

doctors and Matron, a certain *bon camaraderie* subsists in a hospital, for sickness is a great leveller, second only to the greatest of levellers—Death. Death entered twice whilst I was an inmate of the hospital. Once it was an old man who answered the summons. It had been a long fight for all—doctors, nurses, and the patient himself. He had longed with intense desire to see his native land again ere he died, but Death was final victor in the strife.

Then a young American was brought in, desperately ill. He was wealthy, but riches were of no avail, for Death will not barter life for gold.

In the room next to mine was a young girl. She had, of course, no right to be on the men's side of the house. But on her arrival no room could be found for her in the women's quarters—the *hareem*, as the native servants called it. So she was brought over to us, and as we grew better we used to exchange little civilities. She would send me flowers, and I lent her newspapers, and we took much interest in each other's condition. But ere I was well enough to be carried out on to my verandah or stoep, or to belong to the outside world again, she had left the hospital. So that embryo romance came to a speedy end.

How curious it is that coming into touch with ordinary life again after a long illness. Everything is of interest, an interest trebled for me by the fact that I was in an Eastern land for the first time.

On the other side of the road in front of my verandah stretched cultivated fields of a delicious soft green. There were sweet-smelling clover, lupins, and various vegetables, and acres and acres of ripe strawberries.

Along the road which led from the town came the carriages of the doctors, and visitors to the patients, horsemen, and bicyclists. In the early morning, down the main road, a little farther off, one could see long strings of camels carrying merchandise into the city—weird, but proud creatures these, with their supercilious stride. Native children played in the road, much as the children play in old England. Dignified Arabs swept past in their picturesque robes. Veiled women went by carrying waterpots on their heads. And from my verandah I could see the sunset. Who shall describe the glorious beauty of the sunrise and sunset in that ancient land? The whole sky pulsates and quivers with the crimson of after-glow, fading towards the zenith into pale pink, and growing a golden red near the horizon. Never, never can one forget the glory and the wonder of it.

My convalescence was long and tedious. Yet surely, if slowly, vitality and strength returned as I basked in the ever-blessed sunshine, which, at that season of the year, heals, but does not smite.

The doctor had long ceased to take more than a passing interest in me, when, at last, I was pronounced well enough to leave the hospital.

Many happy memories cling around my stay in that haven of refuge. I must always be deeply grateful for untold kindnesses received there, not only from doctors and nurses, though they come well to the front of my gratitude, but from others, who from strangers became friends, as, out of pure goodness of heart, they visited the sick and the stranger in the land. Therefore, from the bottom of my heart, I wish health, wealth, and prosperity to that English hospital in the land of the Caliphs.

RAY MERTON.

## Professional Review.

### FLAT FOOT OR SPLAY FOOT.

Nurses as a class are particularly interested in the subject of flat-foot, for owing to the exigencies of their work, and the hours when they are either standing or walking in the course of the day, this condition is one to which they are specially liable. Those who desire to understand this condition, and what is involved in it, cannot do better than study a booklet on the subject by Mr. Henry Holden, published by Holden Brothers, 3, Harewood Place, Oxford Street, W., price sixpence, in which it is described clearly and concisely, while some excellent illustrations still further elucidate the text. The author considers that the term flat-foot is somewhat misleading, and quotes Mr. Arbuthnot Lane, who says "Flat-foot is a term which might be dropped with advantage. I would suggest fixed adduction of the foot."

Flat-foot is, we are told, both a disease and a deformity. The group of bones lying in that part of the foot immediately under the leg and a little in front of that position are kept in their place by a number of ligaments and tendons, and the whole of these elements become displaced downwardly and inwardly in the case of "flat-foot." The bones project inwardly in each foot towards each other, about the middle part of the foot, and the inner ankles tend to knock together, the heel widens and flattens. . . . In walking the toes turn out, the knees fall inwards, the back stoops, the shoulders oscillate round and round, and backwards and forwards, causing an exaggerated use of the chest and shoulder muscles, the arms and hands sway excessively; the hips gyrate from side to side and the body waddles. Varicose veins often appear on the legs.

Flat-foot is a disease of great frequency, and is steadily increasing. It may be congenital, the result of accident, or of paralysis. It is, however, more often acquired in the early years of life, and never lost or amended. It is almost exclusively a disease of civilised people. The great cause of flat-foot is, we are told, the malposition of the great toe, which bends out of its true straight line, and points towards the others, overlapping or crowding them. This malposition is in all cases induced, acquired, or artificial. The author recommends that sufferers from flat-foot should wear digitated stockings, and Nature-form boots, in which the great toe is kept in its true position by a toe post when misplaced. He holds out the hope that with the proper exercise of the muscles of the foot a complete renovation may be effected in nearly every case of flat-foot.

This is of considerable importance, because the condition of flat-foot incapacitates from many callings in life, and makes standing very irksome. It also disqualifies candidates for the Royal and public services, such as the army, navy, police, postal, civil, and railway services. The author states that it is to the discredit of some of these services that they clothe the feet of their men so that they often acquire flat-foot.

Boots, shoes, and hosiery, modelled and designed according to the above description, are obtainable from Messrs. Holden Bros., 3, Harewood Place, W.

A staff of assistants trained to deal with this special class of case are always on the spot or will be sent any distance on payment of the necessary expense, if required.

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