

PREPARING TO FACE THE WINTER.

By "MEDICUS."



WHEN the summer is past and gone, and autumn itself is well advanced, and, with broad free hand, dashing its brown and russet beauty - tints over hedge - row

and tree, there are many thousands of delicate girls, and ladies more advanced in years who look forward with a little premonitory shudder to the wintry weather ahead.

For the most part these are what I might call summer birds—birds that love the spring and love the sunshine, far better than dark rolling clouds, and falling snow. Nevertheless they form a class so numerous, that I feel quite justified in addressing them at this season of the year. And the reason is this: Nature does not issue her warnings in vain, and if she tells us beforehand that we have something to fear and dread from the inclemency of the wintry weather that is before us, she does so, I believe, in order that we may prepare ourselves to face it. Remember this, gentle reader, it is not after he reaches the battle-field that the warrior, who expects to be successful, arms himself for the fray, but long before, and it is in autumn that the delicate are to learn how to defend themselves against cold, damp, fog, rain, anything and everything that tends to make the winter inclement.

I have made use of the expression "Summer birds;" well, if the delicate were summer birds in reality, they might do as these do, shake their wings and fly away and away to southern and more genial climes before the icy blasts begin to blow. But, heigho! few can afford to do as our summer birds do—although in this paper I shall not fail to give even these few a hint about winter climates. While, then, people of means and leisure can follow the birds to sunnier shores than these, the majority have to stay at home and work. In many cases, however, work is in reality a blessing, and what is more, it may or might often-times take rank among our curative agents.

"Our Bessie is not very strong," I heard a mother say one day, "and we are rather afraid the winter will be hard upon her."

She referred to her daughter, a slip of a lassie about fourteen years of age.

Well, there are a good many Bessies of this sort in England, some perhaps nearer forty than fourteen, and in Scotland too.

In Scotland, however, I may tell you, winter is not so much dreaded as it is on the south side of the silvery Tweed. You may imagine that the reason for this is that the Scots are a more hardy race. This is one reason, but there is another: in most parts of the far north the climate is less changeable. A spell of hard frost with bright sunshine and no wind worth thinking about or reckoning with, is far more common than in the English Midlands. Weather like this is bracing, and raises the spirits quite as much as it hardens nerve and muscle.

I remember coming south once from a visit to a family, principally of young folks, in the Scottish Highlands, to live for a week or two in the outskirts of the beautiful town of Leamington, at the home of a friend whose children were also in their teens, or most of them. Well, I will tell you what I left, and what I lost in coming south, and what I found in England. The time was January, and near

the end of it. But from Christmas Day there had been snow on the mountains and in the valleys too, with hard frost and a crisp, clear windless air. And hardly a day passed on which my Highland cousins were not out of doors somewhere; there were drives by dog-cart or sledge, long walks to see frozen streams and waterfalls, and glens where snow lay deep or high above the rank heather, which in autumn had been crimson and red; there was curling for the boys on loch and pond, and there was skating for both boys and girls. And I may tell you that so warm were we while curling, that top-coats or plaids were discarded, and the very existence of such things as gloves completely forgotten. We didn't feel cold, not a bit of it. But, on coming south, as my cab whirled me along—after arriving in Leamington—through wet and wind-swept streets to that comfortable English house on the outskirts, where a comfortable English welcome awaited me, I felt all the truth of the old saying: "A Scotsman or a Canadian never feels cold till he comes to England." I *did* feel cold, and so I think did Rat, my Skye terrier. Anyhow, he got up on the seat and worked himself right under the corner of my Gordon-tartan plaid. "If this be England," said Rat, "a very little of it goes a long way."

But arrived at Holme Grove, I found great fires burning in every room, and I am sure that every day for the next fortnight nobody did much else except stay indoors to read or play, varying this sometimes by staring at the rain-beaten windows, or listening to the angry wind that tore through the leafless trees, while the twigs of climber rose trees beat their melancholy tattoo against the panes.

But don't imagine, pray, that I desire to hold up Caledonia as a model winter climate. Far from it. Among the hills there is many a terrible blizzard in January, while in the valleys and plains snowstorms may rage for weeks that a collie dog can hardly face, and later on the streams and rivers may come down in spate, appalling even the sturdy mountaineer, uprooting trees and bushes, rending their banks, rolling even rocks before the raging torrent. Yet I believe that most people would prefer even this, to the cold, wet, damp drizzle or fog, with glints of sunshine in between that constitute the wintry weather of the Midlands.

Well, it is to show my readers how best to battle against such inclemency that I am now writing. First and foremost then, let me tell the delicate—no matter what her age may be—that she needs to lay up all the strength she can, now in autumn to enable her to face the coming winter. How is she to do this? Not certainly by stopping indoors and looking out at the window. This would only breed or beget melancholy, and melancholy, it has lately been proved chemically, engenders a poison in the blood that preys upon and diminishes the vigour of every organ and tissue in the body. Nor by taking medicine either. This, if judiciously chosen, is well enough in its way, but it would be better far to pour it down a rat's hole, than trust entirely to its efficacy in renovating the strength.

