"LIAS."

BY KATE MILNER RABB.

"When did I fust think of it? Well now I can tell you to a day. 'Twas ten year ago last spring I was taken with an uncommon bad spell of rheumatiz; doctor's stuff didn't seem to do me any kind of good. My pocketbook was getting emptier and emptier and the rheumatiz was worse, if anything. I sat by the fireplace a heap, them days, and havin' nobody to talk to, sis being mostly busy, I thought a good deal, and it come to me all of a sudden, 'Lias, try roots and yarbs. The good Lord put 'em here for a purpose. Most of 'em haven't any I can see, 'less it is to heal. Mother was powerful inclined to it, so I reckon I come by it natural. I don't take undue credit to myself. There's one thing I can say, and that's more than most of the doctors can say of their nasty stuff, I've tried it all on myself and when I found it helped me I give it to others."

The farmer looked down from the high seat of his wagon upon Elias Bennet who stood resting one foot upon the hub of the front wheel. His brown jeans clothes were rudely made. He wore no hat and the south wind blew his white hair about his simple and not altogether homely face. Among the country people Elias passed for one not over shrewd, but honest and "powerful knowin' when it comes to roots and yarbs."

The farmer idly chewed a straw as he looked down on Elias. "Well, you might as well bring me a bottle. Nancy said I needn't come home without it."

Elias turned toward the low log house set in the wide fields, and presently returned with a large, yellow-labeled bottle. He limped slightly and bent his head as though always in search of his favorite herbs.

"Well, I declare, 'Lias, if you ain't decided on a name at last!" The farmer slowly turned the bottle to follow the letters on the encircling label: "Elias Bennet's Botanic Blood Builder."

"Just the other day, yours is the second bottle I have sold with the label."

"Does make it look more business like," said the farmer. Same old price, or have you concluded to raise on us?"

"Same price; and where else air you goin' to find such medicine for the money?"

"Sure enough," replied the other, as he searched through his pockets for the money. "I ain't grumblin'. Good day, 'Lias."

It was only after many months experimenting upon himself that Elias had hit upon a compound that he fondly fancied a cure-all. A scoffer might have pointed out his crippled limbs as a poor recommendation; but none such existed among Elias's acquaintances, and he was persuaded to devote his time to the manufacture and sale of his compound.

The name troubled him most. He had great scorn for "patent medicines," but their names had a peculiar fascination for him as he read the glaring advertisements in the papers, or, on his weekly visits to the town, eyed the signs painted in conspicuous places. Three black E's on a yellow sign, setting forth the merits of Eller's Electric Elixir, called forth his unwilling admiration. It was this last sign which finally suggested to him his great name, and he wrote it again and again in his cramped hand for fear he might forget it before he could carry it to the printer. When the beatiful yellow labels came home he was overjoyed as a child, and sat up half the night pasting them on the bottles ranged upon a shelf in the little room.

The fame of Elias's remedy spread throughout the country, and many from the town drove out to his log house to purchase a bottle. The name had, indeed, a singular attraction. Saturdays the farmers' wagons stood before his gate, and he was always ready to chat with them, explaining in his simple, garrulous way how he came to think of it, and all its virtues. His innocent pride gave no offence: rather, his faith communicated itself to them.

One spring a new disease struck the county. It came, they said, from frosty Russia, and having once landed, swept westward rapidly. Young and old were alike affected, and the doctors were puzzled. The people of Osgood county were opposed to paying doctors' bills unless it was absolutely necessary. Elias's Blood Builder was much less expensive; and as to its merit, they knew all about that, for hadn't they tried it?

In consequence the road to 'Lias's cottage was much traveled at this season, and his heap of quarters was growing into so many dollars that he hoped to realize his desire to make a small deposit in the bank. To rise to such dignity was enough for him.

Elias spent the day gathering roots to dry for the next year, and at night brewed his medicine in an old kettle. The shelves were lined with bottles, but it kept his old sister and himself busy to wrap them up and carry them out to callers.

Still the strange disease lingered in Osgood county, and scarcely a family was free from it. The older members of the family, when attacked, succumbed almost immediately. The younger ones had a hard fight and recovery was slow. The death list was unusually long; the faces of the people grew graver.

