



**BLOCKLEY DAYS**

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**ARTHUR AMES BLISS**



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*117 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street.*



# Blockley Days



Memories and Impressions of a  
Resident Physician

1883-1884



Arthur Ames Bliss, A.M., M.D.



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## INTRODUCTION

It was in the winter of 1913, that my husband came upon his "Memoirs of Blockley." He decided at once to rewrite and revise them for publication. Every spare moment during these winter months, in spite of not having been in his usual health, Doctor Bliss spent in preparing this work. It seemed to give him so much pleasure, that I repressed my feelings of anxiety lest he might overtax his strength.

His professional duties had been especially hard during this winter, and he gave himself unsparingly to the many who called for help. These "Memoirs" had been just finished and been typewritten, when God called him to his Heavenly reward.

The life of Doctor Bliss was an example of unselfish devotion for the good of others, and of rare nobility of purpose.

To publish these pages is my greatest privilege.

Laura Neuhaus Bliss.





## PREFACE

Humanity has been observed from many points of view. The rich and great and fortunate of Earth have had their entrances and exits on the stage of literature. Great authors have told of the lives of the lowly and depraved. Paradise has been described; and classic writers have drawn and redrawn the sunless world of Hades and of Purgatory. Even Hell need have few surprises for any one who reads.

In the pages of this little book there is a candid, almost photographic, account of life in a community of paupers, where the members conduct themselves without any fear that fate or the authorities can put them in any lower place than that in which they have placed themselves. It is not the life of a reformatory or of a prison. The almshouse is merely a receptacle of the miserable and helpless, and, in Blockley, there are added hospitals for the physically and mentally ill.

The book tells something of the life and habits of these submerged citizens, and of the experiences and impressions gained by one who went in and out very freely among them in the peculiar and intimate relations of a resident physician. It is a plain, direct statement of things that actually happened, without any attempt to enlarge upon them or to soften the blunt realism. And, between the lines, can be noted the effect of this life and contact upon the journalist.

It is a grim story, not without some touches of a sad humor. But it all happened; and something like unto it has been worked into the life of many a resident physician not alone of Old Blockley, but of any great City Hospital. So the little journal is a small bit of actual history.

ARTHUR AMES BLISS.

PHILADELPHIA, April 20th, 1913.



## Blockley Days

The life of a physician who has pursued his calling within the confines and surrounding country of a great city is so filled with the incidents and details peculiar to his profession, that he has little opportunity to review his career. He lives so entirely in the present, that there are no spare moments in which to look back and trace for footsteps in the sands of time. Such sands are shifting. The footprints are shallow and faint, and little would be gained by a search backward through the forgotten years. But it happens, sometimes, that a narrow bit of trail may have survived, and certain landmarks remained unchanged by its way. There came a chance moment in the busy life of a doctor now advancing into middle life, when the need for certain notes of cases, in relation to a study of an obscure disease, led him to hunt within old boxes and chests in a lumber room. The reader would have little interest in all that such delving amid relics revealed, except, perhaps, for the discovery of one plainly bound notebook. When the Doctor unearthed this small volume, a flood of memories seemed to spring into being, and, for a moment, he was floated away upon a tide of time that set him somewhat adrift from the real object of his search. In his own handwriting, on the corner of this book, he read the title, "Blockley Days. A Journal, September 1st, 1883—August 31st, 1884. 'So it's over the hill to the poorhouse.'" It was indeed a forgotten trail; and the discovery of the footprints recalled to the physician's recollection that he had been an interne in Blockley Hospital, and that he had essayed to keep a sort of diary, and that here was the very record of his good or evil deeds unexpectedly facing him out of the dusty corner of an old packing box. Blockley has undergone such

changes in the course of recent years, that these records of an official life, passed there almost thirty years ago, must not be applied to the institution as it exists to-day. The diary has some historical value, as it describes the episodes in the life of a resident physician of that period, in a hospital conducted much on the general lines that obtained then in all large city hospitals. But the inmates of that day might be the inmates of the modernized and improved institution that succeeded it; for human nature is the same as in the days of Babylon. The tramp, the degenerate, the unfortunate, the weakly good and aggressively bad are simply clad in the rags and tatters of their especial time and place. Blockley's guests are much as they were then and ever have been. The administration, the methods of control and medical attention have revolutionized the place so greatly, that none of the references in this diary that relate to nursing and hospital details can be applied to the institution as it is conducted to-day. The very name has changed. No one spoke of the institution otherwise than as Blockley. This name of reproach is now lost in the modern title of the reformed and re-organized institution, "The Philadelphia General Hospital." The Almshouse of Philadelphia, after having occupied several different localities, was finally established on an extensive tract of farm land on a narrow lane below Spruce Street, bordered on the east by 34th Street, and extending to the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad tracks along the Schuylkill River. Its western limit was another picturesque narrow lane which separated it from a bit of wooded ravine that formed a part of Woodlands Cemetery. In old times all this district had been a part of the extensive estate of Blockley, and thus the large community of City Hospital, Hospital for the Insane, and Almshouse derived the name by which it was known, and to which a certain sinister meaning was attached, on account of the maladministration in all departments,

and the general misery and wretchedness that became a part of the lives of all who passed within its gates. The buildings formed a vast parallelogram following the main lines of the property and enclosing a large central courtyard. Through the centre of this great open space a line of irregularly built shops and storehouses extended, dividing it into two great halves with a single, dark, gloomy passageway between, while at either end of the yard arose lofty stone walls, with two arched gateways and heavy gates in either wall for communication with the great north and south halves of the central open courtyard. Thus divided, the northern half of the institution was for the accommodation of women, and the southern half for men. The high wall to the eastward separated the yard from the buildings and ground of the City Hospital, while beyond that to the westward were the extensive buildings and grounds of the Asylum for the Insane. The lines of buildings between these eastern and western divisions, and the great court itself, formed the Almshouse of the City of Philadelphia. Thus it will be seen that the Almshouse dominated and overshadowed the City Hospital, which should have been free from the associations which belong to this home for the destitute and inefficient. So close, however, was the relationship of the various departments at Blockley, that it was often with extreme difficulty that a poor but respectable man or woman, when sick, could be induced to enter the City Hospital. "Oh, Doctor! Don't send me to the Poorhouse!" It is indeed a shame and disgrace that a hospital which should have been regarded as a proper and honorable place of retreat for the sick poor of Philadelphia should have been so burdened by mismanagement and evil associations that no sick man or woman sought its walls willingly. It was the last resort for those who could not gain admission to other hospitals, or who were absolutely friendless and penniless.

The great buildings of Blockley were of uniform construction,

having mastic covered walls of a dull grey color, three stories in height, with a low, sloping roof. The main entrance, facing towards an open stretch of fields that represented the farm of the Almshouse, was a rather imposing portico of Greek design, standing high above a lower story, in which the offices of the institution were housed. One gained this upper terrace by a flight of steps, passed beneath the arcade of columns, and entered the main hallway, on one side of which the Superintendent had his office, while a door on the other side led to the assembly room of the Board of Guardians of the Poor, the rulers of the institution and the various activities associated with it.

This large and important governing board consisted of many members who were elected to their office by the City Councils. Each district of the City was represented among the members of the board. For many years it had been connected with the less open and honorable field of local politics. Few citizens of sterling character or important standing in the community cared to serve in its ranks, or could have gained an election even if their candidacy had been proposed. The board had a bad name. Somewhat caricaturing its management and reputation was the oft-heard epithet which gave it the title, "The Board of Buzzards." Among the earliest efforts to reconstruct and improve the City was a determined effort by a small group of able and honest members of the City Council to elect better men on the Board of Guardians of the Poor. A few men of worth and prominence in the social and financial affairs of the City were persuaded to stand as candidates for election. It was a hard and bitter contest in the Councils, but the better elements of those bodies combined, and filled a few vacancies on the Board of Guardians with these gentlemen of good character. Many improvements to the institution were effected by the work of these new members assisted by their friends in the City Councils. One change

of importance was the appointment of resident physicians for Blockley by a fairly conducted competitive examination, in place of the old system of appointment through personal influence.

It was a dark, sultry day, the first of September, 1883, when a certain young, inexperienced, and somewhat anxious youth, who had gained the degree of Doctor Medicinæ, and had won his right to an internship in Blockley by the first competitive examination held for this position, took his way over the Chestnut Street Bridge across the Schuylkill River and turned into the pleasant shaded lane that extended in front of Blockley.

The farm fields sloped gently down towards the river from the left side of this road. The trunks of the trees that bordered the lane were covered with whitewash. The sidewalk was of wood, and gave such a hollow reverberation to the youth's feet, that there arose a disturbing notion in his agitated mind that all Blockley must hear his coming, and every prospective patient be called to the long rows of windows to observe his approach. Far away over the river was a nondescript mass of old factories, railroad tracks and bridges, and the green foliage about the buildings of the Naval Asylum. The City had a sort of tag-end appearance from this view of its more southern portion. A break in the long line of grey buildings was closed by a high wall through which was a wide-arched gateway. Above this, in black letters on a band of white, was painted the title, "Philadelphia Hospital." In the hospital ambulance the young doctor was to pass in and out of that entrance very often in the months to come, at all hours of the day and night, going forth for or bringing back paupers, sick people, and sometimes unfortunate victims of mental disease in every degree of delusional wealth or misery.

Knowing nothing of what lay before him, the young medicus reverently ascended the entrance steps as to the shrine of Æsculapius, passed beneath the somber portals of Blockley, and

became one of the denizens of that strange community that, in a sort of microcosmos, represented the misery and goodness, the meanness, the brave endurance, the cheap deceits, the vileness and degradation of the whole great world.