But while protecting herself against wind and weather, the delicate should do all she can now to harden herself off, as gardeners do green-house plants they want to transfer to the open. She must not remain more indoors than her work or duties compel her to. The fresh air is, for her, life itself, especially if with it she is lucky enough to find sunshine. She will find walking exercise, if taken at the

same hours every day, the best tonic to the nervous and muscular system. It is best because it is safest and strengthens the heart without over-straining it, or over-exciting the vascular system, as cycling does, you know. I am myself an enthusiast as to cycling, but it is *not* the best exercise for those who are weakly. Many ladies who read this may not be strong as regards the heart. Well, let them remember this, that the heart is a muscular organ, and if it be merely weak it can be toned and braced by exercise. If you desired to strengthen the muscles of your arm, you would swing the dumb-bells or Indian clubs, and just in the same way can you increase your heart's vigour by walking even uphill sometimes, though not to the verge of the slightest distress.

A fortnight spent in the country during the autumn season, or by the seaside, often goes a long way as a preparation for weathering the winter. If you choose the seaside, make sure before you go there that the water is not hard, hardness of the drinking-water is to account for a great deal of dyspepsia, and liver and kidney disturbances also, so I rede you to beware of it whether at home or abroad.

In preparing for winter the delicate should study regularity of living in every way. I do not wish you to go too early to bed, or to rise as soon as the cock begins to crow, but avoid late hours, and be up and in your sponge-bath by eight o'clock. "Oh, that sponge bath!" I think I hear someone say, "what a dread ordeal!" Well, I can only tell you as I have told you before, that it is—if taken cold—an excellent nerve-tonic and an almost sure preventative of not only colds, but many more dangerous ailments.

Good food is most essential, but study to eat in great moderation. Blood is made from food; not necessarily, however, from the food you swallow, but from that which you digest. Too much meat will do harm. I may tell you also that for many reasons underdone meat—and some folks eat it almost raw—is dangerous.

As to medicine, a little cod-liver oil with malt extract, or now and then iron with phosphates in some form, will meet the requirements of your case. If the system is dry or bound, beware of getting into the habit of taking aperients for relief. Fruit eaten in the morning—and oranges all day long if you choose—affords the safest chance of remedy. Lemons also, two or three daily, do good.

I believe then if you be exemplary in your obedience to the laws of health during the autumn months, and cultivate the acquaintance of your best friend, fresh air, you will find yourself so hardy by December that you have little to fear in the coming winter.

But let me now suppose that winter has come. Well, you are not to be fool-hardy, and must take every precaution to guard against the inclemencies of the weather and its frequent changes.

Fogs.—How are you to guard against these? This is a question which is difficult to answer satisfactorily. You see, fogs are so penetrating that it is worse than useless to remain indoors, and I cannot counsel the wearing of a respirator, unless it be insisted on by your medical adviser. I think on the whole it is better not to let fogs of any kind prevent you from taking your out-door exercise. By taking this regularly, you are able in a great measure to defy the fogs.

Clothing in Winter.—This must be sensible, and while it should be pretty much all wool,

it must not be so heavy as to cause perspiration while walking. Besides, heavy clothing weakens both the nervous and the muscular systems. The same thing holds good as regards head and footgear. Perhaps I should not call your hat or boots gear; well, it is but a sailor's expression, after all; anyhow, let your head be cool and your feet warm, but the boots soft as to uppers, moderately thick as to soles, and let your stockings be of the softest wool, and changed whenever they are the least little wee bit damp. Mind, perspiration alone will cause dampness, so it is a good plan to put on a dry pair of stockings after coming in from a long walk. No, I don't believe in cork soles, nor any other sort of soles worn inside your boots or shoes, except the soles that nature has furnished you with. When out walking, carry a light strong umbrella to protect yourself against rain or wind, but abjure a mackintosh.

Those who live in cities should never stand a moment in any street where there are cold cross currents of air. It is these draughts sweeping up side-streets that give you cold by causing shock to the system, or rather shocks, for you are subjected to so many of them, that hardly have you recovered from one before you have another, so in cold windy weather choose streets to walk in that are not much exposed to side eddies. Young folks in winter should be especially well-clad but not heavily. Next the skin, at all events, nothing but wool should be worn.

Idleness breeds illness in winter. This is really true, reader. If you are not therefore a work-a-day girl or woman, have a hobby or fancy of some kind to keep the mind occupied.

Be as happy as you possibly can be in winter. Happiness keeps sickness on the other side of the fence, I do assure you, and there is

nothing more weakening or wearying than worry or care. Always think of something pleasant. Turn every matter round and round till you find the bright side, and fix your mind on that.

Rooms in winter should be warm and dry, not hot, however, and you cannot have them too well-ventilated. For my own part, rather than sleep in a stuffy close room, I'd wrap my plaid around me and sleep out-doors on top of the snow. Do not have a fire in your bedroom if you can do without it.

Bottles of hot water or foot-warmers should not be used in bed. Bed socks, however, are useful, and the bed may be warmed before you lie down.

