

London hospitals and dispensaries.

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the markets. But the figures performed such strange antics before his eyes, that after an hour of vain endeavour to master their meaning, he impatiently closed the book and rose no wiser, or rather less wise, than he had been before he sat down.

He took himself to task. It was of the utmost importance that in the morning he should be cool and clear-headed; but he could not hope to be so unless he obtained sleep. Well, he would try the second remedy.

He put on his hat and overcoat and went out. It was not of any consequence to him in which direction he should walk, his sole object being to exhaust himself by the physical exercise, in order to induce healthy sleep. To distract his mind from its troublous ruminations, he turned instinctively towards those quarters where he was most likely to encounter signs of life.

He strode along Oxford Street and down Regent Street. But he was walking in a dream. The lights of the lamps were dim in his eyes, the figures which flitted by him were like shadows, and he could not have told whether they were men or women. The voices of those who passed him seemed to be muffled, and he scarcely distinguished any sounds. A hansom cab came rattling at full speed towards him: the horse slipped, staggered, fell. There was a commotion, and although, a minute before, the street seemed to be deserted, figures sprang out of the darkness, and there was a crowd at the scene of disaster.

He passed on, with that insensibility to the fate of others which characterises people when in dreamland. His feelings were numbed as his eyes were dimmed. The sense of humiliation at the utter failure of what he had believed to be so certain of success produced the one pain of which he was conscious, and which no drugs, fatigue, or reason had power to subdue.

If the money had been his own, he could have borne with comparative calmness the overthrow of his hopes and the ridicule of those who had from the first called his project folly.

But despite the assurances of Mr Shield and of Mr Shield's solicitors, Philip had never regarded the money otherwise than as held in trust; and the loss of it was as bitter as the destruction of the beautiful palace he had built in air.

The only bit of ballast left him was the dogged conviction that the principle which he had endeavoured to carry into practical effect was a right one, and would be turned to good account by some one more fortunate or more careful than he had been.

He set his teeth together and marched on. He began to realise how strangely numbed his sensations were, and how vague everything appeared to him. The rain had ceased, and the tiny pools in the roadway glistening in the lamplight seemed like great white eyes staring at him in pity. He passed down the Haymarket, nor did he slacken his pace until he reached the Embankment. There he halted and leaned over the parapet. He was not fatigued: the rapid walk seemed to have instilled new strength into him and had partially cleared the cobwebs from his brain. He was attracted by the lights gleaming in the dark fast-flowing river. Out

there, were black islets of barges, and on the opposite shore the fantastic outlines of buildings, showing like irregular ramparts against the dull gray sky. He was thinking of Madge, and the pain she would suffer on his account, when the worst was made known to her in the morning, perhaps, or next day.

'Got a copper to spare a poor cove as hasn't had a crust for two days?' said a husky voice close to him.

Philip started up. He was aware of the evil reputation of the Embankment and the character of the roughs who infest it after nightfall. A lamp close by showed him a miserable-looking wretch, ragged and hungry-eyed. He did seem to need help, poor fellow. Philip gave him a shilling, and was about to pass on. But a huge hulk of a fellow stood in his way.

'We want som'at more nor that, guv'nor. So tip us'—

The man went down as if he had been shot. Philip was in the mood for mischief, and he had not forgotten his practice with the gloves. So the first words of the ruffian plainly intimating his purpose, a well-delivered blow straight from the shoulder finished the sentence for him. Philip knew that it would have been madness to have given the man time to attack him, and as it was, the other man was already attempting to rifle his pockets. This one belonged to the sneak tribe, and finding his throat suddenly gripped by fingers that seemed to possess the strength of a vice, his hands went up to loosen them. He was hurled aside; and Philip hurried away with a sort of savage pleasure in having punished the brace of scoundrels, as well as disappointed them of their expected prize.

Near Blackfriars Bridge he met a policeman, to whom he briefly reported the incident. The man listened with stolid indifference.

'They are a bad lot about here, at nights, sir,' he said composedly; 'and it ain't a place for decent people at this hour.'

The constable's idea evidently was that decent people should keep out of the way of the roughs, not that it was his duty to keep the roughs from molesting the decent people who might be compelled to use the thoroughfare.

Philip entered his dreary chambers again. He felt better, but still he could not sleep.

LONDON HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

From the day when Rahere the troubador, in the year 1123 A.D., founded the hospital of St. Bartholomew, the number of hospitals, dispensaries, infirmaries, and other institutions for the cure and medical treatment of the sick poor, has gone on increasing, till now it stands at considerably over one hundred and fifty for London and its district alone. This is altogether exclusive of the workhouse infirmaries. Besides hospitals and dispensaries, there are included in the above number institutions for the supply of surgical instruments, &c., either free, or at such reduced prices as bring them within the reach even of the very poor. Twelve of the London hospitals have medical schools attached to them, amongst which is one for the education of lady-doctors. Differences of opinion of course exist as to the medical

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which they were created and fostered 'are productions of old ages, not to be repeated in the new: they presuppose a certain rudeness of conception, which the progress of mere scientific knowledge puts an end to.'

