

"I didn't like to ask the Doctor straight out, for I thought, Sister, you'd be sure to know." Sister does know, of a surety, but the wisdom of the serpent needs to be mixed with the harmlessness of the dove, in the emergencies of the out-patient's room. And though Grannie can be loud-spoken in her denunciations of the way her grandchild has been treated by its parents, she is by no means always immaculate herself. Her tender mercies are at times like unto those of the wicked. "Grannie did it wid the poker," said a little patient who had been admitted into the Wards very ill, and covered with black patches, adjudged to be a bad case of purpura. After a few days' care the child greatly improved, and was making a rapid recovery, when her remark to her Nurse, made quite as a matter of course, put the authorities on the right scent, and revealed the extremely simple nature of her disease. It is needless to say Grannie was interviewed, and that particular attentions were paid to her thereafter by the Inspector of the Society for the Protection of Children, so that it is to be hoped she found some safer way of expressing her feelings towards her grand-daughter for the future.

This we must hope was an exceptional case, but certainly the lives of the little children of the poor are in constant and imminent danger from the ignorance, incapacity, or cruelty, of those to whose care they are committed.

Baby is too often met at the very outset of his career by the feeding-bottle, with its dirty and deadly tubing. Next, there is the stage when "he gets a bit of anything we have ourselves;" then comes the time when he is confided to a child hardly bigger than himself, to be carried about, or dragged by one arm through the dangers of the streets—dangers not perhaps really greater than those he encounters at home from the open window, or unshielded fire. A little girl was brought to me with one hand completely burnt off, and the other maimed beyond recovery. Why? Because the child—a size larger—to whom she had been entrusted, dropped her under the grate, and then ran off to find mother, leaving poor baby to burn for five minutes instead of picking her up. The little care-taker was frightened, and lost her presence of mind, as care-takers of larger growth have been sometimes known to do. Yet, far be it from me to asperse the characters of all these youthful guardians.

How often one has watched, with admiration, the tender patience of the bigger child—especially if a boy—through long hours of amusing baby on a doorstep, or in a street corner; and one's heart has many times ached for the sturdy lad who so perseveringly carries his helpless little brother or sister to the Hospital for advice or galvanism.

"Who owns this child?" the Doctor will ask, as a new patient is brought up to his table.

"It's my baby, please, sir," says the boy of ten, who has struggled along with it since early morning, and is, as a rule, better to it than its parents, and quite unconscious of the pathos of the situation.

"My baby!" It is pretty to hear the discussions on this subject in a Children's Ward. Great pride is expressed by the elder ones, often, in the size of the latest addition to their family; wagers will be laid that "my baby'll be ever so much bigger than yours, when mother brings it on Sunday."

"Look, Sister! *my* baby's growed a great piece. He's a proper 'un, ain't he?" and baby enters into the spirit of the joke, and crows, and sucks his thumb placidly beside the sick child's cot during the visiting hour; and, in gazing upon him, one cannot but be thankful that it is no part of one's own duty to carry about that heavy lump all day.

Yes, baby grows, in spite of all he has to go through—in spite of his ignorant mother, who takes him out in the damp fog at night, or stews him up all day in her airless, unclean room; who neglects a cold and cough, but rushes to the Hospital with him, even through a snow-storm, if she discovers that form of terror, a *nævus*, however microscopic, on his body, because a neighbour tells her that it will spread with frightful rapidity, and then burst, or explode, and kill the child.

Baby grows, in spite of his teething, his relations, and his surroundings—he grows as the sparrows grow, and should he "fall to the ground," overborne by the changes and chances of this mortal life, it is but to rise with the wings of the morning, and flee away to that land where he, and a vast assembly of his fellows, continually behold the face of the Father who careth for them.

M. F. E. H.

NURSING ECHOES.

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

I HAVE just received my notice of the Annual Meeting of the B.N.A., and congratulate myself and other Members generally on the enticing programme sketched out for the gathering. I hear that St. John's College will welcome two hundred Members to dinner in its grand hall, tickets for which will be issued strictly according to the order in which applications for them are received. I always feel safe in prophesying success to anything organized by the B.N.A., and if the weather is only fine the first Annual

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