The sketcher in London : the physician's levee.

Contributors

Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

[London] : C.F. Nicholls, [between 1850 and 1859?]

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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
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Not uniformly so, however; or, if willing, a counteracting influence sometimes kept him back. This influence seemed to nestle in Mr. Gillman's eye, which was steadily, though stealthily, watching the intimacy of the two junior clerks, and to lurk in his unpleasant smile. It was plain to Basil that Gillman had a strong though secret hold upon Arthur, from which extrication was, at least difficult. Sometimes, when the two young men were about leaving the counting-house in company, when business was over, a glance from the senior clerk was sufficient to arrest Kemp's steps, and cause him to linger behind, if not to break off his engagement. At other times, a word or two settled the business; as, for instance, one evening when Kemp had, as he thought, slipped away unperceived by Mr. Gillman, the latter, following at his heels, and gently tapping him on the shoulder, quietly said, "You cannot go with Mr. Marsden to-night, you know, Kemp."

Arthur started at the touch and tone and words, and coloured deeply. "True, I had forgotten," he stammered; "I have another engagement, I remember now. Excuse me to-night, Marsden;" and, letting fall Basil's arm, he followed the senior clerk back to the counting-house, casting, however, as he went, a piteous look at Basil, which, while it powerfully appealed to his compassion, excited also his suspicion.

So excited it, that on the following evening it was with less cordiality than ordinary he acquiesced in Arthur's proposal to walk homeward together through the city. It may be that Arthur Kemp guessed the cause of Basil's unusual gravity; for, after some attempts to engage him in conversation, he suddenly broke off, and exclaimed passionately—

"I wish, from the very bottom of my heart, that I had never known Gillman."

"Why?" asked Basil, laconically.

"Why! why, don't you see—I am sure you must, though—how he domineers over me, and makes me do just what he likes? There was last night, for instance."

"I see plainly enough," said Basil, "that Mr. Gillman has a good deal of influence over you; but if you don't like it, why do you submit to it?"

"I cannot help it—I mean I can't break with him all at once," rejoined Kemp, gloomily.

"But he never attempts to interfere with me," said Basil.

"Ah, that's a different thing: he knows it would be of no use to try it on with you. You don't know Gillman so well as I do, Basil," continued Arthur, still gloomily.

"Perhaps not: and if I were to say I have no wish to know so much of him as you do?" said Basil, interrogatively.

"You need not wish it, Marsden. If I did not, it would be all the better for me. He is always getting me into all sorts of—of——"

"Of what?" asked Basil, perceiving that Arthur seemed stuck for a word. "Of mischief, I suppose you mean?"

"I don't know; you might call it mischief perhaps—'tis botheration at all events; and I am so soft, I suppose, you would say, that I cannot shake him off."

"It seems to me," rejoined Basil, rather coldly, "that if you are really in earnest about it, and are determined to avoid his society, it is only to exercise firmness and decision. There does not seem to me to be any difficulty about it."

"But there is, though," replied Arthur, earnestly. "That is," he added, correcting himself, "there is for me. Only think, if I were to offend him it would be all u-p, up with me at Rutland's; don't you see that?"

"No, I do not," said Basil; "and I think you overrate Gillman's influence with Mr. Rutland. You know that I am, at any rate, as much in Mr. Gillman's power as you are; and though he does not like me, because I am not what he calls 'one of his kidney,' he has never, to my knowledge, attempted to injure me."

"Ah, that is a different thing," resumed Kemp, with a deep-drawn sigh; "you are not me, you know. And I would not say, either, that he has not tried to injure you——"

"Well, he has not done it; and that would only prove that he has not the power to injure you either. Besides, if he has, and would use it, and you feel that he is doing you greater injury in other ways, you ought to stand up firmly against his temptations. Of course," added Basil, "I do not know what they are; and I have no wish to know."

"Ah, if I had your pluck, Basil," once more sighed the young man: "but it's of no use to talk about it;" and, apparently struck with the uselessness of "talking about it," Arthur walked on for some time in silence.

In silence, broken only now and then by a cursory remark, the two young men reached Basil's lodging.

