FATE'S INSTRUMENTS.

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued).

"Poor little Lally!" said Mr. Pocklington. Then he sat and pondered. "It is an abstacle," he said at last.

"Ah!" said his wife.

"He must put himself right."

"Do you mean, prove what he says?"

"Well, at any rate, show he had good excuse for saying it."

"I think it's a little hard. But it's for you to decide."

Mr. Pocklington nodded.

"Then, that's settled," said Mrs. Pocklington. "It's a great comfort, Robert, to have a man who knows his mind on the premises."

"Be gentle with her," said he, and returned to the strike.

The other parties to the encounter over George's merits had by a natural impulse taken themselves to Neaera Witt's, with the hope of being thanked for their holy zeal. They were disappointed, for, on arriving at Albert Mansions, they were informed that Neaera, although returned from Liverpool, was not visible. "Mr. Neston has been waiting over an hour to see her, miss," said Neaera's highly respectable maid, "but she won't leave her room."

Gerald heard their voices, and came out.

"I can't think what's the matter," he said.

"Oh, I suppose the journey has knocked her up," suggested Isabel.

"Are you going to wait, Gerald?" asked Maud.

"Well, no. The fact is, she sent me a message to go away."

"Then come home with me," said Isabel, "and we will try to console you." Gerald would enjoy their tale quite as much as Neaera.

Low spirits are excusable in persons who are camping on an active volcano, and Neaera felt that this was very much her position. At any moment she might be blown into space, her pleasant dreams shattered, her champions put to shame, and herself driven forever from the only place in life she cared to occupy. Her abasement was pitiful, and her penitence, being born merely of defeat, offers no basis of edification. She had serious thoughts of running away; for she did not think she could face Gerald's wrath, or, worse still, his grief. He would cast her off, and society would cast her off, and those dreadful papers would turn their thunders against her. She might have consoled herself for banishment from society with Gerald's love, or, perhaps, for loss of his love with the triumphs of society; but she would lose both, and have not a soul in the whole world to speak to except that hateful Mrs. Bort. So she sat and dolefully mused, with the tailless cat, that gift of a friendly gaoler at Peckton prison, purring on the rug before her, unconsciously personifying an irrevocable past and future emptied of delight.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was fortunate that Mr. Blodwell was not very busy on Saturday morning, or he might have resented the choice of his chambers for a council, and not been mollified by being asked to take part in the deliberations. At eleven o'clock in the morning, Gerald Neston arrived, accompanied by Sidmouth Vane and Mr. Lionel Fitzderham who was, in the first place, Mrs. Pocklington's brother, and, in the second place, chairman of the committee of the Themis Club.

"We have come, sir," said Gerald, "to ask you to use your influence with George. His conduct is past endurance."

"Anything new?" asked Mr. Blodwell.

"No, that's just it. This is Saturday. I'm to be married on Monday week; and George does nothing."

"What do you want him to do?"

"Why, to acknowledge himself wrong, as he can't prove himself right."

Mr. Blodwell looked at Fitzderham.

"Yes," said the latter. "It can't stay as it is. The lady must be cleared, if she can't be proved guilty. We arrived clearly at that conclusion."

"We?"

"The committee of the Themis."

"Oh, ah, yes. And you, Vane?"

"I concur," said Vane, briefly. "I've backed George up to now; but I agree he must do one thing or the other."

"Well, gentlemen, I suppose you're right. Only, if he won't?"

"Then we shall take action," said Fitzderham.

"So shall I," said Gerald.

Vane shrugged his shoulders.

Mr. Blodwell rang the bell.

"Is Mr. George in. Timms?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; just arrived."

"Ask him to step in to me, if he will. I don't see," he continued, "why you shouldn't settle it with him. I've nothing to do with it, thank God."

George entered. He was surprised to see the deputation, but addressed himself exclusively to Blodwell.

"Here I am, sir. What is it?"

"These gentlemen," said Mr. Blodwell, "think that the time has come for you to withdraw your allegations or to prove them."

"You see, George," said Vane, "it's not fair to leave Mrs. Witt under this indefinite stigma."

"Far from it," said Fitzderham.

George stood with his back against the mantel-piece. "I quite agree," he said. "Let's see—to-day's Saturday. When is the wedding, if there——?"

"Monday week," said Blodwell, hastily, fearing an explosion from Gerald.

