of ornamental freaks of fancy, which cost a great deal more than the public likes to pay for such doubtful delights. It is very well and very desirable that handsome and highly decorated buildings should be erected in our metropolis, but I do not like paying six shillings for a bottle of sherry, in order that there may be caryatides of colossal size supporting the balcony outside my window.

I was dining, dear parent, not long ago, with some friends, at a certain hotel in a fashionable quarter, to which we had been attracted by the high reputation of the cook. The bill was so enormous in comparison with what we had had; it was so outrageously and humorously extravagant; that we summoned the chief, and ventured on a gentle remonstrance. How do you think this honest man defended himself and his prices? He did not defend himself or his prices at all; he merely said, with rather a piteous shrug: "Gentlemen, you have no idea how difficult it is to return ten per cent to the shareholders."

On the whole, my much respected father, I think I would not recommend *you* to live at hotels, just as in other ways I have advised you not to attempt keeping pace with those who belong to the period, and have grown up gradually among its institutions. It does very well for me, and I like it; but for you it might prove too exciting.

P. CHESTERFIELD, JUNIOR.

THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER.

MILES and miles away from London, and nearly an hour's drive from the nearest railway station, there is a village as little known as might be expected from so remote a position. It is a charmingly pretty village, the houses, each with more or less of garden to it, scattered about, not ranged into any attempt at a street. There is a green, which *is* green, and not parched and brown, and there the village boys play cricket in the long summer evenings; and above it is a heathery common, bounded by a fir-wood, whose auburn trunks and boughs burn in the sunset; while below, winding softly through flat rich pastures, a trout-stream glides between its fringes of sedges and bulrushes and tall water myosotis, blue as turquoises in the sun.

Just out of the village stands the house with which we chiefly have to do. It is inhabited by Dr. Britton; he is an M.R.C.S., and used to make a fight to be called Mr. Britton, his proper title; but the village would not have it; his profession was doctoring, and doctor he was and doctor he should be called; and so doctor he *was* called, till he had become so used to it that any other prefix to his name would have sounded strange and unfamiliar. He was a widower, and had two children, a son, who had married early and foolishly, and who had emigrated, which was about the best thing he could do, and a daughter, Nelly, who lived with him, and kept his house and looked after him, from his shirt-buttons to such of his correspondence as a woman could attend to. For Mr. Britton was a much cleverer medico than village doctors and general practitioners are wont to be, and his practice was large and widely extended, all the county families for miles round employing his services for any but such cases as they conceived required the attendance of a London physician.

The house in which Mr. Britton and his daughter lived was very unnecessarily large for so small a family. It could not be called a good house or a pretty house, and yet, especially for the summer, it was much pleasanter than many a better and handsomer one. It was old, and the rooms were low, and those on the ground floor had beams across the ceilings, and the windows might have been larger with advantage, and the doors fewer and better placed. But the walls were thick, and there was abundance of space, and closets and cupboards enough to stow away all the goods and chattels of a large family. And there was a snug little stable for the doctor's good roadster, and a chaise-house, and cow-house, and poultry-house, and larder and dairy, and all that wealth of outhouses that can only be found now appertaining to old-fashioned middle-class tenements, and which are as unattainable to the wretched inhabitants of the modern lath and plaster abominations at four times the rent, as are the quiet and repose and retirement that belong to those old houses. But it was the surroundings of the cottage that made its great delight. For it stood off the road, from which it was quite hidden, nested down into the midst of a lovely garden, full of old-fashioned flowers and some newer ones, roses especially, one of which it was part of Nelly's self-imposed morning duties to gather, all gemmed and heavy with dew, to put in her father's button-hole before he started on his daily rounds. He used to boast that from May till November he never was without one. There were little belts and screens of Portugal laurels and yew, and sunny bits of lawn, one of which boasted a magnificent Himalaya pine feathering to the ground, and borders blazing with colour and sunlight, and shady nooks, cool and green, of rock-work clothed with ferns and ground-ivy and periwinkle and violets. The house itself and all its dependencies were tapestried with Virginia creeper, clematis, jasmin, ivy, and crimson China roses, and against the coach-house wall, in the face of the south-west sun, was trained a vine that in even moderately hot summers yielded rich clusters of yellow-tinted sweet-watered grapes southern vineyards need not have despised. For the place was warm and dry and sheltered, and everything about it throve, and seemed to take pleasure in growing and spreading, and Nelly loved and tended them all, and they rewarded her.

