

Left alone, I ruminates, although I have no doubt how it will all fall out. There will be no hesitation and no delay; to-night, before Bettina retires to rest, she will have been made very distinctly to understand that "all work is honourable," and that her own duties are especially so; that her duties are of great value to every inmate of the Ward, from the "Missus" downwards. Somehow it will dawn upon her benighted brain, that after all she is a person of no small importance, as she has, until now, been taught to estimate herself in her capacity of maid-of-all-work; and that it behoves her, like all her associates in the Ward, to put her best foot foremost, and do her utmost, if she is to satisfy this "Missus," who, oddly enough, evidently knows what wants doing, and moreover means to have it done, and who, at the same time, is "so kind and 'omely." She will be made to feel that cleanliness and neatness are virtues far in advance of smartness; and that unless the mop vanishes, and her finger nails are speckless, Sister's digestion will be considerably perturbed. She will feel, when she is bidden "Good-night," that it is no mere matter of form, but that it is quite probable that her slumber will be more restful, owing to the fact that the same bright voice will wish her "Good-morrow." In fact, Bettina, incapable of expressing her sensations, will acknowledge mentally that somehow she no longer feels alone, and a creature of little value, as she did a few hours earlier, when she first entered the Ward.

The month comes and goes. At its end it is difficult to recognise in Bettina the original Betsy Ann, so marvellously has the impressionable clay of her expansive nature responded to the hand of the potter; and, although Sister Damian's crockery has suffered considerably in the interval, owing to a certain slap-dash mode of washing up, concerning which more than one sharp reprimand has been administered, productive of sundry sniffs and tears, we begin to recognise the fact, that if her hand is clumsy—owing to its formation somewhat resembling in shape a leg of mutton—it is a willing, cleanly hand, untiring in its grasp of scrubbing-brush and broom, and possessing a knack of "polishing up" which is truly admirable; and then to see the girl's face about, is a treat—ruddy and shining, like a Normandy pippin, with a wide, smiling mouth, from which "Yes, Sister," issues as the unflinching and willing answer to every wish and order expressed.

No, there is no doubt that, unpromising as in the first instance she appeared, Bettina is rapidly being "made into" a Ward Maid. One evening, when Bettina comes to say good-night, she lingers in the door-way, her face more beaming than usual; but she makes no remark.

"Well, what is it, Bettina?" inquires Sister Damian.

"Ain't you heard, Sister?" counter-questions the Maid, regardless of grammar, her mouth widening into an irrepressible smile.

"I ain't, Bettina," answers Sister, unconsciously adopting the Maid's vernacular.

"Well, then, she ain't coming back, Sister. The Wards Maids was talking of it at tea, and said as how she was not strong enough for the work, and couldn't return; and please, Sister, will you speak to Matron for me?"

"The Ward Maids are a set of incorrigible gossips," says Damian, somewhat sharply. "I suppose you mean that they have heard, or invented, that our Ward Maid is not returning? When the Matron intimates the same to me, it will then be quite time for me to make suggestions to her, and I desire that you will not repeat their tittle-tattle."

"I beg your pardon, Sister," says poor Bettina, colouring visibly, tears springing into her eyes. "I didn't mean no harm—only—only I can't bear to leave you."

Damian looks up quickly, and sees in the pitiful and beseeching little face of her handmaiden, the expression of God's best gift to man—love, beautiful and priceless—and her warm heart melts with instantaneous sympathy. For a minute she makes no response, and then she says softly—

"Thank you, Bettina. When Matron tells me she has a vacancy for a Ward Maid, I will tell her what a good, industrious little maid is my Bettina; how true and faithful she is; and how much I should miss her if she went away."

A suspiciously gurgling sound escapes Bettina, suggestive of tears; yet her eyes are shining, though she says no word. Then we hear the door click, and she is gone. But Bettina is Ward Maid Damian still, and is likely to remain so.

NURSING ECHOES.

* * Communications (duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith) are especially invited for these columns.

WITH reference to my note last week as to Princess Christian's visit to Wiesbaden, "to consult a famous German oculist," as the London papers expressed it, and the conviction I expressed that every Nurse would earnestly hope that Her Royal Highness might "speedily be restored to complete health and strength," I have received a letter, a quotation from which will doubtless interest my readers. "I was very glad to read

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