



THE HOLIDAY.
HOW TO MAKE THE BEST
OF IT.

By MEDICUS.

DIFFIDENCE isn't a virtue, and it certainly isn't a vice; it is something that we rather like to see in a young girl, and can just pity and forgive in a boy; and yet—would you believe it?—it is the feeling uppermost in my mind at the present moment. And if you will listen to me I will endeavour to explain to you how it happened to come there. I looked into our Editor's room a little while ago. It was early in the day, but he was busy, as usual; he was flanked on both sides by piles of letters and flowers, and a load of manuscript lay before him, so that I could only get a kind of bird's-eye view of him.

"How do you do?" I said. "I hope I see you in good health."

"Are there two *p*'s in apartment?" was the Editor's reply, not deigning to lift his head, but scribbling away as if writing for his life.

"No," I said, "only one *p*. Good morning; I must be off."

"Wait a moment," said our Editor. "I want you."

Now the fact is, I didn't want to be wanted. I had my dust clothes on. I presume I looked quite gay. I was bound for a long drive. However, there was nothing for it but to wait, so I sat down on a pile of old papers, and hung my white hat on a file. After the lapse of five long minutes he looked up.

"What are you going to give us for this month, Medicus mine?" he said. "You must write your article *now*."

"This is beautiful weather," I replied, "and everybody is out."

"Duty first," said our Editor; "duty first, doctor. Now what is it going to be? The eyes of two hundred thousand young girls are on you; and *there* is paper and *here* is a pen."

"What would you say," I said, "to an article on the circulation of the blood?"

"Circulation of the blood, indeed!" said our Editor, scornfully. "Who do you think would read it? Our girls can feel their blood circulating, they don't need to be told of it.

No, tell us something practical. Be useful if you can't be lively."

I cast only one longing, lingering glance at my white hat on the file, took up my pen and commenced, merely remarking to the Editor, "I don't mind losing a holiday for the sake of our girls."

So now, my fair young readers, having sacrificed my own holiday for your sakes, I trust you will let me give you some hints which, if taken and adopted, will assuredly tend to make your holiday all the more agreeable to you.

And here is where the diffidence comes in. Your boxes are all packed, your flyman is at the gate—he has come fifteen minutes before his time, as flymen often do—and you are all bustle and excitement, and I, your Medicus, touch you gently on the shoulder. No wonder I am diffident for daring to address you at such a supreme moment. Well, then, don't read my article just yet; fold THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER carefully up, and slip it in under the rug-

bands along with "Bradshaw," and after you have spent your first day and your second day in the cool green country, or by the sad sea wave, take it up and read it.

And now the question I wish to ask you is this—What did you come to the seaside, or what did you come to the country, to do? Your answer rises readily enough to your lips or thoughts. You came to enjoy yourself. That is precisely what I should wish you to do; but while doing so I should like you to lay up a store of health and good spirits that will last you all the year round until summer comes again. If you can do that you can say with truth that you really have made the best of your holiday. I know there are many readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER who have never an ache and never a care, for whom the sun seems always to shine, and whose pathway in life is strewn with flowers; but there are many, many others who, young though they may be, have already a heavy burden to bear, who have to toil late and early, whose backs must often ache, whose heads must often throb, and who oftentimes must feel the true meaning of those little words, "sad and weary." To such as these a short holiday is an incalculable boon; it is such as these that I wish to address. The whole has no need of a physician; only they who are sick. Perhaps you have of late noticed that you have been looking paler than usual, or blanched, or weary, that you go about your daily avocations with less heart, that pain in the loins or head often keeps you company, that your sleep at night is less sound than it used to be, that you do not feel so fresh in the morning as you ought to do, and that you would fain rest another little hour. It may even be that your heart palpitates at times, and that you are nervous or suffer from a slight hacking cough.

I am only mentioning the symptoms likely to be induced by overwork, by long hours, or by labour conducted indoors in stuffy rooms or shops, or, what is as bad almost as anything, going too often upstairs in tall houses. But however they may have been brought on, your short holiday in the country, or by the sea, is likely to remove them, if you try to enjoy it in a rational way, and take regularly the few simple medicines I am going to prescribe for you.

First, then, it is to be hoped that you have left home well supplied with proper under-clothing. I do not care much how or in what style you dress, but it is my duty to say, that thousands of people every year fall victims to serious illnesses which could easily have been kept at bay by the expenditure of a little common sense in the matter of clothing. Here is the mistake they make: they say to themselves "The warm weather has come now, and we must lay aside our thick clothing." But in this country we have no surety of summer lasting for any two consecutive days; in fact, summer comes and goes, and a delicate girl who wishes to make the most of her holiday will dress each day, according to the temperature and appearance of the weather. Thin flannels should be always worn by her, especially if at the seaside, and on some days thick garments will be necessary. Again, some change of raiment should be made towards nightfall. Hundreds of people catch cold through the feet. Well, granting that you *must*, for fashion's sake, wear thin boots or shoes during the day, you ought assuredly to exchange them in the evening for stouter ones.

The evening is often the most delicious time to be abroad. The older doctors used to preach against what they were pleased to call the evil effects of night air. This is all nonsense. Walk by the moonlight if you wish to; stroll on the beach when the stars are out; you cannot have too much fresh air, morning,

noon, or night, but pray have stout boots on, sensible stockings, and a shawl or plaid around your shoulders.

