

DURING the summer season when so many people go for sea trips and ocean voyages, and provide themselves with comfortable deck chairs from which they can luxuriously enjoy the views of sea and sky, it is well to remind such persons that on their return they cannot do better than send their discarded chairs to Hospitals and Convalescent Homes, where, in wards and grounds, the recovering patients may enjoy the lounging idleness which goes so far towards re-establishing health.

WE are reminded in this connection that the Secretary of the Royal National Hospital for Consumption, Ventnor, has been appealing to the generous for old sets of croquet and other light games, to tempt the patients to enjoy many pleasant and healthful hours in the open air. This Hospital possesses 22 acres of ground, with five large lawns on which the patients may play games of a light and easy kind and obtain great advantage from the fresh interest and inducement for remaining out of doors.

TENNIS-BALLS partly used (new ones will not be despised!), tennis-nets, and rackets are also most valuable gifts to Convalescent Homes, either for children or adults. New fashions in games and improved "editions" of rackets, &c., often lead to a surplus of somewhat out-of-date garden-game implements, and these are too often consigned to lumber-rooms and attics, when, instead, they might give the utmost joy to recovering sick people. Garden bowls, "bean-bags," and many other outdoor games may, when the novelty—and some of the paint—has worn off, be sent off to Institutions where nobody will stop to criticise the fact that they are somewhat second-hand.

IT is not every child who can produce music from measles or harmony from scarlet fever. But we learn from a recent book that the late Sir Frederick Ouseley, who was a great musician, when only six and a half, had a serious illness, in the form of a fever, lasting for some weeks. On his recovery he composed a piece of music descriptive of how the disease had run its course. All the stages are dealt with in turn, the beginning, progress, crisis, and abatement, and then the relief of convalescence. "*Andante espressivo*—beginning to be a little ill—now I'm very ill—illier than ever—blisters—a little better—not quite well yet—*allegro*, now I'm quite well!"

That illnesses should have their appropriate rhythm and counterpart in music is an interesting suggestion. We have heard of the soothing effect of music in disease and pain, but it is quite new for the outcome of an illness to be a dramatic musical description of it.

Medical Matters.

HAIRBALLS.



AN interesting case has recently been published in which the stomach had to be opened in consequence of the presence; in the organ, of a rounded and movable body. The operation proved that the mass consisted of hair, which was evidently the cause of the incessant vomiting from which the patient suffered, and it was subsequently found that the patient had, for long, been in the habit of biting off pieces of her hair and swallowing them. Such cases are by no means unusual amongst persons of unsound mind, but in this patient it appears to have been the result rather of a thoughtless habit than of any mental disease. The generally accepted theory is that hairs when swallowed stick to the stomach wall and become glued to other hairs, subsequently swallowed, by the viscid stomach secretions, all being then rolled into the form of a ball by the movements of the organ, as soon as the conglomeration becomes heavy enough to detach itself from the mucous membrane. A mass of hair sufficiently large to become thus consolidated, would almost certainly be too large to pass through the pyloric opening into the intestines, and so its presence sets up sufficient irritation in the organ not only to derange its function, but also to cause constant vomiting—Nature's effort to relieve the organ of the source of irritation. But as the ball would probably be too large to pass upwards again, through the cardiac opening of the stomach, the trouble persists, and consequently, in these cases, there is usually no alternative but such an operation as that performed in the patient to whom reference has been made, so as to effect a cure by removing the foreign body.

NOISE SUBDUERS.

A German surgeon has recently pointed out that the ordinary plan of placing cotton wool in the ears to deaden noises, especially in patients suffering from sleeplessness from such disturbing sounds, is sometimes followed by troublesome irritation and disease of the outer ear-canal. He therefore has suggested that the wool should be made in the form of a plug, thoroughly smeared with vaseline, and inserted down the canal to the extent of about an inch, the ear being covered over, out-

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