

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

THE BOOK OF THE WEEK:

"DR. TUPPY." *

In "Dr. Tuppy," Mr. Stephen Townesend, the talented author of "A Thoroughbred Mongrel," has given us a book which is sure to be widely read and discussed in hospital circles, more especially in the one with which the story is concerned, and the identity of which is scarcely veiled.

When we first become acquainted with Charlie Tuppy, the medical student nicknamed "Dr.," Tuppy by his fellow students, we are inclined to agree with the opinion, endorsed by himself, "Tuppy's a bit of a fool." Surely no student who had been long enough in a hospital to be dresser in a ward, would commit so egregious a *faux-pas* as to offer to tip a Sister. Yet this, Tuppy actually did, "diving into his trousers' pocket for a handful of coins of the realm, from which he selected a florin: 'It's like this, you see; surgical work is quite new to me; I've never dressed before; I told Baxter I was afraid I should give a lot of trouble in the wards, and he said that, in a case like mine, the customary thing was —'"

"Tuppy hesitated, and nervously balanced the florin on the tip of his forefinger.

"The customary thing was?" Sister Mary repeated, drawing back a step, and looking at the coin, askance.

"Well, t-t-to square the Sisters," he stammered.

"With a florin?" she asked, demurely, and lifted her laughing eyes to his.

"Tuppy's perennial smile was once again chastened by the suggestion of a misgiving. He felt there was a mistake somewhere, and attributing it to the smallness of the amount offered, he most dexterously substituted a half-crown.

"Well, Baxter wouldn't specify the exact amount," he replied; "he had such confidence in my tact and discretion, but we mutually agreed, on the ground of delicacy, that it ought to be small."

But, as we become better acquainted with the hero of the story, we agree with the opinion of his friend and house-surgeon, that he is "true and loyal to the back-bone"; and are glad that he and Sister Mary become excellent friends. With Nurse Jessop a warmer relationship than friendship is speedily established, and though no Matron could be expected to approve of a courtship conducted in the wards and fostered by the Sister, we must own to considerable sympathy with the lovers.

We all recognise as "to the life," the description of the visit of the surgeon.

"Sister Mary looked impatiently at the clock; the surgeons ought to have been up at two, and it was now a quarter past. . . . She hated this

waiting about on Parade, and being tied to the front ward door. Not that she wasted time; she employed it in knitting and thinking. . . .

"Ah! there was the lift at last, the babel of students' voices, and the clatter of many feet on the echoing corridor. Mr. Tucker, with the dressers, was about to burst through the doorway, like a huntsman with a pack of hounds at his heels."

Dr. Tuppy lived with a delightful aunt, by whom he had been adopted, to his great advantage, for Canon Tuppy, his father, was an intolerable old autocrat, and his kindly mother something of a nonentity. "Do I know St. Peter's Rectory?" repeated the policeman, in reply to a question from Nurse Jessop; "Lor', yes, miss, we all know it on this beat, and the Canon, too; 'e's so often round at Bow Street, complainin' o' something."

Dr. Tuppy shared his Aunt Eleanor's love of dogs. She was an ardent anti-vivisectionist, this little old lady, "as pretty and delicate and dainty as a beautiful piece of Dresden china. . . . Lady Milner's whole life was devoted to what she always spoke of as 'The Cause,' which, being interpreted, meant the total prohibition of experiments on living animals for scientific purposes. Her whole estimate of character was based on a person's attitude towards this, to her, all-important subject." To her nephew she admitted, "Of course, I know that you can't go preaching these things at the hospital. I'm not unreasonable; all I expect is that whenever the question is mooted, you should boldly hoist your colours, and stick to them."

"Rather!" answered Tuppy, succinctly, "but, either at the hospital or elsewhere, my position is much more difficult to defend than yours."

"Why, Charlie?"

"There's the reason." Tuppy held up a nice crisp piece of bacon on the end of his fork. "You are a vegetarian, I am not; I tried to be, as you know, and with pretty disastrous results. You can talk about the 'rights of animals,' I can't. To do so, whilst I am 'trifling' with a chicken's leg, or toying with a piece of ham, is inconsistent, to say the least of it. As a scientist remarked, in the trial about a famous brown dog, 'if we sacrifice animals for food, why not for education?'"

"But we don't eat dogs, Charlie."

The story of the hero's first and second appearance before the Good Discipline Committee of the hospital must be read in its entirety. Sister Mary proved herself a true friend and an excellent champion, although her championship led to trouble for herself.

The day after the meeting of the Good Discipline Committee, "the little Sister was up betimes, and by a quarter-to-nine had not only stolen half-an-hour's march on her work, but had finished her breakfast. At the very moment that the hospital clock chimed the three-quarters, she heard a knock at her doorway.

"Come in, Mr. Tuppy; I'm delighted to see you."

* Hodder & Stoughton: London, New York, and Toronto.

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