

gardens and flower-covered bungalows, and to ask the way of coloured people. I long for a camera or brush to give you an idea of it. Coming home I called at the Vicarage close to us.

Mrs. L. lives near and is so charming. A lovely house and garden; and she will kindly take charge of my trunks when I'm ordered off at a moment's notice "with my bundle on my shoulder" up country.

A month ago to-day I was riding along a Somersetshire road—a cold frosty day. Ages seem to have passed since then—not only because we have gone from Christmas to midsummer so quickly, but all the varied experiences of a month seem to cover many happy years.

*Thursday, Jan. 25.*—Midnight. Have been on "orderly duty" all day, which is very tiring, but I have so enjoyed it. I went up to camp as usual, ran home to lunch at 12, then stayed in camp till after 9 P.M., having charge of nearly all the eighty-five tents in the afternoon while the other Sisters were off duty. Of course the orderlies are on duty. An immense amount of walking about from tent to tent, and one has to receive the visitors who come with flowers, etc., in the afternoon. The doctors are camped in bell-tents under the pines. Everything is so well done, and the entire staff so efficient. The orderlies too work excellently under direction. Absolute asepsis—as we understand it—impossible in field-surgery; but the fresh air does instead, and the results are excellent. No wound seems to go wrong. An utterly smashed limb can't, of course, heal by first intention, but there is little suppuration. One finds that surgery and the ways of surgeons are much alike all the world over. I'm glad to be so well up in my surgical work, for no nurse ever trained at the South Devon without blessing the thoroughness of the training.

It must have been tremendous work for the first Sisters getting everything in order. Now there are dressing-tins and almost everything one wants. No sterilising though. The English Government is a wonderful institution. Think of the labour and expense of getting the entire equipment for a field hospital over here, the daily commissariat, the large staff to be maintained. They are even laying an electric light for the entire camp. Now it is absolutely dark, and after sundown one gropes about, tumbling over the ropes of the tents, or half-lighted by carrying a hurricane lantern. It's quite a weird scene. And all so interesting.

I'm half afraid the British soldier is not so keen on fighting for Queen and Country as of yore. So many say they "have had enough," and want to go home. This is especially the case—which is natural—with Reservists, who have wives and families at home. But some are equally eager to get to the front again, and "to get their own back," as they say,

from the Boers. Of course we don't see terrible sights here. One wound is just like another, whether caused by a Mauser bullet at Magersfontein or by a surgeon's scalpel at home. It's when we get to the front, and perhaps actually close to the battlefield, that we shall have stirring tales to tell.

Another quaint South African picture:—

I met a Malay funeral procession close to camp, the coffin palled with an embroidered scarlet shawl, six coloured men staggering under the weight. The two women who were chief mourners, swathed in white; the other women following in brightest colours—green bodices and brilliant pink scarfs turbaned round their heads and black faces. One Moorish-looking man in a fez (possibly the husband) was close behind the coffin, and he touched his hat to me as abjectly as they do. Wasn't that pathetic in the midst of his own grief?—if they feel grief: do they? I stopped one of the women and asked her about it. She said the dead was a "big fat woman, very fat," who was quite well yesterday. Two hours afterwards they were still there, only waiting under the pine-trees, not now processing. The body was in the mortuary awaiting interment, and they would follow to the grave when it was brought out again. The mourners in white were crouched by the empty bier, with heads between their knees. The gaily-attired women laughing and talking near. I hear the Mohammedans may not mourn the dead with any outward show of grief.

*Jan. 26.*—Went to Cape Town again this afternoon to finish my shopping, so as to be ready at any moment for the front. Bought kit-bag, folding bath, sacking water-bottle, etc., all necessary for up-country. Cooled on Dix's verandah, the café, with ices and strawberries and cream. It's so nice to come back again to work in the quiet camp, with the trees all round; and this evening there was a glorious Alpine effect on the more distant mountains at sunset.

*Jan. 27.*—An interesting day. Much work this morning dressing, etc. Some photos were taken of the Army Medical Staff—all surgeons and Sisters assembling under the trees at mid-day as the bugles played the officers' call.

