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A CHANGE OF REMEDY.

By BAXTER THOMPSON.

THE announcement that Miss Jane Prior, of London, was going to lecture on first aid for the wounded and sick nursing in general threw the village of Foxdale into an unusual state of excitement. That these lectures were to be for ladies only added a mystery that merely increased the interest manifested in the minds of these favored individuals. Notices calling attention to these facts were posted in favorable spots about the village, and the congregation was apprised of the same from the pulpit of the parish church.

If Miss Prior excluded the male community from her attentions, she herself was not disregarded, but formed the subject of much criticism among the neglected members of the Foxdale population. The nightly discussions at the Pig and Whistle centered round these proceedings, the knowledge respecting the subject being varied and obscure. Foxdale had never had its peace disturbed by anything more intellectual than an occasional traveling circus, so that the prospect of Miss Prior's advent awoke the quiet village from its usual apathy.

The lectures proving a great success so far as the attendance was concerned, Miss Prior announced that, providing a sufficient number came forward, the institution she represented in London would be pleased to conduct classes in the same subject during the ensuing months. This finding favor, Foxdale teemed with embryo nurses, thirsting for opportunities to test their newly-acquired knowledge and to put it to practical use. Broken bones not being an every-day occurrence, they turned their attentions to sound ones; many hours that might have been spent much more congenially at the Pig and Whistle being passed by long-suffering husbands in submitting various parts of their anatomy to be bandaged and put in splints, to give their better halves the necessary practice.

Old Sam Willet was the first to become a genuine patient, and he limped home early one afternoon with a sprained ankle. Mrs. Willet was the most earnest devotee in the new cause, and received her husband figuratively with open arms and welcomed him with fervor, stimulated by the advent of the first case of necessity for the trial of her skill.

With the wounded ankle carefully bandaged Mr. Willet was assisted into the front garden, where, reclining in a comfortable chair, his injured foot resting on a hassock, he served the double purpose of advertising his wife's skill and creating jealousy among the other amateur nurses in the village.

He was inclined to grumble at his enforced confinement at first; but the kind and increasing attentions of his wife caused him to feel more contented with his lot, and to look upon his accident as a fortunate occurrence. It being the period of the year during which the evenings were long and balmy, Mr. Willet sat in the garden and held receptions of numerous friends coming to inquire after his hurt and to cheer his loneliness.

"It must be tryin' for you to 'ave to sit so quiet all day, Sam," said Joe Rogers, who, living next door to Mr. Willet, had had his feelings somewhat severely tried at the sight of that personage enjoying an early morning pipe and a daily paper.

"You get used to it," answered Sam. "I did feel it 'ard at first, but the rest's nice, after the 'ard work I've done; but it pulls you down a bit."

"You're lookin' well," remarked another, in a cheery voice. "Gettin' quite fat, you are?"

"Look at the nursing I've 'ad," responded Sam. "Why, I couldn't 'ave had been better looked after if I'd been in a 'ospital."

Mrs. Willet smiled proudly, and glanced with an expression of triumph at the faces of several of her rivals who were present.

"I'll get you your tonic," she said, solicitously. "You mustn't talk too much, or we shall 'ave you goin' back again, and you're gettin' on nicely now."

"I 'as this three times a day," said Willet, beamingly, as his wife returned. "It's to keep strength up; it's wonderful 'ow it sustains one. Puts you all in a glow," he added, as he took a draught and put the tumbler down empty.

"When shall you be about again,

Sam?" inquired Joe, whose face during the above incident had been a study.

"I don't know," replied that worthy, gingerly moving his injured foot on the cushion. "It doesn't do to 'urry these things; there's nothin' like gettin' properly cured while you're about it. Sprains is awkward things."

Mrs. Willet interposed at this point and insisted on the invalid returning indoors, so the party broke up, Joe Rogers and others adjourning to the Pig and Whistle to discuss the advantages of a wife who understands and takes a practical interest in the gentle art of nursing. Two days later Joe Rogers fell a victim, his right knee giving away altogether, rendering walking evidently a painful and dangerous undertaking. Mrs. Rogers, full of the new responsibility now resting upon her, sought an interview with Mrs. Willet, and the two went off together to hold a consultation over the injured and apparently suffering Joe. Similar treatment being meted out to the new invalid, the two conversed amiably over the hedge that divided the gardens, comparing symptoms, and receiving in state numerous interested friends during the evening.

