

have been best—but the thought came to me this evening, the forty-eighth anniversary of my good-for-nothing vagabondage on this planet, that I would like to have you all with me, from the distinguished pioneer in the new specialism of mucous-membranology, the erudite neurotectonists, and other great men, down to the humble plodder who goes about quietly fighting off the death angel, or smoothing the passage for those whose time has come, and then says no more about it.

If you could sit with me now on the roof of my lowly dwelling (no, beg pardon, palatial residence), surrounded as I am by all the luxuries and barbaric splendours of the Orient—for *I have wealthy neighbours*—viewing the graceful domes and lofty minarets pointing skyward out of the fresh-green palm groves of “The City of Peace,” “The Queen of the Desert,” “The Home of the Caliphs,” the Tigris which washes the walls beneath with the melted snows of Mount Ararat, the famous bridge of boats, and on the opposite shore a long line of quaint-looking houses and beautiful gardens, all delicately coloured by the rays of the setting sun, you would surely exclaim with me, “A Painter’s Dream.” Then again, passing out of my residence with me through the massive gate on which a cannon ball would hardly make an impression, into the narrow, crooked, inconceivably filthy streets, where, being, jostled every moment up against the walls of the houses by the Bagdad Water Works (sheepskin bags on donkeys’ backs), you would have to tread your way cautiously to avoid stepping on fresh human excrement, while fine dust consisting of the dried ordure of both asses and men fills our nose and throat; or walk with me through the bazaars, where food covered with flies and dirt is exposed for sale, while alongside of the bread, meat, or fruit, lie children with purulent ophthalmia, whose faces you cannot see for the flies that are feast-

ing on the pus oozing from their eyes, and on ash heaps near by half a dozen half-starved vagrant dogs are dozing, covered with sores from head to foot—excellent material for a skin clinic—with not enough life in them to even fight over the fish heads, sheep entrails and other offal strewn about; or, examine with me cess-pits, wells and cellars which fill with water whenever the river rises, and are emptied by percolation through the porous soil, and just as surely would you groan under “A Sanitarian’s Nightmare.”

I treat, *gratis*, from sixty to eighty indigent sick daily and my universal prescription—for like most quacks I have one—is, “wash and be clean.” If a patient comes dirty a second time, I have scrubbing brush, soap and water ready, and apply the brush myself so effectually that I have never had to repeat the operation a second time. For the want of a suitable place to operate aseptically I have had to turn away many cases which I could benefit, as to operate in the house of the poor—and even of the rich, for diamonds and dirt are found together—is out of the question.

The practice of medicine is in a degraded state, and patients are constantly bargaining with the physician for a cure, and refuse to pay for advice pure and simple or for an examination, no matter how much skill or time it may involve. When a wealthy person gets sick all the doctors and magicians in the city are sent for an hour or two apart, and without each other’s knowledge, and their advice is followed or not, as it suits the fancy of the women neighbours, who always try to pump the doctor by fair means and foul. If a prescription is sent to the drug store it will probably be put up in an old unwashed cod-liver oil bottle that has lain perhaps for months in some dirty corner, and then an old rag and some paper is made to do service as a cork. This is not overdrawn. Sometimes the prescrip-