

indulge in long fits of weeping, and curse her fate for having brought her to this "dull existence," full of regrets that she would never go back to the footlights again. "Yes, I know," she said one day, "know that often I hadn't a cent, and it was jolly hard often, but, hang it all, this place is so dull, I've jumped from Scylla to Charybdis; I want to dance and sing, and hear the people clap. Oh! if I could hear them once again!" And then a light came into her eyes that seemed to illumine her whole face, as if she were suddenly inspired. And, without further notice, we were listening to selections from "Carmen," "Mignon," "La Fille du Régiment," etc., etc., and the whole ward was hushed into the most absolute silence—for a minute—then followed a perfect furor of applause. "Oh, they're clapping," cried Nita, suddenly overcome, her face flushed with excitement, and the tears in her eyes. "Oh, it's lovely! I can almost see the footlights." Then she lay back on her pillows exhausted, and soon fell asleep.

Nita was no longer "dull," she had her audience now, even in hospital, and as nearly all of the patients were convalescent and able to help themselves, most attention was given to Nita; she was the only one in that ward about whom the doctors were really anxious; any sudden shock or disappointment might be fatal any moment, they said, as the heart was simply played out. And so it came about that the poor girl who had often been without shelter for the night, and had more than once been found on the Embankment, became a sort of queen in the ward, whose lightest whim was now a command. Soon she would be far beyond all earthly help or care," and "Sister" was so longing to speak to her about "the life that knows no ending." Great tact was required with Nita! however, on Good Friday the Chaplain came and in simple words told the patients the "Old, old, story" of Christ's great love and death upon the Cross, and long he dwelt on the words, "That we through Him might live." Nita listened very attentively until the hymn was announced, "There is a green hill far away." The patients found it in the books which had been handed to them, and "Sister" played the tune over, when Nita exclaimed, "That's the wrong tune; we'll have Gounod's," and in low, rich tones she sang the hymn all through, alone. Her mother, who was constantly with her, was sitting beside her bed, and for a moment, the girl seemed to be unconscious of the presence of anyone else. "I was quite a tiny little mite when you taught me the words, mother, wasn't I?" she said, "and then I learnt the music and sang it in a church; oh, that's long ago." Then, turning her face to the patients, she said, "Let's sing the second verse again; I'll lead. Now, all together:

"He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go, at last, to Heaven,  
Saved by His precious blood."

All joined in this verse, led by Nita, and many eyes were full of tears, when Nita exclaimed, impulsively, "How good it was of Him! He's forgiven even me. I do hope we shall all be there. I shall want you all, you Sister, and Chaplain, and

all the lot of you. I'm sure there'll be music up there, and, oh, perhaps they'll let me sing a solo, sometimes! and now I must rest, for on Easter morning I want to sing 'Oh, rest in the Lord' to you all. I once sang that in a church, too, years ago, but it's all come back to me now." The next day she was very quiet, but very happy with her mother sitting beside her. Sometimes they would talk softly together for a while. "When I get well, mother darling," Nita was saying, "I shall never leave you again; we'll have a little room together, and perhaps I can join a choir and sing on Sundays in a church. Won't it be lovely and you'll be quite near, listening to me, and then I shan't go wrong any more." Poor Nita! she was barely four and twenty, but worn out by sin and suffering. And so they talked, these two, then a long pause, and Nita fell asleep. She did not sleep well through the night, but was quite calm, and often as the Night Sister passed her with shaded lamp in hand she smiled, and once said, "Won't it be beautiful if they let me join the choir?" Next morning she complained of feeling very tired, and took very little breakfast, but was looking forward to the service to be held in the ward. "Sister" had brought an Easter egg in the shape of a small present for each patient, and a flush of pleasure came into Nita's cheeks when she saw hers, a copy of the song she was to sing, "O, rest in the Lord." Then the Chaplain and choir boys came, singing softly as they entered the ward, "Jesus Christ is risen to-day." Nita's face was radiant as she scanned each youthful chorister, and when the hymn was finished, she exclaimed, in her quick way, "Oh, sing another! I want—'Jesus triumphant,'—and then—I'll sing to you 'O, rest in the Lord.'" Very eagerly she listened to every word of that beautiful hymn, and as the last note ceased she suddenly raised herself and called out in a clear but broken voice, "Jesus is triumphant," and with a sigh she fell back on her pillows. The doctor and "Sister," who were both at the service, went at once to her, but the tired heart had ceased to beat, and Nita, with her fingers still twined round the scroll of music, was at "rest in the Lord."

SISTER MARIE.

### Norwich Union Life Assurance Society.

We are glad to learn from the Norwich Union Life Assurance Society, which uses this Journal as a medium for bringing its advantages to the notice of trained nurses, that as a result inquiries have been received and policies issued, and at the present moment they are in negotiations with a hospital in India. A commencement may be made by setting aside quite a small amount, and we have pleasure in directing the attention of nurses to this opportunity for investment. Nothing gives a greater sense of security for old age than a nest egg safely put away.

Particulars may be obtained from Mr. F. Bate, King's Cross Branch, 25, Euston Road, N.W.

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