Misfortunes never come singly, and had the invalids suffered from scarlet fever infection could not have spread more quickly. William Jones was the next to fall a victim; and he broke his arm in an attempt to quiet a restive horse that seemed to take a sudden antipathy to harness and work in general. Then Jim Robinson sprained his wrist, which rendered his attention to work, which was of a manual nature, absolutely impossible. From these it spread yet farther, the pain attendant on the several accidents rendering a free use of stimulants a necessity for the maintenance of the sufferers' bodily health.

In spite of such careful attention the patients progressed very slowly, and after the first burst of enthusiasm was over the several nurses grew somewhat dissatisfied with the result of their treatment. A visit from their instructor, who condescended to personally examine their patients, only added to this dissatisfaction, and they met together to consult as to the advisability of a change of remedy. Mr. Willet was not feeling so well when his wife returned after this discussion; there was a look in her eye that warned him to be careful if he desired to keep things pleasant.

"When are you going to use your foot again?" she asked, as she removed her bonnet.

"I'd like to use it now, if it wasn't so painful. I don't understand 'ow it is it doesn't get on quicker. I s'pose I'm weak, that's what it is," he answered resignedly, looking anxiously out of the corners of his eyes at his wife, who was doing a rough and ready toilet in front of the parlor mirror.

"You can't be very weak," answered his wife, looking at him. "Look at the nourishment you've 'ad; besides, everybody says you're lookin' so well. 'Ow do you feel now?"

Mr. Willet inwardly wished everybody would pay less attention to his personal appearance. He had been quietly enjoying the last few days, and would like to continue in the same condition a little longer.

"I've felt a bit faint while you've been out," he said, feebly. "I'd 'ave 'ad a little tonic only I couldn't move out of my chair; p'raps it's not too late now."

Mrs. Willet murmured something her husband did not catch, and looked anxious.

"And 'ow's the foot?" she inquired.

Mr. Willet looked down upon it, and as it was swathed with many thicknesses of bandages, and there being nothing else to say about it, he remarked that it felt hot.

"I've been treatin' you wrong, I'm afraid," replied his wife. "You've been fed up too well in your low state. I'll take your temperature."

Bringing out a small glass tube, Mr. Willet was commanded to place it under his tongue and not to speak until it was removed. It being an impossibility to do otherwise than obey, Mr. Willet remained silent for the longest four minutes he could remember. Mrs. Willet then removed the instrument of torture, took it to the light, and examined it long and closely; finally she shut it up in its case and returned it to her pocket.

"I'll go and get your bed ready," she remarked seriously. "You want to be kept quiet; you'll be better up there."

"I don't want to go to bed," said Mr. Willet, anxiously. "I'm very comfortable down here."

"You'll go where it's best for you," answered his wife sharply. "You'd better be gettin' yourself ready now; I shan't be more than a few moments up-stairs."

In a very unwilling state of mind Mr. Willet was undressed, and placed safely in bed at the unusual and, to him, unpleasant hour of six o'clock, and a summer evening into the bargain. Being left to himself he found it a dreary time, and in the morning he screwed up his courage to inquire after the other invalids.

"They've all been treated wrong," said Mrs. Willet. "Like you, they ain't so well, so they're restin' quietly."

"In bed?" queried Mr. Willet, anxiously.

"Same as you," responded his wife. "You'll 'ave some friends in to-night that'll cheer you up a bit."

"I'll come down and see 'em," said Sam, weakly.

"You'll do nothing of the kind; you lie where you are and get well. I don't want all my nursing to go for nothing."

Mr. Willet's remarks on nursing fortunately were not heard—they were not complimentary. Mrs. Willet smoothed his pillows, arranged the clothes and said she'd bring him some gruel later on.

"I don't want any," said the patient shortly.

"Ah, you're losing your appetite, are you? It's a good thing you've got some one to look after you and see as you 'ave your food regular."

Mr. Willet said nothing—argument was useless; he lay and looked at the limited view of the world that was permitted from the small window of his bedroom. The sun was shining brilliantly; he could hear coming faintly from the fields familiar sounds, proving that the work was going forward where he ought to be assisting. What a fool he was! Why had he not gone back to work when he was able, instead of laying himself open to this self-imposed confinement? Even the knowledge that his fellow-sufferers were in a like position failed to bring him consolation.

