



HEALTHY RECREATION.



## USEFUL PASTIMES FOR HEALTH AND PLEASURE.

By "MEDICUS."

THERE are several words and phrases in common use in these so-called advanced days, which I cannot help saying I do not regard with much pleasure, and which I, for one, trust are not very often to be found in the mouths of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER. But for all that, we should stare at you in surprise, if you insinuated that we belonged in any way to the goody-goody class of literature. We do not; we endeavour to be straightforward, above-board and candidly honest; and not a question arises that is not discussed by some members of our staff, and if there be anything good in it, we do not hesitate a week before bringing it before you. If there be nothing in it, we leave it severely alone. That is the sort of people we are, from our worthy Editor downwards, I was almost going to say, to the office boy. It would be out of place for me to say a word about myself. Whether I strive to do my girl-readers good or not it is for them to say, only the advice I do give, I believe to be right, and as far as science is concerned, I live in an atmosphere of it. I am surrounded, week in week out, by all the organs devoted thereto, which I read instead of the trashy fiction of the day, so that no new invention is brought to the front, and no new theory promulgated, that I am not at once made cognisant of. Well then, I can thus adopt or adapt whatever is useful to you. And I do not hesitate to keep myself "dressed up," as we used to say in the volunteers, to the line of march and advancement.

But let me just give you one or two of the words I hear silly girls in society make such frequent use of. One is the "New Girl," or "New Woman," the other the ridiculous use of the phrase, *fin de siècle*, and a third, that awful absurdity "Rational Dress." I'm old-fashioned, some may say, but these are girls who do not know me personally. Thousands of our readers have met me on the road in my caravan, and can testify to the fact, that I am as fond of all kinds of manly sport as most men, but I am only a man after all, and being so, you may take it as a fact, when I tell you, that ninety per cent. of men-folks would rather run a mile, than talk a minute to a *soi-disant* advanced woman, and if she wore "rational dress," the percentage would mount up to ninety-nine, and the other man would simply stop and speak for the fun of the thing. And the others would all say with me, "God bless the dear little souls, whose innocence, whose beauty, and whose *naïveté* constitute their chief claim to be called advanced." But, I say, girls, whisper: don't we often notice that it is just those young ladies who can lay less claim to beauty than most, who do go in for rational dress and extraordinary hobbies, by the way, as it seems to me, of attracting attention?

Now in mentioning in this paper a few of the more useful pastimes, I desire to measure them by a certain health-giving standard. This will be somewhat as follows: 1. Their value as a means of securing non-exciting and, consequently, healthful exercise. 2. Their value as a means of keeping those who adopt them out in the pure fresh air and sunlight, if the sun does condescend to shine; and 3. Their value as mental tonics and calmatives.

On the whole, I shall not mention many pastimes, because, when the reader is made conversant with the standard by which I judge of their health-value, she can easily add many others herself.

1. Let me say a word about cycling. My first love was what is called the ordinary, and I still like it. Of course safety-men run it down, but I know quite an army of safety-men who couldn't even mount one. However, this is not a lady's machine, so nothing more need be said about it. At present I ride a tricycle, because, if not quite so swift a machine, it just suits the requirements of a literary man who does a lot of writing in woods and lanes. With a safety I should have to dismount, but on this I merely open my portfolio, and with my excise ink-bottle slung to a button-hole set to work. I can even make a rough sketch of scenery or a droll face from this capital machine. Then I can ride as slowly as I please, and if I want a good spin, why, the machine can do everything but fly. What more does anyone want, who does not care to make or break a record? Now the tricycle is also a lady's machine, and great indeed is the enjoyment she can have thereon or therefrom. Let her have a light one of a good make and with pneumatic tyres, and not go from home without all accessories with her. If going for a good long spin, I advise in my books on cycling that she should take also refreshment in the form of food, with a spirit-of-wine apparatus capable of making tea and cooking an egg by the wayside. If she has a dog, all the better. Almost any breed of dog will do for the tricycle, though not for the quick-speeding bicycle, but a collie, a retriever, fox-terrier or Newfoundland is probably best. She ought to take a book to read when resting, or, better still, her sketching materials. If another girl can be got as companion all the better. A macintosh-cape should be borne, but only worn when absolutely necessary. I am so fond of cycling that I must not here begin to praise it, or I should forget myself and become rhapsodical. Only let me remind you that on the tricycle, if you do not rush hills, which weakens the heart, or spurt too much, you get rational healthful exercise and sometimes sunshine, and always pure fresh air, for you will naturally bend your prow towards the greenery of the country. You have, moreover, a mental tonic and calmative of a high order. Once away out

into the lanes, or among the hills and woods, you soon forget all life's care and worry. You cannot help wondering with yourself how you ever could have permitted things sublunary to bother you at all. Cycling is really a cure for a large number of chronic ailments, I might include chronic rheumatism and neuralgia, and that beginning of so many diseases, dyspepsia. However, let me remind you that in taking to cycling with a view to health, it must be kept up day after day, rain or shine. Your cape should make you independent of the rain. A girl whom a shower or a threatening sky shall keep at home has not much courage. Let her be bold and weather-defiant. By the way, you should not fail to eat plenty of good ripe fruit while *en voyage*. See that it is ripe, and not too ripe.

