

He visited the sick and dying, not from morning to night, but from week's end to week's end. For seven whole days and nights he never went to his bed. For nearly three weeks he had not one whole night's rest. From house to house he hastened, forgetting to eat, and passing sixteen hours at times without food; administering the medicines, rubbing the cold limbs of those in collapse, and praying by them when they were conscious. All this time he suffered so intensely in heart for the agonies and spiritual dangers of the people, that he never thought of or was conscious of his bodily privations and toils. Physician of body and soul, he spent and was spent for his flock; nay, for those who were of no flock at all, godless, blaspheming, drunken strangers, who had never regarded him. During one of Mr. Cook's evening visits to these navvies, a few weeks before the cholera broke out, he remarked one powerful-looking man, whose insolent bearing towards him was more striking than that of others, and who appeared to be a sort of leader amongst them. To this man Mr. Cook particularly addressed himself; and on urging the importance of coming to church, the man exclaimed in a tone of extreme insolence, "We have torment enough on week-days, we don't want torment on Sundays." When this man was seized with cholera, he sent one of his friends up to the vicarage, late in the evening to beg Mr. Cook would come to him immediately. At this man's bedside, Mr. Cook passed the whole night. He found him agonised in body and mind, and humble as a child, imploring him to pray for him, and crying out continually he was so ignorant he knew nothing about religion. He had never been taught the history of our Blessed Saviour. The whole work of conversion and instruction was to be done, and in such brief space, and during such agonies. I know not how to describe this scene so as to set out the truth, and yet not to speak unbecomingly. There was no office so loathsome, but he himself executed it. With his own hands, he held, carried, removed, cleansed, brought again the vessels required in such a disease. The effluvia in a room occupied by several of these coarse men, labouring under such a nauseous sickness as cholera, must have been overpowering. *He lived in it.* He did not enter the room as a medical man does, feel the pulse, prescribe, and go out, but he remained, *he dwelt in that atmosphere.*

Few persons, except the clergy, know the intense nausea occasioned by reading in a foul atmosphere. By keeping the mouth shut, and not breathing much at a time, a very sickly air can be tolerated; but when we have to read, and the miasma touches the roof of the mouth, it is impossible sometimes to help retching over the book. Now all this was endured hour after hour, day after day, by this faithful servant of Christ, the shepherd who walked in the steps of his Saviour. Doctor, nurse, priest, without repose, and almost without food, he comforted, assisted, supplied want, and prayed.

It was, to a great extent, an act like that of the good Samaritan, for Mr. Cook to devote himself so much to these strange wild men, his neighbours only in respect of their necessities and their humanity; but my friend had the grace given him to do a work still more resembling that in the parable.

A traveller was taken ill of the cholera, and lay by the roadside. There lying he was passed by like the wounded man. A Dissenter, who was a parishioneer of South Benfleet, assisted him in walking to the vicarage. The door of every house on the way was closed against him. The Benfleet parishioners said to him, "There is but one house that will take you, and that is the vicarage." At last he reached Mr. Cook's door, and then fell down shrieking with agony. He was carried upstairs by Mr. Cook and the man who had so kindly helped him in the road; put to bed, nursed, and attended until he recovered.