

I should advise all Nurses who feel inclined to "give way," and who suffer from "sinkings," "back-aches," "toe-aches," and "finger-aches," to try one or the other of these remedies. Many a break-down will be thus prevented, and in consequence more sympathy accorded to Nurses when they are really ill.

What a contrast I am to Sister Damian! With what keen admiration her perfect health and strength inspire me! To see her in her Ward, surrounded by the sick and suffering, with their poor discoloured, anxious faces, their wasted limbs, their tuneless voices, causes one to rejoice doubly in her physical perfection. Her mere presence is to them a continual feast. "The sight of her smiling face is just the best dose of medicine a man can take," and "her laugh's just the sweetest o' music"; "foggy days ain't of no account, when Sister's near"; "she's just gleams of sunshine," and so on, and so on—masculine encomiums, but quite true, nevertheless. Tall of stature, and full of grace, with a little head poised gaily on her shoulders, upon which the hair waves back from a low and thoughtful brow—as artists love—in curious contrast with the laughing eyes, and mocking mouth.

A very unsuitab'e young person for a Hospital Sister, I hear remarked. Nay, rather retain your judgment until you have questioned those who know her best. The sick, the weak, the weary—they have proved her, and have not found her wanting, and can tell you of her virtues. Where a spirit so sweet and pitiful to tend and console, so strong and fearless upon which to lean, so gay and dauntless to help and cheer? Where? echo answers, and may echo again.

We were trained together, six years ago, at one of the large county Hospitals, which at that time was so far in advance of many London Nursing Schools, and where we might still have been working, if "our Matron" had not been taken from us.

Ah! that was a sad day!

We were vaguely aware, about that time, that the "Great Eastern," one of the principal Metropolitan Hospitals, had, for some time, been convulsed by those unhappy dissensions, seemingly unavoidable in the transition from the old order of Nursing to the new; that the Matron had resigned—"worn out," as Damian tritely put it, "with the work of excavation alone, and with no strength left to reconstruct the new edifice." Our Matron was chosen to replace her—how wise a choice the future was to prove. We, women-like, how little we appreciated her, until we lost her! From her letters we gathered but few details of her new duties, and absolutely none as to her mode of life; but rumour, busy babbler, soon brought us news of her—of much use of midnight oil; of a graceful,

black-robed figure flitting hither and thither, and to be met, at most unearthly hours, in the Wards, and in the Home; untiring energy, gentleness, and patience; self-imposed duties, punctually performed, saving others work and worry; enlightened views, calm judgment, and unalterable decision; a humorous indulgence of narrowness and prejudice; a just appreciation of all work well done—a simple history, in fact, of devotion to duty, tact, and justice going hand in hand, with the inevitable result of victory all along the line.

It was not until she had been gone from us six months, that one day she wrote to me, saying, "There is a vacancy here for a Night Sister. If you still possess your old supply of charity and discretion, come and help me. The work here is magnificent, because it is so difficult."

For two days that letter lay hidden unanswered in my pocket, and then I went to "mine own familiar friend," and put it in her hand. "What am I to do?" I questioned, determined that she should decide. She glanced through the letter, and looked up quickly. "Do," she answered, quietly, "your duty, of course. Go!"

And so, one fine morning, a month later, we said good-bye to one another calmly, but with very full hearts, not knowing when or where we should meet again. Six months came and went—months of up-hill, and yet not altogether unsatisfactory, work, in which, during the hushed stillness of the night, one seemed to hear the Divine voice of encouragement so distinctly, and be drawn more closely to holy things than in the garish light of day.

It was winter-time—a hard winter, in which the poor suffered greatly. The Medical Wards were over-crowded. Endless cases, diagnosed pneumonia, bronchitis, hæmoptysis, and anæmia, were admitted and gently tended, Nurses looking compassionately in one another's eyes, as they removed the scanty clothing, and discovered emaciated bodies beneath, which, in conjunction with the sunken eyes and sharply defined jaw, told their own sad tale of the predisposing cause of half the suffering—starvation.

One night, when passing through Doris' Ward, Nurse drew my attention to a new case in No. 16 bed. "Oh! Sister," she said, "this is such a sorrowful story. Poor lad, he was brought in this evening, insensible from exposure and hunger. It seems that all through this bitter weather he has been sleeping at night in an old empty hamper, at the back of the market. Three nights ago he crept into it, exhausted for want of food, and too weak to make himself heard, and it was not until this evening that he was discovered by a policeman, and brought into the Hospital. He has no name, and says, 'Tis only Tags.'"

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