and furious. Aunt Jessie and Nurse seconded her "That the poor child should be turned out of her home *for a stepmother*, forsooth!" Irene had but one answer to their outcries. Bella would have gone to school abroad had Dr. Forrest not married again; there was no reason for altering the former plan. And in spite of opposition, Bella, mutinous and weeping, did actually depart at Easter for Switzerland, where, notwithstanding all prophecies, she was very happy, and became a creditable member of society.

The elder opponents were less easy to manage; but Irene indomitably waged her single-handed warfare. She began by "having it out" with Nurse, and informing her that unless she treated her new mistress with respect, she—Irene—would have to beg her father to dismiss her and pension her off. "Mrs. Forrest will not stand up for herself, but I intend to do it for her," the young lady observed with calmness.

Nurse shed indignant tears, and great was the storm; but in the end Irene's determination gained the day. The old servant had nothing to complain of, being treated with the greatest kindness and deference, and she knew it; she had been giving way to an unreasoning jealousy, and to the prejudice of her class; but she saw in the decision of Irene's look and tone that she must do so no longer. In the end she was completely won over, and became strongly attached to the new mistress.

Aunt Jessie was the most difficult foe to subdue. "Am I really a peacemaker?" thought Irene, with a little wondering amusement, as she emerged from one of the numerous small battles in which she had "stood up" for the poor stepmother. Then she reflected on the classic saying respecting the Romans: "They make a solitude and call it peace." Was she, too, going to be a peacemaker only by virtue of forcibly clearing everybody out of the way?

But there are occasions when mere passive gentleness will not suffice to "make peace and ensue it": and Irene's method was the right one under the circumstances. Finding no fit soil in which to sow her seeds of jealousy and suspicion, Aunt Jessie, little by little, "came round," and treated her new sister-in-law with tolerance, if not with affection.

The twins had always been fairly amenable, and under Irene's influence, with Bella away, soon became attached to Mrs. Forrest. Winifred had clung to her from the first.

And so it happened that in six months from the date of Irene's home-coming, the doctor's household was transformed from a scene of internecine warfare to one of peace and happiness. The sweet and tranquil influence of the new mistress, formerly checked and hindered, now had full scope. Irene loved her dearly, with a half-protecting love, and the gentle creature clung to her stepdaughter with a passion of affection that was only too much disposed to push her into the first place of honour.

Strangely enough, Irene's own mother seemed brought nearer to her by this new relationship. Mrs. Forrest encouraged her to speak of that fair, faint memory of the past, and with delicate loving touch wove the girl's scattered reminiscences into a more real, a more beautiful entity. No hint or thought of rivalry between the two affections was possible, they were utterly different in their nature; and the young mother, now, as ever, occupied the shrine of her daughter's heart.

Had Irene assumed a hostile tone, how completely everything in the family life would have been altered! Her father and his wife knew this. The girl's task had not been easy; it had often cost her trouble and sinking of heart; but she had a full reward one night. Dr. Forrest had spent a particularly happy and peaceful evening after the toils of his day. The children, after innocent mirth and laughter, had gone to rest; the stepmother had followed to give them the tender good-night they never liked to miss; and Irene was left. Placing his hand on her hair as she sat beside him, the father said, in a low, moved voice:—

"I owe you much, Irene, my kind daughter.

'BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD.'"

ABOUT RHEUMATISM, AND ITS KINDRED AILMENTS.

By "MEDICUS."

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."
—*Shakespeare.*

A FELLOW feeling does. I am a fellow *feeling*. I am a fellow feeling excessively weak, after one of the sharpest attacks of acute lumbago that probably anyone ever suffered. Lumbago, you must know, is a species of rheumatism, though it may count kin with sciatica too, or join hands and dance therewith all along one's back, and right away down to the very toes.