BY MEAD AND STREAM.

CHAPTER XLII.—A LAND SHIPWRECK.

To be unhappy and alone at night in chambers is to have an opportunity of realising the sense of desolation in its bitterest degree. The double doors and double windows which secure the stillness that is of so much importance for working purposes, seem now to shut you off doubly from the world; from help if you are dying, and from sympathy if you live. The rumble of the heaviest wagon reaches the ears as a faint sound from afar off; no footstep is heard at all; and the adjacent chambers are silent as the tenements of the dead. You welcome the splash of rain against the window-panes—dull as that is—as if it were a friend come to speak to you in your solitude.

That is the time for thoughts of suicide to haunt a man if his mind is disturbed; and that is the time for cynical broodings on the vanity of life, the falsehood of friendship, and the fickleness of love. He sees in what miserable failure his most earnest efforts have resulted; he misinterprets the most trivial word and look of his friend, and he loses grip altogether of that faith which in healthier state enables him to find consolation in love. He recalls all the bitter things that have been written about women, and for the time-being believes them.

How was it, Philip asked himself, that he had fallen into this desperate position? He had laboured with all his might for others rather than for himself; his object was a noble one, and quite feasible, he was still convinced. Yet the social revolution he had dreamed of was as far off as ever, and he suddenly found that he was face to face with absolute ruin. Evidently his blunder lay in his miscalculation of the power of his capital. There had been disappointments with his fellow-workers, who, shrewdly counting the cost of material and the market value of the manufactured article, saw that the latter would barely realise enough to give them a fair ordinary wage in the best of times, to say nothing of the share of profits promised them. The cost of material was too high; and it was natural that they should conclude the cost was so fixed by arrangement with their chief in order to deprive them of what they now called their rights.

Philip saw the force of their argument, and began to inquire about the items of expenditure. Hitherto, he had been so deeply occupied in the organisation of his scheme, that he had left financial matters almost entirely in Wrentham's hands. Hints were given him that the prices he was charged were not the prices paid for materials, but that a large proportion went in secret commissions. As soon as he began to look into the question closely, he was met by the astounding fact, that he had reached the end of his capital, and had heavy liabilities

to meet almost immediately, as well as heavy current expenses to provide for. How to do this without applying to Mr Shield, he had been trying for weeks to find out; and the more harassed he became, the more impossible it appeared to work through the mess without assistance.

Then had come the last humiliation: he must submit to the immediate and entire overthrow of all he had been working for, and in which he had sunk the considerable fortune placed at his disposal, or he must seek the help which only a short time ago had appeared to him as an impossible necessity. He was bewildered, and could not understand how it came about. It should not have been so. He yielded to the necessity, however; but determined that when his course became clear again, his first task should be to institute a thorough investigation into the causes of his failure.

Through all this agitated survey of his position, how was it that the figure of Beecham continually obtruded itself? What could Wrentham have had in his head, when he urged him so strongly to find out from Madge all that she knew of the man's history and possible friendship with Mr Shield? He had not felt very keenly impressed by the suggestion during Wrentham's presence; but now, in the silence and alone with his chagrin, he became infected with Wrentham's suspicion. It had not occurred to him until now that there was something most incongruous and altogether incomprehensible in a girl consenting to accept from an acquaintance of only a few weeks a confidence which she could not disclose to her guardians or the man who was soon to be her husband.

If Beecham had been a younger man than he was, there would have been a ready and most bitter explanation of the mystery; but it was not available in the present case. And yet (so outrageously morbid had he become that he was capable of the thought!) women were such strange creatures, that there was no telling who might win their favour or by what charm it might be done.

Pah!—What madness was this?

He went to the front room and opened a window overlooking Gray's Inn Road. The stillness of the chambers had become intolerable. This was better; much better. There was more air; he could hear the rattle of cabs, and catch glimpses of hurrying foot-passengers on the opposite side of the way.

Why should he remain indoors, to be haunted by these horrible phantoms of doubt and suspicion? He knew they were phantoms, and yet he could not drive them from his brain. Sleep was impossible, and he was afraid to take more drugs, for he was conscious that they had already impaired his power of self-control. When would the morning come? The active duties he had to discharge would relieve him. He looked at his watch. Very little past midnight. Why, it seemed as if two nights had passed since Wrentham went away!