It is surprising how quickly one finds his place in the order and discipline of life in a great hospital. The very green young doctor, in a state of anxiety and mental mix-up as to his ability to meet the unknown that faced him in the wards, who doubted that he might not sin from ignorance daily, and be an agent of death instead of health, found very quickly that his errors were unknown, unnoticed, or nonexistent. The faces that peer out at him from the long rows of beds soon cease to shock him with imagined expressions of distrust, contempt, or fear. His colleagues of the resident staff give him friendly hints and helpful suggestions. The grave medical or surgical chief treats him with a kind consideration that combines the manner of a father and older brother. He feels the unconscious support of the great organization of which he is one of the units, a soldier in the little garrison. The events of each day confirm him more and more in the methods of thought and the ethics of the splendid guild that has received him as a member, and to which his loyalty and enthusiastic devotion are due for all the years of his life. The oath of Hippocrates, seldom pronounced in words, is moulded into the young doctor's habits of thought by the precept and example of his associates. For truly can it be said, that among no class of men is the earnestness of their calling more expressed in their lives and associations with one another than among a community of physicians. There is a wholesome boyishness in the mental make-up. There is no pretense that they are models of piety. In the great army to which they belong are deserters and camp followers, but those of the rank and file are generally true to the responsibilities of their great trust. Like Chaucer's clerks gladly will they learn and gladly teach. With a modest acknowledgment of the vastness of the dark



unknown about them, physicians have hopefully looked forward, through all the ages, for more light, more light. In a time when idealisms are dulled in the greyness of a materialistic philosophy of life, it is still the physician who rejoices to spend and be spent in the pursuit of scientific truth, who values his life cheaply in the struggle with ignorance and disease, whose compensation is more often found within his conscience than in bank cheques or coin of the realm. In that glorious army of saints and martyrs, sung by the Church; those who have borne testimony to their faith and have been faithful unto death, there are few physicians; but surely another group of martyrs, they who have perished in the struggle against error and the unknown, who have lost their lives in the conflict to tear the veil of mystery from disease and let in the sunlight of knowledge, the unhaloed army of martyrs for science, should have their meed of praise.

Without any direct instruction in ethics, the young medicus is involved in a social order that honors these traditions of the past and the heroes from the history of his profession. Thus the young and self-doubting interne, in the unconscious influences of his surroundings, as well as the direct instruction of his colleagues, begins to acquire confidence based on experience. The medical instinct, that specialized combination of sense-perception and the reasoning faculties in relation to the various phenomena of disease, begins its development, and the young medicus finds himself.

The Board of Guardians possessed a City office building on South Seventh Street. It was an old and dilapidated dwelling house, in no way rebuilt for office purposes, but simply made available by the most limited supply of desks and chairs and benches placed in parlor, dining room, and bedrooms. In what had served as a parlor, on the ground floor, was housed the bureau for arranging the proper payment and collection of money in cases of illegitimate children, born at Blockley. It

may have had other duties, but complaints and inquiries in connection with the consequences of infringement of the seventh commandment were always in progress on the occasions of my visits. Above, in what had served as the best bedroom in days of family life, the "second story front," was the office for receiving and examining applicants for the Almshouse itself and for the hospital. The medical examination was conducted by a Blockley resident physician. One of our staff was in attendance daily, for a few hours each morning. The examination in regard to social conditions, destitution, and inability for support was made by the Secretary of the Board of Guardians or by the House Agent of Blockley. It must be confessed that the young medical man was too often disposed to be sarcastic, cynical, suspicious, and anxious to drive away every applicant who did not bear in his or her body the symptoms of being an interesting medical or surgical case. On the other hand, the two lay officials, men long trained to their duties, were most patient and reasonably sympathetic. I never heard either of these men say an unkind word to the wretched, broken men and women who applied for shelter within the walls of Blockley. Not infrequently when I had dismissed an applicant with a contemptuous statement that the poor man or woman was "not sick enough" to be admitted to the hospital, the Secretary or House Agent, whichever one happened to be officiating at the desk, would find some excuse for admitting the subject to the Outwards—the Almshouse Department,—or would mildly set aside my verdict and make out a pass for the hospital. Having obtained such a pass, the miserable citizen of the underworld would start on the long journey across the City and over the Schuylkill by one of the bridges to the haven of rest for the poor and sick. So a thin stream of outcasts took its way daily, through the cold, the snow or melting slush of winter, or the summer's torrid heat, among the busy shoppers of Market or Chestnut Street, past the great stores and amid the rushing

traffic, each with the precious bit of paper that meant shelter and somewhat of a home. Many of the sick must have spent long, bitter moments on the way, with frequent rests on doorsteps or against railings or on the curbstones of the street. It would have been a vision for an artist to have depicted this long, struggling line, as wherever in this sad world of ours the weary and heavy laden have journeyed, led by the Man of Sorrows, with His patient face of infinite compassion, bearing His cross and going on before. The lowest of the earth are in that line, outcasts and beggars and weaklings; nothing noble is there, nothing heroic; only sickness and hunger and longing for some place of refuge.

It is in this very Seventh Street Office that the scenes of the diary have their beginning, for the first report in that old book is entitled—

“A GENTLEMAN GONE TO SEED.

October 23, 1883.

“At the Seventh Street Office, a few days ago, I came across a queer example of whiskey-wreckage. The last applicant for admission was an unsteady, red-nosed, dejected-faced, white-haired old man who slunk into the first chair near the door. I asked him what his trouble might be this morning, when to my surprise he answered in the refined tone of voice of an educated Englishman. He wanted shelter; was afflicted with a variety of complaints all of which narrowed themselves into the syndromes of drunkenness and poverty. During the citations of what he was and what he wished for, he quoted from several Latin authors. I learned that he was a graduate from Eton, that he had taught in the Cathedral School of Exeter, and that he had been a teacher in this country. His weakness for drink caused him to lose every position he had held, and now an outcast he dragged himself from the gutter and begged for admission to the Almshouse. We decided ‘to send him out,’ which means, he obtained his pass of entrance. The Warden

took pity on him and allowed him to spend the days in his office doing some nominal work, for the old fellow is lazy. Although he will talk for hours about his necessity to find some occupation, so as to fill his mind and keep out sad memories, still, when any real work is supplied, he seems to prefer the memories. He is a real old Micawber. A few days ago he told me in a most independent manner, as though his coming hither had been a matter of pure option on his part, that, 'A few more days will decide me whether to remain here longer or go elsewhere. My mind must be occupied. I find it very hard to put up with the profanity of this place. My dear sir! There is nothing for which I have such a violent aversion as for the *hoi polloi!* I wish much to ask you a question. Can you inform me as to the necessary steps for me to take in order to obtain a piece of castile soap?' He had already asked me for a copy of Thucydides. He spends much of his time in composing ingenious sentences in Greek and Latin which give the same meaning when read backward or forward. He is the saddest object on earth, a gentleman gone to the devil. He has the intellect, sensitiveness, and the exclusive traits of a scholar, and yet with these he has the slavery to drink which has brought him to the level of its other victims here, most of whom are of the opposite social scale to which he belongs. What a place of decay and death this is! It reminds me of the Ox Bow in the Connecticut River. The broad, deep river flows on, but into this back stream drift the deadwood, scum, withered leaves, floating corruption; and there they drift together swirling around in the sluggish current, sinking to its muddy, oozy bottom, never again floating out into the open stream. Hope gone! Ambition gone! Yes, the very sense of shame vanished!"

"ARROGANT GUESTS.

October 24, 1883.

"What I am unable to understand, or rather what con-

stantly surprises me, is the degree of arrogance which the inmates of this place develop during their sojourn. I have seen men who have come here as a last resort, actually picked up out of the streets, who after a few weeks' stay develop all the selfishness and overbearing manners of one born to every luxury that wealth supplies. They order the nurses about as one might speak to slaves. They complain of the slightest discomfort. They anathematize the food and cooking, both of which are far superior to any they have known for years. The only individual of whom they stand in awe is the doctor, for he has the keys of a heaven or hell, and can allow them to rest in sheltered ease or send them forth to experience winter and cold weather in the streets. And I must confess that it is almost a pleasure to me to 'come down heavily' on such men as these. In some cases there must be a limit to long-suffering."

"CADAVEROUS CHARLIE.

October 31, 1883.

"There is a man here named Charlie. He has charge of the green-room or green-house, both of which are the local terms for the post-mortem laboratory, or dead-house. Charlie's entire time is devoted to work upon the dead. He is present at the autopsies, sews up the incisions after examinations, and takes measures to preserve in glass the various specimens which are to be kept in a sort of alcoholic immortality. He is a well-built, broad-shouldered, and cheerful-tempered German, and is quite an anatomist. He never estimates a man, either living or dead, by his face or reputation, but judges of his worth by considering what kind of a skeleton he would make, if the fortunate opportunity offered. A stranger at once excites his notice, and he exclaims, 'Mein Gott! What a vine skeleton dat man would make!' Or, it may be that the whole *ensemble* was below standard, and that the skeleton would be a frank failure and unsatisfactory. He has fitted up a neatly made bracket

on one wall of the post-mortem room, and here the severed head of an insane negro rests, which Charlie had embalmed and prepared with tender care. In its way it is a work of art. The ghastly ornament has painted eyes, made from paper and fitted between the eyelids, giving quite a satisfied and friendly expression to the face. A pair of femurs are crossed behind the head, and the whole makes a most horrible ornament for this place of death, but evidently brings much satisfaction to the cadaverous mind of Charlie.

“V. has gone off in the ambulance to-night to bring back an insane woman to the hospital. I was to have gone also, but, as Donovan’s arm was amputated to-day, the Warden thought it best that I should be on hand in case of trouble. So M. has gone in my place. They will have a rather moving experience, as the woman is so violent that her husband dares not enter the house.”

