PREVENTING "CATCHING" DISEASES

This is the season of the year when school children are most liable to communicable or "catching" diseases. In October the common cold is most common. In November the sore throat rate is the highest. The great influenza wave of 1918 swept over the country in October. Diphtheria is apt to be at its worst in September, within three weeks after the beginning of school. It is reasonably certain to reach its peak during one of the months between Labor Day and New Year's Day.

The Portals of Disease.

Measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, and pneumonia started mounting a month ago, but they will not reach their peaks until later in the winter or early spring. All of these diseases enter the body through the mouth and nose. Probably as many of the cases get their infections through the mouth as through the other parts.

Diseases are often spread by means of objects which children habitually put in their mouths. Among the articles are toys, pencils, penholders, spoons, forks, cups, the mouth parts of playground, street and school fountains, whistles, the mouthpieces of band instruments, tooth brushes and fingers.

Hands.

A child will not infrequently chew a pencil that is still moist from the mouth of another child. Hands are worse offenders than any other objects mentioned because they have so many opportunities for infection and they travel so frequently to the mouth. Fortunately, the custom is for a person to put his hand to his mouth only. There is no telling what would happen if somebody made it fashionable to put one's fingers in another man's mouth.

A Possible Spreader.

One observer studied the possibility of the toothbrush as a spreader of diphtheria in a boarding school. The boys kept their toothbrushes on a rack. They had a common bowl of carbolic tooth powder, into which they all dipped. It was assumed that the carbolic in the powder made it safe to use it in common. The study showed that the disease could be spread by toothbrushes. Furthermore, it was found that it is not easy to sterilize a toothbrush with chemicals once it has become infected. The only safe plan seems to be to train children to keep such objects as penholders and pencils out of their mouths. The mouth secretion of a child who seems to be in good health may cause infection. The child may be about to be sick or he may be a carrier. The safe rule is to put nothing in the mouth except clean eating utensils, clean food and clean drink.

A USE FOR KEEPSAKES

The problem of the appropriate gift on such occasions as commencement days, anniversaries, weddings and birthdays is not so simple as it used to be. It is often hard to judge what a bride and groom who are to begin life in a distant city will need or what will best suit a young man who is leaving the university for his profession. Gifts of money, of course, are sure to be useful; but it is hard to give the desirable touch of sentiment to cold cash. Still the money gift solves the problem of transportation when the new home is far away and the problem of selection when there is no clue to what is wanted. It risks no awkwardness of duplicate sugar spoons, it saves hours of search for just the right thing, and it permits the recipient the plelasure of leisurely choice. Therefore there are times when money is the best gift to make.

A litle keepsake of no value, treasured for associations, if sent with the money gift, lends a touch of originality and interest, especially if a note of explanation or a jingle goes with it. One mother, who wished to give her son's fiancee a check to cover the cost of a journey across the continent to visit the new family-in-law, enclosed the cheque in a tiny shoe that had been her son's first bootee, kept among her valuables all the intervening years. With it she sent a rime telling about the shoe and the purpose of the gift, ending with these lines:

"We want you here to visit us,
And so this little shoe
Goes trotting over hill and dale
To take my gift to you."

Another mother gave her daughter a cheque with which to buy her table linen and silver and dinner set, and on the envelope she tied with silver ribbon a souvenir that she had kept for thirty years—the wishbone of the first chicken she baked in her own oven in her newly-married days. The wishbone, she assured her daughter in a little note, would bring her good luck every time she used the linen and the china.

A daughter, living far from home, wanted to give her mother a silver teapot that she knew she had been wishing for. So, on the mother's silver wedding day, there arrived from the daughter a carefully-packed wooden box. Inside the box, safely wrapped in folds of tissue paper and excelsior, was the tiny doll's teapot that the mother had given her little girl many years ago. And inside the spout of the teapot was a draft for enough money for the silver tea things that the mother had wanted so long.

Sometimes a keepsake without any romantic associations is amusing. Once upon a time a little girl heard of the old-time custom of saving the first curls of a little boy and giving them years later to his wife. The little girl was thrilled at the idea, for she adored her little brother; but he had straight hair. Still, she resolved that she would find something belonging to him that she could keep for his future bride. Everything belonging to her brother appeared to be in use, except one tiny pair of outgrown knickerbockers that her mother had made for him of soft blue French serge. They were far smaller than any pair ever found in any store. She took them and rid them in her treasure box, safe from moths. Twenty-five years went by, and the brother became engaged to her own best friend. Perfectly delighted, the older sister rushed to the attic, found the little knickerbockers, pressed them neatly, put some five-dollar-gold-pieces into the tiny pocket and wrote a jingle to her friend, the future bride. The jingle contained too many lines to be quoted in full, but these are the concluding stanzas:

"And so these little pantaloons
I stole that very day,
And with his future bride in mind
I hid them safe away.