Well, he would try Dr Joy's specific, and endeavour to work or walk off this nervous frenzy. First he tried the work. There was much need that he should master the accounts and compare prices paid with prices quoted in

woman, some no doubt regarding her as a great acquisition, and one of the glories of the nineteenth century; whilst others would speak of her as an institution naturally to be expected in the dark ages, but quite an anomaly in a civilised age. Which of the views may be the correct one, we will not pretend to say. However this may be, in Henrietta Street stands the medical school for women, which is in connection with the Royal Free Hospital, Gray's Inn Road.

The hospitals with medical schools attached undertake the treatment of almost every form of disease both surgical and medical. Still, there are some diseases which it is necessary should be treated apart in special hospitals, and the chief of these is that terrible scourge of past times, smallpox. Not only smallpox but scarlet fever and other infectious diseases have to be excluded from some of the hospitals of which we are speaking, inasmuch as they are not all provided with wards set apart for infectious cases. To get an idea, however, of the great variety of work undertaken by the largest hospitals, it may be well to glance at the various departments of medicine and surgery represented at St Bartholomew's Hospital, the oldest of these London institutions. In addition to the out-patients' rooms, and wards devoted to the treatment of ordinary medical and surgical diseases and accidents, there are the following special departments: A department for skin diseases; for diseases of the eye, ear, and throat; an orthopaedic department; a dental department; a department for the special diseases of women; a maternity department; and lastly, in the case of this hospital, a ward for the treatment of cases of infectious disease. The average number of in-patients is estimated at over six thousand annually, and the out-patients at more than one hundred and fifty thousand. It will readily be believed that the work of the physicians and surgeons, both visiting and resident, connected with such an institution is by no means light. There are many other general hospitals in various parts of London, besides those having medical schools attached to them, but we cannot speak of them here. The nature of their work is much the same as that of the others, though of course the extent of it is more limited.

Coming next to the dispensaries—their name is legion. Almost every parish in London has one or more, and they are very abundant in the immediate suburbs also. Some of these dispensaries are free, others are to a greater or less extent self-supporting. It is, we hope, needless to say that the public dispensaries of which we are speaking are not to be confounded with the private dispensaries set up by medical men, quite legitimately, for their own benefit, but which are not unfrequently conducted upon the lowest of commercial principles. The public dispensaries of London, with their committees of management and staffs of physicians and surgeons—who in the case of the free dispensaries are almost invariably honorary—do excellent work, and are worthy of all, and more than all, the support which they obtain. Unlike the majority of hospitals, they undertake the treatment of disease at the patients' own homes; and by calling in the aid of the nursing institutions, they are able to supply not only medical attendance and medicine, but also trained nurses. Recently, an effort has been

made to increase the number of provident dispensaries; and this indeed appears to be one of the best ways of meeting the difficulty of supplying good medical treatment to the poor cheaply, without demanding of medical men more unpaid work. It has been estimated that the medical profession does more work without payment than the rest of the professions put together.

We will now say a few words concerning the special hospitals and dispensaries. And first, it is to be remembered that all are not of the same merit. Many of them may be said to be above praise; but some, it is to be feared, are almost beneath contempt. Indeed, the opinion of those in the medical profession best able to judge of the matter is, we believe, strongly opposed to the multiplication of special hospitals, except of course for those diseases which cannot be advantageously treated in the general hospitals. Enumerating now the special hospitals and dispensaries in their alphabetical order, first of all come those for the treatment of cancer, of which there are two. Then there are eight hospitals for children. A visit to the hospital in Great Ormond Street is calculated to make most persons enthusiastic on the subject of well-managed children's hospitals; and many readers will remember the glowing description given by Charles Dickens of the East London Hospital for Children. Of hospitals for diseases of the chest there are five. The physicians of the general hospitals do not, if they can avoid it, admit patients suffering from consumption. The air of a hospital in which wounds and diseases of almost every kind are being treated is ill fitted to give any good chance of recovery to a case of consumption, which requires almost more than anything else fresh air and plenty of it; and if such a patient gets no good, he only occupies uselessly the place of some one who might benefit greatly by admission. Chest diseases require, too, arrangements for the securing of appropriate temperature, and this it would not be easy to do in a general hospital. It is well, therefore, that there should be special hospitals for diseases of the chest, and it is to be regretted the number is at present quite insufficient. Still, these chest hospitals contrive to treat a very large number of patients in the course of the year, the average being estimated at considerably over thirty-two thousand.

There are six hospitals and infirmaries for the throat and ear; and three for diseases of the nervous system. Next we come to the fever hospitals—four in number. It is almost impossible to overrate the value of these hospitals. They not only tend to prevent the occurrence of epidemics, by removing the fever-stricken from the healthy, but they also save many from the untimely death that might have befallen them in their own ill-ventilated homes, and with the intermittent nursing which alone they could have secured. And further; even when the danger of death is past, the continuous care which can be given to patients in a hospital may restore many more to sound health, who in their own homes would only have escaped death to remain for the rest of their days miserable invalids.

