

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY JUNE 12 1897.

FOR DISTRICT NURSES.

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION TO THE PEOPLE OF MONCTON.

A Way in Which the "Bend" Might Still Have Some Share in Commemorating the Queen's Jubilee - The Plan Discussed - The Nurses Settlement in N. Y.

Now that Moncton has definitely decided not to celebrate the Diamond jubilee in any way; and the urgent need of an hospital seem to have lessened in some mysterious manner so as to enable the suffering poor, the friendless clerk who is condemned to the harsh mercies of a boarding house, when he is ill, and the wounded railway shopman, or trainman, who meets with an accident in the discharge of his duty, to wait at least twelve months for the accommodation they were supposed to stand in such immediate need of—now that all these things have occurred it might be well for those who have really had the welfare of the sick and suffering, at heart all along, to consider a thoroughly practical and comparatively inexpensive plan which would really be of far greater benefit, especially where the poor are concerned, than a hospital could ever be. This is the provision of district nurses whose duty shall be to care for the sick, especially amongst the poor who are unable to provide any luxury for themselves.

This idea has long been cherished in the hearts of some of the charitable ladies of our city who work amongst the poor and whose knowledge of their real requirements is gained through everyday association, and an intimate acquaintance with the inner life of the very poor, the privations they are obliged to suffer and the daily wants that make poverty so hard to bear. Such knowledge is of really practical value and enables these ladies to give far more intelligent advice, than any mere theorist could do, no matter how much in earnest he might be, or how philanthropic his intentions. They know just how impossible it would be for the mother of four or five small children to leave them uncared for, and go to a hospital even though she might be seriously ill.

The poor know but one law—that of necessity—and though it may be easy for the mere theorist to preach of the comfort and advantage of a hospital to some poor sick woman suffering from fever, pneumonia, or perhaps consumption, the hard fact remains that however alluring the prospect of perfect rest, and the best of care may be, it is simply impossible for her to avail herself of it. True she cannot care for the children but as long as she is with them she can at least look after them, and have the comfort of knowing that no harm comes to them. She can in a sense keep the home together, tell the elder children how to "get a bite" for the father when he comes home from his day's work, see to his comfort to a certain extent, and keep the younger children under some sort of control. She can even take care of the baby to a limited extent, keeping it warm beside her in bed and comforting it as no one but a mother, even though she be a sick mother, can. She is there to be appealed to, and to exercise her authority when needed, and while "mother" is still in the house it can never be quite desolate even though she may be unable to leave her bed. For the rest, the neighbors with that wonderful self-sacrifice and kindness, so characteristic of the very poor, will come in when they can, and "set to rights a bit" for her, bring her a share of their scanty meals, or perhaps cook a bit of food for her husband.

Under circumstances such as these, it will readily be seen that the provision of a trained and skillful nurse would be an inestimable boon to the poor, and would fill a want that the best equipped hospital in the world could never reach. Such a nurse could devote an hour or two every day to each patient, could wash the invalid, make her bed, supply clean linen when necessary, prepare some suitable food for her, and leave her clean and comfortable for the day. She could even set the house in order a little, and perhaps wash the poor children's faces, if she was not very busy, and so cheer and comfort the whole family. If it was a case where a baby was responsible for the illness, she could wash and dress it relieving the mother of her greatest care, and insuring such comfort for the little one as it would never have otherwise.

But take the wife to the hospital and you leave the family utterly unprotected. There is no one to care for the children, no one

to look after the husband, and the good done to the wife is almost counteracted by the deplorable condition of her family. Should the father be able and willing to support his children, no matter in how poor a fashion, it is quite impossible to pauperize them by taking them forcibly to the almshouse, so the poor little beings must be left to shift for themselves, and the chances are that their poor mother's anxiety about them is such that her recovery is retarded, and perhaps prevented, for the knowledge that half a dozen little children are certainly half starving, and probably either setting themselves on fire, falling out of the window or getting run over by the electric cars, is not conducive to a peaceful frame of mind on a mother's part.

Where the patient was the husband and father, the services of a trained nurse for even an hour a day, would be invaluable, as the poor are usually lamentably deficient of any aptitude for nursing, with the best intentions in the world they seem destitute even of that instinct so often seen in women of the better class, for taking care of the sick. A nurse could instruct the wife in such simple care of the patient as might be necessary for his comfort during the day and where the case required it, the nurse would of course remain for the greater part of the day and take entire charge of the patient.