"Very well. On Tuesday——"

"A telegram for you, sir," said Timms, entering.

"Excuse me," said George.

He opened and read his telegram. It ran, "Yes—my handwriting. Will return by next post registered—Horne, Bournemouth."

"On Monday," continued George, "at five o'clock in the afternoon, I will prove all I said, or withdraw it."

Gerald looked uneasy, but he tried to think, or at least to appear to think, that George's delay was only to make his surrender less abrupt.

"Very well! Shall we meet here?"

"No," said Gerald. "Mrs. Witt ought to be present."

"Is that desirable?" asked George.

"Of course it is."

"As you please. I should say not. But ask her, and be guided by her wishes."

"Well, then, at Lord Tottlebury's?" suggested Vane.

"By all means," said George. And, with a slight nod, he left the room.

"I hope," said Mr. Blodwell, "that you have done well in forcing matters to an extremity."

"Couldn't help it," said Vane, briefly.

And the council broke up.

Mrs. Horne's telegram made George's position complete. It was impossible for Neaera to struggle against such evidence, and his triumph was assured from the moment when he produced the original document and contrasted it with Neaera's doctored copy. Besides, Mrs. Bort was in the background, if necessary; and although an impulse of pity had led him to shield Neaera at Liverpool, he was in no way debarred by that from summoning Mrs. Bort to his assistance if he wanted her. The Neston honor was safe, an imposter exposed, and the cause of morality, respectability, truth, and decency powerfully forwarded. Above all, George himself was enabled to rout his enemies, to bring a blush to the unblushing cheek of the Bull's-eye, and to meet his friends without feeling that perhaps they were ashamed to be seen talking to him.

The delights of the last-mentioned prospect were so great, that George could not make up his mind to postpone them, and, in the afternoon, he set out to call on the Pocklingtons. There could be no harm in giving them at least a hint of the altered state of his fortunes, due, as it was in reality, to Mrs. Pocklington's kindness in presenting him to Lord Mapledurham. It would certainly be very pleasant to prove to the Pocklingtons, especially to Laura Pocklington, that they had been justified in standing by him, and that he was entitled, not to the good-natured tolerance accorded to honesty, but to the admiration due to success.

In matters of love, at least, George Neston cannot be presented as an ideal hero. Heroes unite the discordant attributes of violence and constancy; George had displayed neither. Isabel Bourne had satisfied his judgment without stirring his blood. When she presumed to be so ill-advised as to side against him, he resigned, without a pang, a prospect that had become almost a habit. Easily and insensibly the pretty image of Laura Pocklington had filled the vacant space. As he wended his way to Mrs. Pocklington's, he smiled to think that a month or two ago he had looked forward to a life spent with Isabel Bourne with acquiescence, though not, it is true, with rapture. Had the rapture existed before, it is sad to think that perhaps the smile would have been broader now; for love, when born in trepidation and nursed in joy, is often buried without lamentation and remembered with amusement—kindly, even tender amusement, but still amusement. An easy-going fancy like George's for Isabel cannot claim even the tribute of a tear behind the smile—a tear which, by its presence, causes yet another smile. George was not even grateful to Isabel for a pleasant dream and a gentle awakening. She was gone; and, what is more, she ought never to have come; and there was an end of it.

George, having buried Isabel, rang the bell with a composed mind. He might ask Laura Pocklington to marry him to-day, or he might not. He would be guided by circumstances in that matter; but at any rate he would ask her, and that soon; for she was the only girl he could ever be happy with, and, if he dawdled, his chance might be gone. Of course there was a crowd of suitors at her feet, and, although George had no unduly modest view of his own claims, he felt it behoved him to be up and doing. It is true that the crowd of suitors was not very much in evidence, but who could doubt its existence without questioning the sanity and eyesight of mankind?

As it so chanced, however, George did not see Laura. He saw Mrs. Pocklington, and that lady at once led the conversation to the insistent topic of Neaera Witt. George could not help letting fall a hint of his approaching victory.

"Poor woman!" said Mrs. Pocklington. "But, for your sake, I'm very glad."

"Yes, it gets me out of an awkward position."

"Just what my husband said. He thought that you were absolutely bound to prove what you said, or at least to give a good excuse for it."

"Absolutely bound?"

"Well, I mean if you were to keep your place in society."

"And in your house?"