"Don't let us go in just now, Marsden," said Arthur, suddenly; "it is a fine evening; what do you say to a turn farther on? I have something I want to say to you—something particular."

Basil consented, and they proceeded accordingly a little farther on, waiting patiently for the "something particular" which Arthur had to communicate. It was a long time coming; at length it came out with startling abruptness.

"Basil, I am desperately in love!"

Basil's first emotion was that of irrepressible amusement. He had in his composition a spice of Ellen's love of fun; it was some time, however, since his laughter had been excited. It was now, and he laughed heartily and merrily; yet so good-naturedly that it would have been difficult to take offence.

"I can't think what there is to laugh at in that," said Arthur, so solemnly that Basil began to laugh again; but he restrained himself, and apologised.

"Oh, I don't care about your laughing, of course," said Arthur; "I dare say you think I am joking; but I am not. And to tell you the truth, I want your help."

"My help!" exclaimed Basil; and once more he with difficulty kept his countenance. "My good fellow, you could not have applied to a worse assistant than I should be in a love affair. Only consider."

"I could not have come to a better ——, seriously now, Marsden, there's nobody can help me

so effectually as you can. I know that a word from you will go as far with Minnie ——"

"Minnie! my sister Minnie!" exclaimed Basil, in profound astonishment; "you don't mean to say that it is of her you are speaking?"

"Of course I am," said Arthur, in a faint voice; "I thought you must have known ——"

Basil had no inclination to laugh now. "I never should have dreamt of anything so inconceivably wild," he said, at length; "so seldom as you have seen Minnie, and she as yet only a child."

"Seventeen and upwards," said Arthur; "I know Minnie's age, you see; for I have heard you speak of it; and she is far beyond her age in every womanly grace."

"This is mere folly, Arthur," said Basil, gravely. But he was interrupted by his companion, who began to pour out, in incoherent language, the declaration of his strong affection for Minnie:—how, from the first visit he had paid to Basil's home, he had been struck with her beauty; how, in subsequent visits, he had listened to her voice, and been charmed with the good sense and affection she had displayed; how these sentiments of admiration had sunk deep into his heart and ripened into undying love; how he knew he was unworthy of such excellence; but that already—even in hopelessness—the influence of her character, and her father's and Basil's, had wrought a favourable change in his own; and if he might but believe that she cared for him, how he would be strengthened to break through the remaining bonds of former habits, and the enticements of such men as Gillman, and become all that Minnie could wish him to be.

He paused at length, and there was a long silence. The young men had halted, and Arthur's face was damp with perspiration, and tears stood in his eyes. Basil felt for him, and was embarrassed.

"This won't do," he said at length; "I will be plain and honest with you, Arthur. There is not the slightest chance of anything but disappointment for you. Almost everything is against you. Minnie has not —— well, I won't say what she has or has not; but, setting everything else aside, she is much too young to form an engagement of this sort. And then—excuse me, Arthur—knowing what I do know of you, do you suppose that I should willingly ——"

"And this comes of being so frank and honest with you," exclaimed Kemp, bitterly. "If I had been sly and cunning, like Gillman, I should not have given you that handle."

"You are mistaken; but I won't argue about that. There is another thing that ought to put an end to this at once. If you are desperately in love with Minnie, or anybody else, and your love should come to courtship—plain words are the best—it will be for the sake of marrying. Now, you know you have no prospect of being in circumstances to marry. In ten years' time, very probably, you will be no nearer to it than now. Think, what have you to offer to Minnie, or any other person, to compensate ——"

"Pshaw! Marsden; you talk as coolly about it as if you were balancing an account in the ledger. *You* are not in love, or you would not argue in that way."

"Perhaps I am not," returned Basil. "I can tell you one thing, however; I have been very near it; but I reasoned with myself as I am rea soning with you; and I determined that I ough to banish the idea from my mind. It has cost m a pleasant friendship; but it was the only honour able thing I could do."

"You mean to tell me there is no hope for m then?" said Arthur, impatiently.

"I should say, none in the least, under presen circumstances, at all events. In fact, I should b very sorry indeed for Minnie to be disturbed nov with anything of the sort. Poor girl, she ha been almost worn out with nursing our father and it would be very improper to subject her t the agitation even of giving a refusal, at present."