To this home Nelly had come as a little child after her mother's death, and she remembered no other. That was a good many years ago, for she was now two-and-twenty, though she hardly looked so much. For she was a little thing, plump, with a round face, smiling dark

eyes, and a bright brown complexion; one of those girls whose good looks consist in perfect health, in colouring and expression, and a certain *freshness* of appearance—freshness moral as well as physical—that keep the owner young for long. Her uneventful and unambitious life had hitherto passed in that happy monotony that is best suited to such natures as hers; cheerful, bright, contented ones, that take the daily duties of their humble lives as pleasures, not sacrifices, and are yet not without a touch of refinement that makes the duties less prosaic. She need not have been now keeping her father's house, had she been minded to keep a house of her own. Two years ago her father had had a half-pupil, half-assistant, Mr. Baker, who had a little money of his own, and expected to have some more, and who would fain have had her promise to become Mrs. Baker when he should have acquired sufficient age and instruction "to set up on his own hook," as he expressed it. But Nelly had not been so minded. She did not care for Mr. Baker; she first laughed at him, and then, when he became piteous in consequence, she was sorry for him, very sorry. But she could not marry him. When she thought of her father as a companion (for not being in the faintest degree in love, she looked at the two men in this light), and then thought of Mr. Baker, she felt it could never, never be. And she had not for a moment at any time regretted or repented her decision, but went on in her quiet way, taking her chance of what the future might bring her.

Among Dr. Britton's occasional patients was a very grand family indeed. The Earl of Leytonstone had an estate about three miles from Summerfield, and there he passed a part of every year with his two children, the little Lord Leithbridge and Lady Agnes Collingwood, who, under the care of a young tutor and an elderly governess, for their mother was dead, lived almost entirely at Leytonstone Hall.

The young tutor was a north countryman, whose father, a poor clergyman, holding a little cure in a village among the hills in Westmoreland, had, seeing the boy's aptitudes, struggled hard to send him to college. He had educated him himself up to that point, and then Andrew Graham had entered Oxford as a sizer, and had worked, and read, and lived hard, as few men in that ancient seat of learning are given to do. He had carried all honours before him, he could write and speak five modern languages, and read seven; he knew at his fingers' ends all the best books in all these, beside the classical tongues; but of men and women he knew absolutely nothing. Poor, proud, intensely shy, and devoted to study, he lived entirely apart from even the men of his own standing in his own college. In their sport as in their work he kept aloof, only fortifying himself against the exhausting nature of his labours by prodigious walks, keeping always the same pace up hill and down dale, choosing the most solitary paths, and never heeding weather. In the course of time he had been so fortunate as to obtain his present post, that of tutor to the little Lord Leithbridge, and librarian to his father, who boasted the possession of one of the finest private libraries in England; and as his pupil was but twelve, his work with regard to him was so light, that the greater part of his time could easily be devoted to the labour he delighted in—the care and arrangement of his beloved books.

Poor Andrew, he was not comely to behold, and was young in nothing but his years. He was pale, and spare, and light-eyed, and lightish haired, and had thin whiskers, and wore high shirt-collars, and hesitated in his speech. He was so intensely, so painfully shy, and spoke so rarely, that when called upon to speak it seemed as though he was too unused to the employment of uttered language to be able to find the words he wanted. In the presence of women, and especially young women, he absolutely trembled. It was long before he could reply, without starting and shrinking, to Mrs. Brereton's—Lady Agnes's governess—softly spoken questions, and had Lady Agnes herself been more than thirteen when he first entered on his duties, I doubt if he would have ventured into her presence.