After hurried lunch—we have bread and butter and cheese, wine, fruit and coffee for luncheon: dinner on coming off duty between eight and nine in the evening—caught a train to Minsenberg on False Bay, the nearest sea to us. Spent the afternoon with the F.'s. Most interesting people. This is their country seaside bungalow at Minsenberg, where they live completely *al fresco*, and bathe after my own heart. Miss — and I walked for miles over the sands in our bare feet, with the waves washing over them—a lovely expanse of breaking green waves—and beyond them the B.

Mountains, the ones I have loved so much from camp, my rosy Alps at sundown. It is such an unusual combination to have sea and mountains. The sandy shore abounds in quaint blue jelly-fish, shaped as a covered Venetian gondola, and with long, floating, deep-blue strings, sometimes beaded. They sting horribly, and are called "men-of-war" from the way they sail on the water. If you crush them with your foot, they pop with the noise of a small cannonade. I don't know their scientific name.

Rumour of another serious reverse from Buller. We only hope it is not true. How intensely Cape people feel it all! I told Miss D. the rumoured news I had heard, and she immediately began to cry, wailed, "We feared it, we feared it! Oh, we know Natal, and the dreadful country it is. What will happen to England!" Our men, too, all speak of the terrible difficulty of the country, and complain bitterly of the impossibility of fighting the Boers, because they are not straight, and will not meet their opponents fairly.

I just missed seeing Sir Alfred Milner this afternoon, he was walking on the sands quite near. And Lord Roberts was in a little special train in front. How the men worship "Lord Bobs!"

*Sunday, Jan. 28.*—The Archbishop preaching at the church close by to-day; but I didn't manage to hear him, as morning and evening one is on duty. The two Topsyis walked off after lunch of their own accord, so we had to get tea and keep the kitchen fire going.

The ways of coloured maidens!

*Jan. 29.*—One wakes always to Midsummer mornings, with no fear (as at home) that the sunshine will vanish. You cannot imagine the charm of the place—of the flowers, of the air, of the mountains—unless you have seen it. I have never seen anything in Norway or Switzerland like the cloud effects on the mountains. And one thinks of Ruskin, the cloud-lover, now gone to his long home, and his dim mind undimmed again.

My men press the silver leaves (the only silver-leaved tree in the world, I believe) and send them home as cards with mottoes on them—others knit, and some make wonderful wool-work belts. The soldier is just a Mariston man, and I can't say more for him than that.

Evening. Startling news! They have telegraphed for a Sister to be sent to the front, and, if it's not cancelled in the morning, I'm to be the one to go.

You can imagine how excited I feel, and I want to go dreadfully—though there'll be a little regret at leaving all the charming friends here, and I know no one at Durban or Spytfontein where I'm to be sent. But I shall see the smoke of conflict I expect—terrible though it is.

(To be continued.)

## SOME WORDS IN SEASON.

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., C.M., R.N. ("MEDICUS").

Is it not pleasant, girls, to think that though spring still lingers in the valleys, and hardly has the sun yet chased cold winter from the mountain-tops, summer is on ahead, and that May will usher us into the joys of June?

Invalids specially, but perhaps every one of you, must long for that happy time, for all creatures and all plants and flowers love the sunshine. Though I am writing these lines on a bleak wintry night in January, with the wind roaring "snell and cauld" from over the hills,

snow in the clouds, and frost in the air, I can see in imagination my roses all in bloom; many a wild flower, wanton to be pressed, lifting its sweet face to the blue of the sky; the mavis lilting wildly in thickets of spruce; the lark singing high, high against the fleecy cloud; and the bees in their thousands making murmuring music among my scented linden-trees.

Soft and low breathes the balmy air through the chestnuts and sycamores in gentlest whispers, as if afraid to disturb the

bird-melody everywhere swelling around. But the very brooklets seem to thank Heaven for the blue skies and sunshine, as over their pebbly beds they go singing to the sea.

I am here brought back to my senses and to stern winter's reality by the entry of my secretary with the evening mail.

"Why, Roberts, your coat is covered with snow! Surely it cannot—"

"Ah, but it is, sir!" he interrupts; "and I'm not sure we won't have a heavy fall. Shall I stir the fire, sir?"

"Yes, Roberts; though I never go near it, I confess it makes a room look cheerful."

