

except 'Mrs. Harcourt.' She shall never be 'mother' to me."

"Well, tell me, how is the good lady? I hope you have got her into a good temper for my benefit."

"Indeed, I haven't. I should think she is probably pouring a long tale of complaint into father's ears about my sins and shortcomings at this very moment."

"Now, Madge," he remonstrated, "what have you been up to? I gave you special injunctions to get her into a good humour. You see, I have a favour to ask—I shall want you with me all day long."

"Well, I did try, Jack, but, as I've told you before, it isn't the faintest use. If I pleased her for ninety-nine days and offended her on the hundredth, she would forget the ninety-nine in a moment. I came downstairs this morning full of good intentions. I managed to keep them too, for, although she told me I was late when I wasn't, and that my hair was untidy when it was perfectly smooth, I never said a word. In fact, I was successful all day until this evening. She found me reading on the lawn and told me to go and practice. I declined, as it was the first time I had opened my book all day. Presently she came again and tried to prevent my coming to meet you; as if anyone in the world could do that! Of course, I just came, and you can imagine the rest. I might as well not have tried at all, all day."

"What a tale of woe!" remarked Jack, pulling a long face and heaving an unnaturally deep sigh, "I wonder you have survived! Never mind, we'll soon bring her round," and then, to change the subject, he gave her a brief account of his own recent doings, which lasted until they reached home.

"It's a beautiful old place, after all,

Madge, in spite of its drawbacks," he said, standing for a moment to gaze at the dark pile of buildings sharply outlined against the sky. "If only it was nearer to London and not in such an out-of-the-way corner, how I should enjoy coming home oftener."

Madge was silent, and her eyes assumed a strangely wistful look, as she too gazed thoughtfully at her home. It made a pretty picture in the dim light, with its bodyguard of giant oaks, and behind them the Cumberland hills stretching away into the far distance.

"Oh! yes, it's beautiful enough," she answered presently, with a little catch in her voice, "but it isn't like home. I should be glad to see the last of it," and she shuddered a little. "Do you know, Jack," she continued in a softer voice, "I often wonder how it looked to mother, and if she ever felt like I do. I wonder if she loved those distant hills, or if they made her feel hemmed in and crushed down, as they do me. If I look at them for a long time I feel like a bird in a cage, beating its wings hopelessly against the unyielding bars. I feel as if all the hoping in the world would not help me to pass those hills and get out of my prison into the big, free world beyond; as if, for me, the hills stretched on and on interminably, and I should never reach a spot where I could see beyond them."

"But you shouldn't think such gloomy thoughts, Madge," he answered. "It isn't likely you're going to stay here all your life. As soon as ever we can manage it, you shall come up to town and have no end of a time."

"Perhaps by then I sha'n't care about coming. I shall always feel I am different from other girls, and that will make me dislike to mix with them. Besides, I don't think gaiety is what I want; but

come, we are very late, we must wait until to-morrow for a long talk," and she drew him forward quickly.

"You do think such queer things, Madge," he said, as he followed her; "I don't know anyone else who thinks as you do. Fancy dreaming of not liking London! It's glorious! Wait till you've tried it. You'll forget all about these dull times."

Madge made no reply, but her heart did not feel any lighter at the prospect held out to her. Deep down in that heart she knew only too well that it was not London and gaiety that would take the aching restlessness out of her life.

On reaching the house they found their father and Mrs. Harcourt waiting anxiously for them, for they were very late through lingering on the way. However, as Jack was there, Mrs. Harcourt expressed nothing but anxiety, and after the usual greetings he turned to the table and sat down.

"Aren't you going to keep me company, Madge?" he asked, as she remained standing.

"No, I'm not hungry."

"Nonsense, you must want your supper; where are you off to?"

"I'm going to bed," she replied quietly.

"Don't let Madge go to bed without having something to eat, *mater*!" he exclaimed, turning to Mrs. Harcourt. "It's half-past ten and I expect she had tea before five."

"I can assure you Margaret is quite capable of looking after herself," replied Mrs. Harcourt coldly.

Jack was about to answer, but something in Madge's expression stopped him. Without a word he returned her kiss and let her go.

(To be continued.)

HINTS ON HOME NURSING.

LOCAL APPLICATIONS.

The object of poultices, etc. is to relax the skin and the surrounding tissues and to apply warmth and moisture to any one part of the body, so causing a superficial redness to relieve a deeper inflammation causing pain.

Linseed Meal Poultice.—Pour boiling water into a basin, stir quickly with one hand and shake in with the other, sufficient linseed meal to make the poultice of a consistency to spread smoothly on a piece of rag or flannel, the edges of which should be turned over the ends of the poultice in order to make it look neat. See everything is in readiness before beginning to mix the poultice. Warm the utensils, and see that the water boils. Let the poultice be light and not too wet. Change the poultice frequently so that the person never feels it get cold.

A Bread Poultice.—To make this, coarse bread crumbs from stale bread should be stirred into a basin of boiling water, covered up and put to stand by the fire for three or four minutes, strain the water off, and add fresh water, boiling, pour it off and spread the poultice on rag or flannel and apply with muslin or tissue-paper over the surface, otherwise the gluten in the bread is apt to stick on to the skin and form a crust.

Mustard should be mixed with cold water

and warmed after being spread on a piece of flannel by the fire; it should have a piece of muslin over the surface next to the skin. A mustard poultice is also made in the same way as a linseed poultice with mustard stirred in, in equal parts, or two parts of linseed to one of mustard.

Charcoal Poultice.—One ounce of charcoal to four ounces of linseed meal or bread crumbs, stir the charcoal in while mixing, and sift finely-powdered charcoal over the surface before applying. Useful in cases of old sores and ulcers.

Bran Poultice.—Make a flannel bag, partly fill with bran, sew it up and pour boiling water over it, wring out, and apply; or the bran may be baked and applied dry. Salt bags may be used in the same way.

Fomentations.—Wring folded flannel out in boiling water and apply with oil silk over it to keep in the heat. **Soda Fomentation.**—Two ounces of soda to one pint of boiling water; useful in some cases of rheumatism.

Poppy-head Fomentation.—Break up the heads of two poppies, and boil them in two pints of water, till the quantity is reduced one-half. Wring out folded flannel in decoction, and apply; useful in cases of pain, when severe.

Laudanum Fomentation.—Sprinkle folded flannel after being wrung out in boiling water

with from one teaspoonful to half an ounce of laudanum, according to the size required, and apply with oil silk over it to keep in the heat.

Turpentine Stoup.—This can be made in the same way as a laudanum fomentation, or a better plan is to sprinkle the folded flannel first with from two spoonfuls to one ounce of turpentine, and then wring out in boiling water; by this method the turpentine gets more equally distributed all over the flannel, and is not so likely to cause little blisters.

When carrying poultices from one room to another it is a good plan to put them between two hot plates to keep them hot. Always if possible use a wringer made like a small round towel with a stick run through each end; when wringing out fomentations it saves burning the hands. A patent fomentation heater saves all heating of water or trouble of wringing, and may be bought for about 2s. 6d.; it also warms up poultices, so that they may be used again if necessary.

A Cotton Wool Jacket can be made with cotton-wool tacked inside a calico jacket; it is useful, and often better than a poultice in cases of lung disease. When applying blistering fluid mark out the size the blister is required with oil or ointment to prevent the fluid running down the skin and so causing a blister of too large an extent.