him before he had done too much mischief, but his friends advised him to
wait and catch the thief with a full basket, so he sat quietly a while longer.
At last George's patience gave out and the three of them rushed to the spot
and caught the thief just as he was picking the last of George's best peas.
To their great surprise the thief was a woman and George's wife Ellen.
George was furious and demanded to know why she was doing this and
making him a laughing stock in the eyes of his friends. Ellen said that
she wanted fresh vegetables for the children and was not going to buy them
at fancy prices when there were plenty in the garden. She added that she
did not see the good of saving them up for a show or letting them rot in
the garden. George now understood where all the delicious peas and beans
etc., had come from which he had been enjoying for so long. His friends
laughed and George and Ellen went home, George carrying the basket, and
the friends told the story all over the town.

In due course the Flower Show came off and in spite of Ellen's visits
George sent in a fine exhibit and gained several first prizes.

When distributing the prizes the Mayor told the story of Ellen's
nocturnal visits to her husband's plot and said he was glad that her 'Mother's
instinct had come before ambition, and he awarded her the special prize.

---

TROPICAL DISEASES

REPRINTED FROM THE CHINESE RECORDER.

Depression—

This complaint is very common in the Tropics. It may arise from
various causes—indigestion, overwork (although this is not the usual one),
teaching, singing to the natives, amateur attempts at goat farming or
gardening, or even house building. It is of a highly infectious nature, and
affects the eyes, spoils the power of vision, interferes with focusing and
perspective, is often accompanied by intellectual doubt, (in male patients)
a tendency towards whiskers and carpet slippers, and (in female patients)
droopy skirts and a sagging waist line. It is best treated by vigorous
exercise in the open air, the study of history and large doses of Punch.

Irritability—

A complaint very trying to those not infected. The causes are various
such as a native feast, late hours, excessive tea or coffee drinking, or home
truths from a colleague. The manifestations are a tendency to contradict
accepted opinions on everything, to 'take wrong' everything that is said or
done, or in some cases the assumption of an early-Christian-martyr air.
This complaint is non-professionally called "cankerness," or euphe-
mistically "nerves." Treatment, as advised by an eminent C.M.S. doctor, is
TROPICAL DISEASES

as follows: “If some one in your compound is irritable, give him some cathartic compound. If everyone is irritable and unreasonable, take some yourself.”

Diddling—

This is a disease that affects the patient’s work more than himself. It attacks the motor centres. An example may be given. The patient starts in a direct line from A to B. En route the whitewasher from C appears, desiring an immediate inspection of his work. A right-angled diversion is made in favour of C. Then the carpenter from D appears wishing to know the exact height a beam is to be, or, to speak more accurately (since no one ever wants to know anything exactly in the East) to be told whether what he has done will do.” Leaving D, the cook appears and directs the course to the water cistern at E; the tadpoles are now well grown frogs, the weather is dry, and would it not be well to have the cistern cleaned? Next, the dhobi is seized with a desire for soap, and more soap (a purely native disease, something akin to diabetes). When this has been administered, the study desk is reached once more. A glance reminds the patient that the important message to B has not been delivered. The remedy for this disease is perfect organisation based on a sound system. As the patient starts from A he carries in his pocket (if ‘she,’ in her hand) a large number of corks. These corks are carved into a number of fantastic shapes, something like the conversation lozenges of our youth. The shapes mean different sentences. For instance, to C would go: “Very nice indeed”; to D “That height will do beautifully”; to E “An excellent idea.” One which is generally reserved to the end, and is only given out on very busy days translates into “Go and boil your head.” The cork treatment is highly recommended by the medical faculty.

Heroes—

This is most commonly met with in young people, but may manifest itself at any age, or in persons of either sex. The symptoms are a desire to postpone furloughs, abjure holidays, neglect personal appearance, and cultivate a general air of overwork. The catchword of this stage is “I have not time for such things”; the more emphatic the “I” the more acute the attack. It is frequently accompanied by “cantankerousness.” It occurs as a rule in patients of an opposite disposition to those attacked by the Diddling symptoms, but it may result after convalescence from this disease. As this disease is frequently associated with low feeding, it is best treated with the egg cure. Any number up to ten are given daily. The cure may be considered complete when the patient has said “Cock-a-doodle-do” three or four times instead of the ordinary native language. In addition, wholesome intercourse with one’sfellows and a little mild badinage is recommended.

These are some of the minor complaints met in the tropics. They can be best guarded against by keeping up the tone of the general health. For this, certain things are recommended: such as nourishing food in sufficient quantities, exercise in the open air, plenty of interesting work, a little wholesome literature, a hobby, and above all, the cultivation of a sense of humour.