

were about twenty ladies taking tea, and, as it happened, there were no men present. Someone had just come from visiting a friend who was in a nursing home; so the conversation ran upon operations. They all seemed to have had very serious ones, with the exception of one lady, a fat, fair dame of fifty, who seemed distressed at not being able to relate any terrible experience of her own until a dreadful woman, with a penetrating voice, described her sufferings when she had hysterectomy done.

Then the fair and portly one beamed, and gasped out in a tremendous hurry, "I had a little dog once, such a dear, little dog, and she had just that operation, and the poor, little dear died."

I could not put on an expression serious enough for the occasion, so left the room.

Another day I listened to the various conversations in the drawing-room. It was raining, so we had more than the usual number indoors, and, having no one to talk with, I took notes.

"Have you been to any of the Suffragette meetings, Miss Brown?"

"Oh, no, Major. I think the Suffragettes are dreadful women!"

"I quite agree with you, and I think if some of them were sent to China it would be a good thing. There they would learn how well off women are in England. Women are of no account there; they throw the girl babies into the river."

"So I have heard, but is it true? Did you ever see them do it?"

"Yes; I got a good snapshot once."

"How horrible! I wonder the people who do it are not haunted for the rest of their lives."

"I don't know that it is so horrible. It is better that they should be drowned than grow up Suffragettes."

Here the two were interrupted by half a dozen newcomers, and the conversation turned on rinking and the various injuries they and their friends had received when pursuing this pastime. One lady still had her arm in a sling as the result of an accident a month before. I turned my attention to a little party sitting in a palm-sheltered corner.

"Then the nurse gave her opium."

"Really, Lady Helen? How wicked!"

"Yes; and she was a trained nurse, too, with excellent testimonials. Of course the poor darling died."

I had heard this story before, so moved away. I found a comfortable seat near a remarkably healthy-looking woman, who seemed to be doing most of the talking in her small circle.

"I am trying the sour milk cure now," she

said, "and it is doing me ever so much good."

"My dear Mrs. Launay," said one of her hearers impressively, "pray do not take too much sour milk. I have heard that it causes cancer. Why not try Sanatogen? So safe, you know, and so good for the nerves."

"Oh, I don't believe in things giving you cancer. If we believed all those stories we should die of starvation. I went without salt once for six months because someone told me that it caused cancer; then Charles turned vegetarian, because meat is said to cause cancer; and we left off fish, because that gives one leprosy. We must not have oysters for fear of typhoid, and milk is not safe, as it may come from a tubercular cow—and, you know, with my nerves, it is absolutely essential that I should eat plenty of good nourishing food."

I turned from the nervous lady to listen to a merry party recounting their adventures at a recent ball; but they soon went out for a walk in the rain, and again I heard the voice of the authority on diet. She had given up foods by this time, and was discussing doctors.

"I have never met such clever doctors anywhere else; they are simply wonderful. One man of whom I heard got blood-poisoning, and the poison spread over the whole of his body. Of course, had he been anywhere else he must have died; but this doctor simply drew all the poison out of his body to one finger, and then amputated the finger!"

General chorus of, "How very wonderful!"

To return to my own patients. My last one, who was nearly seventy, never talked of anything but diseases. She said she had had chorea of the brain; and when she was a child she had mumps, but hers were worse than most peoples, because she had them in her stomach. She thought it was due to the carelessness of her wet nurse, who, she was sure, had neglected her most shamefully.

I am now longing for a dumb patient who cannot write, so that I can have a rest from diseases.

Of course there are exceptions, even among patients, who take an interest in something beside diseases. I heard the other day of a charming lady, who said when her nurse first arrived—"You know I don't want a nurse exactly. What I want is a well-educated lady to be a companion to me—one who would slip off her skirt, put on a coarse apron, and scrub a room out!"

M. H.

Miss Janet Stewart sends £2 2s. 6d. for the State Registration Fund, "an object so dear to her late sister's heart."

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