The nurse, or nurses, if two could be supported, would be paid the usual price for their services and be provided with a comfortable place to board where she could always be found when not engaged, and where she could rest between times. When there was absolutely no work amongst the poor she could attend cases where those who employed her were unable to afford the luxury of a nurse all the time, but were willing to pay for her services for a few hours each day. Such is the scheme which has long been in the minds of some of the benevolent ladies of Moncton, but which they hesitated to take any active steps in making public until it should be decided whether the hospital was to be built, or not, lest it might interfere with the larger enterprise. The plan has been pronounced quite feasible, and several of the wealthy men of the city have promised substantial help should the experiment be tried. Four or five hundred dollars a year would easily cover the expense, even including a small supply of clean linen and the occasional provision of some little luxury or necessity in the shape of food where better nourishment was required.

There is no lack of real charity in Moncton or of those who are able and willing to give, and once such a sorely needed charity was fairly started it would be sure of support. Lady Aberdeen's favorite jubilee scheme of the Order of Victorian nurses, may be very well in its way, but that it is not practicable or adapted to the conditions of life in this country, is proved by the lack of support it is meeting with; we need some simpler and less expensive method of supplying help to the poor, and it seems to me that the district nurse would meet the requirements of the poorer classes much better.

An institution on much the same plan has been in successful operation in New York for the past five years, and today it is prospering so far beyond the wildest dreams of its promoter that a branch was opened last month, and it is probable that in the near future it will be still further extended.

This institution is called the Nurses' settlement, and it had its origin in the active brain of Miss Lillian Ward, a philanthropic lady whose first move in that direction was the formation of nursing classes for poor mothers, in order to teach them how to care for the sick, and who gathered these poor women together once a week and gave them lessons in the proper airing of sick rooms, the making of beds and other vital necessities in caring for the sick. Struck with the need of bringing the services of a nurse within the reach of people who were not paupers, and yet were too poor to afford a regular nurse at the usual high price, Miss Ward decided to open an institution which should provide wage earners with proper care in sickness, and the present flourishing settlement is the

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result of her decision. There are seven residents in the settlement six of them being trained nurses, and they go to a patient for one, two or three hours a day, or for a half day, charging thirty cents an hour for their services, and doing all that is necessary for the patient. In this way one nurse can care for several patients, but the first thought is always for the poor who cannot pay anything, and to these of course their services are freely given. One nurse remains in the settlement always to see people and attend to a small dispensary which is kept in the house.

If such an institution has grown so rapidly and proved so successful in New York, it would be strange if a city like Moncton could not support a district nurse, especially as its citizens were eager only a short time ago, to build a seven thousand dollar hospital and keep it up on an expense of three thousand dollars a year.

GEORGEY CULTBERT STRANGE.

SMART YOUNG SAILORS.

Prompt Obedience Makes Good men at Sea or in War.

'The boys responded with surprising quickness and good order. This is the second life they have saved this winter.' These were the concluding words of a statement made by Commander Field of the school-ship St. Mary's at a meeting of the Board of Education of New York city, a few months ago, regarding a rescue made by the boys of his ship.

On the night of the 23rd of February, after the boys of the St. Mary's had turned in, the cry was raised on the wharf at the foot of which the ship lies, in New York, that a man had fallen overboard in the North River. The boys turned out, lowered a boat, and in a moment were off to the rescue. Just as the man rose for the last time they pulled him in, and in an insensible condition he was taken to the hospital, where he revived.

The next moment would have been the man's last, and the least delay on the part of the handy boys would have been fatal to him. But if they had been capable of delays they would not have been good sailors, and they make no delays and did no bungling.

The school-ship on which these boys acted so bravely and promptly this time, and have acted so promptly and effectually before, is, though commanded by an officer of the United States navy a part of the public system of New York city. The boys are just such as go to the public schools in the most crowded parts of the metropolis.

They are good material for the making of prompt, quick, ready and intelligent sailors, and—for much the same causes as those which make them good sailors—for the making of good citizens as well.

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"I built my house on dotted veils," a well known oculist is said to have remarked when somebody commented upon its expense. And as the ladies continue to wear spotted veils, he will probably be able to keep up his establishment.

SOUTH AMERICAN JAGUARS.