It would be difficult to-day for any one to conceive of hospital work without the efficient services of the trained nurse. Every institution has its school for nurses, in which young women of good character and a very fair degree of general education are instructed, employed in the service of the hospital, and graduated after having pursued the full course and passed the prescribed examinations. So valuable and essential are the services of these nurses that no satisfactory result in medicine or surgery could be obtained without their aid.

The Blockley of 1883 had no trained nurses. Each department had an official called the Head Nurse. These officers were men or women appointed by the Board of Guardians and, in most cases, protégés of some one member of that board. Their skill in the art of nursing was not so much considered as the influences that placed them for nomination and their ability to keep order in their departments after appointment. The acting nurses for all wards were simply convalescent patients

who evinced some aptitude in carrying out orders, and who received a small compensation in money for their imperfectly done work. Among such convalescents there would develop, from time to time, some man or woman who seemed to have a natural instinct for the required work, and who dreaded a plunge again out into the world beyond the high walls. Perhaps without any valuable friends and with little ambition, such individuals had acquired a species of "Blockley habit," and, until they wearied of the place and work, were content to live on and labor in its wards for mere bed and board and a nominal wage. Among such as these were found the assistants to the Head Nurses, sometimes rising even to the dignity of night nurses.

It was a strange, irregular, untrained force, the members of which not infrequently fell from grace by returning drunk after a day off in the City, or who wandered back to their old associations and ways of life. In the office we had a very intelligent gentleman who had been a volunteer clerk for several years, because within the walls he was able to remain sober, but, once outside, would mean drink, drunkenness, and delirium tremens. Of course our main officials, the Superintendent, Chief Clerks, and members of the administrative staff, were men of character and efficiency.

Among our comparatively untrained head nurses were men and women of fine instincts and good judgment. Although most of them belonged to a class of individuals fitted for domestic service rather than for the management of hospital wards, we had some who won and held the affection and respect of every resident physician of that day and generation. Mr. Smith, the white-haired, clean-shaven, and fine-featured old man who was chief nurse of one of the departments of the surgical wards for men, was a splendid character. This really fine old gentleman would receive the wild, raw, young internes, in his neatly kept office, with an air of kindly deference and

quiet dignity that commanded respect. Doubtless his long experience in practical work had given him a better knowledge of the needs of our patients than the interne had gained from his college training. Everybody loved Nurse Owens, the amiable, patient, and cheery head nurse of the medical wards for men. A rather fiery and energetic character, well fitted to be first mate on a sailing clipper, ruled the surgical wards for men. He had lost one leg, and the slightest disturbance in any of those wards would be attended by a rapid and energetic stamping through the corridors, as the leg and stump came swinging in hurried rhythm, and rebellion was hushed by a quick sharp command. There was an impression given that all our hospital officials had been through more or less interesting history, that there were backgrounds in their lives. The women nurses were not so able or of such decided character as were the men; and yet, considering the methods of appointment and the imperfect training for the responsible positions, it is much to be wondered at that the general work and the order of the wards were so well maintained. This absence of trained nurses threw much more responsibility upon the internes than is now the case in any hospital. We did all the surgical dressings, and were forced to oversee very closely the details of the nursing itself. Of course there must have been terrible negligence and oversight. During the long hours of night duty there was no one to superintend the work of the untrained, unintelligent, and far from zealous workers. The books for night orders might be most carefully written by the interne, with dosage and hours detailed for medicine and feeding, yet who could tell that the attendants did not eat the food and drink the stimulants themselves? The patients may possibly have received the medicine. It was a time when much reliance was placed upon alcohol, in all exhausting fevers. Our patients were of a class that knew whiskey and valued it highly. They were apt to know when it was ordered for the night, and their



insistence on receiving their doses, and fear that they would report to the doctor any failure in this attention, probably deterred the night attendants from consuming all the supply that was ordered for distribution. But the patients recovered in very fair proportion, and it must be acknowledged that the rank and file of our poorly trained helpers took interest and even pride in their share of credit for the good results.

“A MARTINET.

November 13, 1883.

“Nurse H. is a remarkable character. He ought to have command of a crew of pirates. His abilities are really lost in this relatively law abiding community. He is of large size, possesses the strength and gentleness of a blacksmith, and, although thoroughly good-hearted, is obsessed with the idea that all patients are prisoners and are to be treated accordingly. Conscientiously faithful in duty, he believes in maintaining a high ideal of dignity. I am sure that he is annoyed that I do not assert myself as Allah, and then he could figure as my prophet. When I appear at the door of the ward, Nurse H. always stops his work, strides to the middle of the room, glares about him with an expression of great threatening, and calls out in a powerful voice,—‘Silence. The Doctor’s in the ward!’ This is a nice direct way of giving a timid medicus a due sense of his importance. To-day he interspersed strictly professional notes with accounts of our patients’ misdoings. ‘Bed No. 5 over there’s been at it again; hidin’ chunks of steak under his mattress and eatin’ of ’em at night. Bed No. 10’s took off his dressin’s. Bed 14 tried to rub his wound sore.’ This latter performance is not infrequent when a convalescent patient fears that his recovery means a few days of work or immediate discharge from the hospital.”

In the days of the diary surgical cleanliness or antiseptis was unknown. The operating room was the wooden-floored

arena of the great lecture amphitheatre. The operating table was of wood. The entire furnishings of this great room were of the same material. No sterilization of instruments or dressings was attempted. The surgeons and all the assistants wore their ordinary street or house costume. The residents were clad in their uniforms of blue and brass and gold bands and stars, which were supposed to be a copy of the uniform of a surgeon in the Navy of the United States. Usually, one suit of uniform sufficed for the entire year of service, so that it was far from surgically clean. If an instrument chanced to fall on the wooden floor, it might be quickly wiped with an ordinary towel and immediately put to further use. The dressings were of an ancient system of surgery, bearing no resemblance to those in use to-day. One of the visiting staff who had just returned from London, where he had seen something of the work of the great Lister and his assistants, attempted an imitation of the rather complicated dressings used by that great man, but his colleagues smiled forbearingly and continued the old wet and open treatment and had a horror of a dry wound. Nothing healed by first intention unless the intention of the operator was thwarted by a kind providence, and good luck won in spite of our efforts. Strange as it may seem, however, most of our cases recovered after a long, slow process of healing. The operative work was of a simple character, as the wonders of modern surgery could not have been dreamed of under the methods in vogue in those days. The most important public clinics were held on Saturday morning, and the medical and surgical chiefs selected their cases for demonstration with reference to that great day. There is a reference made to such a clinic under a note in the diary entitled

“ANDERSON, THE BUM.

November 19, 1883.

“‘This,’ said Nurse H. stopping before a cot on which a

new patient lay, 'is Anderson, the Bum.' Anderson, surnamed the Bum, opened his grey eyes and looked at Nurse H. with a glance plainly indicating malice, but which changed almost immediately to a look of lazy indifference. Upon the face of Mr. Anderson, life had clearly printed the hieroglyphics of laziness, courage, humor, and cruelty. It was battered, weather-beaten, and seamed with ugly scars; and yet the head was well-shaped, with a broad, almost intellectual forehead. There was a strange mingling of gentlemanly refinement and brute coarseness. The man's figure was massive, with broad shoulders, large chest, and good length of limbs. Anderson's advent in the ward occurred several days ago, and I have had an opportunity to develop considerable interest in the man socially as well as professionally. He has been an inmate of the ward before, and is well known to several of our other guests, whose glee was manifest, as they anticipated that the *ennui* of the ward was to be relieved by the appearance of this jolly devil. As our newly arrived bum, however, has an abscess of the liver, and is in a very weak condition, his social qualities will not appear to their best advantage and add happiness to the ward. Dr. P., our chief surgeon, selected him as a case for operation at to-day's clinic. As Anderson watched me yesterday in my attempts to adjust his mattress, so as to make him less uncomfortable, he remarked in his slow, lazy voice, 'Say, Doctor! You're taking a deal of trouble for nothing. I don't feel a bit grateful for it all; and say, you know, I'd a deal rather be let alone!' I told him, in reply, that the expression of gratitude would be so entirely beyond the line of our hospital experience, that its exhibit would come almost as an unpleasant surprise.

"The man must have an interesting background. I can learn absolutely nothing about him, except that he has been an inmate of this hospital on several occasions, when he has made considerable trouble in the ward.

“He was wheeled into the operating room this morning. In the great amphitheatre, the circling rows of seats were crowded with students, tier above tier, until, to one standing down in the deep arena, the very air above seemed filled with eager faces. The patient lay on a high, revolving, wooden table in the centre of the arena, and was clearly displayed in the light which streamed from the skylight in the lofty roof. Close by stood Dr. P., knife in hand, lecturing to the students in his rather stagy manner. On either side, each in his proper place, were grouped the resident physicians. I face Dr. P. on the opposite side of Anderson, as the chief assistant, and in the background stand a few nurses. Everything is calm, systematic, almost druidical. There is a breathless hush and the light, sweet, sickening odor of ether fills the air. ‘Gentlemen, the next case which we now bring before you,’ says Dr. P., ‘I have explained already, and the operation will now proceed.’

“Well, so it is here on the clinic day! But the students vanish, Dr. P. goes home, or to patients, or to another operation, or to the opera, or to a banquet, and we poor devils are left to fight out the after-treatment, which is a good deal more of a work than the drama of the knife.”

#### “THE STORY OF A NIGHT WATCH.

November 27, 1883.

