

"Go in for Bart's. Go in for Bart's."

At last in desperation I sat up in bed and said aloud quite solemnly:

"I am terribly tired. If you will let me go to sleep I *promise* I will go in for Bart's."

Then I slept.

When I awoke I felt strangely disturbed. The whole incident flashed across my mind. I had solemnly entered into a contract with an invisible force, and must keep my pledge. In the broad light of day the presumption and absurdity of an unknown young person, who had not yet completed three years' hospital service, calmly proposing to assume the Blue Ribbon of the Nursing World, was sufficiently evident to me. What well deserved ridicule would be the result of such presumption!

Nevertheless, I did not intend to break my word.

So, when dressed, across to Rachel Ward I went, where my friend Cassandra Beachcroft must be made acquainted with this folly.

I told her the facts.

Very sprightly, and full of wit and grit, was this Sister Rachel. We cackled in chorus in our light-hearted way. We thoroughly enjoyed the joke, and then we sobered down.

"Apply I must," I sighed dolefully. "I have *promised* the spirits."

"Of course," said Rachel, and that settled it.

"What shall you do?" she inquired.

"Go straight to the fountain head, of course," I answered. "To-morrow morning I shall call upon the Treasurer of St. Bartholomew's Hospital."

And I did.

(To be continued.)

How An Ex-Nurse is Privileged to Spend Sunday Morning.

I live in the country, some distance from church, and look on it as a great privilege if I can manage to get there twice a month in time for the midday Communion (about 11.45); for I have a delicate husband, three little children, and a very young maid. On this particular Sunday morning I was up betimes, saw to the children's dressing operations and their breakfasts, bathed my baby, made an apple pie, and put the rest of the dinner that it *could* not get spoiled, whatever my maid did or did not. Then a casual putting tidy of the bedrooms, for we do no work we are not obliged, and at last I hurry over my dressing.

I am putting on my gloves at the front room window, preparatory to starting, when—what

do I see? A child on the opposite pavement choking, nearly black in the face! Has it whooping cough, or what? Off go my gloves, I tear across, seize the child, and run indoors, followed by the big brother, aged about ten. The little patient might be three. I get a finger down the throat, but the obstruction is too far down to move with it. What do I feel—is it a pin or a fishbone? Soothingly I tell the child I will make her better while I get out my forceps, long since disused; but in my cottage it is a long way to boiling water, so down they go as they are. They were put away clean, and I will not say what I have seen even doctors do in emergencies!

Fortunately the pin (a very large one, which we, as children, would have christened a "pig-sticker") was bent, and I was able with very little trouble to extract it. Then I swabbed the throat with boracic and glycerine, and with an orange to compensate for the other evils, I sent the children on their way to their own home.

Now for church. Have I time to get there? As I am washing my hands, my little girl runs in and tells me, breathlessly, "Mother, Charlie (2½), has killed a baby outside with a stone! It must be dead, coz its face is covered with blood!" Down I rush and haul a little blood-stained mortal of about 14 months from its pram, and carry it through to the kitchen. Oh! my poor Sunday-best frock!

My maid gets me a basin, cotton wool, boracic, old rag and bandages, and then I send her to stop the din the two elder children in charge of the pram are making outside the house.

The ablutions (how needed!) show me there is a ½-inch cut close over the temple, and I prepare some old hospital "bread and butter" of boracic ointment on linen for future occasions. A neat little head bandage, a clean bonnet, frock, and pinafore belonging to my children, and the baby is quite presentable. The old stained garments are put in a parcel, some dressings in another, and all the children get oranges and biscuits, the baby a cup of milk, and I send them off with a letter of apology to their mother for the misdoings of my young hopeful.

Then come *his* bad few minutes with Daddy, and never again have I had cause to complain of him, even if other "swanks" (as he calls them) began it!

No doctor lives nearer than a good half hour's walk from my house, so I try to refrain from being disappointed at having to wait another fortnight for my service.

ALEXIA.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)