"Oh, he did not go so far as that. Everybody comes to my house."

"Yes; but, Mrs. Pocklington, I don't want to come in the capacity of 'everybody.'"

"Then, I think he did mean that you must do what I say, before you went on coming in any other capacity."

George looked at Mrs. Pocklington. Mrs. Pocklington smiled diplomatically.

"Is Miss Pocklington out?" asked George.

"Yes," said Mrs. Pocklington, "she is out."

"Not back soon?" asked George, smiling in his turn.

"Not yet."

"Not until——?"

"Well, Mr. Neston, I dare say you know what I mean."

"I think so. Fortunately, there is no difficulty. Shall we say Tuesday?"

"When Tuesday comes, we will see if we say Tuesday."

"And, otherwise. I am——?"

"Otherwise, my dear George, you have no one to persuade except——"

"Ah, that is the most difficult task of all."

"I don't know anything about that. Only I hope you believe what you say. Young men are so conceited nowadays."

"When Miss Pocklington comes in, you will tell her how sorry I was not to see her?"

"Ceratinly."

"And that I look forward to Tuesday?"

"No; I shall say nothing about that. You are not out of the wood yet."

"Oh yes, I am."

But Mrs. Pocklington stood firm; and George departed, feeling that the last possibility of mercy for Neaera Witt had vanished. There is a limit to unselfishness; nay, what place is there for pity when public duty and private interest unite in demanding just severity?

CHAPTER XIV.

Neaera Witt had one last card to play. Alas, how great the stake, and how slight the chance! Still she would play it. If it failed, she would only drink a little deeper of humiliation, and be trampled a little more contemptuously under foot. What did that matter?

"You will not condemn a woman unheard," she wrote, with a touch of melodrama. "I expect you here on Sunday evening at nine. You cannot be so hard as not to come."

George had written that he would come, but that his determination was unchangeable. "I must come, as you ask me," he said: "but it is useless—worse than useless." Still he would come.

Bill Sykes likes to be tried in a black coat, and draggle-tailed Sal smooths her tangled locks before she enters the dock. Who can doubt, though it be not recorded, that the burghers of Calais, cruelly restricted to their skirts, donned their finest linen to face King Edward and his Queen, or that the Inquisitors were privileged to behold many a robe born to triumph on a different stage? And so Neaera Witt adorned herself to meet George Neston with subtle simplicity. Her own ill-chastened taste, fed upon popular engravings, hankered after black velvet, plainly made in clinging folds; but she fancied that the motive would be too obvious for an eye so ruse as George's, and reluctantly surrendered her picture of a second Queen of Scots. White would be better; white could cling as well as black, and would so mingle suggestions of remorse and innocence that surely he could not be hard-hearted enough to draw the distinction. A knot of flowers, destined to be plucked to pieces by agitated hands—so much conventional emotion she could not deny herself,—a dress cut low, and open sleeves made to fall back when the white arms were up-stretched for pity, —all this should make a combined assault on George's higher nature and on his lower. Neaera thought that, if only she had been granted time and money to dress properly, she might never have seen the inside of Peckton gaol, at all; for even lawyers are human, or, if that be disputed, let us say not superhuman.

George came in with all the awkwardness of an Englishman who hates a scene and feels himself a fool for his awkwardness. Neaera motioned him to a chair, and they sat silent for a moment.

"You sent for me, Mrs. Witt?"

"Yes," said Neaera, looking at the fire. Then, with a sudden turn of her eyes upon him, she added, "It was only—to thank you."

"I'm afraid you have little enough to thank me for."

"Yes; your kindness at Liverpool."

"Oh, it seemed the best way out. I hope you pardon the liberty I took?"

"And for an earlier kindness of yours."

"I really—"

"Yes, yes. When they gave me that money you sent, I cried. I could not cry in prison, but I cried then. It was the first time any one had ever been kind to me."

George was embarrassed. He had an uneasy feeling that the sentiment was trite; but, then, many of the saddest things are the tritest.

"It is good of you," he said, stumbling in his words, "to remember it, in face of all I have done against you."

"You pitied me then."

"With all my heart."

"How did I do it? How did I? I wish I had starved; and seen my father starve first!"

George wondered whether it was food that the late Mr. Gale so urgently needed.

"But I did it. I was a thief; and once a thief always a thief." And Neaera smiled a sad smile.