“Edmunds was operated upon last Saturday for excision of the right hip joint. He is a strange combination of meanness, wickedness, low cunning, and moral cussedness inherited or acquired. His father was a criminal; his mother not much better. He has been in two different prisons for long terms of confinement. The unfortunate being certainly has suffered horribly, and would arouse every one’s sympathy did he not also call up feelings of utter disgust for his character. His last day on earth came very near to being that of the operation. It was in the clinic room. We commenced at about half after

eleven o'clock. It was almost four in the afternoon before he was placed and finally fixed in Bruce's splint. Dr. P. thought that he was dying, but we managed to move him into an empty ward and there, after long working with whiskey, ammonia, strychnia, and, later, beef tea and milk, he was at last brought into a sort of working order. I spent the night with him, as it was out of the question to trust to the tender mercies of a mere watchman.

"It was a strange and long to be remembered night. I had been busy in the ward from half after eight o'clock that morning, and had failed to get any dinner on account of the unusually long clinic. Edmunds had been moved into a large, barren, square room with board walls without plaster and worn or stained to a dark mahogany color. My patient, propped up with pillows, lay on the operating table from which he had been too weak to be removed. Above his head, high up, a single gas jet threw down a feeble light on his pale, emaciated, pain-marked face. A storm had arisen, and all night the wind moaned about the buildings, rattling the window sashes with sudden gusts. There was a bright fire in the stove, the only cheerful object in the room. Around the walls and placed above spaces once occupied by beds, were many tin frames containing cards which noted the bed numbers and the names, ages, and diseases of patients who had long since gone back to life and work, or perhaps, instead, to the Potter's Field or dissecting table. They looked to me like memorial tablets, raised to the departed. The ward had been unused for some time, and numerous rats had established a colony in its walls. Here I sat until almost four o'clock in the morning. Slowly the hours passed by, marked by the solemn tones of the hospital clock. Edmunds would awaken occasionally from a troubled sleep, groan, make some incoherent exclamation, take what was administered, and again drop off into a semi-conscious state. Otherwise, everything was very still, except when the

wind blew in gusts against the windows, or the rats scuttled about in the walls or flooring or squeaked in the wainscoting. Suddenly came a visit strange and unexpected. It must have been near midnight. Edmunds had been restless but was sleeping quietly. I sat before the fire thinking of the room's history. How much pain and agony those walls had enclosed! How much suffering each poor wretch drifted hither on the tide of life represented, even outside and beyond himself, the suffering he had caused to and received from others. A sound seemed to creep into my train of thinking; a sound distinct and real, yet vague and far away; a rushing, whirling sound as of something flying, hastening on rapid feet that caused no footfall but the rush and gliding shadow of a sound. The door of the deserted ward opened into a long, dark entry. Into the upper end of this passage the sound seemed to enter. It was louder now and growing nearer, the pattering of hurrying feet that scarcely seemed to touch the floor. Suddenly a piercing shriek arose, loud, wild, and full of utter woe, a shriek that seemed to embody the suffering of a lifetime and of an eternity beyond. The cry rang out shrill and clear, and a something fell violently against my door. Then the night was still again. Edmunds had not awakened, so I went to the door, opened it, and beheld in the thick darkness of the entry, as it were sunken in the darkness itself, two glaring, fiery eyes. Edmunds had frequently remarked to me, that, when his time came to be carried to the dead house, whither he had seen so many borne during his long illness, that the Devil would at once take his soul to the underworld or shadows. Had the Evil One come to claim his own? I threw a piece of coal at the Evil One and the fiery eyes vanished; but a light, galloping sound, as of a cat in extreme haste, was apparent and grew fainter into the remote distance. I closed the door and sat down again by the fire, but I was soon conscious that something was in the room that had not been there before. Seated by the stove and looking up into

my face was a small grey and black streaked cat. Evidently it had been in company with that evil thing which had flown away up the entry. With me it was in better company, and I was glad to have its society for the rest of the dreary night. At one o'clock in the morning a watchman arrived with my lunch, which consisted of a very large bowl of coffee, Irish stew, and bread and butter. The cat and I agreed that it was a pretty good lunch and timely. At length half after three o'clock was reached, and the watchman whom I had chosen put in an appearance. It was sweet to get to bed; but oh, how short and sweet! For soon Sam's horrible voice announced at the door, 'Half past seven, Doctors; half past seven; half past!' The work of another day was begun."

"BY THE WAY.

December 2, 1883.

"V. has departed homeward, having received a letter that gave news of his father's sickness. The attack seems to be a severe one of quinsy, and my energetic roommate has hastened home with his mind filled with ideas to meet any eventuality. I thought that he had discovered every possible method of treatment needed for any complication, but I came upon him suddenly, at the last moment when he should have been well on his way to the railroad station, reading up the subject of *Feeding by the Rectum*. The medical talent of the town will be startled when Dr. V. comes on the scene in his present state of mind, and with the armamentarium that he is prepared to set into action. To-day was Sunday, a busy one, and as little like my old-time Sundays as day is like night. Sunday has been a variable day in my experience. The time has not long passed since it was the cloud and bugbear of my infant life. Dreaded from one week's end to the next, the fact of its existence and regular coming hung like a pall over my youthful hilarity. The day became less trying as years advanced. To be sure, I

had to read 'Barnes' Notes,' on Sunday afternoons, and the Notes of Barnes and those Sunday afternoons were painfully long. But then, barring Barnes and his Notes, the day was not wholly unpleasant, for it was judged that I could go outside the door of the house into the open and yet not sin. At Princeton the day was the pleasantest one of the week. It was after the long walks of Saturday afternoon. We had no work, and we did have a fair dinner, followed by a supper rather more choice than usual. During medical student days the great day became truly a Godsend, for it brought the only rest of mind afforded an overworked candidate for the degree. During its passage we could throw physics to the dogs and have some freedom of thought and action. And now the busy life here reduces the day to the standard of work required for all other days. But there is yet a difference, though I know not what it is. Something in the air, in the sky, in all instincts and memories, unconsciously and subconsciously at work, announces that this is Sunday; and from far away beyond the walls of the Almshouse comes the sound of ringing bells."

#### "WORK IN THE DEAD HOUSE.

December 10, 1883.

"Edmunds died last Tuesday. An autopsy was held on his body last Thursday afternoon. I did the cutting. Dr. P. had sent out word that he wished the entire pelvis and the diseased femur removed and sent to him for his college museum. So, after the post, I commenced the operation of *excision of the pelvis*. It is quite an undertaking, and the day was well advanced into the late afternoon. Daylight is short now. There is no means of lighting the dead house except by candle or lantern. Finally Dutch Charlie, the last helper available, went off to his supper and I was left alone. At the upper end of the long table lay all the recognizable parts of my former patient. His face, deeply marked with lines of pain, was quiet



with the rest which had come at last. His eyes, wide open, had the far-away blank gaze of death. It is an indescribable stare, as though the dead man saw far off something for which he had long been searching, and was satisfied. And in the face of this poor crime-possessed pauper there was a touch, a shade of expression, which seemed reflected from some former time when he was a child and innocent. I could see this, because I had worked over him and watched so long. Yet one who had been present that afternoon had exclaimed,—‘What a villainous face!’ What would he have said if he had seen Edmunds at his worst! It was getting dark. I could hardly see to place my knife. In one corner of the room, leaning against the wall, was a roughly made, unplanned coffin with shavings for a pillow. In this the mangled remains of what had been humanity was to be carried to the Pit or Potter’s Field, and there hidden away under the ground.

“Along the walls of the room on shelves were large glass jars containing impossible babies or specimens of various organs gone wrong by disease, and, from a nail fastened into the side of a grey-painted, greasy cupboard, hung a dangling mass of leather and metal charms, tarnished, stained with filth and wear, that had been taken from many bodies posted in this clearing house. I say clearing house advisedly, because here the truth comes to light. A learned professor may have diagnosed a disease while the patient was still under treatment. He may lecture learnedly and eloquently upon his diagnosis to crowds of wondering and note-taking students; yet the observations held in this room may prove that the professor’s bad organs were good organs, and that the good were all bad, and that there was no more health in the diagnosis than in the patient. Through an open door that admitted to an outer room, placed on rudely made trestles, could dimly be seen a row of coffins, many of which were already filled while others were yet waiting for their occupants. Such is the dead house,

and here I labored in the moonlight aided by two candles, until the unpleasant work was finished. Then Charlie arrived with additional candles, in time to place the removed bones in water and clear the débris. I had intentionally left the body in such a condition that the parts could have been replaced, skin and flaps sewed up, and the whole would not have presented such a very bad appearance. But there was no need of this care for Edmunds' clay; his friends long ago lost to him; his family, criminals themselves, indifferent as to his fate; not even a dumb animal to care for him or mourn his loss! All that remained was soon accomplished, and he has found rest at last, after his twenty-five years of tossing and stumbling and suffering through his vagrant and criminal life, in the ash heap of the Potter's Field."

"SOME GOOD ONES.

December 20, 1883.

"A pleasant change from Edmunds is Daniel C., a boy of sixteen years of age, who came to Ward No. 3, Men's Surgical, about nine days ago. He is from a rough country, Schuylkill County, a mining district, where his occupation was to drive mules in connection with the mining operations. In spite of the ruggedness of his surroundings, his disposition developed into a combination of gentleness, patience, and sweet reasonableness that is rarely to be met in this house. Every one in the ward likes the boy, even the roughest and toughest, and all are willing to help him in such way as is possible. I have not yet had a patient in whom I have felt so much personal interest. But the poor fellow has no prospect of recovery. He has a tumor almost as large as his head, which is growing from the back of his neck, infiltrating the surrounding tissues and extending into the carotid region of both sides. It is a small round cell sarcoma of exceptionally rapid growth. \* \* \*

"The boy never complains. He is perfectly satisfied with

everything about him and is always cheerful and brave. Some of his relatives who live in Philadelphia come to see him occasionally, and, this evening, it was my unpleasant duty to tell one of his family that there was little hope that the boy could live, except for a very short period. It is a rare picture and a very pleasant one to me, this little glimpse that I have had of what was evidently a very pleasant home life. The people were all poor and compelled to work. My patient was the oldest son and did much towards the support of the family in which each member was doing his or her part. He was able to earn about thirty-five dollars each month. Always at home after his work was finished, he spent the evenings reading books that would give him some start at an education. He was entirely different from the men and boys of his mining town, but is free from all priggishness or the peculiarities that we associate with the victims of 'early false piety.'