Elias's old sister, Jane, noticed that the calls for B.B.B. became fewer; her brother, ransacking the forests and brewing his herbs, was so busy and so filled with enthusiasm that he had not observed it. But one morning, when arranging his last brewing upon the shelves he found them all filled, he grew suddenly thoughtful and remained in the house until noon, pasting on labels and listening for some ringing "Hello, 'Lias!" to call him forth.

No summons came, and after dinner he gathered up his basket and knife and set off for the neighboring pasture. His sister looked after him a few moments, then turned away with a sigh and began to gather up the dishes.

A knock at the door aroused her. A tall, grim faced woman with squarely tied bonnet strings and coarse cloak, stood in the doorway.

"Good day, Mis' Totten; come in, won't you?" Jane's gentle old voice quavered persuasively.

Mrs. Totten's lips came together with a snap. She shook her head. "Is Elias here?"

"No, he ain't here, so come in, won't you?" Jane's voice was pleading.

"Where is he?"

"He's just gone over in the far pasture. If you want a bottle of the—" Jane's voice failed her as she noted Mis' Totten's lips.

"No, I don't; I wan't 'Lias Bennet. The far field, you say?" She gathered up her skirts and struck of through the high grass in the direction indicated. Jane stood, dish-cloth in hand, looking after her helplessly.

"'Lias Bennet!" 'Lias was kneeling in the moist clay, pulling at a refractory root when he heard his name called. He rose stiffly and with difficulty; his overalls were stained with yellow clay; his crumpled hat was pushed back from his eyes. His face, a little thoughtful, its usual look of innocent pride sobered a little, brightened at the sight of Mrs. Totten.

"Why, Mis' Totten; how are you? Glad to see you. And how's Em'ly?"

The woman's face was purple. "Em'ly's dead," she gasped. "She died day before yesterday, and I come here a purpose to tell you o' your work. The doctor says, and all the neighbors say, 'at ef she had a been taken in hand right at the start she'd a got well, but like a fool I give he. that poison stuff o' yours and killed her Poor Em'ly! the prop of my house!" She burst into tears, and turning quickly, tramped away over the clayey field.

Late in the evening Elias came home, and drawing off his muddy overalls sat down in the chimney corner. His basket was empty.

Soon after Jane came in, hung up her sun-bonnet, smoothed down her gray hair and took her rocking-chair near the fire. She looked inquiringly at her brother who sat as though he did not see her. Finally she ventured a word.

"'Lias, what was Mis' Totten a wantin' with you this afternoon?"

He stirred. "Mis' Totten? She came to tell me Em'ly's dead." He paused uneasily, then added with an evident struggle. "She 'lowed it was my medicine that killed her."

Jane shuddered. "I've just been over to Mandy Green's. She promised me some of her 'east, and I want to set sponge to-night. And they told me, 'Lias, that Nancy Jones is dead, too."

When she ventured to look up a little later she saw her brother's face visibly shrunken and altered. The look of innocent pride and self-confidence was gone, and no other had taken its place. It was a mask of flesh and blood, with empty eyes through which no spirit shone, "Oh, don't, 'Lias, don't," she cried nervously. "Don't look like that; don't look like that no more."

Elias heard not. He sat long in the same position, his chin upon his breast. She watched his face eagerly, and finally saw a new expression come over it; it settled into stronger lines; his eyes flashed. It was a look of resolve, sacrifice.

"I'm a goin' to give it up," he said.

"Oh, 'Lias, 'Lias," she groaned. "What'll we live on? What'll we do?"

"I'll give it up."

She leaned forward, her thin old face, her tearful eyes, her withered hands appealing to him. "'Lias, 'Lias, don't! Can't you keep on, anyway? What's the difference! They'll forget. Half of 'em won't ever know."

"The difference!" She read it in his altered looks. He made her understand by gesture that he would be alone, and she crept off, weeping and trembling, into her own room. Through the crack in the door she could watch Elias.

He sat by the fire a little longer; then she heard him limp into the little room and presently return with a package. She recognized the highly prized yellow labels and the basket of herbs.

She gave a great sob and covered her face with her hands.

Presently the pungent odor of burning herbs filled the room. —[Worthington's Magazine.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

A Buffalo Girl Very Nearly Buried Alive —She Was in a Trance.