"You must not suppose," he said, as he had once before, "that I do not make allowances."

"Allowances?" she cried, starting up. "Allowances—always allowances! never pity! never mercy! never forgetfulness!"

"You did not ask for mercy," said George.

"No, I didn't. I know what you mean—I lied."

"Yes, you lied, if you choose that word. You garbled documents, and, when the truth was told, you called it slander."

Neaera had sunk back in her seat again. "Yes," she moaned. "I couldn't let it all go—I couldn't!"

"You yourself have made pity impossible."

"Oh no, not impossible! I loved him so, and he—he was so trustful."

"The more reason for not deceiving him," said George, grimly.

"What is it, after all?" she exclaimed, changing her tone. "What is it, I say?"

"Well, if you ask me, Mrs. Witt, it's an awkward record."

"An awkward record! Yes, but for a man in love?"

"That's Gerald's look-out. He can do as he pleases."

"What, after you have put me to open shame? And for what? Because I loved my father most, and loved my—the man who loved me—most!" George shook his head.

"If you were in love—in love, I say with a girl—yes, if you were in love with me, would this thing stop you?" And she stood before him proudly and scornfully.

George looked at her. "I don't think it would," he said.

"Then," she asked, advancing a step, and stretching out her clasped hands, "why ask more for another than for yourself?"

"Gerald will be the head of the family, to begin with—"

"The family?"

"Certainly; the Neston family."

"Who are they? Are they famous? I never heard of them till the other day."

"I daresay not; we moved in rather different circles."

"Do you take pleasure in being brutal?"

"I take pleasure in nothing connected with this confounded affair," said George, impatiently.

"Then why not drop it?"

George shook his head.

"Too late," he said.

"It's mere selfishness. You are only thinking of what people will say of you."

"I have a right to consider that."

"It's mean—mean and heartless!"

George rose. "Really, it's no use going on with this," said he. And, making a slight bow, he turned towards the door.

"I didn't mean it—I didn't mean it," cried Neaera. "But I am out of my mind. Ah, have pity on me!" And she flung herself on the floor, right in his path.

George felt very absurd. He stood, his hat in one hand, his stick and gloves in the other, while Neaera clasped his legs below the knee, and, he feared, was about to bedew his boots with her tears.

"This is tragedy, I suppose," he thought. "How the devil am I to get away?"

"I have never had a chance," Neaera went on, "never. Ah, it is hard! And when at last——" Her voice choked, and George, to his horror, heard her sob.

He nervously shifted his feet about, as well as Neaera's eager clutches would allow him. How he wished he had not come!

"I cannot bear it!" she cried. "They will all write about me, and jeer at me; and Gerald will cast me off. Where shall I hide?—where shall I hide? What was it to you?"

Then she was silent, but George heard her stifled weeping. Her clasp relaxed, and she fell forward, with her face on the floor, in front of him. He did not seize his chance of escape.

(To be continued.)

The Microbiological Institute at Madrid has published statistics that show that only ten per cent. of diphtheria patients treated with serum died, whereas previously (from 1882 to 1891) the mortality had been 80 per cent.

PRACTICAL FARMING.

WINTER WHEAT AFTER POTATOES.

"Since wheat has become too low in price to make it profitable to summer fallow, farmers have sought to economize by growing some crop which can be got off in time to prepare the field for fall seeding," says an Eastern exchange. "On a large scale the small grains, oats and barley are most generally used as fallow crops. But they have the disadvantage of exhausting the soil of precisely the kind of plant food that the wheat plant requires. Besides, after harvest the ground is hard, and when plowed the grain stubble under the furrow makes the soil light, so that it dries out too quickly and does not make a good seed bed. This dryness of soil makes its mineral plant food insoluble, and as the available nitrogen in the soil has been used up by the grain crop, the wheat which follows can only make a weakly fall growth.

"From all these objections the potato crop as a fallow crop for wheat is wholly free. Potatoes are not exhaustive except to some extent of potash. The thorough cultivation they require develops in the soil a large amount of available nitrogen which the potato in its late growth is wholly unable to use. This is seen in the immense crop of weeds which starts just as soon as cultivation ceases. If no winter grain is sown after the potatoes, weeds use this fertility, not only without advantage to the farmer but to his injury. It makes one of the great advantages of sowing wheat on potato ground that the grain crop needs no nitrogenous manure. The bright green of the young wheat shoots shows plainly that the plant is supplied with plenty of nitrates. With a dressing of 150 to 200 pounds of commercial phosphate, a full wheat crop can be grown after potatoes.