Evening had barely set in on one of the most dismal days he could remember when voices below signalled the advent of anxious inquirers. Mrs. Willet ushered them upstairs, but Mr. Willet did not seem hospitably inclined, and the look that greeted the good Samaritans that entered could hardly have been interpreted into one of welcome.

"Sorry to hear you ain't so well, Sam," said one of them; "we all thought you was a-pickin' up wonderful."

"It's surprisin' 'ow these things turn," said another. "I 'ad a brother who sprained 'is ankle once, an' 'e was in bed three weeks."

Mr. Willet glared at the last speaker, and had he been anywhere else but in bed his look might have instilled the recipient with a fear of worse to follow.

"Make yourselves comfortable," interposed Mrs. Willet. "There's a little cordial down stairs I've been givin' to Sam; 'e don't take it now, an' it's a pity to waste it. I'll bring it up."

The conversation was very one-sided, Sam being treated to graphic descriptions of some interesting evenings at the Pig and Whistle from which he had been debarred, the details of which were bitter-sweet to the hearer.

"Sam's not very lively to-night," said one, with a commiserating glance at the ruddy face, showing like an angry sunset against a white cloud of bed-clothes. "I suppose it's not to be wondered at, though."

"I've got a 'eadache," said Sam, which was not far from the truth, though it sprang from suppressed anger more than impaired health.

"Ah, well, we won't keep you talkin' any longer," said another, compassionately; "we must go and call on Joe Rogers and the other pore sick folk."

Next morning, after extending her professional care to the needs of her patient, Mrs. Willet left him to the companionship of his own thoughts while she went into the village for a few necessities known to housekeepers. Mr. Willet devoted much time to planning an excuse for a rapid recovery; but ideas did not come as he wished. He was in the midst of these problems when he heard the front door open below, and a well-known voice calling his name broke his meditations.

"Sam! Sam!" called the speaker. "Can I come up?" Apparently thinking his question needed no answer,

footsteps followed the voice, and the owner of both entered the room.

"Why, Joe!" exclaimed Sam, in a surprised tone, "I thought you was in bed. 'Ow's the knee?"

"Better," said Joe, ignoring the first remark. "Why don't you get up?" he continued, leaning over the end of the bed and looking at Sam. "Foot still bad?"

"No worse than you knee, I suppose," Mr. Willet growled in response. "'Ow can I get up? The wife won't let me."

"No more will mine, but I've done it. She's gone out shoppin'. I'm sick of nursing."

"'Ow can I get up without making an ass of myself?" returned Sam, bitterly. "I don't want the wife to know as I've been playin' the fool."

Joe gasped and looked at Sam with an ignorance of the situation.

"Well, bless me," he said. "You don't mean to tell me you think she doesn't know it. Wot do you take her for? I thought you'd have guessed after last night."

Any doubts as to Mr. Willet's condition would have been at once dispelled had those who questioned it been present after this remark. Throwing the bedclothes violently off the bed, and regardless of sprains and bandages, he sprang to his feet.

"What do you mean?" he asked. "Only that we've been made fools of," answered Joe, with a laugh. "Puttin' us to bed and orl that rot; and last night, too. Regular put-up job to make us mad."

Mr. Willet was a reserved man as a rule, but his language was of a forcible nature as these facts dawned upon him in all their fullness.

"Help me to take off these infernal bandages," he said, when he had finished his criticism of the whole proceeding. "'Ow did you find out?"

"Guessed it partly," said Joe, as he assisted Sam out of an entanglement he was getting hopelessly involved in. "Bill Morgan told me the rest. 'E always did give secrets away when 'e'd a drink or two. I don't think they'll be as keen on first aid, though, after this."

There was consolation in this thought, and having no fear of disillusioning his wife as to the deceitfulness of his character, Mr. Willet dressed with celerity and sallied out once more into the sunshine, his movements in no way affected by his recent accident.

Recovery had been rapid in other quarters, and the late cripples joined forces in restoring the fallen spirits once more in the congenial surroundings of the Pig and Whistle. The glamor surrounding the duties and pleasure of nursing was destroyed somewhat after this in Foxdale; and if afterwards it was necessary for any to indulge in that particular employment, the person concerned was careful not to prescribe for her patient in public.—Tit-Bits.

White Ants as Food.

