

less tubercular nowadays. Your lungs are slightly touched."

Then this was the awful truth which I had suspected myself for some time, but had abstained from finding out definitely by making inquiries. In some ways it is better to have doubts as to whether one is suffering from some fell malady than to know it for certain. I felt like one doomed. That famous picture, "Sentence of Death," where a young man is represented sitting in a Doctor's consulting room, and staring into vacancy, having just been told he was suffering from some fatal disease, flashed across my mind. At any rate, there was no use being down in the mouth over it. One must die sometime, and better to do so like a gentleman than start whining about it. I determined to feign indifference.

"What's the programme now?" I inquired.

"Dr. Trefern says you must have absolute rest and plenty of good food. He advises that you should go *at once* to a small sanatorium in Blankshire, which he recommends. He thinks very favourably of your case."

"How long will I have to stay at this exciting place?"

"Oh, he thinks perhaps five months. It all depends on how quickly you get well."

There was no help for it. I must resign myself to Fate, and there was this merit about the step about to be taken, that nothing was undecided, and undoubtedly it was the best thing to do. But, to think of it—to spend the next five months of my existence in a *Consumptive Home* (to put it in plain English!) and perhaps to—but I must keep that idea out of my mind.

Accordingly on the following day, after a two hours' motor drive from London, I found myself feeling pretty cheap, and worn out, sitting in an easy chair in the study at *Mount Pleasant*—mighty pleasant!—Sanatorium. Presently, Dr. Williams came in. He was a genial soul, and had a fine breezy manner. Two little fox terriers accompanied him. More questions about my health and condition, and then conversation, in which owing to lassitude I ceased to interest myself, between my father and the Doctor, in which the words "open air," "good food," "quiet," "temperature," occurred very frequently.

Presently a pretty girl, looking very fresh and smart in her neat hospital uniform, looked in.

"Allow me to introduce the new patient—Nurse Thompson!" said the Doctor.

Already I began to feel more reconciled to my lot.

"Come along, and I'll show you your shelter," she said.

I had always thought of a shelter as a gruesome, mournful sort of place where consumptives passed their last hours. Instead of that I beheld a cheerful, sunny room with canvas sides which could be let down at will. There was a comfortable wicker-work chair in one corner, a big cupboard containing a washing-basin, etc., in another, a mahogany chair in another, and in the centre—last but not least—a most comfortable looking bed with a little table on each side of the head. On the top of the cupboard were two huge vases of sweet pea, which scented the little apartment with their pleasant odour. The floor was covered with a linoleum of a pretty pattern, and which harmonised very well with the light blue distemper of the framework of my bedroom. Altogether a most inviting *studio*!

I soon popped into bed, and when snugly ensconced between the snowy sheets, felt more comfortable than I had for days. This then was the dreaded "San!" Well, what with reading, playing patience, and chats with the Doctor and Nurse, I reckoned I would be able to pass the time quite comfortably.

There was a knock at the door, and the Nurse came in and let down two whole sides of the shelter. It was very pleasant, the summer breezes came wafting in, and through the open sides I had an enchanting view of meadows, trees, hills and dales, and far away a picturesque old country church just showing over the surrounding foliage on a distant mound. To my consternation, I noticed Nurse Thompson calmly collecting all my clothes into a bundle.

"What are you going to do with those?" I asked.

"I'm going to take them away into the house."

"Why?"

"Oh, to keep *you* from rambling and to keep your clothes dry," she said with a smile.

"Drastic measures to keep your patients here! I thought this place was called *Mount Pleasant*?"

She laughed—"Oh, it's a merry place right enough, but we must not take any risks with our precious charges."

At any rate, I thought to myself, it would be difficult to be lugubrious with such a jolly lively little sprite running round.

I felt a bit of a shock when my father came out to say "good-bye," as I had reckoned on his staying in the neighbourhood for about a week. However, he said Dr. Williams had been very firm about his going away. According to the Doctor I was to have absolute quiet, and apparently, my father was supposed to exercise a disturbing influence over me.

"Good-bye, my boy! and I hope to find you

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