A Buffalo despatch says:—One of the most fashionable families in the city has narrowly escaped having a terrible tragedy enacted in their house, and by their innocent instigation. Before daylight Coroner Ransom was aroused by a telephone call from this house. The order was imperative that he come at once and remove a corpse before the neighbors were stirring. The coroner hastily summoned Rodney, the official undertaker, and went directly to the place. He was ushered in by the lady of the house who was on the verge of hysteria and nervously told him that one of the servants

HAD DIED SUDDENLY

during the night. The coroner was shown upstairs. There lay the pale and rigid figure of a comely, well-formed young woman. The body lay on its back, the hands peacefully folded on the bosom. The coroner pronounced it a natural death, from superficial examination, and ordered the remains removed to the morgue to await autopsy. The undertaker's first assistant, with easy familiarly born of frequent handling of the dead, grabbed an arm to draw the body toward him, when he felt an unmistakable jerk. He called for Dr. Ransom. The coroner made a closer examination, but could discern no pulse. "She's dead, all right enough," said he. "I tell you she's alive, said the assistant, putting his ear to her heart. The coroner stooped and applied his ear, and could barely hear the pulsations. A mirror was placed over the girl's lips, and it showed a trace of vapour. "This isn't our case," said the coroner; "you take the coffin out and I'll

CALL A DOCTOR

for the living, I'm only the doctor for the dead." Upon the arrival of another physician the girl was resuscitated. Here was a case of suspended animation or trance, he determined. To-day she is as well as ever. Very fortunate, indeed, it is for her that the undertaker's assistant was more sceptical than the coroner, or she might have been frozen to death on a slab at the morgue.

Strange Effect of a Storm

A curious phenomenon was observed at Stewartstown, Ireland, after the severe storm of a few weeks ago. The north and west fronts of houses and trees and shrubbery adjoining were thickly coated with salt. Drumcairne at any point is forty miles from the sea, so that the storm has been cyclonic in character. In Garvagh, which is twelve miles from the sea, hedgerows, windows, etc., were coated with a saline deposit.

KEROSENE AND DIPHTHERIA.

A French Country Doctor's Important Discovery.

An observant and thoughtful country doctor in the French village of Neuville-Champ-d'Oisel, about nine miles from Rouen, made an important experiment last year, which may be the means of saving many lives if the knowledge of it comes to be widely diffused. A violent epidemic of diphtheria broke out, and the deaths were appallingly numerous, and his usual methods of treatment seemed a total failure. He remembered that the English had used petroleum (kerosene) as an antispasmodic and antiseptic; he determined to try it on a little girl of seven, whom he had given up. He explained to the parents that, with their consent, he would make the experiment, and at once commenced swabbing the throat with the petroleum. He was careful not to have an excess of the material on his brush, as a drop too much might strangle in the disabled condition of the throat and larynx. To his astonishment there was improvement after the first application. He continued the treatment, and the child recovered; and he used it successfully with many patients afterward—in fact, he lost none. Lest this should turn out to be too good news to be true, and it should prove that he had been treating false diphtheria, that so closely resembles the true that only examination by an expert bacteriologist can determine its nature, he sent portions of the expectorated membrane to Prof. Francois Hue, bacteriologist of the Medical College of Rouen, and he reported the presence of numerous bacilli of diphtheria. A little observation and reflection shows how the potent fluid works. The membrane of diphtheria consists of a most rapidly growing plant, and among the other elements in petroleum is a large amount of sulphur, which is very inimical to diphtheria membrane. Did you ever notice how effectually a handful of common salt will kill a tuft of thrifty grass? There is something in this oil that is just as fatal to the diphtheria plant; at once the membrane seems to become thinner; i. e., it ceases to grow, and that which had attained its growth breaks down under the softening of the oil, and eventually disappears. We are thus careful in detailing the use of this remedy; for supposing a person, far from a physician, is attacked with some malady which produces "white spots on the throat." Whether it is false or true diphtheria, it is an undesirable inmate, very liable to be communicated to others, for it only wants a throat slightly inflamed by a cold to find its natural habitat—a soil where it will thrive.

