

Our Foreign Letter.

IN AN ITALIAN HOSPITAL.

(Concluded from page 307).



with Galimberti, then others. He was taken prisoner by Menelik and kept for months, chained in a sitting position. He got malaria, went on to pleurisy, and is now far ahead with constant hæmoptysis. Brizio is short, but very broadly built, and, though now bent, has still immense width of thorax. His cough can be heard all over the hospital, and brought me down from my room during the hours of silence, as it sounded as if he must have broken every blood vessel in his lungs. He frightened away a heart case in twenty-four hours, but no one seems able to induce him to attempt to control or modify the terrible rending cough. Probably that is due to his having the morphine habit well developed, poor fellow. Dr. T— ordered him forty drops this morning, and at evening rounds told me I might leave him the bottle, so that he might take another forty drops if necessary during the night. They want to let him down gently, for he looks very wild and talks of going out and killing himself if there be no improvement in a few days time.

August 11th.—I found the morphine bottle empty. Brizio had taken nearly two hundred drops during the night, but seemed none the worse, except for talking more incessantly. He is really an impossible patient, thinking himself a *personage*.

As I feared, Giovanni has decided to go home when his mother comes to-morrow. He will continue the cure, he says, with the *medico di condotto*, but that is not likely, and as it is not believed in one cannot even urge it with conviction.

August 17th.—Brizio has been rather better, without hæmorrhage for four days and without morphine for two. It was piteous to see his efforts to be reasonable, *i.e.*, not to talk, not to cough loudly, and not to take morphine. But last night he had hæmorrhage again, and was in such a state of abject misery this morning that over an *ergot hypodermic* (given, happily, by the doctor) he had a nervous collapse, trembling and crying like a child. His mother is in Naples, and sat by him consoling him after this crisis. He has now set his hopes on returning to his native town somewhere in Piemonte, and begged me to persuade his mother that this was the only way to save him.

It seemed best to ask the Chief what course to take, so I told him of the man's craving for home, and asked if he advised his going. He gave his benevolent smile as he answered, "Che vuole, it might do

him good; mountain air might diminish the hæmoptysis. But I cannot tell him to go; it would seem like wanting to get rid of him." I thought how nice it was of him not to do as so many—*i.e.*, send dying patients to die elsewhere—and went to tell the poor fellow that the Chief thought native mountain air would be good for him. His mother was with him, and told me there was a new little hospital with six nuns and few or no patients in their town; so he hopes to go there, and that the nuns will look after him better than we have done. He is very observant, and had expressed to me his opinion that our work, "though most laudable," was imperfect, so long as we left no one to continue to supervise the *infermieri* at night. Of course, I quite agreed with him, and only hope that in time Sister will manage to have nurses at night, but—*ci vuol tempo*—they must first be trained, and poor Brizio wants attention now at once.

August 25th.—Brizio has left for his home, having improved considerably the last week. As he goes by sea to Genoa, we hope the journey will not do much harm, whilst he will certainly be far happier amongst his *compatrioti*. There is a wide difference in character and temperament between Piemontese and Neapolitans, as, of course, there is between Suffolk and Highland folk at home.

Two new *alunne aspiranti*—would-be probationers—came to-day to ask admission to the Blue Cross Nursing School. The *Direttrice* of S. Orsola saw them with me; being Neapolitan herself she judges well their characters. One is a doctor's wife, and says she wants to learn nursing so as to be of use to patients who are brought in seriously ill, and find her husband out. This sounds more like need of "first aid" studies! but we imagine that it is a Neapolitan way of explaining a desire to do what is considered here an unladylike thing. Nursing is still looked on as fitting employment only for servants or nuns, as a matter of trade or of religious vocation. As Signora Morana's example will be of use in encouraging better class girls to come forward, Pssa. S— wishes us to accept her. There are now seven *aspiranti* waiting for examination trial on Sister's return; so that, with the three who already had begun, we may hope for at least eight probationers to start the first course of nursing.

August 30th.—My days are now numbered. Sister G— returns to-morrow, and I leave for Rome on the 6th, as that will give me time to hand over the wards to her and help arrange things for the school.

September 1st.—We left Hospital early, so as to get to S. Orsola in time for the examination of new pupils. Only one proved too uneducated to be accepted, writing "o dartato" instead of "no tardato," and so on. But as she seemed morally a nice young woman, Sister is going to write and advise her to study for a few months and then apply again.

September 4th.—The doctor's wife, Signora Morana, came with me to Sala I. this morning, Sister G— having two other new pupils in the woman's ward. It is not thought advisable to put any unmarried girls yet in the male wards, so Sister will take two at a time in turns in the woman's ward, until she sees what they are like, &c.

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