"The potato crop in a heavy one to handle, and the difficulty of harvesting the crop and clearing the land in a large acreage in time for sowing wheat is one reason why wheat is not more generally preceded by potatoes. Yet the cost of harvesting the potato crop is not increased, but rather lessened, by doing the work early. Potato diggers are now so improved that a large field can be speedily cleared of this crop. When the potatoes are off the field and the potato stalks raked up and burned, little more preparation is needed for sowing. A light cultivation of the surface for three or four inches is better for the wheat crop than plowing deeper would be. It is also better for the clover seeding next spring, keeping at the surface the soil which has been enriched by the summer's cultivation. It has always been noted that the finest clover catches with winter wheat are got where the grain crop has been sown after potatoes.

"One of the advantages of succeeding potatoes with wheat is that it makes a shorter rotation and does away with the necessity for sowing spring grain, which is now every year so cheap that in the eastern states it is grown at a loss. If a winter grain crop follows that of spring grain it makes a four years' rotation, which is not less profitable but more exhaustive of fertility than a rotation in which clover or grass seeding comes every third year, and above all, with a highly cultivated crop in this rotation to keep the land free from weeds."

ABOUT POULTRY RAISING.

We often hear the question asked: "Is there any profit in poultry?" writes a farmer's daughter. I have always found it to be a profitable as well as a most pleasurable occupation. If you will allow me the room in your poultry colum, I will give my short experience in that line of business.

When but a small child, my greatest desire was to possess a flock of chickens, and to gratify my wish, my father bought me a few old hens, in the fall of '90. It is needless to say that when out of school I was kept very busy caring for my biddies. Since that time my flock has gradually increased until now I have the care of all our fowls.

Two years ago, thinking I would like to raise Leghorns, I procured six settings of eggs from thoroughbred fowls. I raised about twenty hens from them. During the first winter only about eight of them laid—and they lay in the field—dead. It took but a very short time to decide that they were not the kind of fowls wanted. But to give them a thorough trial, we kept them until spring, when they laid exceedingly well, and would have given better satisfaction had they not eaten two eggs for every one they deposited in the nest. Seeing it took two hens to keep one, we sold them and said mentally "good riddance."

Having given a number of breeds a thorough trial, we have decided to keep none but the Barred Plymouth Rock, believing them to be the best all-purpose farm fowl. If you wish a fowl for the table, a good, fat P. R. would satisfy the most fastidious, and for egg producers, none excel them. Last winter we kept a flock of 120 hens. During the three winter months we received $25.40 cash for our eggs, and considering the very low price received per dozen, we think it paid very well.

As my father is quite an extensive farmer, we raise all the grain we feed, and as the fowls have a large area of ground over which to roam, they can pick the most of their living in summer.

We use the old way of hatching and raising our chicks—the old sitting hen. Although it is a slower way than by the incubator and brooder, we think the chicks are more healthy when cared for by the mother. We are scarcely ever troubled with any kind of disease. The little red lice annoy us in the summer by getting in our houses. We shut our chickens out of the houses entirely, and as they are not disturbed by vermin I think they are better off in the pure out-of-door air.

I will give a simple and infallible cure for the gapes. When you see a chick gapping catch it and drop a few drops of lamp oil in its throat and windpipe. I have had old hens sick with what looked very much like diphtheria, and after applying a few doses of oil in this way, they have been entirely cured. We expect to keep about a hundred good fowls the coming winter, and judging the future by the past, we feel we shall be more than paid for our labor and attention. Taking it all in all, I consider it a very good occupation.

LOSS BY SLOW MILKING.

Dr. Babcock found in some experiments he tried regarding this matter that slow milking had a very decided effect in reducing the butter fat in milk, there being an average decline of over 11 per cent. in his trials as a result of slow milking, while also there was a decided diminution in the quantity, though in a prolonged trial with cows naturally going dry the differences tended to disappear. The total result over a season, however, is beneficial to the milk yield in the case of quick milking, not to speak of the saving of time. We do not know all about the secretion of the milk in the udder, but we are getting on that way.

THE DUELS OF FAME.

Facts and Incidents of European Combats.

