

and when I heard them call you by *his* name I *knew* you must be good."

So I received Jean's pardon, and her curse was removed for the sake of the name I bore, out of the great love that filled her heart.

M. W.

On Nurses.

They say that every girl has a longing at some time of her life to be a nurse. If this is really the rule, I am one of the exceptions. I never had the faintest wish to be a nurse. If I had ever been offered the alternative of being either a nurse or a scullerymaid I should have plumped for the scullerymaid quick; perhaps from the feeling that I should be likely to do less mischief in that position.

But I think the reason is deeper seated. As a child I had a kind of terror of sick people, especially those who were supposed to be dying. They seemed so near the awful gates of mystery; so far from earthly things. Even the pallor of their faces showed them to be allied to the spirit world. And as I grew older the same feeling possessed me with regard to nurses, who have watched so often while the gates of mystery opened and closed.

Yet I love nurses. I always feel a little uplifting of the heart when I see the familiar cloak, and bonnet, and neat, white strings coming towards me. It is always an effort to remember not to smile as she passes, as though the wearer of the cloak and I were old friends. They are so real, these women; in the days when many people are trying so hard to appear to be something they are not, they say by their dress "I am a nurse," and instantly they have one's highest respect, while the fashionably-dressed women around them merely provoke a mild wonder as to whether they are somebody very great or somebody very ordinary. If the out-of-door uniform should ever be discarded, one of the brightest touches of romance will be banished from our streets, so rare is it in these days for people to declare openly their standing in the world. As for the spurious imitations, most of us can distinguish them at a glance.

To a connoisseur in nurses like myself, there is something in a nurse's face that tells one at once her calling, whatever her dress may be. For one thing, she never wears that bored, weary-of-earth look that is seen on the faces of so many women. Her mouth looks as if it is just ready to smile, there is a twinkle of humour in her eye, and with it all such a wonderful sense of steadfast strength and tender kindness.

I often wonder what in their secret hearts

they think of the rest of the world. Do they ever have a nightmare vision of the world as one vast hospital, full of disease and pain, with not one sound body in it? I am sure they have almost a motherly pity for us all, and that is why nurses, as a class, are so tolerant. I can imagine one listening to some grandiloquent political speaker, full of the great importance of his party, and hurling forth defiance of all the rest of the world. A flicker of a smile passes over her face, and I imagine her saying to herself,

"It is all very well, my poor, dear man; but you might catch cold going home to-night, and find yourself in bed before long, with a doctor and a couple of nurses holding your life in their hands. Where would all your fine talk be then?"

I think all nurses must love Nature, she is so strong, and clean, and sane. Imagine, after being shut up for weeks with some sick, cross, unhappy creature, being able to escape and lie full length on the hillside, in the heather, with the sunlight streaming down on you and the great sea stretching out before you. What a heaven!

And little children, too, with their clear, unmorbid minds, must cheer and refresh them. Sickness is such a vague, unreal thing to children, and when it enters their own family a thing to be rather proud of than otherwise. The other day I heard a small child of nine remark with much pride, "My brother has had every single thing there is except typhoid."

Yes, I think the nurse's paradise will be heather, and hill, and sea, and happy, healthy little children.

This is the puzzle to me. Nurses are face to face continually with the darkest tragedies of human life. (What terrible life stories they read in hospital and district work; what fearsome skeletons, shadowed forth from gilded cupboards, they meet with in private nursing!) And yet they are the happiest women living. A nurse's face is the sunniest, her laugh the freest and most real of any woman's. Is it because she faces the world's sorrow bravely, and feels that she is doing her part to make it less bitter; or is it because, having faced the worst she realises that, dark as it all is, there are compensations everywhere, sunshine in the darkest places, and a silver lining to the blackest cloud?

JESSIE HARVEY.

The Liberton Cottage Hospital, Mid-Lothian, recently opened by the Earl of Dalkeith, contains forty-four beds. It is to be used as an annexe to the Longmore Hospital for Incurables, Edinburgh.

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