What about drink on the road? Well, you should not ride to perspire too much. Hurry is to be avoided above all things, but when thirsty buttermilk, if you can procure it, is one of the best of all drinks; next comes whey, and a glass of pure milk will often do good, but I really think that pure water is to be preferred to most of the aerated messes sold by the roadside. Home-made ginger beer is the best of these, however. Here is a hint the amateur cyclist should remember. Thirst is caused as often as not by tiredness or overdoing it, in which case a teaspoonful or two of some of the best of the bottled beef-teas, such as bovril, will drive it away if followed by a glass of pure water.

As to the bicycle, it isn't a lady's machine at all. The light well-made tricycle has advantages that quite counterbalance any it may possess, and on a tricycle you can dress like a lady *versus* a mountebank.

But it is time I spoke of some other pastime.

2. *Golf*.—What say you to this most insinuating game? It is not because I am a Scot that I recommend it. Indeed, some of the English links nowadays are as good as the Scottish, and the members of the clubs that play quite as enthusiastic. It takes some considerable time to become a good golf player, but the game does really grow on you wonderfully if you practice well. Have you a lady companion; if so, you hardly need go to the expense of having a caddie for every-day practice. For this pastime you need to be well-booted or shod, and your garments should accord with the season of the year. Scotch tweed is best for either winter or summer, and as to the head-dress, what is the matter with the Tam o' Shanter? A better head-dress for golf, except on very sunny days, would be what Scotsmen call the "the cockit bonnet" or Glengarry. An arrow, thistle, golf club or anchor might be worn at the left side of it on a ribbon, and it suits nearly every style of youthful beauty and enhances most. The Tam o' Shanter I don't want to run

down, though in the north of Scotland it is looked upon more as an old man's bonnet than anything else. Well, if you do take up golf, pray do so with a will. You will be well rewarded. It affords plenty of good exercise, fresh air, sufficient excitement and enough calmness to cause you to forget every worldly care and worry. Golf as a cure for sleeplessness I frequently recommend. It is ten times better than poisonous and dangerous sleeping-draughts.

3. *Cricket* may be recommended for large families. I do not believe in girls and boys playing the game indiscriminately. However, it might be introduced with advantage in large schools. It is excellent exercise, only you can't take it by yourself, and at the best there is a good deal of standing about and waiting, during which one is apt to catch cold.

4. *Lawn tennis*, although one of the sports and recreations I have written a long treatise upon in *Cassell's Book of the Household*, I was never very much struck with as a health restorative. You do not play constantly, and so are apt to catch colds and rheums. There is much good to be said for it nevertheless, and as a health pastime it is infinitely to be preferred to the ridiculous old game of croquet. I have heard this was coming in fashion again. My advice to you, girls, is this: don't take up with the game till you are forty, and—don't then.

5. *Walking*.—I have spoken so much and so often concerning this that I need add but little, except to remind you that it is no good unless gone into with spirit; unless you take long earnest walks, preferably with a purpose such as the study of botany, or making a collection of wild flowers, or sketching in

summer; that you must dress lightly and warmly, and wear stout shoes—not necessarily heavy—that will not pinch. N.B.—A good walking shoe should have a soft pliable upper and a broad strongish sole with plenty of steel tacks or even a plate to protect the part you wear most. Walking exercise must be taken with great regularity day after day, and in this a spurt is now and then permissible; it does not hurt the heart so much as spurting on the cycle, or in a boat does.

6. *Boating*.—Oh yes, very good indeed if it can be taken regularly, or boating might be taken one day and walking the next. Learn to row neatly and to keep good time. Have an extra garment to wear when it gets a bit chilly. A Shetland wool light comforter will be found invaluable on the river or sea. In rowing the strongest girl should be stroke, the weakest bow or coxswain. It may seem unnecessary to tell you this, but we constantly see mistakes made in this way. Rowing expands the muscles of the chest, and arms, and neck, and also helps the lungs if you do not spurt. Always take some tiffin with you when going for a good long row, because you are apt to be hungry. Don't forget a bottle of milk and one of water with fruit also. So shall you gain health and strength.

