

you, as remember it is only you who is fortunate enough to have gained admission into the house. "No," you say, "wait a minute. I have not half finished looking at the exterior. How many windows can we see? One on each side of the front door, French windows on the right hand side leading on to the lawn; three above—one each side, and one over the front door (the latter evidently on the landing); and lastly two small ones, one on each side, which perhaps would hardly be noticed if it was not for the snow-white short curtains, drawn back with red ribbons, and dark red long curtains drawn slightly over the windows and contrasting well with the grey venetian blinds." "Now may I ring?" "Yes," you answer, and after pulling an electric bell I leave you, not before hearing you say, "The old proverb says, 'Judge the folks by the exterior.' Well, I hope I may find it so."

The door is opened by a tall neat-looking young woman, who asks you to follow her across a very tasty hall. You cannot stop to gaze, but you notice under your feet is a charmingly soft carpet, and you pass a case of choice ferns. Now you are in a very small room at the back of the house, and the servant has only just left the door when you dart up from your seat to examine, and imagine, if you can, what room this is. There is not much furniture, but what there is looks good. Two small writing tables, a sofa, two easy chairs, and a substantial-looking bookcase well filled. What room can this be? Oh! the Matron's, of course. Matrons always do look after No. 1. No disrespect, you say to yourself, when the door opens and No. 1 is before you.

"I am glad you have come," she says, approaching you to shake hands, adding, "Let me see, you are to stay a month, I think. Well, come and take off your things; you must be rather tired."

You follow, and as you are partially behind her you can catch some idea of what she is like in personal appearance. Not good-looking, but a kind face; dark, rather stout, tall, and age—"Well," you say, "I am not a good one at guessing age; but I should say not under thirty years or over sixty."

Only up one flight of stairs you follow, and you are on a broad, square landing with three doors. The one on the right is your room. You enter, and No. 1 is going to leave you alone, but stays to say, "Come down when you like; but do not hurry, Nurse. I had that small fire put for you to-night, in case you preferred to be quiet the first evening. And now be sure you make yourself quite at home."

"Thank you," you say, and you are alone to look round your room, which you see, on going to the window, looks on to the back of the house, facing a tennis court. How delightful and cosy!

The bed, which is a small one, is iron (black enamel), and a snow-white quilt and white drapings round the foot are its only ornament. Not any curtains? No; they are not healthy. "Never mind," you say, "it looks lovely without." A chest of drawers, the top of which is covered with a white toilet, and on which stands a Bible, Prayer Book, and a small brass candlestick; a table draped with pale blue art muslin, two chairs, and a wooden washstand with a blue china service, completes the furniture of the room. There is not much carpet—three strips (one each side of the bed, and one by the fire-place). Yes, I think that is all. No, stay! some thoughtful hand has placed a tiny table in front of my window, with a vase of fresh-cut flowers. "How kind! I wonder who it is? Perhaps, after all, I judged No. 1 too quickly; anyhow, when I go down I will thank her!" is what you say, half aloud.

Now for unpacking. "How nice it seems to know that after so much work will come one month's rest, and freedom to do exactly how I like in the way of spending each day; but I must hurry, for it is five o'clock," and with these thoughts you commence placing your few small fancy treasures about the room, and your articles of clothing away. This done, you are about to stir the fire, when your attention is drawn to a neatly printed card over the mantle-shelf, and you read:—

#### HINTS TO THOSE WHO STAY IN THE RETREAT.

As only six members are admitted into the Retreat at one time, it is hoped each member will endeavour to make it a home in the truest sense by conforming to the undermentioned few regulations:—

(1) Meals.—Breakfast, 8.30; dinner, 1.30; tea, six p.m.; supper, nine p.m.

(2) Prayers are read daily by the Matron at eight a.m. and 9.30 p.m. Everyone able is requested to attend.

(3) Every Nurse who is able is expected to make her bed and dust her room after breakfast every day.

(4) Boots for cleaning to be left outside the bed-room door over night.

(5) Washing to be paid for by the Nurse, this being the only item of expenditure during her stay in the Home.

(6) Gas is turned off in the sitting rooms at 10.30 p.m., and as a safeguard from fire every inmate is requested to put out her candle by eleven o'clock.

(7) For the comfort of Nurses a small room has been set apart for anyone wishing to be alone or quiet for an hour while writing, &c., and to ensure this comfort the Matron requests that not more than two persons use the room at one time.

(8) Each inmate is requested to use furniture, &c., as carefully as if it was her personal belongings, remembering that the expense of keeping the home in good condition is great.

I fancy I hear you say aloud, "Good rules, especially No. 7, which, of course, explains what room that was."

You have not noticed how very quickly the time has passed since you commenced unpacking,

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