A recent book on the Congo Free State gives this picture of the fondness of the natives for white ants: "In the white ant month the natives have a very busy time. The river is deserted, and men and women, boys and girls, go out to gather the white ant for food. I cannot say I admire their taste, but the white ant is not bad as food—merely very rich. In this month he is about an inch long; the natives gather him in hundreds, pull off the wings and roast him. The native boys have a shorter way with him. Sometimes at mess white ants flopped on to the table, attracted by the light. The boys, who were waiting, pounced on them and without further ceremony popped them into their mouths."

Making Saltpeter From Air.

For ages whenever persons wished to make a particularly strong statement about the impossibility of doing anything, they were more likely than not to say, "I can't pull it out of the air, can I?"

Now Professor Muthmann, of the Polytechnical Academy in Munich, has found a way by which many things can be pulled out of the air. He has demonstrated that by passing high electric currents through moist air from one platinum point to another, nitric acid is formed and can be gathered by the use of suitable apparatus. He has shown that saltpeter can be "pulled out of the air" at less than one-fourth of its present cost.—New York Press.

Italy's Younger Generation.

Out of every hundred young men called up for military service in Italy nearly fifty per cent. have to be excused for physical unfitness.

OYSTER SHELL "CULM HEAP."

Great Banks Find Ready Sale For Several Purposes.

The average citizen may not know that oysters are planted, cultivated and harvested like any other crop, a person who engages in this industry being known as an oyster planter. Thousands of acres of oysters are under cultivation in Hampton Roads, which, during the harvesting season, is often literally alive with the reaping machines of the oystermen.

When the oysters are from one and a half to two years old they are usually large enough to be sold, and, as a rule, part of them are sold at this age and the balance in the third or fourth year, after which time the ground is allowed to rest a year before being planted again. Great care must be exercised in the selection of bottoms for oyster planting, if the planter would be financially successful.

The largest packer in Hampton opens from 100,000 to 200,000 bushels of oysters in a year. In this house, as the men open the oysters, they drop the shells on an inclined plane from which they slide into a trough and are carried along by scrapers attached to an endless chain called a "shell conveyor," which takes them without further labor to the shell pile in the yard. When a shucker has filled his gallon measure he carries it to the strainer, where the oysters are strained and measured. They are then emptied into large casks kept full of fresh water, by means of which any loose shell or grit is washed out. From these casks the oysters are dipped into a second strainer, and when separated from the water are again measured and packed.

The shells are sold for from one to three cents a bushel, and are used extensively by oyster planters for the propagation of oysters. They are placed in small piles on grounds found suitable for the purpose, where the spat or small oyster will attach itself to the shells. They are also used for making shell lime and for building the excellent shell roads found in some parts of the Virginia peninsula.—Philadelphia North American.

Size of Philadelphia.

Some idea of the great size of Philadelphia may be gathered from the figures in the department reports just printed. There are in the city 1147.71 miles of paved street, besides 412.29 miles of unpaved roads in the suburbs. All but a small percentage of these streets have modern "improved" pavements, of asphalt, granite block or brick. The paved surface would make a continuous driveway thirty feet wide from here to the Mississippi.

There are beneath these streets 951 miles of sewers. They would form a continuous water course as long as the Ohio River.

The streets, with 318 city bridges, are lighted by 9426 electric arc lights and 33,409 gas and gasoline lamps. One thousand four hundred and ninety-one and six-tenths miles of water pipe convey water to 242,506 premises. Only 11,738 premises are not supplied with city water.

There are more than 800 miles of conduits for electric wires, representing more than 5000 miles of ducts, and there are still 18,189 miles of electric wires in the air, sustained on 61,981 poles.

There are 435 miles of street railway track, enough to reach from the Delaware to Lake Erie.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Carnegie's Indifference.

The rejection of a proposal to build a library does not worry Andrew Carnegie in the least. He is familiar enough with iron structures to make allowances for heat and cold, expansion and contraction. "Sometimes the people are warm, sometimes cold," said one of Mr. Carnegie's former associates. "It all depends on how the sun of prosperity affects them. Talk to Carnegie about this refusal of his libraries and most likely he'll tell you about the man who built a chicken house. The walls were constructed of wood. For a temporary roof he stretched an old carpet over the structure. That night it rained. In the morning the owner found his hen house in collapse and the fowls dead beneath the walls. He blamed his enemies, but he should have censured the elements. Water had caused the carpet to shrink and the walls yielded."

"So will a rainy day humble a pride built up under the sun of prosperity."—Detroit Free Press.

The Rainbow.

To form a rainbow the sun must not be more than forty-two degrees above the horizon.