

THE MESSENGER.

the field near his house one evening, he could hardly see where he was going, and had to rest at the stile, and then nearly fainted when he got to his house.

'Well, to-day he quite fainted at the warehouse. When he came round one of the partners wanted him to be taken to his house, but he, poor fellow, begged to come home, so one of the men came home with him in a cab. We have got him safely into bed, and there he must stay and keep as quiet as possible if he is to escape brain fever.

'I told his wife I should come and fetch you, for I knew you would keep things straight downstairs for her, and look after those two dear little children while she attends to her husband. Anyhow, I knew you would go until some arrangements could be made.'

'Go, of course I will,' said Mary as the doctor finished his explanation; 'and if Mrs. Willmore has a sister or any friend she would like to send for to help her, why, I will gladly bring the two children here so as to keep the house quiet for her poor husband. You did right to come for me, sir.'

An hour later found Mary busily employed at Jessamine Cottage, and during her dear husband's three weeks' illness Mrs. Willmore proved her to be, as she said, 'a friend indeed.' To her she confided all the story there was to tell. How her husband had been for some time past doing not only his own office work but part of a friend's, who had met with an accident.

'His employers offered to get extra help,' she said, 'but Edward felt so certain he could manage. He is so quick and clever, and so much respected at the warehouse. He has been especially good to young fellows who were in danger of being led astray by bad companions. He is a firm abstainer, a true Christian. His mother says a better son never lived, and I am sure a kinder husband or father could not be found anywhere. It is sad to see him lying there so ill and weak, but I believe God will hear and answer our prayers for his recovery.'

Those prayers were answered—the true, noble, unselfish life was spared.

As for Mrs. Sharpe, who had made it her business to publish a statement she could not prove to be true, she felt very uncomfortable when Mary Barton told her the facts of the case.

'See how easy it is to misjudge any one,' Mary said; 'fortunately, Mrs. Willmore has not heard this village gossip, but if she had how distressed she would have been to know that her good husband had been so unkindly spoken about. My husband says that in dealing with other people it is always best to err on the side of charity, and you know that we have Christ's own words, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It seems to me it is better to follow his teaching, better to think kindly, speak kindly, and act kindly than to be governed by what we are pleased to call our penetration.'

Sister Dora.

In the town of Walsall in England there stands a life-size statue of a woman in the dress of a Sister of Mercy; scissors and pin-cushion hang from her belt, and in her hands is a bandage. The noble face, full of grand purpose and lofty aims, is itself a sermon of peace and goodwill and an inspiration to noble deeds.

Walsall lies in the heart of 'The Black Country,' where coal mines and manufacturing blur the fair face of nature with grime and smoke. Here amid the thousands of ignorant and degraded laborers, Sister Dora, as she was lovingly called, spent thirteen

years of her life ministering to wounded and suffering humanity.

Fifty years ago Dorothy Windlow Patterson was a happy, light-hearted girl in a charming home. Her father, a clergyman of the Established Church, was in prosperous circumstances, and his family beyond the need of strict economy; but the daughters were early taught the truth that self-denial for the sake of others is the right way of living. So the girls were always planning to save money for their various charities. They would mend and remend their dresses as long as was consistent with a neat appearance, that the price of new ones might go into their benevolent fund. Often they gave away their dinners, eating bread and cheese themselves, that some of the hungry poor might be fed. They not only gave away food and clothing, but the precious gifts of the heart—tender love and pity for the needy.

Dorothy was a beautiful girl, bright and winsome; but although so attractive, she had no desire to shine in society. When quite young she wanted to join Florence Nightingale's corps of nurses for service in the Crimean War, but on account of her youth and



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inexperience her father would not give his consent. The longing of her life, however, was to care for the sick, and this led her to join the sisterhood of the 'Good Samaritans,' an organization existing within the Church of England.

The great number of casualties among the miners and foundrymen at Walsall led to the establishment of a hospital in the town, and 'Sister Dora,' as she was now called, was placed in charge. It was a small affair at first, with only four beds, but the needs of the place led to its rapid enlargement.

Most women would have found the work trying and repulsive to the last degree, but she never wavered nor faltered. The villagers were rude and ignorant, and in the early days of the work violently prejudiced against it. One day, a boy seeing her pass along the street, called out, 'There goes one of the Sisters of Mercy,' and threw a stone with such force that it made a cruel cut in her forehead. Sister Dora said nothing but bided her time. Soon after, the lad was brought into the hospital, seriously injured. At once she said: 'That is my boy!' and devoted herself to his case. One day she entered the room and found him crying. He exclaimed, 'Sister, I threw that stone!'

She answered brightly: 'Did you suppose I did not know that? I knew it the very first moment you came in at the door.' It is needless to say that this boy was ever after devoted to her interests.

Accidents of all sorts were constantly occurring, and some of them horrible to the

last degree. One day, for example, an explosion took place in the ironworks. The molten iron pouring forth burned twelve workmen so frightfully that they bore little resemblance to human beings. The sight and smell of the wounds made the ward in which the sufferers were laid, intolerable. The physicians, strong men as they were, sickened often, and had to leave. Volunteer helpers came to assist, but were for the most part unable to get beyond the door. Some of the men lingered in agony for ten days. During this time Sister Dora never went to bed and scarcely ever left the ward.

Another instance showing the sublime heroism of the woman was during a small-pox epidemic. A special hospital was established, but it met with decided disfavor until it was announced that Sister Dora would herself take charge. In this dreadful pest-house she remained, often entirely alone, from February until August. Think of the atmosphere laden with pestilence and loathsomeness, and the utterly revolting nature of the disease! No wonder she said she could 'taste the small-pox in her tea.'

It was not strange that these working people came to love her with absolute devotion. At one time a man was brought in whose arm was terribly crushed and twisted. The surgeon insisted upon immediate amputation. The man cried in agony, 'O Sister, save my arm! It is my right arm!' She begged for the chance to try to save it. The surgeon called her crazy, and only consented on condition that she assumed the entire responsibility and blame in case the man died.

For three weeks she devoted herself to that arm, night and day, praying with every breath as she worked. Her faith triumphed and the arm was saved. During her last sickness, this man would walk eleven miles every Lord's Day, ring the door-bell at the hospital, and make the simple inquiry: 'How is Sister to-day?' and on turning away, he would always add: 'Tell her 'twas her arm that rang the bell.'

Amid all the distressing and repulsive elements of her daily life Sister Dora was cheerful and merry. Her faith in God was so absolute that she believed everything she asked for would be given her. The efficacy of prayer was with her an intense belief. Added to this was the strength she drew from a daily study of God's Word. In ministering to bodies she found abundant opportunity to minister to souls, and many stars did she win for her crown of rejoicing.

Sister Dora was gifted with wonderful powers of endurance, but even her matchless strength and will succumbed at length to the exhausting strain of her work. At the age of forty-five the break came, and her physician informed her that life was nearing its close. Her last months were marked by intense suffering. When death was very near she sent every one from the room saying: 'I have lived alone; let me die alone.' And so without human witnesses her soul returned to the Infinite.

Her grave is in a cemetery near workshops and forges that break in with a ceaseless roar on the quiet of the dead. The spot is of her own choosing. Her friends asked her: 'It is noisy there; would you not prefer a quieter place?'

She replied: 'No; I have lived with working people all my life, let me be with them in my death.' Marking her grave is a simple stone with the inscription: Sister Dora. Entered into rest Christmas Eve, 1878.

About five years after her death the beautiful statue, of which mention has already been made, was unveiled at Walsall. It was a notable occasion, yet the growth and enlargement of the work to which she gave her life is Sister Dora's best and most enduring