"I can wait: I will wait, Basil; only tell m that there is hope."

Basil shook his head; and soon afterwards th young men parted company.

THE SKETCHER IN LONDON.

THE PHYSICIAN'S LEVEE.

The bills of mortality, and the reports of th registrar, published weekly in the newspapers inform us that above a thousand of our fellow creatures pass away by death during the interval between each recurring Sabbath. At the momen we write the general weekly average of a thousan has risen to above sixteen hundred, and that with out the prevalence of any extraordinary epidemi or infectious disorder. The two and a half mil lions of people congregated within the circl which contains London and its suburbs are, b means of the tables of the registrar-genera converted into a vast barometer of health an disease, of life and death—a barometer so su ceptible of the numberless influences which affec human health and existence, that the operation each one of them, however trifling compared wit others it may be, is marked and recorded with in variable precision for the benefit and admiratio of the survivors. In a city where above a thou sand die weekly, how great must be the amour of the sickness and suffering which are the for runners of disease! How many must lie groan ing in anguish from day to day, awaiting, amid the strife and turmoil of the surrounding mult tudes, their dismission to that silent land whe no voice is heard, nor sound of human joy or gri can penetrate! How many men are there whom the seeds of decay and dissolution, late in all men, have begun to germinate, and wh bound by a thousand ties to the sympathies an obligations of life, are alarmed by the indicatio of approaching disease, or, wrestling with it the midst of duties which may not be neglecte seek counsel of the physician, to ward off, if po sible, or to defer to an indefinite period, t execution of the sentence they know and feel be pronounced. Among this latter class we a most of us—may we not say all of us?—occasional numbered; the exceptions being those favour few who have never been compelled by inwa warnings to seek medical advice.

The love of life is rarely manifested in a strong light than by those who for the first time feel

sacred outworks assailed by the advance of some insidious or unsuspected disorder. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Let him but feel that that is endangered, and away fly the maxims of economy and miserly prudence; they are but feathers in the balance against the life that God has given him, to preserve which no sacrifice is too great. He seeks for the best advice—the best, at least, that he is in circumstances to procure—and he acts upon it, postponing every other consideration to the means of restoring his lost health. This state of feeling, with which no reasonable man will quarrel, affords the key to the spectacle to which we are about to introduce the reader.

The scene is in one of the genteel squares lying north of the Holborn line of route, and verging towards the west end; the time eight o'clock, or a minute after, on a cold and misty November morning. If the sun has risen, no Londoner has yet seen his face. The surrounding streets are still as a churchyard; the footfall of a plodding policeman may be heard at intervals, but no other echoes break the silence. The inhabitants of this fashionable quarter are fast bound in sleep; even the servants are not yet astir, as is evidenced by the absence of smoke from the chimneys. The milkman will not come round for this hour, and no morning cry will disturb the sleepers' repose. But see! yonder comes a cab gently round the corner; it pulls up at a private house in the square, sets down an elderly gentleman, and draws off a little to wait for him. At the same moment a middle-aged woman, leading a young girl, ascends the steps, and all three disappear into the house together. Another cab, and then several others follow, discharging their fares at the same door; some of the visitors have to be lifted from the vehicle, and assisted up the steps; others spring out and in lightly enough; some are accompanied by friends, some are alone. Now the foot passengers increase in number: we have hardly been watching half an hour ere between thirty and forty people of various ages, and some of them bowed with infirmity or pain, have vanished silently within that ever-opening door. What has brought all these pilgrims out on such a morning as this? The love of life. That house is the residence of Dr. Quinine, one of the most learned and successful practitioners of the day, whose time is worth many thousands a year to him. He visits the aristocracy during the day, travelling hither and thither in his coach, and he devotes an hour and a half every morning of the year to those who choose to consult him personally at his own house. He will see perhaps forty patients this morning, and if he chose he might receive a guinea from each; but, from what we know of him, he is as likely to give a guinea to some poor creature in need of it, and his advice into the bargain, as to take her hard-earned or, perhaps, borrowed fee.