It is seldom, I believe, that lumbago attacks those who are not of the rheumatic diathesis. Am I using words that are too technical. I will try not to, for well I know that all my readers are not Girton girls. A good thing for poor little me they are not, else I might often be brought up with a round turn, as sailors say about ropes. But I believe I can tell even a Girton lassie something she does not know about this scourge of our uncertain climate—called rheumatism, for want of a better name.

What a wonderful thing personal experience of ailments is. You may depend upon it, reader, that the medical man who has himself suffered from the same complaint he is called upon to treat in you, is about the best doctor you could have. He will understand your feelings, and he will sympathise with you.

But this history of my own sufferings from rheumatism and its kindred ailments takes me back—let me see, how many years! No, I sha'n't tell you. Girls over twenty never tell me their ages; why should I tell mine? But I was a very young man, anyhow, and I believed I had a constitution like a horse. I slept constantly on deck in all weathers; if I got drenched to the skin I scorned to change, and, like the eagle, I stared the sun in the face and did not get struck down.

Boat-cruising, sleeping in the open boats, living on raw pork and weevilly biscuits—which we used to steep in the sea to give them a relish—broiling under a hot sun by day, buried in dews at night, brought my diathesis to the top at last, and I succumbed.

Not without a terrible struggle, however. I was the only medical man in a wretched wee gun-boat, that in a heavy sea-way was always under water. This wicked little craft never troubled to mount a monster wave, but cut clean through it, sending the green spray down the funnel, and trying to drown the engineers. She was a water-witch with a vengeance. I had many men sick, but luckily we bore up for Bombay. My patients use to cluster round my hammock for treatment, but finally I had to give way; and one fine day—the days are mostly fine in India—a melancholy procession might have been seen winding its way towards the soldiers' hospital. First, the sick surgeon—your "Medicus"—borne in a hammock on the shoulders of two brawny marines. Then more hammocks; then the halt and maimed and the ailing who could walk or crawl.

Arrived at the hospital, the good surgeon, Dr. Dimmock, told me he could take my men but not myself, as there were no officers' quarters.

"But," he added, seeing my look of weary hopelessness, "if you will be content with an empty ward, I will take you as a boarder."

I would have been content with a coal cellar, so I was installed all by myself in the top ward of a disused hospital, and a faithful Mahratta man was told off to attend on me. There was plenty of company in that ward—of a kind. There were earwigs, centipedes, cockroaches, lizards, and praying mantises; and all day long, whenever Pandoo went out, the rooks came in and plagued my life nearly out of me.

A weary time: for weeks I could move nor hand nor foot, but Pandoo attended on me like a faithful dog night and day.

And really, in rheumatism and allied ailments, nursing is about half the battle. For a time I believe I lived almost entirely on soda-water. When, after weeks of terrible pain and suffering, appetite began to return, I got advanced to fish. There was no sort of fish I did not have a trial of—even bonito and shark.

Convalescence came at last. Owing, perhaps, to the brightness of the climate and purity of the air, I never suffered from low spirits, and my first few days in the open air were like days spent in Paradise. Not that I ever have been there; but I could not have been happier. Everything was so new, so fresh, so wonderful.

But you may draw from this part of my life-history, that persons of the rheumatic diathesis must be very careful indeed how they expose themselves to wet and dew and draughts, and also, they must live well on plain food, being most careful to avoid anything that is at all likely to produce acidity of the stomach or system.

Moreover, they ought to wear soft, warm woollen underclothing; and it ought to be *all wool*, not half cotton, for cotton retains the moisture. But anything approaching the coddling system should be avoided. Without running into actual danger, they ought to do their best to make themselves hardy. If not so, they will not only be more easily knocked over by rheumatism in some form when it does condescend to visit them, but they will the more readily succumb to its violence.

I have the courage of my own convictions, for all the winter long, be it ever so cold, I have my morning tub, and no dash of hot water ever finds its way within, even to melt the ice, which I have often had to break, using the frozen sponge for a hammer. In fact, anyone having a tendency to rheumatism *must* keep the skin in active acting order.