Exciting conversation during the evening tends to banish sleep. Reading before lying down calms and soothes mind and body, and people who cannot sleep had better read in bed than toss about and think. At the same time it should be borne in mind that darkness conduces to sleep.

Many of my readers may have a chance of spending the winter away from changeable and inclement England, or may want to know where the cosiest corners are in this country itself. To these I will say a word or two in conclusion.

I may tell them at once then that there is no model climate, and that foreign health resorts have many drawbacks. It is well then, reader mine, before making up your mind to go abroad to consider the old proverb about going farther and faring worse.

On the other hand, the journey itself has sometimes a good effect on important internal organs, besides exciting for good the whole vascular system. Only in travelling beware of fatigue.

There are many delightful places in the

South of France. Pau, for example; Dr. Playfair summed it up thus: calmness, moderate cold, bright sunshine, dry soil, dry atmosphere and rains of short duration.

Biarritz, on the shores of Biscay Bay, is a nice winter place, and it is at that season cheap. Cannes, Nice and Mentone are too well-known to need description.

Egypt is well worth a visit in winter, and an invalid moderately strong might do worse than journey up the Nile. The climate of Egypt is specially recommended for people in the earliest stages of consumption, troubles of the throat, chronic cough, nervousness, dyspepsia and renal troubles. It may also be favourable to cases of rheumatism.

A voyage to the Azores or Canary Islands is also well worthy of consideration by the well-to-do invalid.

The Isle of Wight from the beginning of November till the end of May has a most genial climate, pretty scenery, and freedom from fogs. I only wonder it is not more popular.

My northern readers I feel sure would be delighted with it.

Torquay is altogether delightful in winter, I speak from experience, and it is also very beautiful.

Salcombe, a little place on the south-west coast, is warm and equable in winter, and quiet.

Queenstown in Cork and Bute in Scotland are both very excellent winter climates.

But if you make up your mind to go away to avoid the winter, take medical advice before you start, and get also a book that gives information concerning the place you choose. It will be well, however, not to have a book written by a native of the locality. *Verbum sap.*

MARSH MARIGOLDS.

By ADA M. TROTTER, Author of "My Lady Marjorie," etc.

CHAPTER III.

SETS THE BALL A-ROLLING WHICH BRINGS FRANK TREHERNE TO THE FORTH.

RUTH MARPHELL had a clear strong mind, but by no means an original one. The idea of converting the long-despised marshlands into a vegetable garden had come from the half-careless *dilettante* cousin Frank, who had a way of veiling earnest meaning under this light superficial manner. Only the Marphells, in whose house he had grown to manhood, were aware of the keen powers of observation, and the really unusual quality of the mind of this favourite of fortune, and Ruth often took his suggestions as the utterances of an oracle, and reflected upon their feasibility long after Frank had forgotten all about the subject. But with regard to the marshes, Frank had been determined to prove his point, and had cultivated a few yards, which this year had yielded rich returns. Unfortunately Ruth did not know that Frank had given the subject a very thorough study, and that he had consulted an expert with regard to the necessary enrichment of the soil, and that the reason he had not been more insistent as to his opinion had lain in the fear that the expense of working the land would be more than it was worth. Ruth saw that the soil was black, and thought as do

many people, that on this showing it must be very rich, and that all she had to do was to drain it piece by piece, and thus have an El Dorado at her feet. Her father had never been a practical farmer, and knew in fact less than Ruth herself upon the question. He had always handed over the working of the farm to a steward, but his choice of a representative had been unfortunate, as Ruth proved to him as soon as she set her clear head to examine the farm accounts. He now saw everything as Ruth saw it, and her argument seemed to bear weight, for the demand for vegetables in the city was greater than the supply; there was an opening for a market-garden, and if, as Frank had suggested, these marshlands were worth their weight in gold (metaphorically speaking), why not go to work and reap the certain advantages? So now as he walked back to the house leaning on his daughter's arm, he became almost excited as Ruth developed her views.

"I had begun to think," he said, as they returned, "that nothing lay before us in the future but the sacrifice of the old homestead," he caught his breath as though the very idea was intolerably painful.

"No, no," said Ruth, "that must never be, not while I have health and

strength to work with; but—I shall move slowly until I hear from Frank; I will go now and write to him, dear father." But the mid-day very spare dinner was ready, and Ruth led her father to the table.

The Marphell family consisted of three daughters besides Ruth, and one son. Ritchie, the seventeen-year-old daughter, had the finely-cut features of her father, and was like him in her devotion to music. Marian, a year younger, was a small delicate child with blue eyes and exquisite golden hair. She resembled her mother in person, and gave little idea of the strength of character which was in abeyance behind this fragile appearance, and Nell, the baby of the family, was just nine years old. Lionel, the only son, was not yet fourteen years old, and was an ordinary boy in everything but his musical genius; his voice was exquisite, and carefully trained by his father; but at the very time when his voice would be soaring in angelic sweetness, his very ordinary boyish mind would be straying to all kinds of pranks, many of them mischievous enough to relieve his parents from all fear of his being "too good to live," as he was apt to look in his white surplice.

"If you're going to write to Frank, Ruth," he observed, as she excused her-