

such a good-humored smile, that the lowest felt at once at ease in her courteous presence. Her authority was maintained by just the faintest firmness of tone, which never varied except to level a short cutting, indignant reproach at any probationer or nurse unusually remiss in her duty. It was not often that this was the case, so firm and vigilant was the Sister, and its rarity in the Roderick ward was a matter of frequent commendation on the part of the matron.

#### SISTER AGATHA.

The Sister was young and of attractive appearance, and had entered the hospital as a probationer, working her way up to her present position. She was deeply spiritual, and with that happy unconsciousness of her piety which has so rare a charm in women who devote themselves heart and soul to any stirring sacred mission. In the whole hospital there was no hooded or black-robed devotee of any religious nursing order, and if the rest of the Sisters were as devout as Sister Agatha there would have been no need for them. It was Sister Agatha who read the prayers in the ward night and morning, kneeling at a prayer desk and reading two short prayers in a clear and sonorous voice, then singing, without referring to any music-book, two or three verses of a favorite hymn. The prayer service was obligatory in all the wards; but the singing was a specialty of the Roderick, and when the sun shone in upon the ward Sister Agatha was singing "Jesus, lover of my soul," in the sweetest of voices. Tom Dyer, the mechanic, fancied that the mule canary listened in prayerful sympathy, and that the gold fish ceased their placid swimming till she had done.