Of course, the family has kerosene in the house, and a bit of soft old cloth wrapped round a smooth stick will answer in the absence of the camel's hair brush always recommended in regulation articles on applications to surface; the point is to get that oil on to the white spots and kill the bacterial growth then and there. The operation should be repeated once an hour, the careful ridding of the brush or swab of any superfluous drop prevents choking. The person applying the oil should be careful to stand a little to one side, so that should the patient cough, no particle of expectorated matter can get into the eye of the operator as the human eye is of all culture-mediums for diphtheria bacilli, about the most favorable, and to-day many a lost eye is owing to want of carefulness. It is said that the patients experience relief at the first application, and if the brush is properly shaken before using the only discomfort they experience is a disagreeable taste for a short time. We wish that a warning word might make people more vigilant as to the care to keep the disease confined to the original sufferer. Among the ignorant and poor, where comforts are scarce, it is spread by using the same handkerchief for the sick and well, allowing them all to drink from the same glass, etc. A German family of five children were swept off within nine days by simple carelessness in these matters; but let every one remember that diphtheria is the most easily communicated of all the "catching" diseases, that its period of incubation is very short, not generally more than two days, and that it fastens on the very gates of life—the breathing apparatus—and that it is one of the most rapidly progressive maladies. No harm can come of the use of the remedy above recommended, and its prompt use may save some precious life.—[N.Y. Independent.

A New Artificial Stone

A new artificial stone is being made in Germany, which appears to be immeasurably superior to many kindred material now in use. The sand employed, which is well dried and screened before being used, contains from 2 to 3 per cent. of clay It is placed with a certain proportion of ground lime into an iron drum with diagonal ledges in the interior, which is then closed and slowly revolved by steam so as to secure a thorough incorporation of the materials with each other. The mixture is taken out and conveyed to an apparatus consisting of a frame of wrought iron, having a flat bed, on which molds are built up. When the frame is filled covers are placed on the molds, everything is wedged up tightly and the frame and moulds are run on rails into a cylinder. When the cylinder is closed water and steam are admitted. The water must cover the molds, and the steam is admitted at a pressure of 45 pounds or 60 pounds per square inch. The steam forces the water between the crevices of the molds, the water slakes the lime, causing it to expand in volume, and as the molds resist the outward expansion the lime is forced into the sand and cements it into stone. The steam pressure is kept up for three days. The frame is then withdrawn, and twelve hours are allowed for cooling before the taking to pieces of the molds and the removal of the stone. Different tints can be given to the stone by mixing a small percentage of colored earth with the lime and sand in the cylinder. In some experiments made in England to ascertain the the resistance to thrusting stress of six 6-inch cubes of this artificial sandstone, three of them, of buff color, crushed at an average of 196.6 tons per square foot, while the remaining three, which were gray, went at 177.6 tons per square foot.

The total annual value of the world's minerals is estimated at $1,000,000,000.

The Italians own 4,420,000 houses of which 650,000 are in the cities and 3,770,000 are in the country.

THE WAGES OF SIN.

Awful End of a Fast Young Man.

A Denver, Col., despatch says:—Edward Handfield lies in the morgue here to-night with a record as a burglar, forger, a possible murderer. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Handfield, whose country place is in Ashfield, Mass., are wealthy. Their son, after completing his studies in an academy, was sent to Montreal to prepare for the priesthood by a course in the Jesuit College there. Young Handfield led a wild life in Montreal. He came to Denver in June and ended up a round of dissipation. He dressed well whenever he received money from home, and his parents were lavish in their remittances. While awaiting these he would do anything to make a living. He fell in love with Miss Ida Hall, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Mary Hall, who keeps a restaurant. Young Handfield lavished considerable money upon the 18-year old daughter of the Hall family when he had means. Handfield became impatient to get married, but he was made to understand that it required money. He forged the name of a friend upon a card, by which means he was permitted to enter the friend's room, where he stole two overcoats. The same night he captured a bicycle and a large bundle of woman's clothing, by which he intended to procure funds for his wedding. This was late in October, and a few days afterwards he was arrested and put in jail. Then Mrs. Hall forbade the girl having anything more to do with Handfield.