And yet it was not in human nature, in young human nature, at all events, to live without some companionship beyond that of a child. Andrew had had a bad and a long illness, and in this Dr. Britton had attended him, and when he recovered, it somehow came about that the patient had, he hardly knew how himself, found that it often happened that in his walks his steps tended towards the doctor's cottage; and when he came to the garden gate, that was just an opening in the mass of green that surrounded and overtopped it, giving a peep through to the house along the sunny gravel walk, lying between borders of glowing flowers, he remembered he had something to say to, or something to ask of, the doctor. You will think that the doctor's daughter might have been for something in this attraction; but it was not so. If he caught a glimpse of her in the garden, or heard her voice, he passed on his way with a nervous sense of the narrow escape he had encountered. This was at first; after having accidentally encountered her a few times when calling on her father, and found that she took little notice of him, he became more reassured, and beyond a certain amount of trepidation in taking off his hat, and replying to her simple greeting, he learned to meet her without further discomposure.

Nelly would look after him with a pitying wonder, and some curiosity. Such a nature and such a life as his to her, genial, energetic, expansive, was a painful puzzle.

"Is he always like that, papa?"

"Always, I believe, my dear, in company."

"Then he never can know anybody."

"Yes, I fancy in the course of time he might get to know people to a certain extent. He does me—a little."

"He must be very unhappy, papa?"

"Except when among his books, or in his

long walks, he certainly must feel rather wretched, I should imagine."

Nelly thought about it a little more, and then went to feed her poultry. But there was a young cock whose false and painful position in the poultry-yard would somehow bring back to her mind the recollection of Mr. Graham. He had not long come to cock's estate, and he was thin and not very sleek in his plumage; and the older and stronger cock had bullied him and put him down, till he hardly dared to call his life his own. He was not naturally a coward; he had made a good fight for it at first, and indeed it was his asserting himself against the supremacy of King Chanticleer that had first awakened that arrogant bird's wrath against him. But he was no match for Chanticleer, and had, after innumerable defeats and sore maulings, been compelled to succumb; and he now loitered about in corners, and moped about in sheds, and took snatches of food in a wary fashion, on the outskirts of the group gathered round Nelly, ready to fly if ever Chanticleer looked his way, and even nervous if the hens pecked at him.

"Poor fellow," Nelly said, throwing him a handful of barley, and cutting off Chanticleer in his instant attempt to drive him away from it; "you certainly are very like Mr. Graham—very like. I think I shall call you Andy; get away, Chanticleer; I won't have Andy bullied and his life made miserable, poor fellow!" and another handful of barley fell to his share. From that day Nelly took Andy under her especial care and patronage, and fed and petted him till he grew fat and well-liking, and learned to play his second fiddle so creditably that Chanticleer held him in sufficient respect no longer to molest him.

Meanwhile the months were lengthening into years, and Andrew Graham plodded on at the old work, in the old way. But a change had come within, though the outer man showed nothing of it—as yet. The cause may as well be told at once; the poor student had fallen in love, with the sort of love that is certain to awaken in the hearts of such men when it *does* awake, with Lady Agnes, now sixteen.

The word love is used in so many phases of the passion, and indeed in so many cases where there is no passion at all, that it fails to convey any notion of the feeling that possessed the whole being of the poor tutor. It is nothing to say it was part of himself; the old man was lost in the new identity it gave birth to. Day and night it was the one ever-present reality, all else fading into shadowy insignificance.

Lady Agnes was a pretty girl, very much like a thousand other pretty, well-brought-up, simple girls.

She had large limpid grey eyes, and a fair pure skin, and her colour went and came easily in sweet girlish blushes, and all her thoughts and ways were innocent and natural. She was not the least clever, and but moderately accomplished; for Mrs. Brereton wisely thought that good general culture was more to be desired than the attempt to force mediocre abilities into the painful acquirement of arts, in which her pupil never could hope to excel, and in this view Lord Leytonstone fully coincided.

It was probably the charm of this very girlish simplicity that in reality captivated Andrew's heart; but his imagination acted the part of a fairy godmother, and bestowed on the idol every gift of mind and body that woman could possess and man adore.

This love, that dared not relieve itself by any outward expression, that entertained no prospect in the future, that hoped for nothing, that aspired to nothing tangible, that was all concentrated in the breast of him who conceived it, rode him like a beautiful nightmare, lovely in itself, but to him cruelly, pitilessly tyrannous, taking possession of all his faculties, goading him into a sort of abiding frenzy that made him wild and haggard and distracted.

