

my two patients reclining on their respective beds, both very seedy, and both very uncomfortable. Having inquired into their feelings, I glanced round the room, and had I been a real proper orthodox sort of a nurse what I saw ought to have produced brain symptoms at once. There were, I think, four tables and five chairs, not to mention two huge zinc-covered boxes, a bath, and a large cupboard, and each and all of these were littered with a medley of articles of every description from a bottle of mushroom ketchup to a shoemaker's last. Besides all this, Medicus had been living in the hospital waiting for his own house to be built, he had not properly unpacked since his arrival from England, and that same morning he had begun to put his things together for a cross-country journey. His way of doing this had been to put a mat on the floor and pile all his necessaries on to it in most admired confusion. Clericus had lately arrived from the mainland, and his luggage was scattered in various miscellaneous receptacles in different parts of the room.

My first act was to pull the two largest chairs together and put everything in the room on them. The pile nearly reached to the roof when I had finished, and did not look elegant, but by this means I had procured tables on which to set things down, and made the chairs available for such ordinary purposes as to be sat upon. I next inquired of Clericus when his bed was last made, and was told that he did not think it had been properly "fixed up" since he first began to use it some months before! I persuaded him that he would be far more comfortable if he got out and let me make it, and then discovered that he had put his travelling bed roll on to the hospital bedstead, and had been lying on a miscellaneous assortment of books, brushes, clothes, etc., since this same roll acted also in the capacity of portmanteau. It did not take very long, however, to make drastic alterations, and the sigh of content he gave when he got back into bed was good to hear.

I then turned my attention to Medicus. Can anyone tell me why a man when he is ill goes to bed with his boots on? and yet they expect self-respecting nurses to come out and nurse them! I relieved him of these exceedingly unnecessary appendages, made his bed, and treated both patients to what Medicus afterwards described as "the eau-de-Cologne and water dodge." During the performance of this operation, as I was about to remove the apparatus from one patient to the other, a startling accident occurred. I lifted up the table in the ordinary way, when, to my amazement, the legs fell to the ground with a loud crash, hitting me smartly on the toe, and I was left standing with the top part of the table in my hands, looking absolutely helpless and ridiculous. It was finished at last, however, and I retired to meditate upon plans of campaign with regard to reformation and cleaning.

Medicus recovered quickly and went off on his journey; Clericus showed an unmistakable disposition to remain *in statu quo*, and the question of cleaning continued in abeyance. Imagine, gentle reader, a floor of beaten earth with a layer of dust about half an inch thick on the surface, in which every footprint was plainly visible. If anything was inadvertently spilled a puddle resulted, and yet to attempt to sweep would have meant suffocation to the patient. At

length the difficulty was solved. Clericus was sent to the other side of the island, hoping that change of air might benefit him, and the morning after his departure I repaired to the hospital attended by four women armed with brushes, and a man to keep them at work. First we turned all the furniture into the road, and then they began to sweep. In spite of valiant determination to see the thing done properly, I was obliged to retire ignominiously after the first two minutes, not wishing to be choked or blinded before my time; and even after they had told me that the sweeping was finished and the furniture put back in its place, for more than an hour I could not see clearly across the room, so full was the air of dust.

I poured my tale of woe into the ears of the doctor on his return, and when I paid my second visit to Likoma, in October, 1900, I should hardly have known the hospital but for its site. The floor is now neatly tiled, the verandah is closed in and makes a most convenient ante-room when one has to sit up at night with a patient, the walls, now coloured pink, present a pleasing contrast to their former funereal aspect, and the roof has been renewed. Everything is in spick and span order, there is a place for everything, and everything is in its place, and I do not think that any ordinary nursing necessity is wanting.

All these improvements are due to the untiring energy of the doctor, who devised and carried them out, in spite of all obstacles (and only those who try to build in the tropics know what that means), and in addition to the other hundred and one things he has on his hands.

Dr. Dussand, of the Psychological Institute of Paris, recently gave a lecture at the Hospital des Sociétés Savantes on the education of the blind and deaf. His method of conveying the illusion of moving scenes to the blind is by means of a cinematograph, by which a series of reliefs of the same object in different positions are passed under their fingers. Dr. Dussand has also arranged an electric rhythm, which gives the notion of musical rhythm to the hopelessly deaf.

Wedding Bells.

An interesting wedding took place recently at St. Swithin's Church, Hither Green, when Miss Ellen Buxton, Matron of the Park Hospital, was married to Mr. Guy Bellingham Smith. Miss Buxton, who received her training under St. John's House, Norfolk Street, Strand, and who has had much experience of fever work, was appointed Matron of the Park Hospital, Hither Green a little over a year ago. She is a member of the Matrons' Council, of Great Britain and Ireland. Her husband was formerly a resident medical officer at the North Eastern Hospital, Tottenham.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)