Another good patient for whom I feel much interest is Henry G. During Edmunds' last days G. watched by him constantly, enduring with patience his complaints, curses, blows, and bites, and did all in his power for the patient's comfort. He has a thin, dark, sad face which itself speaks of a history, but of this I know nothing except that he has served in the United States Navy and is a native of Salem, Mass. I did not learn that he was a fellow Yankee until a few evenings ago, and naturally my interest in him was increased. He makes a good assistant in the ward, does his work faithfully, and is always anxious to be of help. C. and G. and a few others are as rare gems amid the mass of human rubbish which lies in and about this place. It is a pleasure to work for such as these, and to try to give them relief. One feels that sympathy is not thrown away. Of course we work for all alike, but it is hard to worry and toil over a man who would pick your pocket, if he had the chance, or who might break your head if there was any cash in the undertaking, or

who rewards your efforts with false and servile flattery that has no true-heartedness in it and cannot be taken seriously."

"NEW YEAR'S EVE.

December 31, 1883.

"New Year's Eve to-night, and to-morrow is 1884! Now for turning over new leaves, making resolutions, signing pledges, taking vows! With me the greatest change that the New Year brings is the fact that I 'go off the surgical' and 'go on the nervous.' This will be a relief. Too much night work now. I was up all of last night until three o'clock in the morning, and am to be called at three o'clock to-morrow morning, New Year's Day, to relieve my colleague V., who is now watching by my man of last night. I ought to be expressing fitting sentiments for the 'ringing out' business, but will go to bed and sleep through the change of years."

"A NIGHT RIDE ON THE AMBULANCE.

January 7, 1884.

"The night of January 6th was bitter cold. Outside, an icy feeling was in the air. One's breath froze as it left the face. A splendid fire burned in our stove and the room had an unusually cheerful and at-home appearance, in contrast to the manifest discomforts that existed beyond the walls. A knock came at the door. 'Dr. Bliss. Ambulance, Sir!' There was no escape. The only thing to do was to bundle up as warmly as possible and go forth into the cold, cold night. It was bright moonlight, and the stars shone like vivid dots of fire snapping in the clear, open, purplish-black sky; a typical clear winter night, when the snow creaks under one's feet and one can almost see, as well as feel, the cold. Passing through the front offices I found the ambulance waiting for me by the

entrance. 'Where to?' I asked, 'and on whose order?' 'Oh, it's from the Central Station! We've got to go to 4 N. Front St.' Small comfort the driver's reply gave me, but we climbed in, and away. It was a long ride, down Chestnut Street, lighted by its electric lights. The pavements, usually so crowded, are bleak and deserted on this cold Sunday night. We have the track pretty much to ourselves, except when the rapid pace of our horse brings us up behind a street car. Bong! Bong! goes our bell. The car stops. We turn off the track and jolt heavily over the stone paving covered with icy mounds of snow. Heavily again we roll on to the track, and once more away, flying onward as fast as the strong, fast horse can drag the rather light wagon. Policemen run to the corners. Bong! Bong! 'Off the track there in front!' On we rush past well-known stores and theatres and street crossings. On, on in a wild whirl of speed. The horse slips, sparks flash from beneath his feet, but he is steady again and doing his best. How strange the familiar streets look on this bitter cold January night! And for what are we going? Is it some crazy, mad creature, to be seized, bound, and handcuffed, and carried back shrieking to the Madhouse? Is it the result of some drunken brawl? A crowd of men; a blood-covered and bleeding figure on the floor; sounds of cursing and broken sobs and the low muttering of hushed voices! We know not what the errand may be, but still onward flying through the cold and darkness. We have left the lighted thoroughfares and have turned up Second Street, dimly illuminated by far-apart gas lamps. We approach a part of the City which is new to me. It is one of the worst neighborhoods in Philadelphia, Callowhill Street near the Delaware River. We enter a space wider than the ordinary streets. Houses of irregular size and shape stand farther back, giving a more open appearance to the roadway. Gaunt outlines of factories tower aloft, their sides and chimneys silvered with moonlight, while dark shadows lurk in angles and corners and

about the lower stories. Doors of grogshops open stealthily. Faces peer out into the night and vanish back again. We are at the top of what looks like a steep descent. It was once, in far-off days, the quiet river bank, where trees grew and shaded mossy slopes; for the moonlight, flooding down, gleams on a space of glancing whiteness where the river moves and tosses broken masses of floating ice. A mere glimpse we have of this, down a narrow way of blackness, descending tunnel-like between the dark walls of lofty buildings. Turning into Front Street the ambulance stops before a mass of ancient, worn, and decaying houses. 'Where is No. 4—?' I take the lantern and jump to the pavement. A man slouches across the street out from some shadows. 'There's the place!' He points to an archway leading apparently into nowhere, if one can judge from the blank darkness of the passage of which it forms the entrance. I ascend the steps of the adjoining house and try the door. It is locked. A series of loud knocks appears to make little effect on the stony hearts within. There is a sort of glass-covered slide in the door, a small space but large enough to enable one within to glance out into the street. This slide is now cautiously opened, and a villainous-looking face gazes out; low forehead over which a mass of tawny, matted hair hangs stiffly; a thick unkempt beard; eyes which search and search, as though hunting for crime or escape from its consequences. These eyes look quickly at my face. They see a uniform cap and brass buttons. The slide closes quickly and decidedly and with an air of finality. There is nothing to be done but to enter the dark passage. Here I am soon surrounded by strange, half-clad savages, mostly young girls and women, although a few men slouch about here and there. 'Yes! This is the place! Come along! We'll show you the way!' Up, up I go, with these strange guides, the bedraggled looking outcasts hidden away in this resort of vice and crime and poverty. The stairs are worn and old. Filth is everywhere, and the

cold, damp air is heavy with foul odors. The walls and floor are smeared with stains of many colors. In a little room, high up, with no furniture, bare, bleak, and desolate, its one window broken and admitting the winter's bitter cold, there the patient lay. She was a little, thin, pinched, and withered old woman, the very ideal of a hag. She lay upon the filth-bestrewn floor almost naked, and with nothing to protect her from the cold but an old, ragged, straw ticking. 'Don't go near her! She's alive with them!' warned some one. Well know I what this means! The old lady starts up and looks interested. Yes, she will go along with us. Evidently this case does not require immediate medicine. The usual questions are asked and answered, and then they make her ready for her journey. Never before had I seen the charity of the poor for the poor so well set forth. I was among the lowest of the low, people so wretchedly poor, that, in Philadelphia, the city of cheap homes, they housed, or rather kenneled, in this rotting tenement. I don't suppose they knew much of the fine distinctions between right and wrong. I don't imagine that their ideas of morality were exact and nice. I strongly suspect that, like beasts, they lived in promiscuous intercourse, but a wave of emotionalism or, perhaps, divine pity, swept over them, and between them all they dressed that lice-covered old woman as best they could. One gave a pair of stockings. Another brought out from some corner a skirt. A shawl was contributed. And so they covered the candidate for Blockley with articles of dress that must have left sad gaps in their wardrobes. And they are making an event of it all! It is an excited, good-natured, almost a joyous crowd, that gathers about the ambulance in the street, little children, besotted men, and miserable girls and women. It is really the event of the season. Actually! These people are laughing and seem happy! Faith they have, more humanity left than I had given them credit for possessing in all their sadly tangled lives. 'Good-bye!

Good-bye! We're off again. Bong! Bong! Off through the deserted streets, whirling away. Rattle, rattle, rattle, we go over the crossings; rumbling heavily over the bridge. 'How are you now? All right? Warm enough?' 'All right,' comes the reply from among the blankets. Bong! Bong! Off we turn from the main streets and draw near the hospital. Home at last! Half frozen! How good and warm the fire feels, and how cozy the cheerful lighted room! And she who was freezing to death in the rotting tenement is washed, clad in warm, clean clothes, and tucked into bed in the first decent resting place her old bones have lain upon for these many months. Another piece of driftwood tossed hither on the tides of life! Here is peace. But the tenement, there, is still full. There still live crime and misery. "The poor ye have always with you!" Yes, the poor and the vile. What hope for them? The busy life of trade, of pleasure, of gain, goes briskly on. It is not for them. Youth is beautiful and has so much of happiness. It is not for them. For them is a blank existence of indefinite days with misery always; now and then some gleam of what joy might be. For them is a dreary, dull, monotony of want, hunger, misery, cold, and heat; brief gladness, most always in relation with wrongdoing. And all the year, below them, tossing in winter the broken ice, floating dead driftwood in summer, runs the River, and to many of them it gives peace.

"Who will miss them there to-morrow,  
 Waifs which drift to the shade or sun?  
 Gone away with their songs and sorrow,  
 Only the river still flows on."

