

there had been four of them ill; but, one son of twenty had died two days previously, and since then the big girl had been too frightened to stay upstairs.

I asked if I might go upstairs and see the other patients, and, after a good deal of demur on the part of the woman, I was taken up the steep and tortuous ladder that constitutes the stairs in most cottages.

When I saw the bedroom my heart went a little deeper into my boots. The room, lit by a flickering little bit of candle, looked and smelt dirty, fusty, and, oh, so close! It contained an old table and two beds. In one bed, covered by rags of blankets and odd garments, lay a boy of about seventeen, a little girl of five, and a baby of about two. The big boy and the little girl both appeared very ill—the former was roused with difficulty—the latter could only be roused sufficiently to say, "I'm so thirsty"—the baby it appeared was quite well, nothing wrong with him.

The other bed was empty. I asked if there was another bedroom, and was shown a lean-to sort of place at the top of the stairs. It only contained a bedstead, and I learned the other son had died there, and the doctor had made them burn the bedding.

On further inquiries I found, the father, mother, and the two girls would occupy the other bed, and the eldest son (twenty-six) would sleep on the couch downstairs. It seemed out of the question my sitting up there that night under these circumstances, so I decided to go and see the doctor. When we got down again to the kitchen I found the father there, who struck me as being a nice man, and decidedly more intelligent than his wife, but she, poor soul, was, I expect, in a numbed, dazed condition.

The house consisted of the kitchen and a sort of lean-to washhouse—the one bedroom and lean-to upstairs, for a man and his wife, and there had been ten children—two daughters were married, and one son had just died—that left seven, both sexes, and all ages, and no lack of ground, but most of it "preserved"; whilst the villagers were not so well housed as the horses and cows in the surrounding farms.

The father offered to take me to the doctor, and on the way told me about his trouble. It appears he had been out of work for five weeks—when Bob, who was earning 12s. a week, fell ill—nothing very serious at first, just felt tired, sick, and had headache. Sometimes he used to get up and sit by the fire, and, so far as he could get it, he ate what he fancied. Then George, who earned 10s. a

week, fell ill, and then they "went on the parish." Bob grew rapidly worse, Eddy, the big girl, began to complain, and now little Mabel was ill. This was Wednesday evening—the previous Saturday Bob was so ill that the doctor had been called in. He gave them orders for milk and beef for beef-tea; and carbolic to disinfect everything, and his wife sent some sheets and blankets. The doctor showed the father how to bury all excreta, and made him scrub the place down. This house shared an earth closet with several others.

Bob, however, got worse, and on the Monday, when he got out of bed to relieve his bowels, had a very severe attack of hæmorrhage, and died almost immediately.

The doctor said the body must be buried at once, and the sanitary inspector made them burn the bedding. No one would come into the house to wash the body, so the father and eldest son did it as best they could. The father then walked five miles to the workhouse to ask for a coffin, and was sent from there to a town seven miles off—found they were not made in that town, and was sent to another three miles off—found they were not made there, so walked back to the workhouse to find they were made in his own village. The man who made the coffin refused to carry it to the house, or put the body in, so the father with his eldest son had to fetch the coffin, put the body in, screw it down, and carry it out, put it on a cart they had borrowed, and drive it to the churchyard, where the minister of the chapel was waiting for them, and, as the poor father said, "My poor boy was buried like a dog." By this time we had arrived at the doctor's, who seemed astonished to see me, and who, when I told him why I was there, said: "I did not mean the R.O. to get a nurse like you; I meant a woman who would go out and in for about 10s. a week. We have no fever hospital for such cases." "But," I said, "a woman like that can't nurse typhoid, and I will if they can be moved into a clean cottage." After some discussion, it was decided I could not sit up that night; but was to impress on the mother the great danger of letting any of the sick ones out of bed, or giving them any nourishment other than fluid. In the morning the R.O. was to be communicated with, and a cottage found if possible. On this point the doctor was very doubtful. It appeared cottages were very scarce.

I found, on making inquiries, that no one knew anything of any lodgings. At last I was taken in by the widow of the watchmaker, a kind, clean, cheerful little person.

(To be continued.)

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