Let us enter the waiting-room and look around us. It is a handsome and lofty chamber nearly thirty feet square. Upon the walls are a few fine old portraits—one, apparently of a court beauty, by sir Peter Lely; there is a large landscape of the Flemish school; and over the sideboard, on which stands a decanter of water and a few glasses, there is a fruit and flower piece still larger. A cheerful fire is blazing in the grate, warming the whole room, in which there are substantial padded chairs and settees enough to accommodate fifty sitters. On the table in the centre are a few books and yesterday's newspapers. The majority of the seats are occupied by the morning's arrivals, each waiting his turn for admission to the physician in the inner room. There sits by the fire a young fellow about town, who is paying the penalty of dissipation by the endurance of its retributive consequences, and whose hard, noisy breathing tells us, without the aid of the stethoscope, that the orgies of his nights have borne their natural fruit of miserable days. Beside him is an elderly tradesman, with a face of dogged endurance deeply lined with the habit of silent suffering, who has probably borne the martyrdom of an unhealthy occupation for the best years of his life, and, hopeless of cure, seeks only a temporary relief. Opposite to him is a widow with her only daughter, whose pallid face and leaden eye bespeak the presence of some functional derangement which has, perhaps, baffled the skill of former advisers, and may elude the investigation even of Dr. Quinine himself. Behind the widow there sits a girl whose vacant expression tells you as plainly as possible that she has long been growing deaf, and more deaf, and who is come, if it may be done, to have her hearing restored. Then there is a mother with two white-faced children, blighted buds of promise, apparently withering away; and whom she has brought up yesterday all the way from Maidstone, to show to the famous London physician, and to have his advice. But what needs it to catalogue the individual woes and maladies of this various assembly. They all come with one purpose, with one settled thought in their hearts, like the hapless Israelites of old who swarmed round the pool of Bethesda to await the descent of the heavenly messenger of health.

Standing at a green-baize door, which has another door close behind it, is an elderly footman, with the stolid face of a martinet, overshadowed by powdered hair. He is the janitor of the inner shrine, and his movements are directed by the tinkling of a little bell, at the sound of which he opens the door, and the patient comes forth after a consultation of a minute or two, generally carrying a prescription in the hand. When the man-about-town comes forth, we observe that he looks particularly serious, and takes extraordinary care in buttoning and bandaging himself up, while the young man in waiting in the lobby is gone to summon his cab to the door—and we guess that he has received a reprimand for venturing out of doors on such a day as this. When the mother with her two children comes out, we are glad to see that she brings a cheerful, quite a merry face with her: there is evidently nothing seriously the matter with her little ones, and the prescription she holds in her hand will set them all to rights; and the golden fee too, which we saw her slip under her glove when she entered, she now puts back in her purse, because Dr. Quinine wouldn't take it. The poor widow and her daughter are closeted a long time, though it is plain they have not a fee to give; but there is a gleam of hope on the face of each as they come out, and we may in-

dulge the expectation that the recovery of the poor girl is not far distant.

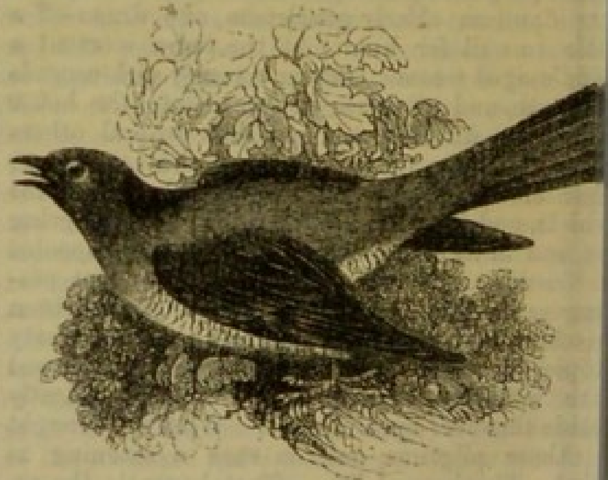
We must leave the elderly tradesman, and the rest of the rather motley company to the physician's management, and proceed on our way, not, however, without a parting trait of the celebrated Dr. Quinine himself. It happened some years ago that an acquaintance of ours, a farmer of good property, requested us to accompany him, on the ground of his feeling rather nervous, on the occasion of his consulting our physician on account of what he called "queer symptoms," such as seeing double, etc. etc. The doctor received him politely, and while the patient was giving a description of the symptoms, examined him minutely. While he was yet speaking, the medicus seized his pen and wrote a prescription. "You need say no more," he said; "take this, and act upon it. There are twenty years of life in you yet if you are wise. I don't know what your powers of self-denial may be, but upon them depends your existence. Take plenty of exercise—drink wine but rarely, ale and spirits never. In that case you may look to be an old man; pursue your present course, and I would not buy your life at a year's purchase." The patient, who was what is called a generous liver, had the sense to take the advice thus sternly given, and profited by it.