"The little pocket then contained
Some pennies bright and clean.
You'll find them in the very place
Where they so long have been.

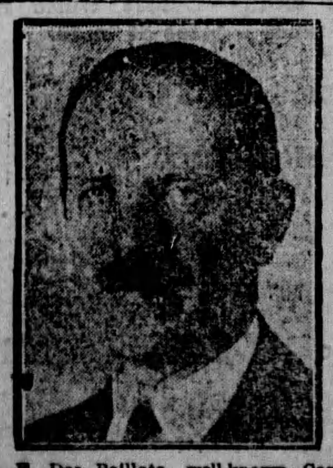
"I took them out and shined them up,
And now perhaps they'll do
To buy some things that you may need
When Geoffrey marries you."

For a gift to be deposited in a new baby's bank book one proud grandfather sent a cheque that stuck out of the chimney of the little red toy bank into which his son, the baby's father, had dropped the first penny that he ever earned.

And a young college senior at commencement time found in her post-office box a package from her grandmother, containing a quaint daguerreotype of the grandmother at the age of twenty-two, in hoop skirts and Paisley shawl—and folded inside the frame a loving letter enclosing twenty-two dollars "from the girl in the picture."

Gifts of that kind are such fun to show to your friends! The little keepsake that came with the money makes a perfect transformation. "See what my aunt sent me for my sixteenth birthday—a cheque pinned like a sail to the mast of the little toy boat my father whittled for her when she was sixteen and he was ten!" Or, "Just see this clever wedding present—the bride's first toy piano, with a note from her father telling her to exchange it for a larger one after she gets to her new home."

Gifts of money presented in that way never seem sordid or impersonal. The recipient can convert them in imagination into just what he wants. No two families keep the same sort of souvenirs, but nearly every house contains some long-treasured toy or trinket that would add to the value of a gift of money. Some little thing can always be found to glorify a gold piece or a greenback—and the giver need never worry lest his gift be a "white elephant" to the rscipient.



E. Des Baillets, well-known Canadian sporting figure, has been appointed winter sports director at the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec. He has had wide experience in this connection in Switzerland.

Stage Coach to Revive London-to-Brighton Trip

Old coaching days will be brought back again—although with a difference—when a stage coach for passengers will run between London and Brighton, a distance of fifty miles each way, on alternate days. It is reckoned that, leaving London at 10 am., the coach should arrive at Brighton by 5 p.m., so that it can hardly be considered a rival of the railroad or the charabanc, since the train now does the trip in an hour and the carabanc in just over two hours.

There are to be seven teams of coach horses for the journey, and changes are to be made at the same places en route as used to be made in the days of old. One Jim Selby covered himself with glory, and incidentally won a wager, in the time of the early Georges, by driving his coach from London to Brighton and back in seven hours and fifty minutes.

—AND THE WORST IS YET TO COME

The Age of Fourscore.

In a letter which The Star has received from a reader who is in his eightieth year, there occurs this interesting passage:

"What puzzles me is where have gone the eighty years! They have slipped away almost unnoticed, and I suddenly awaken to a realization of the fact that I have long since passed the allotted span of life, and even with this knowledge I do not feel like an old man who should lay aside interest in contemporaneous events. It really is wiser to lead an active, industrious life. It ensures against melancholy and idle repining, mental conditions that must impress health."

There is surely much wisdom in this opinion based on the experience and observation of a long and useful life. But even more ineresting than the expressed opinion is the wonder as to "where have gone the eighty years." The years of a man's life slip by almost unnoted; they steal by him so soft-footedly that his attention is not attracted. Others may see changes in him of which he is unaware. His hair may whiten, but so gently does Time use the brush, hat one does not feel it, and so imperceptible is the change that one's own eyes can scarcely detect it. And a man feels that he is himstelf; he feels as he expects to feel. If he does no run to catch a street car or a train, it is because he does not want to run. It is a matter of inclination. The question of his ability to run does not arise at all. He is wiser than he was and is in time for his train. He is more of a philosopher than he was, and knows that if one street car leaves without him, another will follow almost at once. It is not that he is old, but that experience to him has been instructive. He orders his comings and goings with a just and sensible precision which it would be well if others used.

