

the doorway. Its architect is Mr. Fred Crickly and we were told that Miss Wright has given great thought to all details submitted by him. The creams and browns of the plaques on its walls with their beautiful representations of the Mother and Child, harmonise with the brown brick walls, and with these last the soft green draperies of the altar are in complete harmony. The Frontal is eminently well chosen with its spring flowers embroidered low on each panel—hyacinths and daffodils rising from masses of crocuses and short green grass. The dainty silver Communion plate is of an old design and was given by a friend of Miss Wright, the cross and candlesticks shine against the hangings which have a softness and uncertainty of colouring that seems to make them take to themselves something of the shining of the gifts on the altar with its beautiful flowers. Simplicity is the keynote of this Chapel of the Children—the Chapel of the Holy Shepherd it is named—and yet the moment you enter it you are struck with the lovely harmony of the whole; this alone should bring about the mood of reverence, wonder and worship with which Miss Wright would have that ever changing and ever increasing congregation of small folk come to pray.

I. M.

A TRUE TALE WITH A MORAL.

THE OPTIMIST.

It is good to have a long and retentive memory, because humanity is so "variegated" as a gardener we once knew used to say—and in these mechanical days humanity is not so variegated as it used to be. For instance, "divine discontent" was a shibboleth in our youth, but as an antidote we also met complete complacency. For instance, to quote the following conversation between Miss E. and complacent Mr. C., a fat farmer.

Miss E.: "A very nice pig you have there, Mr. C.?"

Mr. C.: "Yes, indeed, Miss E., as good as anybody's pig."

Miss E. (tentatively): "A little thin perhaps. Does he have enough to eat, Mr. C.?"

Mr. C.: "As much as anybody's pig."

Miss E.: "Sorry to see your hay out this wet day, Mr. C."

Mr. C.: "Yes, wet as anybody's hay."

Miss E.: "How about all those poppies in the corn? Poor farming, surely, Mr. C."

Mr. C.: "Yes, gay as anybody's corn."

Miss E.: "And can we have the manure for the garden to-morrow, Mr. C.?"

Mr. C.: "Yes, indeed, Miss E., as good as anybody's mook."

Miss E.: "Well, good-day, Mr. C."

Mr. C.: "Thank you kindly, Miss E., same to you, as good as anybody's day."

This optimist should have died in the workhouse, but no, he passed away quite comfortably, sincerely regretted by his poverty-stricken family.

E. G. F.

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF A DISTRICT NURSE.

"DOING THE RIGHT THING."

I never really grew to love Grannie Chidlow, but I admired her enormously.

She was a Fighter with the biggest capital F that can be written; and, even though in these post-war days one is, of course, a fervid pacifist, one's blood is still stirred by the crude courage which bludgeons at Defeat, and goes down still bludgeoning.

At my first visit I got the impression (I never quite lost it) that she thought me a fool.

Probably she did.

At crucial moments, when I was striving to enforce discipline, she would turn on a cackling little laugh which said quite plainly, "You amuse me, you know!"

That laugh instantly reduced me to Probationer's rank, and made me feel all elbows, as doubtless it was meant to do.

The diseases packed into Grannie Chidlow's very small frame were enough to furnish out a whole hospital ward.

It was unbelievable. If I gave you a list of her prolapses and malignancies and ulcerations and asthmas, you would cover your ears and run.

Her own view was that—save for a temporary setback which had necessitated *me*, her health was very fair, and that I was a professional Fuss Pot, trained to that end.

As a matter of fact, nothing but the positive breakdown of the only neighbour who had consented to cope with the situation would have induced her to allow a nurse to take a hand.

As it was, she suffered the change grudgingly.

Sometimes, as I washed her, and rubbed prominent parts of that pitiful body with methylated spirit, it scarcely seemed as if she had an organ in the right place, or ten square inches of flesh which were not inflamed, or excoriated or damaged.

But if, during the process, I made a pitying "tck. tck." she immediately snapped off my head.

"Bless the woman, I've been like this for thirty years, and out and about me work."

For a while we ding-donged along, but despite her bluff, Grannie perceptibly weakened, though she scorned the idea, and would, if left to herself, reel and stagger out of bed and "see to things."

I have never imagined anything like it. She simply defied Death, shooting her dry little cackle at him and *daring* him to do his worst.

She was the despair of the Dispensary doctor—a very kindly youth—whom she treated as a three-year-old playing with a hoop, cackling at him and despising him until he squirmed.

He was the first to do the right thing: he moved heaven and earth to persuade her into the Infirmary, where good-natured neighbours do not break down, nor overpressed nurses hurry on to a case in the next street.

If my memory serves, she shook her fist in his face.

"The Fernery. *ME?* Who you talkin' to? Lor' bless you, I been ten times worse than wot I am now, and up an' down the 'ill—she lived on the precipice which divided the old town from the new—into the bargain."

At last—after he'd slaved like a cab-horse piling argument upon argument—the Dispensary doctor threw up the sponge.

"Oh! well, Grannie! please yourself. It's a free country."

And with an exasperated look at me, he clattered down-stairs.

But even if it was a free country, it was neither Christian nor humane to leave a forlorn old soul, so near her end, alone at night, in a foetid attic crammed with objects of neither art nor virtue.

So a little later on when things were pretty desperate, I stood over Grannie Chidlow, and failing to cajole her, I uttered threats, which surprised even myself—they included the Sanitary Inspector. I think the Sanitary Inspector did the trick for, after gibbering at me for awhile, I extracted the address of "me niece t'other side of the town."

I swept that niece over in double quick time, and dramatically turning down the bedclothes, showed her the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)