gets fair play.

(This last sentence, I may tell you within brackets, I have actually written without ink, my ribbon having got all rolled on the right hand spool. Verily he who is wedded to a young bride in the shape of a typewriter has not his sorrows to seek.) From this last remark of mine you will note that I seem to beg for sympathy in my trials. Well, sympathy is a fine thing; but let me tell the invalid's friends

that they must use it with discretion. Sympathy is not a tonic, nor is it a stimulant. In some cases it is a soothant, but not in all; for example, to tell a nervous patient that she is looking very ill, would often result in making her ill indeed. There are many forms of nervous complaints in which the patient cannot bear the slightest reference to her ailment, but wishes to pose as a perfectly healthy individual; and in this she must assuredly be humoured to her heart's content.

While in all cases I wish the ailing one to repose the utmost confidence in her own family doctor, it is my earnest desire in this paper to give advice that, while not infringing on his province, shall at the same time be of service to the patient. I must tell you then that too much faith must not be put in the power of medicine to cure your trouble. Medicine alone never did nor never could cure any ailment. Medicine is but like the crutch to the lame man—it helps him along for a time; but it cannot cure his lameness.

Very many of the ailments that are easy enough to surmount by strength of will, coupled with a little expenditure of common sense, are of a distinctly nervous character. The person suffering has probably been overworked, and over-worried for a time, and the whole body is out of tone and below par. Not the least of the disagreeable symptoms connected with this state is a dry condition of the whole mucous membrane. An attempt to remedy matters is usually made by taking aperient medicines. These seem to do good for a time, and the sufferer feels lighter and fresher; but her last condition is infinitely worse than the first. To be a slave to aperient medicines is almost as bad as being a slave to opium; yet I know that thousands are so. If such remedies are urgently needed for a time, the best and safest will be found in the compound liquorice powder of the shops, or the liquid extract of cascara; but even these should not be taken constantly. Regular hours, moderate—not heating—exercise, plenty of ripe fruit, and porridge of good oatmeal not too long boiled, or a porridge made of groats and sweet milk will generally suffice to put matters to rights without the dangerous aid of any medicine whatever.

In cases of this kind I would not even advise tonics to be taken without first consulting a doctor. As a general rule tonics are binding and heating, and, if taken towards the end of the day, often cause sleeplessness.

Sleeplessness is another symptom that is too often attempted to be cured by the aid of physic. But always in vain.

There must be a general review of the whole mode of life, and changes for the better made in diet, in the taking of exercise, in the habits and style of conducting ablution—which must be as perfect as possible—the bath ought to be taken every morning as cold as can be borne, and a warm bath on at least one day of the week. Change often works wonders in cases of this kind. So does a regulated course of exercise, which must be moderate and pleasurable. In fact, as I have said many times before, exercise that does not give pleasure is of very little use.

Well, in conclusion, you are to try hard to mount above your little ailment by endeavouring to forget all about it. This is only possible by keeping the mind constantly employed in some engrossing occupation. Adopt a fad of some kind, and when not attending to this, then read light, pleasant books, or the magazine literature of the day. The evenings especially should be devoted to recreation. A visit to a good entertainment is often of more value than a course of medicine.

My next paper I hope to devote to "The Hair in Health and Illness"—that is, if my lady-love, the type-writing machine, does not send me to an early grave before our honeymoon is a thing of the past.