

There is one little boy, who however is not at the table, but is sitting up in one of the beds, who has already demolished a pile of slices of bread and butter, and is eagerly calling to the nurse for more. You would think that there is nothing much the matter with him; but you are mistaken, for he is in a very precarious condition.

We glance around the ward and a bright face is seen peeping out of every cot. But in an obscure corner there is a bed surrounded with curtains, and on approaching we see a nurse watching a child, who at first glance we take to be asleep. We look again at the child's face and notice that the features are fixed, save that every now and then she opens her mouth and utters a faint, short cry. Her head is drawn backwards till it almost touches her shoulders. What we took to be sleep is the last stage of inflammation of the brain. We take up the notes that are hung upon the cot, and there we read that the patient had had a discharge from her ears for three years, but was not treated until she complained of severe and constant headache, when at last she was brought to the hospital. Alas! too late. The matter from her ears has found his way into her brain and now nothing can save her.

We turn from this dismal scene and enter the women's surgical ward, and there a

middle-aged woman with her head bandaged up arrests our attention. The nurse tells us that she has just been operated upon for disease of the bones of the skull following a prolonged discharge from her ears. More fortunate than the child we have just seen, she has come in time and will probably recover. But if she had not neglected to have had her ears seen to she would never have required the operation.

Having now seen as much as we care to, let us leave the hospital, and while walking home talk over what we have just done. It would be impossible to discuss all our experiences of the past few hours, so let us confine our conversation to two conditions which have been forcibly brought before our notice, namely, wax in the ear and discharge from the ear.

We saw that wax in the ear was cured without much difficulty. The fluid that I have described above was dropped into the ears every night for a week, and the ears were then syringed out and the cure completed. To be successful you must pay attention to the following points: always direct the nozzle of the syringe to the upper wall of the passage. This is a most important detail to remember. If you forget this point, you will do no good by syringing. Be careful to let the water flow gently and evenly. If you inject the

water forcibly or in jerks it will produce giddiness or fainting. Lastly, always syringe until no more wax comes away and the water returns quite clear. If you leave any wax behind it will act as a nucleus round which more will be deposited and so the trouble will recur. For wax in the ear the best fluid to use is warm water.

The other affection that we will discuss is discharge from the ear. We have already seen this condition in some of its most common varieties and with its worst complications. I may have frightened you by showing the fearful severity of some of the results of this affection. It was to impress upon you the extreme importance of having discharge from the ears immediately seen to that I showed you the two unfortunate victims of neglect in this respect.

Remember that if you ever have a discharge from your ear, gently syringe out your ear with a weak antiseptic fluid, such as we saw used in the ear department, and do not put in any wool, as this keeps back the discharge, which may burrow into the skull or brain.

You see there is very little trouble or expense in this treatment, and if it is carried out carefully you will be saved from the severe affections that not uncommonly arise from neglecting this so-called trifling ailment.



CHAPTER II.

HE pile of clothes ready for ironing was placed at the end of the kitchen table, and Helen without any word took the hot iron from the fire and started upon Victoria Maud's pinafores. They were easily ironed as they were made of stout, plain linen,

and Mrs. Larkin had damped them when she had folded them down, so Helen had the satisfaction of seeing the large pile quickly disappear before Mrs. Larkin came in to help. But it was hot work, and she was beginning to look flushed and tired, so Mrs. Larkin told her to sit down and rest while she folded down another bundle from the line in the back-yard. As Helen was sitting there she thought—What would poor Harold say if he knew I am laundress to-day and model to-morrow? And I have to go on deceiving him, as he would worry himself to death, but I'm so glad I've got the rent safe and sound in my pocket, and by doing this I am wiping off some of my obligation to Mrs. Larkin. At that moment Mrs. Larkin reappeared behind a huge bundle of clothes. Helen jumped up from her chair and helped her to put them on the table.

When they were both busily engaged in ironing, Mrs. Larkin's husband came in and settled himself in a comfortable arm-chair by the fire. He was very respectful to the pretty young laundress and thanked her for helping his wife. He had an evening paper in his hand, and he regaled the two women with snatches of news. Mr. Larkin's

"A GIRL OF GRIT."

idea of news was principally taken from the column dealing with the police courts, and he also had a partiality for facts which came under the heading of News in a Nutshell.

"Now, missis, would you believe this," he said, "that there are some folks who have no more to do with their money than to give £3000 for a picture, and here's one man as I should think wants putting in a lunatic asylum, has paid £250 for an egg?"

"Well, Mr. Larkin, there's something wrong with your specks to-night, for you won't get me to believe that. Give me the paper, and I'll believe it when I see it myself."

Mrs. Larkin took the paper out of her husband's hands in a rough but not ill-natured way, and found the paragraph. It gave the prices paid for a few articles belonging to some private collection which had been sold at Christie's sale rooms, and the prices Mr. Larkin quoted were quite correct—a fine Turner, £3000. And one of the other items quoted was "A Great Auk's Egg, £250."

Mrs. Larkin handed Helen the paper. "May I keep it and show it to my brother, Mrs. Larkin?"

Helen's face had suddenly flushed and then turned deathly pale.

"I will give it back to you in the morning."

Mr. Larkin responded readily; "Certainly, missie, how's your brother to-night?"

"He's getting on nicely, thank you, Mr. Larkin. But it's getting late and I must go up to him again."

She slipped her hand into her pocket and drew out her past two weeks' rent and laid it on the ironing table.

"There, Mrs. Larkin, that's yours, and thank you so much for waiting. I will be able to pay you the rest early in the week, and I would like my brother to be moved into the front room to-morrow. The doctor says he would get better much quicker if his room looked south, and," she added with a reassuring smile, "I won't keep you waiting for the rest again."

Mrs. Larkin took the money, and gazed at the girl in open amazement. "Sakes alive! Has the sky fallen? This afternoon you couldn't pay for the back-rooms and now you're wanting the front one, but there, it ain't no business of mine, and if you can afford it I'll be real glad to shift your brother, for there's a bit more life in that room. And I'll tell you what it is, miss, I'll charge you the same rent as you pay for the back one, until I get an offer of a let for the front, and then you see, miss, I must think of the children and accept it."

Helen thanked her but sternly refused the offer. "You've been very good to us already, Mrs. Larkin, I really couldn't accept it, besides," she continued with the same confident little smile, "I have just heard this afternoon of a good opening—I think I can make some money."

"Well, and you deserve it, miss," broke in Mr. Larkin, "for you're made of the right stuff. Oh, I knows all about you, you ain't accustomed to this way of living, for it's mighty strange how small the world is when you come to look at it." Mr. Larkin spoke as if he had taken a birdseye view of the globe. "My mate at Brookfields was stable-boy to your pa, and he says he never served a truer gent. Bill says as how your pa spent money like a duke."

"If he hadn't, there might have been more left for me, Mr. Larkin; but I must go to my brother now, so good-night."

When Helen got out of the hot kitchen, she flew up to her tiny bedroom and threw herself down on the bed. But in a moment she was up again and in a state of nervous excitement; she paced up and down her room like a caged lion.

"Oh dear, oh dear, if I had only someone to help me. I don't know where to begin; what shall I do? In the first place, I must get someone to look after Harold, and keep him from worrying, and then I must go and pay my dear cousin another visit."

She smoothed her hair and bathed her