The hospitals to be next mentioned are one for fistula and one for diseases of the hip. Then there are three buildings for the reception of

cases of incurable disease; two hospitals for lunatics; six lying-in hospitals; six for diseases of the eye; three orthopædic hospitals; one specially for accidents; six for skin diseases; four for smallpox—to which the remarks made on the fever hospitals of course apply; one for stone; three for women; and four for women and children.

We have said nothing concerning the convalescent hospitals. Most of them are of course situated in the country; but those anywhere near London are largely supplied with patients from the metropolis. Their value is immense, for they restore many patients to complete health, who, had they gone back to their work immediately after severe illness, and the bad hygienic conditions pertaining to their homes, might have sunk into a state of permanent ill-health.

There are a few other hospitals which may be alluded to, for, though they are not special as regards the diseases treated in them, yet they are special in other ways. Thus, there is the hospital at Greenwich for seamen; the French hospital for all foreigners who speak the French language; and the German hospital 'for natives of Germany, others speaking the German language and English, in cases of accident;' and lastly, there are a temperance hospital, a medical mission hospital, and one medical mission dispensary.

And now it might perhaps seem that London has hospitals enough; but those who have had some experience of the matter are not wont to say so. They freely admit that numbers of persons seek and obtain the help of hospitals who have from their circumstances no right to it, and these they would gladly see excluded; but they cannot admit that even then there would be hospital accommodation enough for the legitimate claimants. Nay, they may go further, and declare that there is, through the length and breadth of that 'great province of houses' which men call London, an urgent and increasing demand for more. An attempt to meet this demand so far was made a few years ago, when Pay-hospitals were opened in Fitzroy Square and elsewhere (as described in this *Journal* for October 13, 1880). This class of institutions might well be extended, as there are many patients both able and willing to pay for the treatment they require; and the still further development of such hospitals would greatly relieve the pressure presently felt by the purely charitable institutions.

IN A FLASH.

WHEN first I remember my aunt Barbara, she was over forty years of age; but she could never have been accounted a handsome woman. She was very tall and very angular, with a long thin face, the most remarkable feature of which was a Roman nose of commanding proportions. But as she had one of the kindest hearts in the world, her paucity of good looks seemed a matter of trifling moment to those who had the privilege of knowing her well. It was at my request that, some two or three years before her death, she wrote out the following narrative of an actual occurrence in her early life. I put

the manuscript away at the time, and did not come across it again till the other day. On looking over it once more, it seemed to me not unworthy of being transcribed for a wider circle of readers than that comprised by the writer's immediate friends and acquaintances.

You ask me to go back in memory (begins my aunt) to what seems to me now like a period of remote antiquity, when I, Barbara Waldron, was twenty-four years of age, and my sister Bessie five years younger, and endeavour to put down in writing the little story I told you by word of mouth a few days ago.

You must know, then, that in those far-off days, my sister and I were keeping house for our brother John, who at that time filled the position of steward and land-agent to Lord Dorrington. The house we lived in was a pleasant but somewhat lonely residence, about half a mile from the little country town of Levensfield. The house suited us for several reasons. In the first place, the rent was low; in the next, a large walled garden was attached to it, in which Bessie and I spent many happy hours; and in the third place, there was a side-entrance to Dorrington Park, by which my brother could take a short-cut to the Hall whenever he had business with his lordship, or his lordship had business with him. Our household was a small one, and besides ourselves, comprised only Mary Gibbs, a middle-aged woman, and her niece, a girl of sixteen. John's horse and gig were looked after by a young man named Reuben Gates, who did not, however, sleep on the premises. An important part of John's duties was to receive and pay into the Levensfield bank the rents due from the farmers and other tenants of property held under Lord Dorrington. One such tenant was a certain Mr Shillito, a corn and seed merchant, who was noted for his eccentricities. It was only in keeping with Mr Shillito's aggravating way of doing business that he should never pay his rent at the time other people paid theirs; that he should always pay it in gold and notes, instead of giving a cheque for the amount, as he was quite in a position to have done; and that he should make a point of bringing it himself, instead of naming a time when my brother might have called upon him; and finally, that he seldom arrived with the money till after banking-hours.

We come now to a certain autumn evening. Kitty had just brought in the tea-tray. It was growing dusk, almost too dusk to see clearly without the lamp; but Bessie and I liked to economise the daylight as much as possible, especially now that the long winter nights were so close upon us. John had come in for a cup of tea. This evening, he was going to drive over to Nethercroft, some ten miles away, dine there with some friends, and stay all night.