In the days of the diary the resident physicians were served by two men, who were called the "Doctors' runners," and by a middle-aged, kindly, almost motherly woman who looked



after the laundry and had general oversight of the care of the rooms. Our men were Sam and Billy. It was a belief, accepted without any exact data, that both these men had found their way into the institution through the door of the Seventh Street Office. Everybody except the higher officials appeared to have gained entrance to Blockley by that way, rising in the social grade of the Almshouse community to a position that corresponded with their abilities. A large number of the attendants also were friends or hangers-on of members of the Board of Guardians, and were placed in office by such influence. Sam was a nervous, quick-moving, shallow-brained, but most willing servant. Billy, who had but one active eye, was older than Sam, was slow, deliberate, somewhat pessimistic in his views on men and life, disposed to have sentiments of profound depth without the verbal ability to express them clearly. He had seen many generations of resident staffs come and go, during his term of service, and knew somewhat of the general character of the average young medicus. There is a reference to Billy in the diary that is somewhat characteristic.

“BY THE WAY.

January 16, 1884.

“No one can deny that Blockley residents are not kept actively busy. I think that we earn our salt. Billy came into our room, the other evening, to light the gas. The burner leaks out a little of this volatile substance which we try to imagine gives some illumination, but it does not. In regard to this matter we labor under an unsystematized delusion. But gas is expensive, more or less, and the Board of ‘*Guardeens*’ is bent upon economy. Well, the antiquated and slow-moving Billy came shuffling into the room. I remarked to him something about the rapid flight of time here, especially when one had much work. Billy stood on a wooden chair, his arms stretched at full length above his head, endeavoring with unsteady hand

to insert a lighted match under a globe of the chandelier, and squinting dreadfully with the earnestness of his efforts. Pop! went the flame. Billy slowly turned around, and still on the chair, but in imminent peril of falling off, delivered himself thus, with much force on each word and impressive pauses between: 'Of all the men I've seen in life, I have never, at any time, here, seen a class of men so worked as the present resident staff!' He stepped to the floor, and, suddenly rousing himself, demanded, 'Why don't you *strike*?' Being told that this was useless, a look of deep melancholy settled in his one remaining eye, and he left the room, sadly remarking in the depth of his sympathy, that it was 'all a great shame.'

"We cannot very well strike, but certainly there is much to be done. Here is a report of to-day's work: Out of bed at half after seven o'clock; breakfast at eight. Then at work in the wards until twelve, making my rounds and applying the large battery. I am snatched by a runner for the ambulance. Off to the Seventh Street Office, and then away uptown to North Second Street near Columbia Avenue; then back to Seventh Street and out to the Hospital. Arrive here at half after two, and have what dinner I can obtain at that late hour. Go to my room and begin writing up histories of cases for Dr. M. Again comes the runner with another ambulance call which proves to be a false alarm. So back to the crazy histories again. Finish these by five o'clock. Then another ambulance call which, again, proves false. Very fortunate, this, for otherwise I should have had the pleasure of a visit to Bandbox Row, away up in the slums of Richmond. I now go to the wards and, while making my evening rounds, Dr. M. appears. Five students are with him, and he lectures to his class until almost seven o'clock. As a result, I nearly lose my supper. After this, I make my rounds in the Erysipelas wards and then go to my room. Here I try to read, but fall asleep over the book; so that now, about the hour of ten, I am full ready for bed.

There are easier stations in life than that occupied by a resident physician in Blockley."

The wards for patients suffering from diseases of the nervous system were the most primitive in their equipment of any department at Blockley. They consisted of two groups of long, one-storied, wooden pavilions, separated by a wide roadway that led in from Thirty-fourth Street. The pavilions on the north of this roadway were for women and, on the southern side, for men. These thin-walled structures were raised about three feet above the ground and were lighted by long narrow windows. The students, visiting the public clinics in large numbers on Wednesdays and Saturdays, entered the grounds by the gate on Thirty-fourth Street and passed along the avenue between the groups of pavilions to the door leading to the clinic amphitheatre. These cheerless, ill-equipped, wooden structures, hardly better than shacks, had been erected for the nervous patients, because no space remained available within the walls of the main hospital buildings. It is probable that these pavilions were never intended as permanent buildings, but must have been designed to meet an urgent need, at a time when the Guardians were economical or stingy. Every phase of chronic disease of the nervous system was represented in these wards, and the acute cases were numerous and interesting. No finer school could have been found for the study of this class of patients, especially as the most able neurologists of the City had terms of service in this department of the Hospital. One pavilion in each group was reserved for patients suffering from epilepsy. The attendants were few in number and chosen, as throughout the hospital, from available convalescent patients, or were temporary helpers who might leave us at any time. The Head Nurses corresponded with the same class as in the other wards of the Hospital. Among the patients, especially in the wards for epileptics, were many

who were on the border line between eccentricity and insanity. It was not an infrequent occurrence to transfer an uncertain case to the Department for the Insane, after systematized delusions had developed, and there was need for more secure and better organized means of restraint than we could supply. The epileptic patients required careful oversight; and yet the poor victims themselves were most willing to aid one another when seizures occurred. The diary has a reference to some of the peculiar denizens of the nervous wards, under the title and date

“FALSE LIVES.

February 17, 1884.

“Sunday morning. Rain and darkness. A dull, heavy day filled with suggestions of erysipelas, malaria, and numerous lung affections; filled too with far from cheerful thoughts of the unattainable. To disperse these we need only a few consecutive days, or even hours, of sunshine. Two weeks of dark and dismal days have favored the growth of gloom. All my patients have numerous new and unaccountable aches and pains. In my ward are several half insane persons of a greater or less degree of crankiness. One gentleman, Henry C—s, is badly deranged upon the subject of religion. His ideas are crude, but much resemble many of the primitive beliefs of several old races, as well as some of the ancient schools of philosophy. He thinks that men should so live as to worship the Great Cause, whose name he seldom mentions, speaking of God in a roundabout manner. He generally refers to the Deity in a long sentence which I have heard him repeat so often that the formula is stamped in my memory. I asked him to describe his idea of the Great Cause, and he answered thus, ‘The truest, purest, surest, most holiest and most powerful power of all powers. The principal power of all powers. The beginner and maker of all and of everything, visible and invisible, known and unknown, to all and to every one; whose

name we don't know, but I hope will know some day, as we meet on the way.'

"This morning he came to me as I was leaving the ward, having made my rounds, and said: 'You asked where the principal power of all powers lives. This morning while eating it came to my mind that he lives in the whole world, for you find life everywhere—the smallest ants and creeping things in the ground; and I don't think men ought to kill them for food—as killing sheep and bullocks—or for other reasons, for they are made by the principal power of all powers, that is Jesus Christ. I believe every man ought to have a wife. My father meant me for the priesthood, but I refused to be a priest for they don't marry.' He informed me, the other day, that his thoughtful and far-seeing parent 'had me cut for stone, so as to keep me from doing wrong when I got old.' I fear that this operation, whatever it may have been, has not been successful. Henry's religious and ethical sentiments are as noble as those of an Indian Buddhist, and his habits of life quite disgusting and depraved. When not prevented, he eats and drinks substances that are fit only for the drains and sewer. When asked why he does this, and when threatened with punishment, he replies that he does it for the honor of the principal power of all powers; that he made such substances, and that, therefore, they are not unclean.

"An old colored woman who resides in one corner of Ward II, Women's Pavilions, is very talkative. She says that she has always lived with the 'quality,' and refers with much scorn to certain 'colored gals and fat black women' with whom she must now associate, and who are always telling lies about her. Religious topics arouse her into a high state of hysterical excitement. The poor old lady is extravagantly fond of ginger cakes, and, the other morning, after asking me for a supply of these crisp and snappy delicacies, she cried aloud, 'I'm ready to go from Earth to Glory for they don't give me enough to eat!'

“Directly across the ward from this woman resides a white-haired, hollow-eyed, wild and cadaverous looking old Scotch lady who is very noisy and violent and uses the vilest language imaginable. She must be a relative of Rob Roy’s wife. Many trains of thought follow one another without rhyme or reason through her brain. I spent a dreary afternoon noting down her mutterings for Dr. M. If he can make any head or tail out of her talk, that will be of value to the science of medicine, it will be a remarkable feat of the imagination. For mere intellectual amusement I would recommend him to try a picture-puzzle, instead. Unfortunately the dear old lady was not in a profane mood last evening, and the reported monologue was quite commonplace and decent. I copied down a few of her interesting remarks,—‘He was born this side of Glasher and baptized at Douglass’ (mumble, mumble, mumble). ‘Father McElhone asked me why I didn’t sleep. I don’t sleep any because a priest and a bishop put their hands on my head at night.’ ‘He asked what was the prettiest place in Scotland, and I said, said I’ (mumble, mumble, mumble). ‘I don’t see, says he, how any woman could have picked up so much. She couldn’t have it, says I, if she hadn’t it to pick up.’ Deep and dangerous talk this! Almost as clear as Browning! This morning an old colored man, having only one eye, the other having been destroyed by some disease, came to me and announced that his name was William I—m, and that he was seventy years of age and born in Maryland. ‘I am the greatest grain-measurer in the City of Philadelphia,’ said he; ‘well known to all the prominent merchants years ago; have known all for the last thirty-five years. They have died and gone now, and their children coming up.’ According to his statement, I—m has a serpent lodged in the left iliac and hypogastric region. He slaps his abdomen, and the creature crawls and curls about. It has spun a web, he reports, which extends down along both legs to his feet and also up into his brain. It covers his whole

body. 'I'm webbed entirely in,' he says. 'I don't know whether I'll live through an operation, but I'll have it taken out. When I walk the web spins out and is just like a chain-ball. It won't let me go.' This snake eats all the man's food. 'He gits his share and that keeps him quiet. Whether I took it in drinking water, or how it got in, God knows, or why. People are so bad in this world!'