At times, while giving the usual daily lessons to his pupil, the boy would look up to his instructor, wondering at the trembling hand, the husky voice, the working features, and sometimes at the strangely absent words that fell from him. Then Andrew would try to recal his senses, nail his attention to the work he was engaged in, and, the task completed, rush forth and wander alone for hours among the pinewoods and on the hill-sides, striving by movement and fatigue to still the spirit that possessed him.

Such a condition of things could hardly fail to escape Mrs. Brereton's quietly observant eye, nor was it long before she guessed something of the real state of the case, and great was the perplexity into which it threw her. Lord Leytonstone was abroad, and though she might have spoken to him on the subject, she hardly knew how to put it in writing. Lady Agnes must, of all others, be kept in ignorance of the passion she had inspired; and though Mrs. Brereton had sufficient confidence in Andrew to feel pretty well assured that he would not seek to make it known to her, she dreaded, seeing the nature of the man, some involuntary outburst, same accidental circumstance occurring to bring it to light. Should she speak to himself? Yet, though in her own mind almost persuaded of the truth of her suspicion, he had done nothing to justify her in opening the matter to him, while it rested on no more tangible grounds than it did at present. So the good woman turned the matter over in her mind, waiting for some feasible mode of solving the difficulty to present itself.

One morning her pupil said, after having, as it seemed to her, cogitated over the subject for some time, "Mrs. Brereton, do you know I think there's something wrong with Mr. Graham." The governess felt the blood rise to her cheek, but she replied quietly, "Yes? What makes you think so, my dear?"

"Sometimes he looks so wild. And, do you know," with a mysterious and somewhat alarmed air, "he walks about the garden at night when we're all in bed."

"How do you know, my child? That must be a fancy."

"No. I've fancied I've heard footsteps more

than once under my window, and last night I was so sure of it, that I got up and peeped from behind the curtain, and I saw him! Poor man, I hope he's not going mad; I should be very sorry, though he is ugly, and queer, and wears such absurd shirt-collars." Mrs. Brereton involuntarily thought of Olivia's pitying anxiety for Malvolio, under a similar fear.

"He is ill, perhaps, or has some family trouble," she said. And then she resolved that, ere the day should be over, some step must be decided on to avert the danger.

Should she, without appearing to suspect the truth, gently question him, as though she believed what she had said to Lady Agnes, mentioning the latter's discovery of his nocturnal wanderings? This might, at least, put him on his guard for the present, till she should decide on what it might further be necessary to do? Yes, that would be the best plan. So she watched till an opportunity occurred of finding him alone in the library, a room which, in the absence of Lord Leytonstone, Andrew and herself only frequented.

Entering, she found him seated by a table at the end of the room. Books were spread before him, but he read none of them; on an open folio his arms were laid, and his head rested on them. At the sound of her step he raised it, not starting from his position, but lifting up his face slowly, as one too stupified and weary with grief to heed interruption. He said no word, and his face was so wan and haggard that Lady Agnes's words—"I hope he is not going mad, poor man"—rushed across her recollection. She approached him steadily, though her heart beat, and commanding her voice, she began:

"Mr. Graham, you must pardon me, but I fear—I think that I ought to speak to you as an old woman to a young man whom she cannot but believe is in some suffering, physical or mental, that requires sympathy, and it may be advice."

Then she went on by degrees to speak of what her pupil had told her. He sat still, his elbows resting on his book, his head in his hands, his fingers through his dishevelled hair, till she came to this point; then he looked up.

"She saw me? I did not mean that. But the truth—and you know it—is, that I am going mad for the love of her."

Then his face went down upon his hands again, and he groaned aloud.

Mrs. Brereton—good, sensible, proper Mrs. Brereton—stood aghast. For this she certainly was not prepared, and it took her so aback that she paused, not knowing how to proceed further. But she had time to recover, for Andrew seemed to have forgotten her presence in the depths of his agony.

"But then," she began, timidly, "what do you propose to do? Things cannot go on so."