An English physician has been making quite a stir by teaching that men do not become stooped because they are old, but become old because they scoop. It is so. A generation or two ago in Ontario, in villages and on the farm, men became old at a time of life when we would now call them middle-aged. No sooner was a man a grandfather than he retired to an arm-chair beside the fireplace, and spent the rest of his days talking of his rheumatism, his other ailments and the not always interesting recollections of his youth. His day's work was done, his evening had come, he resigned himself to it, and rested and rusted away.

It is not so now—it is certainly not so in the great indusrial, financial and businesst cenres of Ontario, where men in their seventies and eighties, and even in their nineties, are still active, influential and, as our correspondent says, keenly interested in contemporaneous events. — Toronto Star.

Warning!

We wish to draw attention to the matter of unpacking the piano during the months between November and April, when the temperature is liable to be below the freezing point, as, if certain precautions are not observed serious damage will follow.

The governing principle is that the instrument must be warmed gradually before being taken from the case and exposed to the warm interior air; or if this is impossible, then the three impervious wrappings must be left on and not removed for an instant until the instrument has been taken into a temperate room and left covered for at least 24 hours. The physical principle involved is that warm air carries a larger percentage of moisture than cold, which is being brought in contact with very cold surfaces immediaely gives up its moisture by condensation in the form of a thin film of water which covers everything, precisely as happens to one's spectacles when coming into the house out of a zero temperature. This surface moisture leaves a coat of rust over all metal parts with disastrous effect; but still more fatal to the highly polished surface of the hard varnish at this time undergoing a severe process of contraction and subsequent expansion. If this mater is carefully watched no trouble will result from shipping in cold weather, and the instrument will open up in as good shape as when it was packed. Observe principally that the more gradual and thorough the change from cold to warm before uncovering, the better.

So Well Trained.

The school teacher was very proud of the results of her labors during the past few weeks. Day after day she had trained her pupils in the intricacies of fire-drill, and at last they seemed perfect.

"Now," she said one day, "what would you do if I told you that the building was on fire?"

Like one voice came the answer of the hundred or more children assembled.

A few days later a lecturer visited the school. Said teacher, with a beaming smile on her face:

"Now, children, what would you do if I were to tell you that Dr. Wisehead was going to lecture here to-day?"

Everyone knew.

"We would rise promptly, put away our books, then quietly and without disorder file into the street," they replied in chorus.

Men are often visionaries. Women are always practical—Mr. Winston Churchill.

Zooligical Gardens on Anticosti Island

With the object of transforming little by little Anticosti Island, his domain, in the St. Lawrence, into huge zoological gardens, Senator Menier, chocolate king, has issued instructions to his representatives to take means of bringing two new specimens of animals to the famous island.

According to instructions he has transmitted, a party of men will leave early next spring for the northern lands to get some musk oxen, a variety of the buffalo, which is on the eve of being destroyed in the Arctic regions, due to the constant campaign conducted against them by the Eskimos.

Used for Food.

Plans are being made to bring fifty representatives of that dying race to the island, where they will be assured all the facilities of growing without any interference and under ideal conditions, according to experts, who claim that Antocosti is wonderfully located for such experiments. There is much similarity between the musk oxen and the buffalo and in both cases their destinies having been subject to the constant attack of the hunters, who had as an excuse that they were generally the only means they had of food. This is what is stated by the Eskimos, who are said to be slaughtering the animals because they are in need of food at certain periods of the year.

While this species will certainly prove interesting if the experiment is successful, Senator Menier has also decided to try and save another variety by purchasing some ponies, which are now living under unfavorable conditions on Isle aux Sables, the lost island in the Atlantic ocean.

are for Ponies.

These ponies have an interesting history which brings back souvenirs of over three hundred years ago. At that time an attempt was made by Monsieur De Monts to colonize Canada with some prisoners, who came from some French jail. His attempt was, fortunately, not successful, and the majority of the would-be settlers starved to death. However, horses which had been taken across by the expedition were able to look after themselves, but lost their original character until finally to-day they are of the size of ponies.

To try and improve that dyirg race Senator Menier is to make also an effort to get some of those ponies transferred to the island and to meet that end has entered into pourparlers with the proper parties. As a result next spring a number of the ponies will be transferred to the large island.