On being released on bail he claimed to have repented and desired to marry at once. The girl meanwhile had trouble with her family to get their consent to the proposed marriage. Her family did not credit Handfield's repentance. To-day Mrs. Hall said that the young girl must decide finally between the young man and her home, whereupon the girl decided to go to him and declare the engagement off. At 1.30 o'clock she entered his apartments on Welton street and told her story. The young man was reading a novel when she entered. He heard her story, then dashed for a revolver, and before the girl could call for help or escape he had shot her in the breast and had sent another ball into his brain. He fell upon the bed, dying almost instantly. The girl crawled to the door and gave the alarm before she fell. She was taken to the hospital, where an examination showed no possibility of her recovery.

Mysterious Electricity.

To the metaphysical mind on the one hand and to the confident ignoramus on the other, the mysterious nature of electricity offers a fruitful subject of speculation. To the latter especially it seems a reproach that the true nature of electricity has not long before been made manifest, and he is always prepared to dash off an explanation with much more confidence than Newton proposed his theory of gravitation. It seems inexplicable to the public at large that the mystery surrounding electricity is not dispelled. It does not seem to occur to those who are impatient to have the great question, "What is electricity?" answered, that we are in just as dense ignorance as to the mechanism of other phenomena. Gravitation, light, heat and chemical action are in the same category of scientific mysteries and have had centuries more of thought bestowed on them than has been devoted to the new agent. While it now seems that we may be on the threshold of one of the greatest discoveries of the human mind, yet it is possible, and even probable, that the knowledge of man may never be permitted to extend to the entire solution of the problem, for it is the very problem of the universe itself.

Assuming what seems to be unquestioned that electricity, electrical action, or whatever we may call it, has its seat in the atoms or molecules of matter, or of the hypothetical matter, ether, we are brought face to face with the same conditions that confront the cosmical philosopher. As the latter can never hope to have his material vision extend to the bounds of the universe, neither can the molecular physicist hope to materially appreciate the ultimate elements of matter. Lord Kelvin has shown that if a drop of water were magnified to the size of the earth, one of its constituent molecules would only be magnified to approximately the size of a cricket ball. Bearing this in mind, the immensity of the problem which is so often flippantly referred to is evident. True we may demonstrate the exact relation between electricity and magnetism, and may satisfactorily connect these with other phenomena, and even obtain a working hypothesis that will answer all scientific needs, but the ultimte solution may forever evade the human mind. Whatever we do learn, however, will not be through the speculations of metaphysicians or the guesses of tyros, but through the physical investigations of Hertzes and Teslas. While as a mental training metaphysical speculation may have its use, the absolute lack of additions to our real knowledge during the many centuries from Plato to Bacon, when metaphysics held full sway, is conclusive that nothing can be expected from this direction, and merely speculative theories in regard to the nature of electricity deserve as little consideration as is now given to the metaphysical vagaries of the schoolmen of the Middle Ages.

Going Him One Better.

Watts—"I had supposed that excessively high heels were out of fashion, but I saw a woman on the street to-day with heels on her shoes fully two inches high."

Potts—"That's nothing. I saw a woman on the stage last night the heels of whose hoes were higher than her head.

"I much prefer oil lamps to gas or electricity," said Miss Emerson, of Boston, to Miss Warren, of New York. "Dear me! Why?" "Because oil is refined."

Teacher—"What have the various expeditions to the North Pole accomplished?" Dull Boy—"Made g'ography lessons harder."

Speaker Peel, of the British House of Commons, has complimented President Dupuy, of the French Chamber of Deputies, on the coolness and courage with which he conducted himself on the occasion of the bomb explosion. The tribute is deserved, and coming from one who himself possesses more than usual coolness and courage, will doubtless be duly appreciated. The manner in which M. Dupuy and his colleagues acted in face of a danger, the extent of which they could not judge, was an exhibition of courage that would have done credit to trained soldiers on the battle field.

THE WEEK'S NEWS

CANADIAN.

A Mrs. Brady has died in Ottawa, aged 102 years.

The Ottawa winter carnival project has been abandoned.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers will be held in Montreal on January 9th.

Mr. Andrew F. Gault, of Montreal, has been appointed director of the Bank of Montreal, in place of the late Sir John C. Abbott.