"They cannot! God knows they cannot! I suppose," looking up with a ghastly smile, "you think the maddest part of it was my falling in love with her at all! If you knew what my youth has been—starved of all youth's brightness! I know it sounds like a hero of melodrama to talk of suicide, but, on my soul, I do not see how I can face life, while death seems so easy! What can I do? What can any one do for me?"

"Time—absence," faltered Mrs. Brereton.

"Time—ay, but in the *mean while*. Absence—but *during* the absence. *Now*, is the question. When a man is writhing frantic with a present agony, will it relieve him to suggest that years hence he may have recovered from the wound? But at least, if I die in the effort, I must leave this. Nothing must happen to me *here* to shock, or startle, or offend her. You will make my excuses to Lord Leytonstone. You may tell him the truth or not, just as you think fit. I shall probably never see him again; and he is a good man—he will feel that I have endeavoured to do my duty."

Five years passed away, and Lady Agnes was married in her own degree, and Andrew Graham was quietly settled down again at Leytonstone Hall as librarian, his somewhile pupil, Lord Leithbridge, having gone to Oxford. Mrs. Brereton had told Lord Leytonstone the truth, and he had understood it all, and when he could find Andrew out, at the end of four years' wild wanderings up and down the earth, he had begged him, Lady Agnes being lately married, to return to his old duties in his old retreat. And weary and hopeless of flying from himself, and feeling some of the old love of his neglected studies return upon him, and touched by Lord Leytonstone's kindness and fidelity, he had consented.

Time had wrought no great change in him; it seldom does in men of his aspect and manner; it had rather intensified than altered his peculiarities.

His cheeks were more hollow, and his hair thinner, and his shirt-collars perhaps higher, and his manner, if possible, more nervously awkward and absent than of old. But he had by degrees fallen back into his old habit of taking Dr. Britton's house in the course of his solitary rambles, and, by degrees also, his terror of Nelly had worn away.

Somehow or other she had got an inkling of the cause of his abrupt departure, and wild as had seemed to her his folly in allowing even his thoughts to rise to Lady Agnes, it was nevertheless undoubtedly true that his involuntary presumption had risen him considerably in her estimation. Besides, was there ever a true woman who did not view with interest a man who had loved not wisely but too well? who did not entertain a "desire to be good to him," apart from all interested motive in the matter?

So Nelly treated him gently, and he ceased to be afraid of her, and came by slow gradations to feel comforted by her presence, and learned to talk to her shyly.

It was a lovely day in the declining summer, and the late afternoon sun was lying on the doctor's house and garden. Nelly had finished mixing the salad, and had strolled out bareheaded into what was called the orchard, a bit

of ground at the end of the garden, clothed with thick grass, daisies, buttercups, and bull's-eyes, and shaded with grey old filbert, and a scattering of no less ancient apple and pear trees. The sun was getting down so that his rays struck slantingly through the mossy trunks, and a soft "even-blowing wind" made the leaves dance and rustle, and throw flickers of light and shadow on the grass, all bending before the breeze, and now and then a rosy apple or a bunch of nuts would come down with a soft thud on the ground.

Nelly, awaiting her father's return, roved up and down, now swallowed up in shade, now shone upon by the slanting rays, which gilded her russet hair, and lovingly touched into transparence her ruddy cheek and clear brown neck. Presently, while picking a nut from its husks, she was aware of footsteps behind her, and looking round, she saw Andrew Graham. Taking off his hat, with his nervous look, he addressed her.

"I—I beg your pardon—but—a—I wished to speak to your father, and I was told he was expected every moment, and—a—I took the liberty——"

"You are quite welcome," Nelly said, with a smile; "will you come into the house or do you prefer remaining here?"

"Oh, just as you like—it is such a lovely day——" and without finishing his speech, he fell into her step, and they sauntered on, side by side.

It was the first time Nelly had ever been alone with him, and though she was neither prudish nor shy, she felt puzzled how to commence the conversation.

"You have been for one of your long walks?"

"Yes—at least, not very long." A pause.

"Won't you put on your hat?" seeing that he carried it in his hand.