A Hunter's Run From One and an Indian Woman's Brave Effort.

'In the Autumn of 1892 I was staying at a ranch on the Alta (upper) Orinoco, in partly open lands of the cattle region of Venezuela,' said Sidney Ascot, who has travelled South America from one end to the other. 'One day my friend, Ellis Grell, a noted cattle exporter, at whose house I was a guest, proposed that we go out with our shotguns for pewas, as the wild turkeys of that region are called. I was reading an interesting novel at the time, so when we started out with our guns, a lunch, and pockets full of corn, I knew that pewa hunting meant hours of silent waiting, which reading would help to while away. When we got to the place we meant to hunt Grell and I separated so as to cover more country. I found a spot to suit me, rigged up a blind of green branches, and then dropped the corn along in lines, all leading, from considerable distances away, up to the blind, to entice the turkeys within shooting range. Then I seated myself comfortably behind the blind and, taking out the novel began to read.

'The story was a good one, and as I was expecting nothing but turkeys to arrive I did not at first pay much attention to a rustling sound that after a time came to my ears from a tree that stood a few paces away, so near that the tip of one of its lower branches almost overhung me. I merely glanced up among the leaves, and seeing nothing to cause the sound, thought that it was made by a bird or monkey, and went on with my reading. In place of the rustling came another sound, a steady flip-flap, which I could not understand, and I looked up into the tree again more carefully; but still seeing nothing to alarm me I turned again to my book. I should not have found the novel so absorbing had I known, as presently I found out, that the rustling was caused by a jaguar lying upon a limb of the tree within easy springing distance of me, and that the flip-flapping sound was made by his tail.

'A turkey came along at last, a solitary one, and I shot it directly opposite the blind. The instant the bird fell struggling the jaguar leaped from the tree upon it, struck it down with his paw, and turning, crouched, growling, as if to spring upon me. The only cartridges I had along were loaded with fine shot, and there was but one left in my gun. I did the only thing possible to save myself and fired at the jaguar's

head, destroying both his eyes. He sprang, but the shot made him swerve, and he landed to one side of me, giving me a chance to run. Blinded as he was, the jaguar chased me all the way home to the ranch house, guided only by the sound of my movements and his sense of smell. Running slap against tree trunks and whatever else might lie in his way, he nevertheless led me so close a chase that had not my path led through woods he certainly would have overtaken me. I had no cartridges with which to pepper him as I ran, having left my cartridge belt on the ground at the blind with my book in the hurry of getting away.

'A garden fence before the house stopped the jaguar, and, while he was noting along it trying to get through, I had time to dash indoors and get some buckshot cartridges for my gun, with which I came out and finished him. I had had a close call, closer than ever I care to repeat; and I never went out shooting again in the tropics without taking both ball and buckshot cartridges with me. That the jaguar lay so long in the tree without springing directly upon me I attribute to the probability that he was not very hungry. It was the sight of the fluttering turkey, its natural prey, and the smell of its blood that woke the jaguar's savage instinct.

'In the village of Nutrias, up the Orinoco, I saw an Indian woman named Josefa Arabundo who bore sad marks of a jaguar's teeth and claws, being lamed for life, and she incurred them in defending her child from being carried away. It occurred in this way: As she sat at her door one day with the child beside her a jaguar suddenly appeared, seized the child, and turned to dart away with it into the forest. In desperation the mother grabbed the best by the tail and held on. The jaguar dropped the child end, turning upon Josefa, with one stroke of his paw tore through flesh and muscle from her hip to her knee. Again he seized the child and again the mother caught him by the tail. This time the jaguar attacked her more savagely than before, tearing her with his claws and biting her terribly in the breast. Once more the brute seized the child, but the little five-year old Indian, with the jaguar's teeth in his hip, fought so fiercely, hammering the beast's head with his fists, and at last pushing his fingers into his eye, that the jaguar dropped it for the third time.

'By this time the father came up and attacked the jaguar with his machete. In his excitement he missed the first stroke, merely severing one of the jaguar's ears. Again he struck, as the animal turned on him, this time cutting off one of the jaguar's feet. The blow caused the jaguar to miss its spring upon him and gave the Indian a chance for a fair stroke at the neck, which severed the head from the body. The mother showed me the scars of her wounds, and I saw the child that the jaguar had seized, now grown up to young womanhood. She had sustained no permanent injury from the teeth of the brute.'

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