

CHARITY HOSPITAL.

Mission Work on Blackwell's Island. Nine Hundred Sufferers Under One Roof—A Dying Girl—Noble Deeds of Charity—Outside Work.

The ladies of the mission gathered up their packages and papers and divided in two parties—one to visit the penitentiary and do there the beautiful work which Elizabeth Fry initiated, the other to the Charity hospital and with the latter I went. A small room is set apart there for the use of the mission. The tables in it were already covered with baskets of fruit, glasses of jelly, bottles of beef tea, cans of oysters, and various other delicacies. By each basket lay a number of papers and religious tracts. After brief religious services the ladies separated, each taking her own basket and reading matter to the ward she was assigned to here. Under this one roof, are 100 human beings in every conceivable stage of suffering. The pangs of poverty are increased a hundred fold when disease seizes in its cruel clutches the unhappy victim. Few people are fortunate enough to escape the knowledge of bodily pain. Most indeed can recollect at least one season of physical wretchedness. To be sure there was a soft bed and shaded windows, skilled care and loving attention, doctors who said pleasant things and disguised their doses, delicious trifles that appeared by magic, and a thousand in genius surprises to create an appetite and win a smile. With all that, something like a shudder comes over one at the thought of a repetition of the experience.

To go through a ward in the Charity hospital convinces you that the primer of misery has yet to be mastered by the rest of us. Imagine yourself on a narrow and lumpy bed, the light from a row of big windows beating in your eyeballs, the feet of the convalescents shuffling and scuffling over the bare floor, the whitewashed walls, devoid of even a wall paper pattern to be deciphered, the callous young doctor to whom you are but a bit of experience, and the food such that if well your stomach and senses would revolt at it. As to flowers, books, music and bright colors, they come only in dreams.

After all no amount of moralizing brings the truth home like a single individual case, and there was one patient in particular that made a profound impression upon me—a girl in the last stages of consumption. Illness had robbed her face of the coarseness it may have had in health. Through the veil that death is drawing over it shone splendid black eyes and a skin painfully brilliant in coloring. A heavy mass of short black hair falls over her forehead nearly meeting the large dark brows that seem to have been painted rather than grown on the marble skin. There is something curious and shocking in this "maskup" of disease that reminds one of the stage, but there is no counterfeit pretense of health in the long emaciated hands that lie so nervously on the bedquilt. By the side of the bed is a little stand, upon it a Bible and a mug of water—that is all.

Mary was breathing in low gasps. Her lips were parched, her eyes despairing. Suddenly they fell upon the visitor. In a moment she was transformed. When that visitor laid on the little table a slice of ordinary white bread and butter and a big orange the girl half raised herself on her elbow to look her gratitude. The luxury expressed in that slice of bread and butter no one can imagine until they look at the dark, sticky stuff grassed over that is called by that name in the hospital. Then the gentle missionary read and talked to the girl, who listened eagerly. "No one else comes to see me but you," she said, simply, "and the days and nights are so long."

"Is there anything you would like?" asked the lady. "Yes ma'am, if you please, I should so like a little mixed candy," said the dying girl. "You see, the medicine tastes so bad, and we don't have nothing to take after it." The candy was promised, and with her heart in her voice the lady uttered a little prayer and left the sufferer composed and comforted. It is a dark day in a patient's life when the doctor says she may have anything she likes—that is that visitors choose to give her—and many and singular are the petitions. One sinking from the effects of an operation begs for a taste of mixed pickles, another wants "just one bologny, ma'am," a third asks for a glass of ginger ale, and an old woman begs for "a cup of real tea."

Going from one ward to another it is the same story told over and over again of suffering for the most part dumb, of worse blindness and mental misery. It is curious though, to note the difference of reception given to the mission visitors by the new and old ones.

In the surgical wards were many desperately ill women. One of them near the door was nearly over the threshold of life. Her glazed eyes were fixed upon a child—her only one, brought to her for a farrowed kiss. The little fellow crowded and cowered about merrily in the lap of the woman who held him, unconscious of the meaning of the scene. As his mother's eyelids fell he was laughing outright with delight. It would be painful and dreary to go even in pen from one ward to another in this stronghold of suffering. It seems as if the very walls of it would weep and the sights weigh down the heart of the outsider. A few of the branch charities are the loan relief which lends rubber cushions, invalid chairs, hot water bags and bed

rocks to the poor convalescent, the mother meeting where good advice and Bible-reading go hand in hand with sewing the Thanksgiving fund, which supplies fifty poor families with a good dinner on that day, the bucket trade, when the mother is working out by the day supplies her little ones with a pan of good hot food, the kitchen garden, where little girls are carefully taught, and the protective work which aims to care for the female stranger from the country or abroad until she finds work. Mrs. Robert P. Porter in New York Press.

