

For some seconds we stood and looked down, with eyes full of pity, if not with tears, on the gaunt, white face, stamped and wrinkled with the unmistakable signs of acutest suffering. Warmed and fed, he had recovered consciousness, but his harrowing cough told plainly that it would not be for long.

"I'm a lump better, thank yer," he said, huskily, answering the unspoken inquiry in my eyes.

"My poor, poor boy, I am so glad!" I answered, struggling to steady my voice.

Two nights after, he lay dead.

Poor waif and stray! Poor outcast! Could one wish it otherwise? With the strange irony of fate, in contrast to his life, so sordid and so pitiful, Sister and Nurses vied with one another to make things beautiful for him in death, Matron herself lining his coffin with rare white flowers. This was not the outcome of maudlin sentimentality on their part, but rather an outburst of sympathy, and regret that they had been able to do so little for him in life, and maybe a silent protest against the social conditions in which it is possible for a fellow-creature to die like a dog in our streets. Even on the coldest nights I passed from block to block across the open courts, rather than through the corridors, just for a glimpse of the glittering stars and a breath of cool, pure air, for even in the densely-crowded district which surrounds our Hospital, the early hours dawn fresh and sweet; and it was here that I sometimes met Matron, and where we stood and talked of many things near to both our hearts—the poor with their many sorrows, their weary burdens, their despairing lives—and discussed problems too difficult for us to solve, "but not for that reason too difficult to attack," as she observed, with that bright courage for which she is remarkable. When we parted, it was with the invariable result—that I went upon my way rejoicing, inspired with fresh courage, higher inspirations, more content.

In the spring-time dear old Sister Doris took her pension, after five-and-twenty years of honoured work, and went to end her days near the sea. I was fortunate enough to be appointed in her stead.

"Your successor will be here at eight this evening. Mind you are about, to welcome her and give her some food," Matron remarked to me one morning, after hearing my report. She did not add her name, nor tell me whence she was coming—simply the fact that a stranger was to arrive, and must have welcome and good cheer. So I make no inquiries, but at eight am waiting for the new arrival, having put the kettle on the hob, poked the fire into a cheery blaze, and made all cosy. A few minutes pass, when I hear a footstep, firm and swift, come along the passage and halt outside my door. A moment later, and it is cautiously

opened, and a face peers in—a face all smiles and dimples, and brimful of mischief; then some one enters and swoops down upon me, and wraps her arms round me, all entangled in cloak and veil.

Eh! but I am glad to see her again. I turn her round to the light, to make sure that I have made no mistake, and look up into her mirthful face.

"Are *you* the new Night Sister?" at last I find voice to inquire.

"I am," she answers, gaily. "Wasn't it just like matron? She just wrote and said, 'If you think that the "unruly member" is sufficiently subdued, come, bright thing, and expend a little of your magnificent strength in the great work here. Surprise Sister Doris; she will be overjoyed to have you with her again. Those great eyes of hers have been full of a silent appeal, for many days past; we will bring the old light back into them.'"

And since then how full and happy our lives have been! How swiftly the years—one, two, three—have slipped away! How every day we have come to recognise more fully how good a thing is work; and to have been called to work in such a fruitful field, amongst God's poor and weary ones, has become to us a special joy.

It behoves us to labour diligently—here to-day and gone to-morrow! Oh, too short span of life, snatched from great centuries of time, how infinitesimal our most mighty effort!

A voice breaks in upon my reverie, "A penny for your thoughts, sad little dreamer. Come down from the clouds and listen to me." And there in the doorway stands Sister Damian, with a scroll in her hand, looking vaguely round for cakes and cocoa.

QUITE SO!

THE following appeared lately in our well-known contemporary, *The Charity Record and Philanthropic News*:—

"Mr. Burdett is on the Council of the Hospital Sunday Fund, and is editor of the Limited Liability Company's paper, called *Hospital*. By publishing in it the report of the Distribution Committee, he has greatly offended his colleagues, and Sir Sydney Waterlow, at the Mansion House meeting of the Fund, the other day, not unnaturally expressed himself with warm indignation at the breach of confidence. The editor thereupon writes:—'We are sorry, that through a misunderstanding, we published the report;' and, also, 'though no harm has been done, we regret the inadvertence which led to the misunderstanding.' After this somewhat confused statement, he tries to ride off

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