

changes in the burning wound in her hand with its inflamed edges and exuding surface. In the night season, the child would lay the throbbing sore to her lips, and suck out with her parched tongue the springing intolerable pain.

On the fifth day—it was Christmas Eve—she staggered to her swollen feet and went slowly from the noisome rat hole of a room down the steep the endless stairs, clinging to the rickety baluster as she went. Ah! well—the poor little excoriated feet were making their last journey—for which praise be to God.

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Sooty snow lay about on the housetops, and was churned into mud on the road, the temperature was certainly several degrees below zero, and yet this was not sufficient cause for the coolness, which, for a few days past, had existed between the house surgeon on duty, and the surgery sister. The house surgeon was young—conscientious, and very cock-sure, and every ounce of superfluous flesh was consumed from off his lanky frame, by over-work and worry; moreover, he was infuriated to find himself passionately in love with the surgery sister.

The surgery sister had come to years of discretion, and had a pretty wit withal, and she bloomed fragrant as a damask rose in an environment in which her deep and gracious nature found ample scope for expansion and well doing. Moreover, she had no illusions concerning the lasting passion of the house surgeon.

The vituperative Sal had startled and angered the young man. She had only made sad the warm heart of the woman.

"Oh! I am so grieved you let her go," sighed the sister.

"Duty is not always pleasant," sententiously replied the house-surgeon.

"She will return," asserted the sister.

"I doubt it," answered the faulty intuition of the man.

"The creature was hungry for a glimpse of happiness," said the sister.

"She was a greedy little humbug bent on forage," replied the man.

"If she comes back, will you admit her?" pleaded the sister—and she induced a dimple into her peculiarly peachy cheek, which conquered the conscience of the house surgeon.

"To please you—yes," consented the man.

Then the sister as she went off duty turned that dimpled cheek towards the house surgeon,

"I'll be even with yer," she said softly, in the vernacular of the gutter, as she silently passed out from the surgery and closed the door.

Thus she did not hear the forcible monosyllable of the man.

On the morrow the "frost" set in. Every incident of which is no doubt subversive of hospital discipline. But man was even before medicine and matrons.

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The Receiving-Room was empty of patients for the moment, when Sal crawled up the hospital steps, and shuffled through the doorway.

There she stood—a most pathetic figure—hesitating, trembling, her face pinched with pain, a

ghastly fixed grin extending her mouth from ear to ear.

The surgery sister put her strong, motherly arms about the child, and drew her gently within the radius of the great flaming fire. She exchanged a significant and most pitiful glance with the house surgeon, and together they placed the suffering child on the couch. Nearer inspection of the now filthy and suppurating wound showed the source of the danger. There was no question of favour now in admitting poor little Sal to the wards.

The sister still kept her gentle controlling arms about the stricken creature, whilst the house surgeon wrote in somewhat shaky characters the order for her admission, and the diagnosis of the cruel disease.

"Tetanus"!

\* \* \* \*

Ah! well. After all Sal spent Christmas Day in the Great Eastern Hospital, in a quiet little ward, but she did not taste of the fine food provided or take part in the frolic and fun; and yet her senses were painfully acute, as she listened to the heralding in of the happy day, by the sweet singing of carols in tuneless women's voices. Agonising cramps and fiendish muscular contortions had her poor little body in their grip—the clenched jaw, the pitiful fight for breath, the rigid and agonised extremities, the scorching hunger and thirst, the ceaseless weariness of the flesh—these were the demons which tormented Sal.

The Day of Rejoicing wore on, the night came, another day, and yet another night, and the child passed into the Valley of the Shadow, suffering the agonies of the damned.

Science wrestled with the deadly specific bacillus, but was worsted in the fight, as yet science knows of no treatment which will cut short the progress of this hideous disease, or materially alleviate the agony produced by it. Medicine, nursing, pity, love, poured out their treasures lavishly at the feet of this hapless waif—and prevailed not, and yet who shall say that they were of no avail?

And then Death came and laid his cool and merciful hands upon her—and she was still.

E. G. F.

#### WOMEN.

A recent issue of the *Gazette* contains the announcement that the Queen has been pleased to cause letters patent to be issued, under the Great Seal, dealing with the precedence of the several classes of the Royal Victorian Order.

The Queen always has a magnificent Christmas tree for her young people at Osborne. The first Christmas tree the Queen ever had was hung with presents valued at £9,000. That was when Prince Albert was alive. This year the presents did not reach £1,000 in value.

The Queen of Sweden belongs to the Salvation Army, and sometimes wears its characteristic garb in public.

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