

## Our Foreign Letter.

### INCIDENTS IN A NURSE'S LIFE IN PALESTINE.



Lulu, which means a pearl, was the name of one of my little Arab patients. She was admitted to the Hospital suffering from ophthalmia, both eyes being affected, and for a time she was quite blind. She was in great pain, so I put her to bed and attended to her eyes very frequently. For a week she appeared very unhappy, and I tried to interest her by telling her about other little children in the ward. But she continued to be so cross and grumpy that at last I told her if she did not cheer up a little she would make all the other patients unhappy, and she would have to be sent home. At this she was much distressed, and said, "Towelly bairik ya sittee (Have patience with me, lady), and I will be good, and if you make my eyes well, I will serve you for ever." From that day she became more cheerful, and her sight steadily improved. At the end of three weeks she could see, but her eyes still needed attention, and she begged to stay until they were quite well. She made herself most useful in the wards, and seemed so happy when she was tidying the beds or doing little acts of kindness for the other patients.

On visiting days her little sister, Fatmeh, used to come to see her; she was the quaintest little creature, only six years of age, but like an old woman in many ways; she used to wear the black "Malayya," which is never worn by children. This garment is something like two full skirts sewn together, one of which is turned up over the head and shoulders. We all became very fond of Fatmeh. I often used to ask her if she would not like to sleep in the Hospital, as she suffered from trachoma, to which she replied in horrified tones, "Ulla la Yukaddir" (God forbid), "it is beautiful here, but since I was born I have always slept with my mother. God forbid I should sleep here. It is so big, I should be afraid of ghosts in the night."

At last we had to say good-bye to Lulu, for her eyes were quite strong, and her mother was needing her, so, at the end of three months, she left us.

Often she and Fatmeh would come to see us on visiting days, and I frequently went to their little hut by the sea and sat by their blind mother, or nursed the baby, while Lulu cleaned the house. Then there came a time when we saw nothing of these two little Arab sisters for many weeks. At the time I was too busy to look them up, but often wondered what had become of them. One Sunday morning during the service, which is always held in one of the wards, the door opened very quietly, and little Fatmeh, in her black Malayya, peeped

in. I drew her in gently, and took her on my knee till the service was finished, and the bell rang for the patients' dinner.

She looked very miserable, and I asked her why it was, and when I said, "And how is Lulu?" she replied "Màtat" (dead). I was horrified, but she only wrung her hands and beat her cheeks and said, "Yes, lady, Lulu is dead." Then she told me that her sister had been suffering for a long time from malaria, and had begged her father to take her to the Hospital just for a little "keena" (quinine) to make her well. "Three days ago," continued Fatmeh, "Lulu said, 'Take me to my little mother in the Hospital and she will give me keena, and I shall get well.' And at last my father consented to bring her to you, lady; he put her on a donkey, and we got nearly to the Hospital, when Lulu fell off the donkey, broke her neck, and died; on the road, lady, she died, and now she lies, away there is the Barreèya (literally, wilderness—Moslem cemetery), where they buried her. So many times she had asked my father to take her to you; but he would not listen, and now she is dead, and is lying in the Barreèya."

Poor little Fatmeh seemed almost dazed with her grief, and we all felt very much for her. We had all loved Lulu, for during those three months in Hospital, she had endeared herself to everyone. I kept Fatmeh for dinner, but she would only eat a little piece of dry bread, and I felt I could not eat my dinner either, but must hurry away with Fatmeh to her home to try and comfort her poor mother. So I put on my hat and took with me our good little Syrian maid, Miriam. Before starting, I ran to my room and found I had one doll still left from the big parcel that kind friends in England had sent me. It was a very pretty doll, and beautifully dressed. This I gave to Fatmeh, and she hugged it to her heart, and seemed to be much comforted thereby. The sun was at its height, when Fatmeh, Miriam, and I wended our way through the town, and then through the slums down to the sea to the little hut Lulu had called her home. All the way through the heat and dust, and hot sand, through which we had to walk, I noticed Fatmeh was very sad; she showed us the spot where Lulu had met her death, and pointed to the Moslem Cemetery where she now lay, and again she beat her cheeks with her tiny hands, saying, "Màtat, Màtat, ya waily ailayha, Ya Lulu, Ya Lulu" (Dead, dead, woe is me, Oh, Lulu, Lulu). It was most distressing to witness the grief of this tiny child, and I took her hand in mine and tried to comfort her. As we drew nearer to the quarter where she lived, I noticed she became greatly agitated, and looked furtively from side to side in a very frightened manner, and drew her hand away from mine. We passed the soap factories, and came to a narrow, tumble-down sort of street, quite near Fatmeh's home. Suddenly, to our utmost astonishment and bewilderment, we saw Lulu standing in the doorway of a small house with a baby in her arms. She was radiant at seeing us, and called out, "At last you have come, beloved Sister; how glad I am to see you." We could not answer her greet-

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