Well, I must give my readers just a few reasonable hints which may or may not be useful to all.

#### THE THOUGHTLESS GIRL.

I know a good many of the species. She may read my papers, or if they are read to her, the words go into her head by one little pink-shell ear and out at the other. She takes life precious easy, and never objects to how much anybody puts herself about to make her comfortable. She loves dress, though, and would soon fade and die if she hadn't a looking-glass to nod and smile into fifty times a day. She wouldn't think or dream of getting up betimes in winter, and even now that the year is on the turn she comes dawdling down to breakfast after having been called by her sisters and brothers and mother five times at least. This thoughtless girl is lively enough at night, however; in fact you might call her more of a moth than a butterfly.

Well, I'm sorry for her, because though she cannot waken soon of a morning, she will awaken all too soon to the stern realities of life. But I don't really hanker after girl-readers of this sort.

#### THE THOUGHTFUL LASSIE.

Yes, she is more to my taste. She may not be quite so good-looking as her somewhat careless, not to say lazy, sister; but she is simple, unaffected and straightforward, and there is a considerable probability that she will be the first to be married. I tell you what it is, girls: a great many men have a dislike to either wooing or marrying a very pretty girl. You see, she has the fatal gift of beauty, and a man looks upon her as somewhat insincere. She needs a deal of flattery because she has always been used to it, and may have had a half-score lovers before he met her. Then again, a girl who needs flattery is usually a bit of a flirt, and who can tell whether or not that flirting is certain to end with the bonds (or bondage) of matrimony?

Your thoughtful girl, although fond enough of walking in the sweet sunshine with a lady companion, fond of talking, and fond of games, has always a reserve fund of common-sense about her, and not being selfish, is an excellent housekeeper, not being ashamed to help her mother in many a way that serves to make life less of a burden to her.

The one girl may sing with the poet Gay—

"Life is a jest, and all things show it;  
I thought so once, but now I know it."

But the other will tell you that—

"Life is real, life is earnest,  
And the grave is not its goal!"

#### THE GIRL'S OWN BATH.

I have told my readers what this means, but it is many years ago, and a good story is worth repeating. Besides, we are constantly having new subscribers.

Now this is just the very best season in which to start the matutinal tub. There is an old and ignorant idea, which among country people is still extant, to the effect that you must not go into cold water when the skin is hot and probably perspiring. Now the very reverse has been proved. And in Turkish baths they pour cold water over one when the body is beaded over with sweat, and you should never take a cold bath when the body is chilled, nor after a restless and semi-sleepless night, because you will not have sufficient reaction.

Again, if fatigued, whether hot or cold, you must not take a cold bath.

But here is my advice, and it has benefited

thousands, judging from the number of letters I get almost every week. Have an ordinary sitz or flat bath, and the biggest sort of sponge you can obtain. Into this put a bucketful of water the night before. Then next morning place some hot water in the washing-stand basin, and with a piece of Sun-light soap and flannel quickly wash all the body over. Now step immediately into the bath and use the big sponge about half a dozen times. I wish you to remember that you need not remain in the cold water even half a minute. Towelling comes next, and this is most excellent exercise in itself. A few minutes of the dumb-bells when half dressed will complete your victory over the bogey "cold." You will want to sing all the day, and gradually the rose-tint will return to your cheek, the sparkle to your eyes, and the carmine to those lips that erst were pale and dry.

#### WHAT ABOUT CLOTHING?

Oh, you must not change yet awhile, and if at all delicate, or whether or not for that matter, you should really wear all-wool under-clothing.

Here is a hint, however, worth remembering. If going for long walks or rides on the bike, dress rather loosely, and do not wear so much clothing. If hot never stand nor wait about. You are never to

#### SPURT UP HILLS.

Doing so stretches the heart, and its walls get thin, especially the right side thereof. There is no cure, but by doing so you will most assuredly bring on yourself headaches, breathlessness, fulness of the head, and very many other terribly painful symptoms, which all too often are the forerunners of an early death. I speak advisedly when I say that not ninety per cent. of record-making men would pass for Government appointments owing to the fact of their having disorganised hearts. Cycling has been not only a pastime but a study of mine for well-nigh thirty years. I am right to warn you therefore.