Even in Germany the popularity of the duel is open to some doubt. Its existence is due not so much to a desire for combat as of fear of what people will say if there is no fight. There have been noted duellists who were always ready for a fray, and when they entered a drawing-room women quailed and hoped it would not be their husbands or lovers who would be so unlucky as to excite the ire of the men of blood.

During the occupation of Paris by the allies there were duels every day, the Frenchmen usually being the challengers and the victors, as they were very skilful with the small sword. Sometimes, however, they made a mistake as when they jeered at an English officer over losing his leg at Waterloo. The jeerer discovered that the loss of his leg did not interfere in the least with the Englishman's aim.

There have been exceptions to the mania for fighting at any price. An English captain, challenged by a Frenchman, had the choice of weapons and chose pistols. The Frenchman declared he would fight with nothing but the sword, and interested friends finally compromised on lances, a-horseback. The combat naturally attracted much attention. A great crowd witnessed the duel. One man received three ugly prods, but finally killed his antagonist.

No duellist could ever be made to smile over the famous story of the Englishman and Frenchman who were to fight a duel in a pitch-dark room. Not wishing to kill this man, the Englishman fired up the chimney when the word was given, and to his surprise brought down the Frenchman, who had hidden there. When this story is told in France it is always the Englishman who was up the chimney.

Fighting Fitzgerald was successful in eighteen duels before it was discovered that he always wore a coat of mail. For years his fame in society had rested on his invariable success as a duellist, and this discovery was his undoing. A certain major in fighting him objected when his sword snapped on a heart-thrust and demanded an investigation. He was afterwards hanged in Ireland for murdering a neighbor.

The most tragic duel in England was between Lord Byron, granduncle of the poet, and a kinsman. It was fought in a tavern room by the light of one tallow candle. Lord Byron was tried for murder, but got off on manslaughter, from the penalties of which he escaped because he was a peer of the realm. This safeguard of peers was done away with only during the present reign.

CHINESE DETECTIVES.

They Are Said to be the Shrewdest in the World.

Your true Frenchman thinks the Parisian detectives are best. Englishmen swear by Scotland Yard men. In Aemrica every great city regards with pride its local "sleuth hounds." A writer, after three years' residence in China, says he does not think either of the three countries are entitled to the credit given them. The Chinese beat them all.

They are at one time the most expert thieves, and at another the most skilled detectives in the world. A Chinaman can steal your watch while you are looking at it, and he can catch the man who stole it, if it happens to be some other man than himself, when a French detective could not.

The writer has seen evidences of detective ability among the Chinese which would startle even Lecocq. It is impossible for an evil-doer to long elude the Chinese detectives. They scent a crime and follow it to the last before civilized detectives would know of it.

The Chinese detective force is a secret body, and the best organized in the world. They have an eye upon every man, woman and child, foreign or native, in China, and in addition watch over each other.

Informers are encouraged, and collusion is impossible. The head of the Chinese police is not known, but there is one, and a very active one, too. It is reported that the present head was once an Ambassador to a European country, but really no one knows who he is. There are said to be over 60,000 men under him and his assistants who control the various districts.

BLOWN FROM A TRAIN.

"I do not suppose that once in a hundred times we ever learn the real cause of a railroad accident," said a man who is always well posted on such matters, "when any one of the principals concerned is killed. In individual cases, where a man is lost from a train, and his body is found later beside the track, suicide is the first thing suggested; but you can never tell. A peculiar accident happened to a friend of mine. He was traveling Eastward with some friends. He left them for a few moments to go to the smoking car. As he crossed from one car to the other—that was before the time of the vestibule trains—a strong wind that was blowing struck him and blew him to the ground. He was wearing a large circular coat, which acted as a balloon inflated with wind, and it was responsible for his being blown off the train, as well as for the fact that he landed on his feet unhurt. He walked some distance to the nearest station and telegraphed ahead to his friends that he was all right, and would come on by the next train. If he had been killed every one would have said 'suicide,' for the possibility of a man being blown from a train would seem to be an absurd idea."

HEALTH.

A PROPER DIET.

The nature and quantity of an appropriate diet must depend largely upon one's age, individual constitution, occupation, habits of life, and to some extent upon the climate in which one lives. An active child twelve or fifteen years old, who is growing fast and exercising freely, may require and assimilate as much food as a man past middle age.

