

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' 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 focussing 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 "cantankerousness," or euphemistically "nerves." Treatment, as advised by an eminent C.M.S. doctor, is

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 effects 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 rightangular 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.

Heroics—

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's fellows 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.