If you don't rise early during your holiday, you cannot expect to get much benefit from it. And you cannot rise early unless you have gone early to bed. Early rising should be commenced the night before. That is an Irish bull I grant you, but there is a deal of truth in it nevertheless. Do not, if you can possibly avoid it, go to in-door parties or concerts during your holiday. Out-door games, on the other hand, such as lawn tennis, are likely to do you a great deal of good.

If you are up soon after six and down by seven o'clock, you will be able to sniff the sweet morning air and take sufficient exercise before breakfast to engender a healthy appetite. Of course, you will not have forgotten the morning bath, and you will have used the soap and ultimately the rough towel, as if you were not afraid of either of them.

By the seaside you will enjoy the bracing air, and nothing that I know of has such power to restore tone to the muscles and nerves and reinvigorate the health generally. Down in the country the air is not so bracing, but you will have quiet and shade; and there is something else which you may have, and certainly should not neglect having. I mean milk. Drunk warm as it comes from the cow I hardly think its good effects can be too much extolled; it is better than any medicine you could use. It should be taken early in the morning, at noon, and again in the evening.

Now, a word about exercise. It is to be presumed that during your holiday your time will be very much at your own disposal. Well, every hour of it should be spent, if possible, in the open air, and you must take all the exercise you can without fatigue. I do not care much what kind of exercise you take; it may be walking, riding, driving, rowing, or playing games of any sort; but let it be pleasurable. Exercise is not work any more than work is exercise. The time spent in work often goes wearily and slowly enough by; that spent in the exercise which is really doing one good should fly away—in other words, the mind should be wholly engrossed, wholly interested. You may take a book, and walk for miles on miles; I do not say that this will not do you good, you will be breathing the pure air, and to a certain extent exercising your muscles. But if instead of the book you take with you a pleasant companion, and engage all the way in easy, pleasant conversation, or rather chit-chat, your walk will do you a hundredfold more good. You must not force exercise beyond a certain extent; you must not let laziness prevent your beginning it, but approaching fatigue should warn you to take rest, if only for a few minutes, else not only the muscles, but the nerves themselves will suffer. It is a sign that exercise is doing you good if you can take more on the second or third day, than you could on the first. I have just three words more to say about exercise; the first is this. Take it with regularity—that is, at the same hours every day; secondly, let the clothes you wear while taking it be warm and comfortable, but neither thick nor heavy, unless, indeed you are very stout and wish to reduce your weight; and, thirdly, let me advise you never to take exercise immediately after you have got up from the table. On the other hand, a good half-hour should always elapse between the time of taking exercise and that of sitting down to partake of a meal.

Let me warn my young readers against the baneful effects of hurry and excitement. Do everything leisurely; if you do not you will not have half the pleasure in your holiday, nor

will it do you anything like the same amount of good.

If a girl in delicate health, or who had suffered from over-work, were to consult me as to whether she ought to go for her holiday to the country or the seaside, I should say "by all means choose the latter." For there, you see, you can enjoy the great blessing of a course of bathing. I have already had a paper on bathing, and if you are bound for the seaside, you cannot do better than re-read it and act on the advice therein given. I think in that article that, among other things, I advised the reader to let the bathing hour be about two, or even three hours, after breakfast; unless, indeed, she were strong enough to go into the sea before breakfast; to walk leisurely to the beach, so as not to be overheated or chilly; to wear a bathing-cap to preserve the hair; to first wet the face and neck, and, immediately after to plunge at once under the first wave; not to stop too long in the water; to use rough towels, to dress leisurely, and then to eat a morsel of lunch biscuit, and take a short walk.

While doing the best you can to enjoy your brief holiday, do not let the weather interfere with your exercise in the open air. You cannot very well play lawn tennis in wet weather, but you can walk, and you can dress to defy the rain. An umbrella and a light cloth waterproof—not, mind you, an india-rubber one—will enable you to do this.

Do not, I pray you, be afraid of the sunshine. You cannot have too much of it. What if it does make you a trifle brown, it will purify the blood that circulates in your veins, it will calm and tranquillise the mind, and restore the roses to your cheeks that erst were so pale. I do sincerely believe that most girls would be far better in health if they would make a point of always leaving their parasols at home.

And now, in conclusion, I have a word about medicine to say. A tonic of some kind will do you a deal of good while taking your holiday, and that which I am going to recommend is a simple one, but in a large number of cases very effectual. At the same time it is but right to tell you, that it does most good to girls who complain of the symptoms I have already mentioned; in other words, pale, weakly girls. The medicine is the citrate of iron and quinine in a granular effervescent form. Mix a teaspoonful in a tumbler of pure spring water, and take this three times a day. To increase its efficacy, I advise the use of the extract of malt, with or after the food. It is a tonic in which I have the greatest faith, and I have known it do much good when cod liver oil had either failed in its action, or could not be conveniently retained on the stomach.

There is one thing which no one is too young to learn, and that is the simple fact that a little cooling medicine should be taken about once a week while using tonics.

Tonics, after all, are only helps to health, and I repeat that health during a holiday is to be sought for in the sunshine and in the water, and in the breezes that blow through the balmy woods, across the mountain's brow, or over the great and glorious ocean itself.