In health, the appetite may be taken as a fair guide, and the child will seldom eat too much if he is taught to eat very slowly, and thoroughly to chew each mouthful.

Throughout the school years the growth of the body is continually going on, and, therefore, if a proper development is to be maintained, the food must be abundant and of a character to furnish new tissue and to yield in the form of heat and muscular activity.

The full adult weight is not usually attained before the twenty-fifth year, although in some instances it is reached earlier.

When the growth of the body and the development of the vital organs are completed, the use of food consists simply in maintaining the proper equilibrium of the tissues by replacing waste with new material, and in furnishing fuel for the development of force.

As men advance in life, become prosperous, and perhaps acquire more luxurious habits of living, they are apt to take less exercise and, at the same time, to be constantly tempted to indulge in food which is not needed and which is imperfectly consumed in the body.

On the other hand quite as much ill may result from eating too little as from overindulgence. In either case the difficulty is made serious by long continuance.

So great is the force of habit over the different organs of the body that the stomach and intestines will usually reject undigested the contents of an occasional excessive meal, whereas with habitual overeating they become accustomed to appropriating large quantities of food, which are absorbed, but which cannot be eliminated without severely taxing the organs of excretion.

Frequently the excess is stored up in the body and goes on accumulating until the system rebels, and a violent bilious attack, by vomiting and purging, brings relief.

It is no exaggeration to say that avoidable errors in diet are responsible for more than half the disease which embitters the middle and latter part of life.

MISTAKES ABOUT HEART DISEASE.

The changes which go to make up heart disease take place slowly, and go on for years without making themselves known to the victim; and in not a few cases death occurs suddenly from such disease without its existence having been suspected. On the other hand, there are persons who think they have heart disease, when the construction of that organ is perfectly healthy. They complain of bad feelings in the cardiac regions, palpitation, irregular breathing, etc., and such symptoms would naturally suggest disease. In these cases the trouble is purely nervous in character; that is the nerves which control the workings of the heart are somewhat deranged. And very generally this derangement is the result of dyspeptic trouble. Those who exhibit the signs described should turn their attention to the stomach and try and overcome them by careful attention to diet. The quantity of food taken should be no greater than health and strength demand, and only substances easily digestible should be eaten. In some people, even with fairly strong digestive powers, tea and coffee cause palpitation of the heart, hence their use is forbidden. Tobacco also gives rise to the same symptoms. Of course, this habit, and all others which tend to produce nerve weakness, should be discontinued. Where trouble with the heart is purely functional, the remedy lies with the victim, and by wise restraint a cure is generally effected. In fact, medical treatment is rarely needed, except it be to tone up the system.

CLEVER GEESE.

They Are Used in China to Take the Place of Watch Dogs.

China still uses two birds for special purposes, and shows no disposition to part with them. Duck breeding on a large scale is one of the industries of the riverine population. The owners live in houseboats, and every night the flocks of ducks are driven home into floating pens for safety. In place of dogs, the white Chinese goose, a domestic breed, not unlike an English goose, is kept as a watch near the duck pens. It is one of the most wide-awake and vociferous of birds, apparently never sleeping, and uttering its loud call when any person or animal approaches it. Mrs. Atkinson, when visiting the northern frontier of China found the mandarin in charge of the guard post "playing" with his watch goose as if it were a dog.

At Hampton Court, where a pair is kept, the gander mounts guard over all the ducks' nest on the side of the semi-circle canal, and if any one comes near the bank sounds its alarm incessantly.

AN ARMY OF STREET ARABS.

Dr. Barnado, the London worker among the street arabs, and his homes are described by Editor Stead in the current "Review of Reviews." "One day he brings 3,700 of his children from all his homes to the heart of the West End. It is a small army—a larger army than that with which Britain has won many of her most brilliant victories. Under his able direction they concentrate at the Albert Hall to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales, bringing with them a paraphernalia illustrative of all their enterprises, their works and their sports. With a skill the late Sir Augustus Harris could not have excelled, he puts his gigantic troop through a programme lasting nearly four hours, a programme that goes without a hitch, that keeps every one from the Prince to pressman, enthralled in unflagging interest, and that fascinates and delights every one, with one of the prettiest spectacles ever seen in London. And the troup, what is it? One and all they are children, some mere babies, but all, whether old or young, perishing fragments of shipwrecked humanity, snatched one by one from the maelstrom of our cities.