It is an old maxim, that advice which costs nothing, is rarely followed. In spite of this maxim, however, "ADVICE GRATIS" is a commodity as common as any other in London, judging from the frequency with which these two words confront us in our rambles. It is well for the poorer classes that this practice is so general. Excellent advice in common cases, that is, in the majority of the disorders to which we are liable, is to be had for nothing; but it must be remarked, charity is not the only element in this proffer of gratuitous advice. The practitioner who *gives* you his advice expects, reasonably enough, to *sell* you the medicines he prescribes—and thus the commercial element steps in. It would be worse than churlish, it would be ungrateful, to complain of this mode of practice, where it is carried out in honesty and good faith, as we know well enough that it is in a multiplicity of instances. Such an arrangement is deserving of the highest countenance, because it meets the wants of a large and most praiseworthy class of the community, who, being too poor to consult a first-rate physician, and at the same time too honourable and independent to receive from charitable institutions the relief which they can afford to pay something for, are anxious to get good advice at a cheap market. The misfortune is, that this practice, from its adaptation to the popular necessity and its recognised usefulness, has, like most other good things, led to many and infamous abuses. It has opened a door which would otherwise have been closed to them to numerous quacks and pretenders, who, under the specious mask of giving "advice gratis," are enabled to thrust down the public throat all manner of abominable nostrums, prepared with no other view than the unprincipled one of their own emolument. Hence we have, on the one hand, the self-dubbed doctor Crossbones, inviting all London to come for his gratuitous advice, and prescribing to the multitude, for every imaginable disease that flesh is heir to, his one infallible specific, contained in square green bottle, "price four and sixpence:" an on the other hand, we have the self-dubbed docto Sarcophagus Pillcloud,

> "Who with one little wonderful pill
> Can every disorder keep under,"

at least according to his own account—who make his hogsheads of wonderful pills by steam m chinery, and rains them in a deluge of boxes one and three-halfpence—"treble boxes two ar nine," upon all who apply to him or to his ubiqu tous agents for "advice gratis."

Such unprincipled abuses are among the cryir scandals of our day. They are abounding every quarter—the followers, rivals, and imitato of the Messrs. Crossbones and Pillcloud infestir every populous district, and being always mo successful, which means most mischievous an most murderous, where the population is mo dense and least educated. Let us warn our rea ers to act with judgment in matters affecting the health, and remind them that, inasmuch as man in his senses would think of intrusting watch needing repairs to the hands of a scavenge he ought not to think of intrusting his bodily fram which is a machine infinitely more complex than watch, to the mercies of an ignoramus who kno nothing of its mechanism.



"CUCKOO! CUCKOO!"

WHAT the gay sky-lark is to the stubble field, t linnet to the hedge row, the cuckoo is to "crowded glade." Not that its sudden, alm wailing call can ever be compared to the sw music of the former as he sings loudly on his h venward flight, or even to the short yet clear sweet strain of the latter, as he hops from twig twig in the blythe ecstacy of freedom; but cuckoo has its charms; its voice is listened for anxiously in early spring as if it were a very Jen Lind of songsters, because when it begins, so does the season when nature steps forth lik bride bidding the earth rejoice in its gladn The associations of boyhood's woodland ram are inseparably linked with the voice of the "be teous stranger of the grove."

> "Delightful visitant! with thee
> I hail the time of flowers,
> And hear the sound of music sweet
> From birds among the bowers.