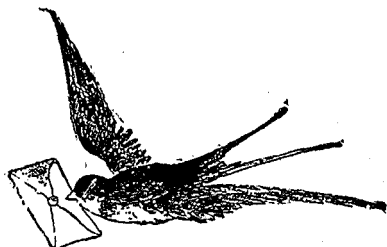


Our Foreign Letter.

SOME INTERESTING CASES OF SMALL-POX IN THE EAST.

(Concluded from page 195.)



But I have another case of small-pox to tell you of, with a less favourable ending to it. This patient was a German woman whose husband kept a restaurant in the German colony. She had been a patient in our hospital several times on previous occasions, chiefly when suffering from malaria or rheumatism. She was a very charming person, and we were all very fond of her. I have never met anyone with such clever fingers. She could do the finest embroidery with the most beautiful coloured silks, mend the patient's uniforms, or the nurses' stockings, and could even make her husband's boots. Directly she got well on each of these occasions the request always came, "Now, Sister, give me something to do, for anybody, only give me some work." She was a delightful patient, and we were always sorry to say good-bye to her though we knew we should often see her galloping about on her horse, at such a rate, as if her life depended on it. Riding was her favourite amusement when the house-work was done, such a house! always clean and pretty.

Imagine my distress when one evening a patient was carried into the ward during a torrent of rain and I was told it was Frau Schmidt, who was very seriously ill, so ill that her doctor had said, "You must go to the English Hospital to-night, in spite of the rain; get there as fast as you can." Her husband and a friend came with her, and she was so covered with clothes that at first she looked like a polar bear, as on the top of numberless garments her husband had put a sheep-skin. I lost no time in undressing her and putting her to bed, and fortunately, as will be seen later, in a ward by herself. Her teeth were chattering, and she complained of feeling cold and shivery, and implored me not to leave her, saying how glad she was to be with us again, but that she felt so ill and thought she was going to die. I had no intention of leaving her, for I felt sure she was indeed very ill. One of the foreign doctors came up to tell me about the case, and said: "This may be influenza with a rash; there are some reported cases of this sort in the German colony, like those two years ago. I have just heard a report of a different case also, and only hope this is not S.P. (small-pox); it is just possible it may be the climacteria." I took the temperature, and on looking at the thermometer saw that it was covered with blood. The temperature was 100 degs. Fahr. Blood was freely oozing from the back of the throat and nose, there was also very severe uterine hæmorrhage, and on a very gentle but thorough examination large bruise-like patches

were discovered in the groins, flexures of joints, buttocks, etc. It was then seen how very grave was the nature of the disease; it was unmistakably a case of purpura variolosa (malignant small-pox), and as is well known, these cases are nearly always fatal. Night came and the doctors came and went, doing all they could, and I ought to have gone off duty at 10 p.m., but midnight struck and I was still sitting beside this poor woman with her hand in mine. I had promised her I would not leave her. There was nothing else to be done, for there was no one to take my place. "And if I know you are there, and won't leave me, I might drop off to sleep, and then how nice it would be," said the poor woman in her pretty foreign way. She dozed a little and then talked again very slowly. "Strange, isn't it, Sister," she said, "since I gave refreshment to the baker boy, who came thirsty to my door, I have felt ill like this? Someone said he'd had some illness, too, it may be."

And then she dozed again. The mind when awake was quite clear, as is nearly always the case even to the end. The hæmorrhage became more profuse, the dark violet patches deeper and larger. Ergot and hazeline were tried, but with very little benefit in the way of checking the hæmorrhage, which was often so great I feared the patient would sink from exhaustion. It was very difficult to give nourishment, which was limited to little sips of champagne, dissolved Brand's essence, a little milk and soda-water, and small pieces of ice. Morning dawned, and with it came the doctors. There was nothing to be done. "Just go on the same," they said. They did not know I had been on duty all the previous day and all night, and it was impossible to spare two nurses for this contagious case, so I prayed for strength to be able to "just go on the same," knowing it could not be for very long. And that day passed with very little change in the patient, only that she was getting weaker. The German Pastor came to the ward door in the afternoon and just said a few words of comfort to the poor woman. I looked at him in, I suppose, an astonished sort of way, and he said: "Yes, I must not go near the bed; I have my family and all my flock to think of. Do you not know what it is, Sister? One of the worst cases of black small-pox. God protect you!" And then he went on his way. Night came again and Frau Schmidt grew restless, but was very quiet, only saying every now and then: "You won't let me die, Sister? I couldn't leave my Paul; he has no one but me." "I shall do all I can, dear," I replied; and as she looked frightened added, "God is greater than our fears."

Her husband came about 9 o'clock, and I made him up a sort of sofa in one of the corridor recesses, where he could rest all night and come to the ward when his wife wanted him. There wasn't much to do; only to keep awake now was the difficulty, so I made very strong coffee, which I had on a table just outside the ward where poor Frau Schmidt lay, and early in the morning I found someone had put tea ready for me, just when I seemed to need it most, for I was very sleepy. Herr Schmidt came to the ward and said: "Oh, I am sure my dear one looks a little better to-day," and hearing his

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