Rightly or wrongly, most medical men agree in believing that rheumatism depends upon an acid condition of the blood. If that state is kept in abeyance by eating only good, easily-digested, and nutritious food, and if the skin is

kept up to the mark so as to eliminate the acid that is formed, the balance of health is kept up, and a rheumatic person is as happy and hardy as anybody else. But let the balance be lost, let acidity get the ascendancy, and the individual be then exposed to a lowering chill, and the consequences may be very sad indeed.

Other conditions that help to open the door for an attack of rheumatism, chronic or otherwise, in joints or muscles, are fatigue, hard work, mental worry, dyspepsia, want of sleep, or all these combined.

Damp and wet should be sedulously avoided. Plenty of exercise can be taken, even to the boundary-line of fatigue; but if the underclothing or outer garments be to any degree damp from the exercise, or falling rain, the clothes should be changed for very dry ones before sitting down to dinner or supper.

It certainly entails a little trouble to go and re-dress oneself after coming in from exercise; but the results are well worth the inconvenience. So the plan is this: After a long walk, take good care to be home nearly an hour before meal-time; then go at once to your room and change your clothing. Do not be afraid to have a cold sponge all over, or even an almost cold bath. In this, of course, you must be guided entirely by your own feelings, both before and after the bath.

It is well that you should bear fully in mind the benefits which may be expected to accrue from sponging the body or taking a bath shortly after exercise, say walking or cycling. You come in then reasonably fatigued. You have been perspiring somewhat, and your clothes have been rendered damp. To sit down in those damp clothes would cause a dangerous and sudden cooling of the body, and consequent reduction of the animal heat. But not only is the skin open, but the perspiration has relieved the system of effete matter, which, if retained, might to some extent have acted as a poison, rendering you at least dull, and probably even wretched, and interfering with the proper digestion of the food—clogging, in fact, the whole machinery of life. But the bath or sponge will remove all the salts of the perspiration, and soften the skin, so that after it the *insensible* perspiration will go on uninterruptedly, insuring you a feeling of buoyancy that you could not otherwise have enjoyed.

You will kindly note that there are two kinds, or rather degrees, of perspiration—the sensible and the insensible. The first is a kind of overflow; it is caused by exercise, or in some by excessive weakness. To a certain extent it is salutary; but after a time it is depressant and debilitating. This it is that damps the underclothing, and endangers life if one sits about in draughts. The insensible perspiration is, or ought to be, always going on; it is imperceptible to the senses; it is this which regulates the animal heat of the body; so that if a chill is caught, and the flow thereof is for a time stopped, the blood soon rushes up to fever heat.

In the rheumatic, or those of the lactic acid diathesis, this insensible perspiration should be encouraged by wearing thin or thick woollen clothing, according to the temperature of the weather.

But to continue about the ablution after exercise. If you care to go to the trouble, a little hot water and lanoline, or Pear's soap, may be first used. This secures complete cleanliness, and gets rid of all loose scurf-skin, which is in scales small enough to be imperceptible to the eye.

Now, if, instead of sponging the body after this, you make up your mind to have a cold sponge-bath, remember you are not to stay in that tin tub over half a minute. And do not expect a fierce reaction after it. A constant bather has little, if any, after-glow; he simply feels lighter and easier in mind and body.

Have a good rub down now with roughest towels. The exercise of doing this will quite restore the insensible perspiration. Dress leisurely. Then have a cup of tea or coffee, supposing it still wants half an hour of meal-time.

I really think I could go as far as to say that no exercise, considered from a health point of view, is complete that is not followed by judicious ablution taken in the way I have tried to describe.

But for those who cannot stand the bath, the next best thing is friction with roughish towels. There are medical men alive who say that this plan is even better, because less dangerous, than the cold bath. I cannot agree with them, but willingly admit that the towelling plan has much to recommend it.