7. Talking of boating naturally leads me to think of *fishing*. I have been all my life an enthusiastic fisherman. I began, you know, with tadpoles and minnows, got promoted to trout and salmon, then to sea-fishing around our shores, and finally to bonito, dolphins, sharks and whales. Of course my readers know that some of these are not fish, but they call it fishing, and if your boat were attached to a whale that was towing you through the sea at the rate of twenty miles an hour, with a

wall of green water rising a yard above your bows on each side, I believe you would think it reasonably exciting, and wonder where you were going to land, up in the sky or under the ice. Well, fishing is such a big subject and my heart is so much in it that I must leave it for some future paper if our Editor wills. Meanwhile let me tell you that ordinary river or lake fishing gives one abundance of exercise and fresh air, and that it is in my opinion the most calmative of all pastimes.

8. *Gardening*.—This is the last health pastime I shall speak about to-day; it is within the reach of so many girls; it is so interesting, instructive, so bracing and calmative that the wonder is, more of our readers do not go in for it. It is like playing the fiddle too in one sense, no matter how clever you are there is always something more to learn.

I would advise girls who can, to take up with the combined flower and cottage garden. This is more interesting than flowers alone. You do not require many tools to begin with, say, a light spade, an ordinary hoe and a push or Dutch hoe, a tiny garden rake and a digger, a garden fork, and a tiny forklet for your flower beds.

You must have a hand-book; there are many good and cheap ones, and you ought to take a gardening paper, most of the articles in these can be relied on. You may ask questions of gardeners if you have a chance, but some of these men are old-fashioned and faddy, and there are great differences in taste even in gardening. My rules are, perfect cleanliness and tidiness, constant attention, constant war upon weeds, plenty of nutrient material, and no over-crowding. If you over-crowd or over-shadow then everything comes up spindly, weak and worthless.

## A RELIC OF THE GOOD OLD TIMES.



HERE can be no doubt that the book lying before me is a genuine antique. The vellum binding is stained, soiled and worm-eaten, and the leaves are of rough brownish paper, written over in pale, faded ink, and evidently by six or eight different hands, some neat and clerly, some scrawling and illegible, and the spelling of most of the recipes looking most quaint to our eyes.

It is a large square book, and has been rather badly treated, for leaves are torn out,

and children have scribbled their names, and made rough attempts at drawings on all the blank pages, but there are still more than two hundred and fifty manuscript recipes for all manner of home-brewed nostrums, and elaborate eatables.

The first page is torn out, so we do not know to whom it originally belonged. The earliest date given in it is that of a business receipt, "Re'cd April ye 3, 1718 of Dame Ballard £3. 0. 0." That transaction took place in the reign of George I., our Queen's great, great, great-grandfather, and it is evidently by no means the oldest entry in the book, which has been judged to be probably two hundred years old.

It seems to have belonged to some lady of rank, as one heading is, "My sister, Lady Wrights recipe for tarts," and others were given by "Lord Chesterfield," "Lady Musgrave," "Lady Digby," "Lady Cavendish," and "Mrs. Penelope Barkleye;" but the name most frequently scribbled by children is Bowater, "John Edward Bowater," "Maria Bowater," and "Sarah Ord," and in a well-formed hand there is a pencil note to "Mrs. Ord," as follows:—

"Will you, my dear good Mama, come and see me to-morrow, and in return will do myself the pleasure to drink tea at your house. John Bowater. Friday evening, 19th March, 1786." The said John having apparently stepped in to see his "dear good" mother—or mother-in-law, the name being different—and finding her absent, for lack of a sheet of paper, scribbled his message on the blank page of her cookery-book. How strange that so trivial an invitation should be still there after more than a century has past, when the actors have been so

long dead, and forgotten. The book has been for more than ninety years in the writer's family.

In 1801 my great-grandfather took a house in the little town of Reigate from a family named Bowater, and we suppose that this old book was left behind by them as rubbish, and was laid away and forgotten, till it turned up a few years ago to be welcomed and kept as a valuable curiosity.

Some of the medicinal recipes are most extraordinary. Those for food are not so strange, but very extravagant to our modern ideas, dealing largely in "quarts of cream," "the yolks of fifteen eggs," and a whole pound of fresh butter as one ingredient of an elaborate sweet sauce for a pudding.

We will quote some of the medical prescriptions first, but some are really not fit to print, and are enough to make one feel thankful one did not live in those days to be dosed with such repulsive messes.

"For a Pin, or anything that sticks in the Throat.—Take a thimbleful and a half of gunpowder, put it in a spoon. Wet it with a little beer, or butter, stir it, and put it down the throat with a little beer after it."

We have more faith in the nursery prescription of a hard crust to remove a fish bone than in gunpowder cold.

"Historicall Water to suppress Vapours.—Take three quarts of canarie sack, and three very great handfulls of rew, two very great handfulls of Mother Time, one ounce of single piony seeds, the rinde of orang, a dram of campher. You must shred your herbs, and braise your seeds, and slice your orang rinde, and put them all into your sack for a day