"So these people and many others, some better, some worse, live on in their fancies and false lives; one with his bosom serpent; one with her dream of ginger cakes and glory; one with his dark deceiver ever at hand to catch him off his guard; another with her mixed recollections, talking and muttering of things past, of old memories mingled together without order or reason, and the whole dreamy fabric of words mortared together with cursing and blasphemy."

#### "AN AFTERNOON WALK.

February 23, 1884.

"This month has contained thus far nineteen days of rain. One almost forgets that a shadow was ever cast, and the sun is becoming a mere thing of past history. However, yesterday afternoon the old illuminator did appear and forced a few feeble rays of light through the lead-colored clouds. V. and I took a walk out Darby Road. The day really was delightful, all the pleasanter for the long series of clouds and storms which had gone before. There was a gentle and suggestive sense of coming Springtime in the air, while everywhere the grass was bright green, and every road was wet and soft with the melting frost. Anywhere, but in the depressing neighborhood of Blockley and the lower reaches of the Schuylkill, the voice of the turtle would have been heard distinctly had one been about and possessed of vocal powers. Yet, in spite of the feeble February sunshine, it was rather a grey day and a grey land through which we walked. Our way took us past several

Church Homes, and finally turned down a long lane, near the Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, towards the River, which we soon reached. It was a dreary spot. The clouds had gathered again, and under a dead, heavy grey sky, the landscape itself seemed grey of many varying dull shades, with no bright bits of coloring to relieve the monotony. Here the river is almost on a level with its banks, and on either side of the stream extend long stretches of marsh land, white at this time of the year and covered with scant, tall, dried grass over which a moist, chilly wind was blowing from the southward. Along our side of the water stood huge oil tanks, and close by were the low, unsightly sheds and furnaces of several refineries. For a broad space about them the ground was saturated black and dank with crude oil. The river itself, bordered by low, scrubby willow trees, was of a greyish yellow tint flecked with whitecaps over its wind-ruffled surface. Across the wide river low-lying marsh lands stretched away, from the flat level of which tall chimneys of oil works rose here and there, and, at a distance, two huge grain elevators loomed aloft, their slate-grey roofs and sides standing out clearly against the lighter grey of the lowering sky. Far off across the marshes could be seen the tall, bare masts and yardarms of several bark-rigged ships lying at anchor in the Delaware. Near by, moored to a wharf, were two large vessels being loaded with blue-colored barrels of petroleum. We walked on, going down a railroad track towards the City. On our right we passed a large, handsome mansion, built in English-manor style, which stood on a knoll above the river and its marshes, and was almost surrounded by trees. Through these we caught glimpses of the building as we passed. Its windows were all closed and boarded up. In many places plastering had fallen from the stuccoed walls. Evidently the place had been shut up and deserted long ago, for young trees had sprouted up thickly in what had once been a well-kept grove, which was now dense with tall under-



brush and tangled thickets. As if the ghostly and uninviting aspect of the place were not sufficient to warn off visitors, a large sign had been placed facing the railroad, which threatened all the law's penalties upon any one who ventured within the high, briar-covered stone walls enclosing the estate. We trespassed not, but I fancy that within the house were large empty rooms; perhaps in some the remains of old furniture, rolls of worn-out carpeting, broken china, all the débris left behind in a place which had once been a home. Even old Blockley wore a cheerful aspect, when I returned to it with a vision of this deserted mansion in my mind.

"I—m, the man who imagines that a serpent is within him, told me this morning that I might as well stop giving him medicine; for although he confessed to feeling better, he said of the snake: 'It is something which neither you nor your forefathers ever saw. It was put on me by God, and I would not have it taken away. Barnum, Sir!' he said, striking his chest, while he straightened up and glared wildly with his one and only eye, 'Barnum, to-day, would give a thousand dollars for my exhibition in a show!' Poor William is fast working himself into a candidate for admission to our associated institution across the great courtyard, where the insane have their habitation."

"RELAXATION.

March 2, 1884.

"The other evening, Dr. R. came into the room. I had out my fiddle, and V. and he endeavored to sing while I picked out an accompaniment. As a performance, although satisfactory to us, it was not entirely a success, and was most unfavorably received by our colleagues in the adjoining billiard room. Later in the evening we joined the billiard players in the great entry, together with others of the staff just back from hospital duty, and improvised a stag ball. I stood on a chair and fiddled waltzes while R. and V. and M. and the others

gallivanted around over the floor, sometimes in couples, or each one singly embracing a chair for a partner. These dances were followed by a grand quadrille, in which, as the fiddler took part, we had no more effective music than the rhythm of our heavy tread. Action was strong and the figures mixed, while a general din of shouting kept up the enthusiasm. This soon resolved itself into a game of leapfrog. Up and down the long hall we went. It was no joke to go over the backs of the six-footers, but it was still less of one when they went over your own. Leapfrog suggested a contest in running and jumping. Two piles of tables and chairs were placed, one on either side of the entry. The narrow strip of carpeting that adorns the centre of our entry was taken up and stretched across the hall between the piles of furniture. This was the line, and was cleared by a running jump, after which it would be placed higher and the contest continued. Tiring of this, we chose sides for a rope-pull, using the dear old carpet for a rope; and so the evening ended with two rounds of a tug-of-war, in which, of course, victory was claimed by both sides. It is this sort of gentle, intellectual amusement that excites the suspicions of our new Superintendent, Mr. S. A more wholesome and yet sober group of young fellows never served on a Blockley resident staff, but Mr. S. is sure that the noise that occasionally disturbs the evening hours and is wafted across the great courtyard to the Front, where he and his family reside, is the din that attends an orgy, and he doubts the morality of suffering it longer."

In the days of the diary the resident staff of Blockley consisted of eleven men and one woman. The Staff of 1883-4 was quite independent in respect to obligations associated with appointment, as all of its members had won their places by the highest averages in a competitive examination. As a result of this method of choice the Hospital had obtained an

unusually efficient and conscientious group of young men. The one lonely woman was a graduate of the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, and was held in great respect by her male colleagues. As she was excused from certain departments of the hospital work, in which it would have been quite unfit for a woman to serve, a slight excess of labor was thrown on the eleven men of the Staff. They took themselves and their work quite seriously, but had that buoyancy of disposition common to the American college man. The writer could not have found a more congenial, self-respecting, and well-mannered group of associates than were his colleagues on the staff of his term. Our quarters were in the central building of the Women's Outwards, the Department of the Almshouse for Women. We occupied rooms opening on a wide hall, on the third story of this building, and were assigned rooms in couples. The woman physician had a little room at the extreme end of our hall, and must have been rather astonished and somewhat annoyed at the noise made by her professional brothers, when this hall served as a football field or space for track athletics or boxing. One room of the series was unoccupied, and in this we had a billiard table which was rented and paid for by subscription collected from the members of the staff. The rooms were spacious, with very high ceilings and each room had one large window so high above the floor that a platform was built, a sort of dais, beneath it, so that the occupants of the room could be seated and yet look out upon the external world. Here the writer and his genial roommate, Dr. V., lived on terms of cordial intimacy. Dr. V. was a tall, well-built, soldierly-looking man, rather impulsive, not always well-balanced in his moods and tenses of self-control, but warm-hearted and loyal to his friends. One afternoon, the writer returned to his room, after some duty in the wards, and saw his roommate standing erect at the window, his broad straight back presented to the interior of the apartment, and his face

to the rather dreary outlook over weed-covered fields and vacant lots. It was not apparent what train of thought passed through Dr. V.'s mind; perhaps longings for the Springtime, when he was to go forth into the wide, wide world, free to establish a private practice. At all events, with hands thrust deep in the wide pockets of his uniform coat, head erect, and face to the world, he was singing in a thoughtful but most expressive manner this song,—

“I'm old and helpless and feeble,  
 The days of my youth have gone by.  
 So it's over the hill to the Poorhouse;  
 I'll wander alone there to die.”

The contrast between that big, well-built mass of human energy and the song of despair was most amusing. And yet, I think that we all of us felt a depression of mood, that came as waves over our youthful spirits, during those twelve months among the associations of old Blockley. From the central building in which our rooms were placed, two long extensions ran east and west. The lowest stories were occupied by the old women paupers. In the upper story, or attic, the local title for which was “Dandy Hall,” were the women awaiting confinement in the obstetrical wards, which also occupied other portions of this same floor. In those days puerperal fever was so common in Blockley, that we had a ward especially devoted to the victims of this infection. Its beds were always occupied. Asepsis was almost unknown. The writer remembers that when it became his turn to serve in the obstetrical wards, it was agreed between Dr. M., his colleague, and himself, that during their term of this service they would discard their old hospital uniforms, wear civilian dress that had never been used about the hospital, remain away from the main hospital itself as much as possible, and use the utmost cleanliness in all operative work connected with their service. We had no

case of puerperal fever during our term of service. Yet this was partly a coincidence or good luck; for the walls, floors, and furniture of those old rooms must have been loaded with streptococci, staphylococci, pneumococci, and all the noble army of the bacillus gens. Our only efficient nurse was a middle-aged woman who had large experience in midwifery. She was a small, lightly-built, and most energetic individual, quick in all her movements, prompt in decision and in action. Her practical knowledge of her subject was superior to our theoretical training, however much more scientific the latter may have been. We could depend upon her to call us from our sleep to active service not one moment sooner than the necessities of the moment required, but when that call came there was to be no delay. Her manner towards us was a quaint combination of motherly interest, good-natured amusement, and professional respect. It was fortunate for us, as well as for the patients, that she was at hand, especially during the early days of a change of service and the incoming of new and inexperienced doctors. Most of our patients were primiparæ, women with their first children, young, ignorant, without any self-control, sometimes with instincts and manners like savages. Of course very few of them were married. In rare instances, the mothers manifested a real and lasting interest in their children, but usually the feeling was an evanescent, physiological, maternal instinct, not as deep or as serious as a cat would feel for its kittens, or a cow for its calf. Rarely would the mother care to give a name to the unwelcome offspring. As some name had to accompany our report of a birth made to the Bureau of Health, the resident physicians gave such children any names that a passing mood might suggest, and some of these young citizens received as remarkable names as were ever given to a human being. Fortunately such titles were not legally binding, and a respectable name could be bestowed at the time of the child's christening.