#### ABOUT DRESS.

The birds have all resumed their summer attire, and why should not you dress attractively? I myself, like many, if not all, men, delight to see a well-dressed woman, be she young or not quite so young. "What did she wear?—what had she on?" are questions sometimes put to me by one of my little daughters, when I say that I had to stop for some time in the street and talk to a charming woman and charmingly dressed, whom for the life of me I could not name. "What had she on?" I reply. "Why, a hat, of course, and a frock of some sort, but I cannot describe it further than to say it became her."

A girl should take time to dress—neatly. But she ought not to keep her brother waiting and fidgeting about, lighting cigarette after cigarette and tossing them only half-smoked among the shrubbery. I like a girl to have something odd or different from what other people wear about her. So long as she does not wear birds' skins! That is vulgar and fearsome. But don't be like the mob. Have a taste of your own, and you'll be attractive. If I enter a shop to buy neckties, the young man is sure to twirl one round his fingers and say, "This style is very much in vogue now, sir!" "Is it," I answer; "then please show me some ties that are not in vogue."

#### I'M NOT QUITE ALONE.

No, there are other men just like me. List, oh, list to the chant of the following writer, and I could sing a good bass to his lay about charming women.

"That superabundant brains and surpassing beauty may but seldom be combined; yet it does not follow that all women of good sense and sharp intellect are necessarily plain. That

bright thoughts enliven the most ordinary face until the reflection of the mind shining out in all its radiance makes one forget that the features are not pure Grecian, and leads us to believe that such a woman is in reality a great beauty. That the vivacious creature of varying moods and quaint fancies is the one to charm. A man forgets all the type of beauty she may or may not possess, so interested does he become in the pleasing study of a mind that renders her face ever winning, irresistible, and pleasing, because, like the surface of a lake, there comes a change with every varying emotion. That the attractive woman should cultivate the mind, for a grace of soul and education of spirit count for more than limpid eyes, a rosebud mouth, and a dimpled chin. That she should be ever teachable, for there is not one iota of loveliness in the man or woman who thinks he or she knows it all."

#### SHOULD GIRLS BE JOYFUL?

Why not girls as well as boys? Only they must be far less forward, and a girl who is too impulsive and impetuous in her talk should put a guard on her tongue. Such girls are looked upon as frivolous, and repel men. They would be more cautious if they could hear some things that men say about them when together smoking their whiffs. I hate to hear any girl run down. I like the sex almost as much as I do dogs.

By the way, many girls who have visited my caravan, and who knew the beautiful St. Bernard, Lassie, will sympathise with me when I tell them she is dead. I can say with Byron—

"My heart lies buried in my poor dog's grave."

Well, to resume, let girls enjoy all life's pleasures now, for alas! sorrow and sadness come all too soon. But in all modesty mind. The girl who is boisterous or half hysterical or too ready to laugh at anything anyone says in the drawing-room or tennis-lawn is not fit to be in society. A hospital would suit her better, and that hospital should be on the top of Ben Nevis, where she would have the benefit of quiet and calmness, and any amount of fresh air.

#### "LANGUIDITY" IN GIRLS.

I guess the word "languidity" is coined by myself. *N'importe*. Well, a girl of this sort can never be any use when married. Lolling on a sofa and reading the last new novel won't do six months after your nuptial day, and don't you forget it.

#### A REAL GIRL.

Beauty isn't going to fight the battle of life for you, though it may help. If you want to be a real girl, don't ape the "new women," but study your health in all you do. Take the life-giving, bracing bath early in the morning. Lying in bed bleaches you and attenuates your muscles. Dress easy. Hornets and wasps are going out of fashion. Paint, or play your fiddle or piano. It will amuse you and while away many a weary hour, though not one girl in a thousand can play well. Keep your temper whatever happens. Never let your feelings cause you to talk too much or too glibly.

Don't worry, and you'll be strong in time if not so already. Do not let your thoughts dwell on a possible married future. Have some aim or object in life. Study all physical outdoor exercises, but don't try to be as strong as your brother. Finally, pray to and trust in God. There are many things you cannot understand, nor can I, but I just try to hold fast.

If I can get one girl out of a hundred to take the advice I give in this paper, I shall have done a little good.