

The Trials of a Fresh Air Patient

BY ONE OF THEM

EVEN the doctor, kind, tactful soul that he usually is, was at fault this morning. "I should think you would feel like a fraud," he said heartily as he joined me on my sunny balcony, "for you are the picture of perfect health."

Then, throwing his driving gloves on the floor, and all unconscious of the effect of his chance words, the good man proceeded to take pulse and temperature and to ask the usual questions about cough, pains in the chest, digestion, etc.

"Is it possible," I asked myself delightedly, as the imperishable spark of hope within my breast suddenly shot up in bright flame: "that my long-hoped-for day of recovery has come at last?"

"Eating well, sleeping well, an outdoor life, and freedom from worry, are half the battle," he said, cheerily, as, presently, without further comment on my condition, he rose to go.

"But you said I was a fraud, doctor," I cried detainingly. "Do you possibly mean that I am well enough to go back to the active household life that I dearly love?"

With a testiness that did its best to conceal the underlying sympathy, came the answer: "I did not say that you were a fraud. I merely remarked that you must feel like one. You know as well as I that your one chance for regaining health lies in months, if not in years, of the life you are now leading."

And straightway the flame of hope died down to the veriest dull ember.

But even as I winked back the salt tears of disappointment, I also repressed a strong desire to laugh. After all, I meditated, worse things might befall one than be called "a perfect picture of health." Indeed worse things did shortly befall me, and it is because of my sympathetic understanding

of the conditions under which my many brother and sister patients are taking the outdoor treatment at their homes, that I continue the history of this particular morning. My experience will be of value if it aids them in cultivating the imperturbable spirits which they of all people greatly need, and better still, it may perhaps reach those devoted, well-intentioned friends, who have the interests of these semi-invalids so deeply at heart.

"Why did you leave the sanitarium?" questioned my next visitor, one whom I have always highly esteemed in her capacity of family friend. "Would it not have been wiser"—she hesitated slightly before adding, "and well, safer, for all concerned for you to have remained there longer?"

The implication that by my very presence in my home I was selfishly and wilfully imperiling those whom I best loved was plain enough, yet I managed to reply pleasantly: "You see I have already greatly improved in health. I had learned all that they could teach me there of the care which a patient should give herself so that she need not be a menace to the health of others. It is with the full consent of the sanitarium specialist, who by the way is in close touch with our own doctor, that I am living by sanitarium rules in my own home surroundings."

"But still," she persisted, with an obtuseness of which I had not thought her capable, "although you look and seem so well, you surely know that in your disease, above all others, appearances are deceptive—"



PATIENTS OF THE MUSKOKA FREE HOSPITAL FOR CONSUMPTIVES
HAVE THEIR GAMES.

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