Telegraphers' Signal Code. There is nothing that gladdens the eye of the telegraph editor quite as much as the magical "30." The compositor at the case likes to see it, too, for he knows it is the end of telegraph copy for the night. The telegraph operator has a fancy for "30" also, as, indeed, has every one who has anything to do with a telegraph or a news paper office. This "30" means literally "the end," and is the signal that the telegraph report is complete for the night, but just why it should be so or how this came about no one can probably tell with any accuracy, but it is a part of a code of signals adopted by telegraph operators long ago. They hit upon it at random, doubtless, and it serves its purpose satisfactorily. By the same token the figure "1" is used as the signal "Wait a minute," "2" and sometimes "12," means "I understand," "18" means "trouble," "25" is "busy on another wire."

These are the signals most commonly used by operators engaged on ordinary business or dispatches intended for the newspapers, but signals and cyphers are used in a thousand occupations. The train dispatcher has his code, and the signals therein save him a world of work and pounding of the key. For instance, "7" may mean "train orders" and "9" be the signal used by the president of the road. When "9" flashes along everything on the wire gets out of the way, just as everything is sidetracked when the president's car comes whizzing down the rails. It can be readily understood how these signals save time and labor on the principle that stenography is better adapted to the condensation of phrases and sentences than longhand. In a single figure a world of meaning can be expressed, but to the overworked telegraph editor who has been slaving all night with his head close to a gas lamp, and whose brain is buzzing and sizzling, the signal "30" is the sweetest and the dearest of them all.—Chicago Tribune.

An Actor in Honolulu. Booth told a very amusing story when he was here last of a trip he took to Honolulu, when he was younger, knocking about California. Some one came up from Australia who had stopped at the Sandwich Islands. He inflated Booth on the subject of that dramatic Dorado. He scraped together all the money he could and went to Honolulu. He had fifty dollars when he arrived. With that money he hired the theatre for five weeks at ten dollars a week. He found two or three people and made a arrangement to give a show. It was to be "Richard III." The two or three people played all the parts. One man played four, and one woman two, and so on. The question of billing the town arose. He managed to get some posters, but he had nothing to stick them up with. He bought a bucket of "poi" and some star paste and sent a small Kanaka out to put up the bills. He didn't see any when he went out, and investigation disclosed that the small Kanaka had eaten up all the paste and thrown the posters away. He begged some of his company to stick them up, but they were all too high toned, and Booth had to go off himself in the middle of the night and paste his bills. He said he came back with fifty dollars, just as he started, and they had lived on bananas principally.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Paying Street Car Fare. I would not pay a woman's fare in a street car. Why? Because I wouldn't, that's all. And if you insist on an explanation I have nothing to offer except this: that it is an unwritten but inexorable law of the maids and matrons of this land that every female who rides must open her own sachel, take out her own pocketbook, close her sachel, open her pocketbook, put her nickel in her mouth, open her sachel, close her pocketbook, put pocketbook in sachel, close sachel, and then, taking her nickel from between her gleaming celluloid teeth, give it to the conductor, and thus pay her fare. I don't know where the law came from or how the sex got hold of it, but it's the law all the same, and we live up to it.—"Maud" in Globe-Democrat.

Washed Bodies Repel Dust. Heated bodies repel minute particles of dust, the repulsion operating alike in the open air and confined spaces. Assuming the correctness of this view, it follows that if the floor, walls and ceiling of a room be warmer than the contained air, the dust will be repelled from the walls to the air, and the reverse of these conditions of temperature will bring about the opposite result. According to this view, those methods of warming rooms should be adopted which heat the air instead of the solid objects, thus excluding open fires.—Globe-Democrat.

Sick Folks in Florida. Some of the sick ones who went to Florida last winter have returned, and are commenting upon the avalanche of cures that were recommended for their consideration. All the old timers at St. Augustine had books full of prescriptions that were warranted to cure anything from a headache to patching a pair of goloshes. "My" said one of the returned patients, "if I had taken a hundred part of the nostrums thrust upon me, I would have been in Cypress Hills months ago."—New York Sun.

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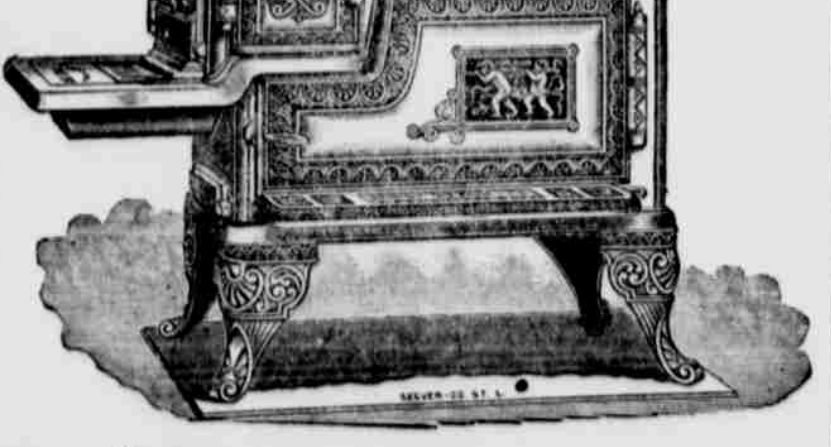
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