"Oh no, I prefer going without my hat." Another pause. Just then a bunch of nuts fell plump on the librarian's head, and made him exclaim, putting up his hand, "Bless me, what can that be?" then it dropped on the grass at his feet, and they both laughed, and he picked it up and presented it to Nelly, who quickly divested the filberts of their sheath, and cracking one like a squirrel, with her head on one side, nibbled it with her white teeth.

This had broken the stiffness, and they began to talk, till the librarian suddenly, to his own amazement, found himself describing to his companion some of the flowers he had seen in South America, and giving her a practical lesson in botany on a large white-rayed bull's eye. And then the doctor came home, and insisted on his staying to dinner; and, after dinner, the good man, as was his wont, fell asleep in his easy-chair; and the twilight came on gradually, and the yellow harvest moon rose from behind the elms, and Nelly and the librarian sat by the window to look at it; and he described to her—speaking softly, so as not to disturb the doctor—how he had lain on his back on the prairie and watched it rise and set many a night some years ago. Nelly wondered she had never noticed before what a pleasant tone of voice he had, and when he became earnest and eloquent, she thought that, hearing him talk thus, one could quite forget his hollow cheeks, and his thin hair, and his shirt-collars. Can you not see, reader, how it all came about? Need I tell how in the spring there was a wedding at Summerfield, and that Nelly Britton was the bride, and Andrew Graham—with a face a little fuller, hair brushed to the best advantage, and modified shirt-collars—the bridegroom?

CHARITY AT HOME.

In the midst of the many high-sounding efforts that are now being made on behalf of public charities, let me put in a word for the quiet, uncomplaining, retiring poor, who starve and struggle and die under the shadow of our comfortable homes, unseen and unheeded because they are so very close to us. British charity has a fine portly presence; it likes to keep its head well in the air while it walks abroad, and it is rather far sighted.

I will admit that England has cause to be proud of her charitable institutions. In no other country on the face of the earth are there to be found so many hospitals, refuges, reformatories, homes, schools, and other kindred institutions for the relief and benefit of the poor and the unfortunate. Some of the handsomest of our public buildings are hospitals, compared to which one or two of our royal palaces are mere barns. Our public charity is all-abounding, all-embracing. It is ever active, ever going about seeking for objects. It is never disposed to rest and be thankful. It has an ambition like Alexander's, and, when it has assuaged the whole world of suffering within its reach, it sighs for new worlds to conquer with its inexhaustible benevolence. And our national charity has this further merit, that it takes pains to be discriminative and systematic. It does not, like the ostentatious prodigal, fling its money into the common road to be scrambled for by the mob. It selects its objects, and subdivides its efforts. It takes thought for all the ills that flesh is heir to, and is never weary of well doing.

All this, and a great deal more, may be said in glorification of British charity; but while much good is done by the united efforts of the benevolent, we still fall short of our duty to the poor as individuals and neighbours. Our charity is chiefly extended to public and national institutions, to the neglect, in a great measure, of the poor, the sick, and the friendless, who reside round about our own doors, and who are the last to parade their misfortunes in the face of the public.

There are persons who refuse alms to a beggar on the plea that they pay poor-rates. So there are persons who consider that they have fulfilled all their duty to their poor neighbours when they have subscribed to a certain number of hospitals and soup-kitchens. This easy wholesale manner of doing our works of charity, as

we pay our taxes, with a cheque, shifting all the labour and responsibility on to other shoulders, robs alms-giving of its feeling and heartiness, and has a tendency to convert our charitable institutions into mere poor-houses, whose relief is regarded as the constituted right of a whole class. Dives may be naturally a kind-hearted man; but he finds so many people ready to take the work of charity off his hands, that he never has an opportunity of giving exercise to his benevolent feelings. When he writes a cheque, it is not because he is melted to tenderness and pity by the sight of poverty and suffering, but because the collector has called for his annual subscription. It is a mere piece of business, a matter of routine; and the knowledge that he has given a certain number of cheques in discharge of his obligations is apt to blunt his sensibilities and deaden his heart. It is charity without mercy; and charity that is dispensed in this wholesale cold business-like way is apt to be received without thankfulness.

