

a meeting at seven o'clock. I made a note of the time, and chose the church as a resting place after dark.

Then I had tea, real teapot tea out of a cup without a crack; and when I could linger no longer in the tea-rooms, I sat in a park and watched the children feed the ducks, and envied the irresponsible lazy life of both children and animals. Then I set out to find the church where I could rest, and perhaps—Oh, dream of heaven—sleep. At a corner of a street I found myself wedged in between a horse and the shaft of a car, I twisted out and was surprised at the energy of the cabby, who swore loud and long.

If I had been thrown down, I need never have stood on my blistered feet again, I mused; and surely that would not have been a catastrophe. I got a nice comfortable back seat in the church, there was a young people's meeting on, but the only remark I remembered was that made by a young man, to the effect that "Providence watched over drunken men." A clock outside striking nine awoke me to every-day life, and I slipped out of the building, and ran all the way to the hospital.

The door was locked, and when the porter admitted me, he advised me to report myself at once, as Matron had taken the Pass Book, five minutes ago. In fear and trembling I knocked at the Matron's door, and in answer to her "come in," said "I'm sorry to be five minutes late Matron."

"Come in nurse," she said stiffly, "where were you?"

Some of the Sisters who were with her smiled when I said at church, and I could see they did not believe me, but she only glanced at her watch, and said, "Don't let it occur again, Nurse. Now you may go."

As the days went by the excitement that had made me partly forget my fatigue wore away. The life seemed one long grind; sometimes I felt that I must have been climbing stairs, sweeping wards, and carrying trays for a hundred years. My feet were one mass of blisters, my hands were like beef-steaks, and, as I washed the patients' mugs and plates on the ward-maid's "days out," the water in the scullery sink became like the river Nile after the smiting of Aaron's rod.

I used to cry into my pillow every night, and declare that I could not stand the hospital work one day more. Then next day I would be too busy to plan my departure, and thus the days went past until I had been a month nursing.

It was the injustice to another probationer that decided me to leave at last. One night, Nurse Porter and I had been talking over our

work—she was probationer in No. 12, and had had two new patients admitted that day, and one death, when the "staff" was off duty. Nurse Porter was now in bed, and I was breaking a rule by standing in her cubicle talking to her, when we were surprised by a visit from a Night Nurse, who said, "Nurse Porter, Sister wants you please. I'm so sorry, but she found your supper things dirty."

The poor little pro. who had never washed a cup in her life until three weeks ago, when she came to Z Hospital, got up and dressed. We were never allowed in the hospital without complete uniform.

I waited for her return, when she told me, amid a storm of tears, that Sister Hansom said she was careless in her work and had no method, and then she added in a whisper,

"I met Matron, and she said I would never make a nurse, and I am going home to-morrow."

"I will go, too," I said. "We can travel as far as Belfast together."

As I got into my uniform in the chilly dawn next morning, I planned my interview with the Matron. I would speak to her when she made her morning rounds. I would tell her that I was not going to remain in slavery any longer. When I resigned I would "burn my boats." I wanted to feel that I never could come back to the hateful drudgery again.

But the matron's first appearance was in company with a stretcher, on which lay a man in the grip of death. There had been deaths in the wards during my month's probation, but an empty bed in the morning, was all I knew about them.

This patient was different from any I had seen in hospital, he was a gentleman in the prime of life, and he seemed friendless. His voice and manner reminded me of the only death-bed I had ever watched by, and the remembrance brought back my humanity. As I stood by his side and saw the fight between life and death all the mystery of suffering and blackness and horror of death swept over me. He lived through that day, the longest in my life, and afterwards, in the dark corner of my cubicle, I could see his eyes and hear his voice, heavy with pain, mutter "Ah! nurse, don't leave me alone."

Next morning he was not conscious, and I was told to remain with him when the Staff Nurse went with the Sister to see about something else. I was deep in the problem of why "humanity should be born in suffering, live in misery, and die in agony," when the voice of the House Surgeon brought me back to more practical things.

"When did his breathing change, nurse?"

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