

Charlotte hurried through the archway with the information that "there were three gentlemen coming down the ward." The trio just then appeared, and proved to be our Chairman, Mr. John Henry Buxton, Sir Sydney Waterlow, and (as I learned later), Mr. Cross!

Mr. Buxton explained that Sir Sydney Waterlow would like to be shown the ward. I murmured "charmed," and "I will just wash my hands," which I proceeded to do in the Lobby, then slipping on my cuffs we began a grand tour.

"You won't mind my looking inside drawers and cupboards?" said Sir Sydney. Mind! Rather not. I have always been a very "house proud" person, with a passion for "spring cleaning" all the year round. I had, therefore, allotted to myself in my division of labour the insides of all cupboards outside the four wards. I scrubbed and papered them, dusted and arranged their contents. I liked little orderly schemes in all my arrangements. I must be able to put my hand on a required article in the dark, and by instinct I waged a ceaseless war on dust, long before I realised that death lurked in its particles. Imagine, therefore, with what pleasure I opened these sanctums. Drawers, lockers, and cupboards were all inspected, and duly admired. And then I was questioned about the patients, and the reply of "little Empyema" as to whether "she was comfortable?" that "that ain't to be expected, but I'm 'appy," was testimony greatly in my favour. At "Adelaide" door these kind visitors bid me good-bye, Sir Sydney shaking me warmly by the hand, and expressing himself as "very pleased with your ward, Sister, very pleased, indeed."

You can imagine what fun we had at dinner that day—how I tantalised the dear ladies about my visitors, and when I revealed their identity how with persiflage and mock obeisance they insisted upon my being served first. Then we had another spell of quiet, until one morning I received a fateful letter in which I was informed that I was a selected candidate for the vacant post of Matron and Superintendent of Nursing to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and politely requested to attend a meeting of the Committee on a certain Thursday at no distant date.

I knew slightly one of the Sisters at "Bart's," and about this time I paid her a visit, and spoke with her on the all important matter. From her I learned that "the old Sisters wouldn't stand it for a moment," and, moreover, that "it was a foregone conclusion that Miss V— was to have the post."

Other funny things happened.

I received letters of discouragement from un-

known persons. One advised me "for your own sake to retire gracefully from so conspicuous a position, and cease competing with Matrons of experience for a post for which your age and appearance entirely disqualify you."

"Why?" I demanded in a somewhat pugnacious reply, and I quoted the exploits of David and Goliath, *le petit Corporal*, Pitt and the Premiership, and the perspicacity of Victoria in her teens!

And of course I did not retire.

Then dawned that dreaded Thursday, and with the dawn, I, poor mortal, awoke to the sound of heart thumps, with every vital nerve a quiver.

Ah! for the psychological system of the heroine of romance. Come life, come death, what cares *she*? Pale and imperturbable, she scorns the pranks of Fate.

Whilst I—in spite of "Tofield"—looked years younger than I *felt*.

Face alone the terrible ordeal at "Bart's" I could not, so Sister Rachel went with me, and it was a very chastened little person, who, seated with fellow victims in the Renter's office, awaited interrogation. It only required that the tocsin should sound—a tumbril rumble under the archway—a key grate in the lock—a *sansculotte* . . . But why dwell on the torture of suspense? Anticipation is a graceless jade—if only I had known—

But we never do.

(To be concluded.)

## Industrial Betterment.

In a note on *Industrial Betterment Progress* touches on the beneficent schemes for work-people of Messrs. Fr. Bayer and Co., at Leverkusen. Great liberality is shown in their provision for sickness. Not only is medical advice given free, but a Polyclinic has been provided for the treatment of ordinary cases, and a Lying-in Hospital for the wives of workmen, who receive attention, not only during their confinement, but until they are convalescent, and the domestic duties which at such times they themselves are unable to perform, are performed by special helpers sent to their homes at the cost of the firm. In addition to the contribution to the National Sick Insurance required from the employer by law, Messrs. Bayer contribute an extra 50 per cent. Workmen's wives and children requiring change of air are sent to some country resort. Four doctors are regularly employed by the firm, in addition to eleven club doctors.

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