Another disadvantage of what may be called the centralisation of charity is, that it throws the greater part of the obligation to aid the poor upon one class. The chief supporters of public charities are the aristocracy and persons known to possess great wealth. Their prominent position in society makes them a mark for appeals which are rarely addressed to the classes below them. Secretaries of charitable institutions share in the popular belief that all members of parliament and all lords are rich. In this belief they direct their appeals to the upper classes, entirely neglecting to bring any influence to bear upon the numerous well-to-do middle class, which in the aggregate is quite as well able to respond to them. This system fixes alms-giving upon the aristocracy as a tax; and compels many a person to give money which he cannot afford, not for the poor's sake but for his own. He must do as others do. Contributions are sometimes given from a sense of public duty, sometimes out of pure ostentation, with a stipulation that the name and amount shall appear in the published list; at others for the sake of patronage and power. There are ladies who like to see their names in the same list with other ladies. Lady Mary is down for ten guineas. Lady Jane will not be behind Lady Mary, and puts down her name for fifteen. Some subscribers take care to have their money's worth for their money, and send their servants, when they are ill, to share in the benefits of the institution to which they subscribe. There are various motives, other than charitable ones, for subscribing to hospitals. It will be found that the landlord of the public-house nearest to an hospital is an annual subscriber, perhaps to the extent of ten or fifteen pounds. In return for this amount he is privileged to give so many letters of admission. Poor people call upon him to solicit a letter, and bespeak his favour by having a glass at the bar. When they get the letter, they have another glass to show their gratitude. A publican known to be a subscriber to a hospital secures the patronage of all the out-door patients, and it is wonderful, considering the delicacy of his health, how much gin an out-door patient will consume, both before going into the hospital and on coming out of it. It would be most unjust and ungracious to say that there was no true charity among the class which supports the benevolent institutions of the country. There are many who give from the purest motives—nay, who devote their lives and a large share of their wealth to the relief of the poor and the sick; yet it is not to be denied that too much of this duty is cast upon one class. There is a vast deal of out-door public charity among us, but there is far too little in-door private charity—far too little of the charity which begins and finds its first work at home.

There is a very large class of well-to-do persons in this country who never contribute a single halfpenny to any charitable institutions. They pay their poor-rates, and that is all. For the rest, they are satisfied to believe that public hospitals and other charities are well supported by the aristocracy and benevolent persons of large means. There is not a more forlorn neglected thing in London than the voluntary contribution-box of an hospital—a stark, starved-looking object, with an open mouth, rigid and rusted from disuse. No one pays any attention to its gaping appeal, except the street-boys, who poke sticks down its throat, or splash it with mud; and when the box is cleared out, nothing is found in its maw but stones, bits of slate, and flimsy handbills, mockingly thrust in to raise delusive hopes of bank-notes. This neglect does not convict the "public in general" of want of charity, but merely proves that they rely, in such matters, upon the "nobility and gentry."

In order that the fullest amount of good may be done in a true spirit of Christian charity, it is necessary that the cause of the poor should be brought home to individuals in their own spheres, at their own firesides, and that their pockets should be touched through their hearts. I, for one, feel strongly that I am not doing the whole of my duty, even though I pay poor-rates and subscribe to hospitals, if I do not interest myself about my poor neighbours. Have we not all poor neighbours, hard-working, struggling people, whom a little sympathy would cheer in their troubles, and a little help might save from the workhouse? The occupant of the grandest mansion in Belgravia has not far to go to find the hovels of the poor; their squalid huts are crowded together under his very windows. Everywhere in London the rich and poor meet together in very close companionship. There are opportunities for us all at our own doors to do good to our fellow-creatures, and to do it kindly, if we would only take a little personal trouble. Some of us men-folks may plead that we have no time for such work; but have not many of us wives and daughters who are sometimes at a loss how to kill the weary time? Might not these ladies kill time by giving hope and life to the poor? The workhouse and the hospital which

we help to support, do not meet all the needs of the unfortunate. Down the mews behind our houses, in back street, courts, and alleys close at hand, there are honest, hard-working men and women suffering from temporary misfortunes, which a little kind help would enable them to surmount; there are sick children dying for the want of a little nourishment (a cup of that gravy which we waste on some fantastical dish which we never taste, the drainings of our wine-glasses); there are poor clerks and artisans hiding their heads in the time of illness or loss of employment in obscure garret-rooms, whose rent, small as it is, they are unable to pay. There are wives working their fingers to the bone to support a sick husband and a swarm of hungry children; there are starving creatures huddled together in cold bare rooms, whose furniture and comforts have been eaten up, piece by piece, by the pawnbroker; there are others who need but a few shillings to save their poor "sticks" from the broker's man.

