

A VETERAN OF WATERLOO.

The Pall Mall Gazette tells the story of an interview with an old lady who was at Waterloo. A babbling tot of a great grandchild is present, and the old woman's daughter, a white-haired woman of 65, is busy about the room, and the room itself is poor, though not abjectly poor, and has that look of thorough cleanliness about it which comes as a surprise upon one in one's wanderings through Whitechapel.

"To-morrow is the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. Do you remember it?" I asked Mrs. Todd, after we had gone through the friendly formulas of welcome which are never forgotten by the east ender.

"Remember it!" Mrs. Todd repeated. "Indeed I remember it. Many things that have happened later on I have forgotten, but I can remember that day as I can anything in my life. I see the duke now, when I think of it; and I hear the drum—the horrible drum—that called the men to the battle. I was only a child of ten, and many things that I was told of afterwards I never knew at that time. But the music and the drum, and the noise of the guns and the soldiers dashing past—all this is as if I saw and heard it now. We were in our tent, but my brother and I peeped out all day long, and my mother too, for my father was in the battle, and she could do nothing but watch and watch. He was not killed on the first day, but on the second day, half an hour before the battle was over, a bullet struck his head. He was not far from our tent, and we saw him afterwards, his poor head almost blown off. Oh, it was an awful sight! I see it now. I was thinking of it this very night, and wondering how many years ago it was that it all happened."

She says it very quietly, almost as if speaking to herself; her withered hand quietly dries the tears that have sprung to her eyes, and then she goes on. "We children used to make lint for the wounded, but no lint would do my father any good. How did we come to be there? It was this way: A certain number of women were wanted in the camps to do the hard work. My mother was a very strong woman, and my father had been applied to to take her with him. 'But what was to be done with the children?' he asked,

my mother told me. 'Take the children; we can make them useful,' he was told; and so we were taken.

"There were no railways in those days. Oh, dear no. We went across the water with a lot of other women and children and soldiers, and then we travelled in wagons, in what they called the baggage train. In our wagon, on the evening before my father was killed, a table had been placed upside down, and in it my brother and I sat as we went along. I looked out and saw the women sobbing and crying in the next wagon, and I remember asking my mother what they were all crying about. Only a day later we also were among those who cried. We were treated very well, and five weeks after Waterloo my mother, my brother and I were back in London. We might have been put into the Duke of York's School, but mother said she had had enough of soldiering and of everything that was connected with it, and would not let us go. Eight months after we came back, she died; her heart was broken by my father's death. My brother went to sea and was drowned in a storm, and I struggled on in London. Two of my grandsons are soldiers, but soldiering is a hard life, and when I see a young girl on a soldier's arm I feel very sorry for her."

"But you are not a Londoner yourself, are you, Mrs. Todd?" "No, I was born at Bantry, but I have always lived in London since we got back after Waterloo. I have been twice married, and of my fifteen children only this one girl remains," and the old lady nodded her head towards her white-haired daughter, a woman of 65. "I was always very strong and healthy, and never ailed anything till some five or six years ago; I got wet one evening, and caught bronchitis. For a while—I forget how long it was—I was in the infirmary, but they said they could do nothing for me, and when my granddaughter, the little one's mother died, I came back to my daughter, and here we three live together. The days seem long, and somehow my spectacles won't do any longer. If I could read, I would not mind it so much. Now I just lie still or talk to the child. I am not ill, but I have not the strength to get up. No, and I am not tired of life. I can wait till my day is quite over. It will not

be very long now, and life has not always been hard. I had always needlework to do—well paid work for private customers—but when I was eighty-two I had to give it up. I could do no more."

Never a word of complaint, never even an allusion that life's evening might be brighter than it can possibly be in a poor upstairs room at Spitalfields. Presently she sat up against the clean, white pillows, pushed her thin hair back under the neat old-fashioned cap, and folded her hands patiently on the old coverlet. The wedding ring on her finger is very thin, nearly worn out. "It has been on my hand for seventy years," she says and smiles, "no wonder it is thin." And then she talks again of her children, and of the two sons of whom she has never heard of for many, many years. "I would like to know something about them, if they are still alive. You can't help wanting to know what has become of your children. But if it cannot be, I must be content. Soon I shall know it all, what I have wanted to know so often and so long."

THE PLEASURES OF DYING.

Euthanasia is not an old word as applied to medical science, but it has a meaning which of late has come to be of great importance to every one. Death was formerly considered a great struggle, and vivid, almost shocking, descriptions of the phenomena of dying were given in such exaggerated forms that none cared to think of the eventful moments when death should come to them. Euthanasia, or the pleasures of dying, takes the very opposite view, and proclaims death to be easy and painless. Those who have watched at hundreds of deathbeds have noted that death was easy, and officers in battle have testified that the last moments of dying soldiers were painless ones. People who have been in the jaws of wild beasts in India, and have been rescued at the last moment, testify that a numbing calmness was experienced after the first sharp, painful snap of the teeth upon them. In fact, the approach of every creature's fate brings with it a kindly preparation when life is blissful and full of pleasures. The last sensation in the world is then one of the joy, and not excruciating pain.

Read THE HOME JOURNAL.