Lady Aberdeen held her first At Home at Rideau Hall Wednesday evening. There were about two hundred and fifty guests.

The Governor-General has signed the order-in-Council appointing Mr. Justice John James Fraser, of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, to the Lieutenant-Governorship of that province.

Mr. John Jamieson, of Whitchurch, who cut his throat with a razor last Saturday, died from the wound.

A meeting was held on Tuesday night in Collingwood, when a scheme for an air line railway from Collingwood to Toronto was formulated by Mr. Frank Moberly, C. E. Resolutions were adopted endorsing the project.

A man named T. Ellsworth Sheppard has been committed at Edmonton, N.W.T., for trial for the murder of a woman named May Buchanan, who is said to have been born at Ottawa, and whose maiden name was Mary or Amelia May. It is said a sister of hers now lives in Ottawa and that her mother lives in Buffalo.

A most deliberate case of suicide took place a few days ago at a settlement on the south branch of the Saskatchewan river, a few miles from Prince Albert. A man named James Brinkman, cut a hole, 11 by 22 inches, through a foot or more of ice in the river, and then squeezed himself through into the river. Brinkman was in comfortable circumstances and esteemed by all.

BRITISH.

The King of Siam is seriously ill.

General elections will take place in Cape Colony, South Africa, next month.

The monster Canadian cheese is said to have been in bad condition when it reached England.

Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria is suffering from an attack of influenza.

There were one hundred and sixty-four deaths from influenza in London last week, and the disease is increasing.

The directors of the Bank of England have decided to grant a liberal annuity to the family of Mr. May, formerly chief cashier of the bank.

A severe storm again prevailed on the southern coast of England, and much damage to shipping reported.

Referring to the debate in the Commons on the navy question, the Times accuses Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt of miserable gambling with the dearest interests of the nation.

The wedding of Grand Duke Ernst of Hesse to Princess Victoria, eldest daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Cobourg Gotha (the Duke of Edinburgh), will take place in Berlin during the last week in April.

UNITED STATES.

The U.S. cruiser San Francisco has been ordered to proceed to Rio Janeiro without delay.

The annual report of the United States Secretary of the Treasury, which was transmitted to Congress, shows a deficit of twenty-eight million dollars.

St. John's cathedral (Roman Catholic), at Syracuse, N.Y., was robbed Monday night of altar plate, jewels and furniture valued at $1,800.

The Union Pacific Coal Co. in Wyoming has sustained a loss of three-quarters of a million dollars in the destruction by fire of mine No. 7 at Almy, and 400 miners are thrown out of employment.

The complete police returns from the Chicago mayoralty election on Tuesday show that Mr. John P. Hopkins was elected over Mr. Swift by a plurality of more than eleven hundred votes.

Three policemen of Ironwood, Mich., have been arrested charged with stealing flour and sugar from the public relief stores, which they were supposed to guard.

The President has sent to the Senate the nomination of Wayne McVeagh, of Pennsylvania, to be ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States to Italy.

GENERAL.

The disaffection in Poland is increasing, the quartering of soldiers among the inhabitants being especially resented.

Advices from Rio Janeiro show that President Peixoto of Brazil has further postponed the parliamentary elections until May.

It is again rumoured that Emperor William will pardon the two French spies who were sentenced a few days ago at Leipsic to long periods of confinement in a fortress.

Baron Alberto Blanc, the new Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, has received a letter from the Porte congratulating him upon his appointment to office, and expressing the hope that he will show in his official position the same sympathy with Turkey that he exhibited when he was Secretary of the Italian Embassy at Constantinople.

Deciding Ownership of a Letter.

A chemist at Preston, England, having written a letter and mailed it, wished to get it back. With that object in view he went to the postoffice, specified the address on the envelope, pretended that he desired to send it by special delivery, at the same time putting down sixpence as the payment of the extra postage. Deceived by these proceedings the clerk hunted up and produced the letter to have the sixpenny stamp stuck on. No sooner did the writer get hold of the letter than he tore it into fragments, asserting that he had a right to do what he liked with his own property.

His view of the matter was not accepted either by the postoffice department or by the courts, and he was fined $25 for his offense.

Doctor (at the night bell)—"Well? Caller—"No; sick."