A strange fact—stranger than anything in fiction—came to my knowledge lately, with regard to a poor family who were visited by the broker's man. When the broker's man came in, the tenant of the house, driven to desperation by his misfortunes, rushed upon him with a knife to kill him.

"For God's sake, don't kill me," cried the broker's man. "I am a poor unfortunate wretch like yourself. While I come to take possession of your things, there is a man in possession of mine."

"Then you ought to have some feeling for me," said the other.

"God knows, I have," said the broker's man; "but I have had nothing to do for a long time, and I was starving when I was offered this job. I never did such cursed work before, and I will starve to death before I do it again."

The visit of the amateur broker's man was an angel's visit to that poor family. He had received five shillings in advance for what he called his "cursed work," and he made a blessed use of it, by giving the starving family a meal. When a benevolent clergyman entered the house to render some assistance to the distressed family, he found the children clinging to the broker's man's neck, kissing him, and calling him "uncle."

Thus, too frequently, are the respectable poor steeped to the lips in poverty, and driven, by dire necessity, to prey upon each other, though one's misfortunes may be as great as the other's.

These are the deserving poor, whom we might help to some purpose. The poor on whose behalf we make our chief efforts are in many cases, perhaps in most, professed paupers, who regard our charity as a right, and live upon us from one year's end to another.

But charity, to be genuine, should begin nearer home still. Who is there among us, however rich he may be, or however exalted his station, that does not own (and too frequently disown) a poor relation? Every one has a family skeleton of this kind in his cupboard—a ne'er-do-well brother, an unpresentable uncle, a sister who has married beneath her and come to poverty, a scapegrace son, a criminal cousin. Our charity is very cold indeed, and a mock offering in the sight of Heaven, though we may subscribe to all the hospitals in the land, if we turn a deaf ear to the distresses and misfortunes of our own flesh and blood. It is the true test of charity in its best sense, to let love conquer pride, to be long suffering and willing to forgive our brother, not until seven times, but until seventy times seven.

I say again, that it would be most ungracious to charge the upper classes of this country, who give so much (whatever the motive may be), with neglect of their duty towards the poor. Furthermore, I believe that the upper classes are particularly distinguished for their private charity, and for the personal interest which they take in their poor neighbours, particularly in the country. But in London there is a large section of the middle classes which does nothing for the poor beyond paying poor-rates. Let me ask, what is ever done by bachelors living in chambers and lodgings—those free, gay, jovial young men whose whole lives are devoted to the pursuit of pleasure and self-gratification? They are not bad-hearted fellows by any means, and they *do* give away money. But to whom? To professed beggars, to loafers, who touch their hats to them, to loose, worthless characters of all kinds. Let me ask, what is ever done by the thousands of middle-class families, who, though not sufficiently distinguished to be a mark for alms' hunters, are yet well off, and well able to assist in relieving the poor? What is done by the élite of the working classes, who earn such good wages, and live more luxuriantly than many of their betters? In most cases very little, or absolutely nothing. And yet, not because they are destitute of charitable feelings, but because no influence is brought to bear upon them, and because they are apt to think that enough is done by the classes above them. Feeling assured that a large field, that might be cultivated to great fertility, is now lying fallow, I would suggest a new mission—a mission to the poor *in their own homes*. I will not propose a society, with directors, secretary, collectors, and the rest of it, for I distrust that sort of thing. When you begin with machinery, you make the whole thing mechanical. You substitute, as it were, a heart of steam for a heart of human blood, and cold arms of steel for warm arms of flesh. No; let it be a mission of the graphic pen and the persuasive tongue. Let all who speak and write to the public point out to them what work there is for them to do, and how it may best be done. And chiefly insist upon this—charity begins at home, but needs not end there.

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