I had no intention, when I began this paper—which, by the way, I am writing in bed—to go into the treatment of rheumatism and its kindred ailments. This had always best be left to your own family doctor. Be it mine to tell you rather how—if of the rheumatic or lactic acid diathesis—to order your life so as to steer clear of attacks from your foe.

Mind you, rheumatism, in any shape or form, whether in muscles or joints, is a very painful, serious, and dangerous ailment; and in a large number of cases the heart does not escape. So we cannot be too careful how we live.

In some people with this rheumatic tendency the digestion is not only weak, but there are frequent attacks of acidity, or heartburn. At such times it will be best to lower the diet, to avoid meat, to use fish instead, to take plenty of gentle exercise out of doors, and to avoid as much as possible the use of anteacids, such as bicarbonate of soda, or potash. These give relief for a time, but they invariably debilitate the system and weaken the digestion. Trust rather to half a tumbler of Vichy water thrice daily, and to, say, ten to fifteen drops of dilute nitro-muriatic acid taken in some bitter herb infusion immediately before each meal. Probably Montserret lime-juice in lemonade will form your best drink.

As for tonics, now and then when weak a course of iron and quinine may do good. Three grains of the citrate of iron and quinine will be enough thrice a day in water. Avoid all kinds of advertised remedies as you would poison.

My medical man has been dosing me with the salicylate of soda, and latterly the salicylate of quinine. These are comparatively new remedies in rheumatism and allied disorders. I cannot say they have not done me much good; but they derange the nervous and digestive system. Besides, some systems cannot take quinine in any shape or form without suffering from headache, restless nights, and singing in the ears.

This paper is more of a gossip than anything else. However, I trust my fair readers who have known me so long will make every allowance under the—to me—painful circumstances.

Let me repeat, then, *re* diet. Be careful—most careful—to keep on the safe side, and that leans towards abstemiousness, and to use but little meat unless you are having very abundant exercise. Another hint to you is this—keep up the spirits. If you have worries, you won't mend matters by thinking about them; but you will depress the nervous system by doing so, and lower the vitality so that rheumatic deposits will have a better chance of remaining in the blood and joints, very much to your danger and discomfort.

Remember, too, it is precisely at the time you are strongest in health that your enemy often makes an attack upon your fortress of life, and tries to carry it by storm, because you are then to some extent off your guard, and not living according to rule.

Three weeks ago I myself could ride for miles on my cycle without turning a hair. To-day—— But here the story stops.

A BATTLE WITH DESTINY.

By JOHN SAUNDERS, Author of "The Lion in the Path," "Abel Drake's Wife," etc.

CHAPTER XXX.

"ARE YOU JOHN ROLFE?"

"A MIST is rising—shall we go in now?" asked Jeanie the same afternoon, as she and Beth walked up and down the avenue of lime trees, where she had been telling her sister one of the fairy-tales she loved so well.

"I'm sorry the tale is finished," said Beth. "Why don't the people who make them up let them be longer? No, I can't come in just yet, Jean. I promised Sybil to tidy my flower-bed some time to-day, and I haven't done it yet. I sha'n't be long"—and the child skipped away to the scene of her neglected gardening.

Jeanie walked slowly back to the house, and, after changing her serge dress for a white cashmere suitable for undress evening wear, adorned only by a cluster of tea-roses, went into the smaller drawing-room, where a fire was burning brightly, and where the family generally passed their evenings.

The lamps had not yet been lighted. The firelight played fitfully upon the mirrors, and deepened the shadows slowly growing in the room. It was the one hour of all the day most dear to Jeanie, and that of all others most congenial for the habit of day-dreaming, in which she loved to indulge.

Seating herself on the hearthrug, her head resting on her hand, which was supported on the seat of a low chair, she gazed into the fire, dreaming of the future, and seeing, in her vivid imagination, forms among its live coals growing and changing in harmony with her thoughts.

Absorbed in her reverie, she did not hear the opening of the door, and started as a servant announced, "Mr. Rolfe, miss."

She had only time to jump hastily up from her lowly resting-place before he