

philanthropic attitude of mind they did not ask themselves, though each individual member was fully aware that Miss Inman did not earn her salary.

As Estelle left to go to the cloak-room for her coat and hat she encountered that lady on the stairs—a thin, meagre, rather pitiful figure, prematurely aged, with rounded shoulders and tight, skimpy grey hair screwed up into a knot behind, with the result that the somewhat large features seemed to be accentuated.

"You look tired, Miss Rodney," she said, and her sympathetic smile had a sudden sweetness which softened all the harsher outlines of her face.

"I am. It's the great unwashed that are responsible. My place has been unbearable this afternoon. If I were a rich woman, I should come down to Camberwell and establish and endow a School of Hygiene for mothers."

Miss Inman faintly smiled. She was used to Miss Rodney's rather drastic remarks, and, as a rule, she enjoyed them. She had no interest beyond the Romsey Road Board School, and, had she been suddenly torn from her setting, she would probably have wilted like a flower long past its bloom.

No item in connection with the school was too insignificant to engage her breathless attention, a new coal-boy for the scuttles being sufficient to fill her with speculation for the rest of the day. She took a personal and vivid interest in every teacher and employee, from the head master down even to the charwoman who cleaned the schools each morning. She observed every change in dress, as well as every variation of tone or mood, and two things about Miss Rodney to-day struck her—namely, that she looked dingy and not so nice as usual, also that she was considerably out of sorts.

"I'm sorry you feel it all so much," she said. "Now, I can never be warm enough! My room has been sixty-