Edibles from the Ocean.

Along the Great Barrier reef of Australia is found that curious sea beast, the dugong, and those who have tasted its flesh declare there is nothing else to compare with it for delicacy. Dugong flesh is now being cured like pork and exported to this country.

As population increases man turns more and more to the almost untapped resources of the sea for food. The amount of fish taken to-day is three times greater than it was fifty years ago. The war taught us that the flesh of whales is good food. The tongue and the tail of the finner-whale are as good as beef.

The octopus, formerly used only for bait, is, when properly cooked, a real delicacy. In Italy it is a favorite dish.

Many seaweeds can be used either for salad or jelly-making, or can be cooked as vegetables. That called laver is popular in South Wales, and you may see it in the markets in Bath and Bristol.

Beche-de-mer is now being imported from the trepang or sea cucumber, of fro mthe trepang or sea cucumber, of which there are no fewer than thirty-six different varieties.

Trepang is dried for export, and must be soaked before cooking. It is boiled for eight hours in salted water and then allowed to cool, after which it can be eaten either with meat gravy or made into soup.

Good Advice.

"Hey, Joe! At last I've figured out a sure way to beat the races."

"Gee! Howzatt?"

"Don't bet!"

Religion a Higher Form of Gossip.

The mere existence of newspapers is a proof of the religious instinct among men, that passionate interest in one another which implies that we are all gossips together. Gossips are people who have only one relative in common, but that relative the highest possible; namely, God.—Christopher Morley in 'Religio Journalistici."

Plenty to Choose From.

Mrs. Gabb (reading)—"Do you know, my dear, that there are approximately 700,000 words in the English language?"

Mr. Gabb—"Only 700,000! Why, I thought you used a great deal more than that every day!"

The Housekeeper.

The frugal snail, with forecast of repose,
Carries his house with him where'er he goes,
Peeps out, and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile again.

Touch but a tip of him, a horn—'tis well—
He curls up in his sanctuary shell,
He's his own landlord, his own tenant stay,
Long as he will, he dreads no quarter day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites
And feasts himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.

He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattels; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches, wheresoe'er he roam—
Knock when you will, he's sure to be at home.

—Charles Lamb.

The Left Hand in Piano-Playing.

Are you a one-handed pianist A famous teacher of the piano has recently said that there are very few two-handed pianists to-day, although most people use both hands in playing the piano. The reason for this is that very few people can make music with each hand alone and separately, but must have both hands working in the same way. There is music written for the left hand alone, and if people would practice this more than they do, if they would learn to play tunes with their left hands in such a way as to be pleasant to listen to, they would be better players altogether. People who have studied the subject will give twenty reasons why left-hand music is useful, but the principal one is that only by using it can we get both hands to work equally well. And only by getting both hands to work equally well can we get both sides of the brain to work equally well, for each hand is worked by a different side of the brain, the right by the left and the left by the right.

"Mad" Men.

The recent observance in France of the centenary of Henri Fabre, the great entomologist, recalls the fact that to the villagers of Serignan, where he spent twenty-five years of his life, he was known as "le fou" (the madman). A very similar doubt of the mental powers of other great men has been expressed by those about them who observed without understanding their habits of meditation. Darwin's gardener, when asked about the naturalist's health, replied, "Oh, my poor master has been very sadly. He moons about in the garden and I have seen him stand doing nothing before a flower for ten minutes at a time. If only he had something to do I really believe he would be better." An old laborer of the Dales, who used to encounter Wordsworth wandering along the roads "booing his pottery," believed him "quite daft" but subject to lucid intervals when he was sane enough to say "Good morning, John," just like other people.

Dean of Chester Tells Story in Fewest Words.

Many people, probably, are familiar with the story of the serial friction-writer who, being asked by his editor to conclude a certain story in the fewest possible words, owing to exigencies of space, wrote as follows:

The hero thereupon took his hat, his revolver, his departure, and, finally, his life.

This story ihas been capped by the Dean of Chester with an anecdote which illustrates strikingly the advantages of compression in speech.

A little friend of his had been asked to tell the story of Elisha, and her reply was: "Elisha had a bear and the children mocked him, and he said: 'If you mock me I will set my bear on you, and it will eat you up.' And they did, and he did, and it did."

This small lake was formed by the energetic work of a colony of beavers, a particularly fine bit of engineering in its location and construction. The opening in the trees is the boundary between Saskatchewan and Alberta.