

Scene in a London Hospital.

By Miss JESSIE CARGILL BEGG.

"Now, Daddy, here is your medicine." Nurse Graham held a glass full of an evil-smelling concoction under Daddy's venerable nose. As she had anticipated, he recoiled from it with an expression of disgust, and then pushed the tumbler away with unnecessary force.

"There! Now you have spilt some on the sheet," exclaimed Nurse Graham, in a reproving tone.

This accident did not tend to sweeten Daddy's naturally irritable temper. "I ain't goin' to tike it," he said, bristling with rage.

Nurse Graham was prepared for this remark. She had been warned by the staff nurse that the new patient was "a Tartar," and that one of the probationers had, after a stormy interview with Daddy, retired to the ward kitchen in floods of tears. He had obstinately declined to have his face washed or his finger-nails cut. She now saw plainly that if Daddy persisted in refusing to take his medicine she would be obliged to retire gracefully, and own herself vanquished also.

"I don't see how you expect to get well if you don't take your medicine," she said, quietly.

"If that muck's the only thing wot's goin' to keep me alive, I'd sooner be dead," roared Daddy.

Nurse Graham sighed. She saw herself getting hopelessly behindhand with the ward work as the result of this unnecessary interruption. "Do you know, Daddy," she began in a wistful tone that she hoped would touch his hard heart—"if you would only realise that you are keeping me from my work. There are several men waiting now for their poultices."

Daddy smiled in a disagreeable way. "I bet they ain't witin' for 'em. You clap 'em on too 'ot for that. When your skin's bin took off by a poultice, 'tain't likely you'll arst for another."

"Then, there are all the four-hourly temperatures to take," continued Nurse Graham, ignoring his remark.

Daddy looked round the ward, and an injured expression came over his face. "Why, 'alf of 'em's asleep. It beats me 'oller why you can't let 'em be without worritin' of 'em to death."

"Well, what about this medicine?" Nurse Graham spoke a trifle impatiently.

"Look 'ere," said Daddy in a stage whisper, "I won't split on you if you'll give it to the bloke in the next bed. 'E looks a bit pasty. I reckon it would tone 'im up a bit, so as 'e could get through the winter." He chortled maliciously.

"Daddy, I have no time to play. I think you are the most tiresome old man I ever came across!" exclaimed Nurse Graham, with righteous indignation.

"Well, you needn't wite. Put it on the locker and go 'w'y," replied Daddy, with tantalising calmness.

"Don't you see it won't be a two o'clock medicine if I do that?"

"Well, it'll be a three o'clock one. What's the odds?"

Just as Nurse Graham's stock of patience had become exhausted she espied the bulky form of a woman with a flabby, pallid countenance peeping in at the ward door. Daddy saw her, too, for a change came over his face. This apparition (of a substantial order), arrayed in a mauve blouse and a lemon-coloured chip straw hat, struck a chill to his heart.

"That's my old 'oman," he said, in a dejected voice.

"I suppose you want to see her," remarked Nurse Graham, secretly amused at his apparent discomfiture.

"Can't you say as how visitors ain't allowed just now, and she can leave my washin' and go 'ome?" suggested Daddy, looking anxiously at her.

Nurse Graham saw her opportunity. "If you'll drink up this medicine I'll get rid of her," she said in a low voice.

He swallowed it like a lamb.

How to Help the Hospital.

Mrs. Edward Handley, the wife of the popular President of the Royal United Hospital, Bath, is the originator of a most useful scheme for providing the hospital with every item of ward linen, blankets, and flannel comforts, a scheme which has already been taken up by many ladies, the last of which we note is in connection with the Lowestoft Hospital. The association is formed as follows:—

"There is a president, working in conjunction with the Matron of the hospital, whose duty it is to inform the several vice-presidents, residing in different districts, of the number and character of the articles required. The vice-presidents are responsible for dividing the work among the associates attached to their several districts, and for collecting the subscriptions. There is a nominal entrance of 1s., one entrance only being required for any family, and an annual subscription of 1s. 6d. to be paid when the work is sent in. Each associate is required to make two articles during the year, and to provide the material according to arrangement with the vice-president. The money collected by entrance fees and subscriptions is devoted to the purchase of blankets and such articles as cannot be made by the associates."

During a visit to the Bath Hospital the Matron showed us with pride the large cupboards, stacked to the ceiling with beautiful linen and warm garments, all most neatly marked ready for use. These gifts save the hospital finances large sums yearly.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)