Below our quarters extended a series of rooms and wards for the women paupers. Most of the wards were great square rooms in which the beds were placed around the walls at intervals, in corners, and through the center. A few favored souls obtained "cubbies." These were cell-like spaces of a few feet square, large enough to contain a bed, a small table, and a chair. The occupant of a "cubbie" was invariably a denizen of the ward, who had proved her right to consideration by genial manners, cleanly habits, and a cheerful observance of all the rules and regulations of the house. Such women adorned their small cells with ornaments and pictures chance or good fortune might bring them, and took as much pride in their narrow dwellings as a Queen in her castle.

The diary has a reference to the Insane Department. This was distinct from the general hospital and had a medical staff of its own. We were quite free, however, to visit its wards and grounds whenever we desired.

#### "THE INFERNO.

March 4, 1884.

"I went with V., yesterday afternoon, through the Insane side. It was something like a descent to Purgatory, if not lower, after the Virgil-Dante fashion. There, in large, square, bare, but sunny rooms, sitting on wooden benches about the walls or wandering restlessly up and down, were the mad inmates. The months pass and seasons change but no change comes to them. During the day, when not out of doors, they are kept in large 'day rooms.' At night each has a room to himself or herself, except the very quiet ones, who are kept in general wards. Each one has his peculiar set of delusions concerning which many will converse freely, but others are very reticent. Each seems to retire into a little world of his own, a false, dream-world, real only to himself. One man, with hands firmly fastened in a muffler which confined his

arms, strode softly up and down one side of a room, every movement filled with a suppressed energy. His restless eyes saw everything, and glared with a baleful look. He seemed to be waiting, waiting. When the release came, a very devil would be loose; or, on the other hand, his evil spirit would be tamed and in subjection. In several cells, into which we looked through small circular windows, were raving maniacs, some yelping like dogs, one apparently in a kind of wicked ecstasy. The walls of these cells were padded. Scattered throughout the various rooms and in the grounds, I saw many of my old patients whom we had transferred from the nervous wards. Michael R. was there. He seemed very glad to see me. I—m, the snake man, was in the same room. He had been there but a few days only, and expressed himself as contented with his new quarters. He shook hands with me warmly, and, having thanked me for my attention to him, proceeded to bestow upon me a very formal blessing. He told me that he was now a prophet, and that he controlled the winds with his right hand and the earth's motions with his left foot. From this it is evident that I—m is rising in social importance, getting quite a little confidence in himself, and developing a sort of universal influence. In another room I met Henry C—s. He did not remember me, but was still willing to talk about the principal power of all powers. At least three of my old acquaintances were wandering about, and conversed with me. It was a strange experience, like crossing over into another world; for the inmates there are almost dead to this one. The poor fellows I had known will never again be able to go beyond the high walls. They live shut out from the great active present, nursing their strange delusions. Like ghosts they seem, wandering along the Stygian banks after crossing the dark waves in Charon's boat. And it was odd to think while in these halls and rooms, high-walled courtyards, or open plaza, that, just over the Schuylkill River, men are working at their busy occu-

pations, little knowing that on this bank Julius Caesar still lives; that Napoleon plots for universal conquest; Elizabeth envies Mary Stuart; Washington still directs the affairs of State; that a poor, deranged, long-haired and bearded individual impersonates Jesus Christ. Comparatively few have assumed these mighty personalities, but everywhere are busy and addled brains filled with intense personal interest. That man is awaiting a great fortune. He has been wronged, but the property will yet be his. There is a man who has committed some great crime. He will not talk of it, but he can never be pardoned. That man is immensely rich. He owns the United States Navy. His mouth is made of gold and all his teeth are silver. One hundred mints cannot contain his wealth. 'Who gave you these things?' you ask. 'Upstairs,' he replies, and points skywards. Here comes a man behind whom the Prince of the Powers of the Air is gliding. Into his ear day and night the Evil One is whispering, but the possessed man will not tell what the demon says to him. That woman, over there, talks with invisible spirits which tell her of celestial things. Her soul is borne far above the earth and soars into immeasurable regions of space.

"The evening shadows were falling over Blockley, as V. and I passed out through the arched gateway in the high stone wall that separates the insane side from the great central quadrangle. Across the courtyard, against the grey front of the general hospital, a rosy glow was cast by the setting sun. But the madhouse was in deep shade, except where the reddish sunlight gleamed through windows opposite to others facing westward. These were lighted up, like great eyes, with a strange and lurid light, an emblem of the unhappy, false lives that burned fitfully, wildly, faintly, within the long grey walls."

During the course of that winter in Blockley, McL. and the diary man, with Dr. H. of the Insane Department, rendered



the music for the balls given for the insane patients. These occurred very infrequently, but may have brightened up the dull routine of life in that cheerless department of Blockley. McL. was a finished performer on the violin. The diary man could only fiddle. Dr. H. played the piano. And the poor, crazy people danced! It was a weird spectacle, this festive occasion, when the floor was occupied by the mentally deranged men and women of Blockley. Most of the patients sat quietly on the benches placed along the sides of the large hall. Others, however, were quite eager to foot it merrily through the central open space, in the glare of the lights, and to the music of our making. Always at a definite hour, on these evenings, Dr. H. started a doleful march, and this was the signal for the close of the ball and the retirement to wards or bedrooms. It was always the same melancholy recessional that was rendered on the piano. I do not know who was guilty of its composition. It was fit for a funeral. V. was so fascinated with its gloomy measures that he often asked me to play it to him on my fiddle, and to this day there are times when bits and snatches of it most unexpectedly recur to my mind, bringing a sense of sadness that I cannot understand, until the associations of the music call up voices from an almost forgotten past, and the lights and shadows of other days.

“ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE.

March 6, 1884.

“Yesterday afternoon I felt sleepy. There was nothing unusual about this fact. The afternoons here, unless there be ambulance work, receiving ward, photography, a bad case, or clinical notes to write, are apt to be conducive to slumber. But the peculiarity about this afternoon was that Susan, our useful, middle-aged, calm and experienced woman servant, with numerous gossips, was seated in her room adjoining mine. The Irish voices of herself and guests, never very subdued, seemed unusually loud.

“‘Yis,’ some one said, ‘she was very unfort’nit. The young feller hain’t bin heard on agin.’

“‘Well!’ remarked Susan, ‘she wasn’t like to thim bould things thet has more’n one child. The fust one don’t so much matter,—’ (a chorus here from the guests of ‘Oh, no! Divil a bit!’). ‘It’s a misfortune, or the likes,’ continued Susan, ‘but after the woman knows what it means there’s no excuse!’

“This sentiment met with warm and hearty approval. The idea seemed to be that any woman, in the daily experiences that make up life, might become the mother of her first and illegitimate child. That was a ‘*misfortune*’; nothing more. Woe to the reputation of any woman, however, who repeated the offense. For her there was no excuse. As I suspect that most of the company present had been unfortunate in respect to this ‘*misfortune*,’ their ideas of virtue were apt to rest on a broad and charitable foundation. Yet the conversation was interesting as an indication of the standard of morality of the Blockley class. It is possible that it prevails, also, among a large body of individuals who live in the rough and tumble of uncultured and laborious lives.

“While I had charge of the Erysipelas wards, in which, also, cases of any suspected contagious disease were kept, a young woman was brought in who was suspected of having scarlatina. This she did not have, but, as the patient was weak, feeble, anæmic, and very wretched, I kept her in the ward and gradually built up her weakened condition with the best food I could get, together with quinine and iron and attention to her general health. She was most anxious to get well, on account of a poor, little, sickly baby which she had added to the world’s population only a few months before. At this time, there was only one other patient in that ward. This one was an old hag from the street. The young woman, although poverty-stricken, was married and respectable. The old one certainly had never stood before the marriage altar, and was

born disreputable. Such a congenital condition seems quite possible from my observations here. One morning, I asked the young woman how many children she had had. 'Six,' she answered. The old hag, who had been listening, suddenly groaned aloud, and exclaimed in tones of heartfelt indignation, 'Arrah, thin! and how can *inny* woman be so *keerless!*'"

"INCONVENIENT PHILANTHROPY.

March 9, 1884.

"While walking along the hospital front, on Vintage Avenue, yesterday, I met two highly excited, elderly, widow-looking women, who flew at me with the information that 'That man,' pointing to a tall, rather well-dressed individual who was in advance of me, that 'That man had a holt on a young baby done up in brown paper!' Telling the ladies to calm themselves, and to feel no surprise whatever at a little thing like that, as such objects might be picked up at any moment about here, I went on to the House Agent's office. The tall gentleman had just entered. He bowed pleasantly to the assembled officials and subalterns, and said in rather a chippy way, 'I found this little object on a bridge near here; and, as it seemed to have no owner, I thought I would bring it over.' He held out the 'little object,' which was in reality an undeveloped and evidently still-born child. Perfect silence reigned as he held out the bundle, and every one looked at it critically. Finally some one asked, 'Well, what are you going to do with it?' A rather startled look broke over the man's face, and he said, 'Why, sir! Why, I thought I would leave it here! I think,— I thought,—well, the fact is,—'

"'No, *sir*,' emphatically said the doorkeeper, 'we don't take no dead ones in *this* place.'

"Now for the first time the dreadful possibilities of the situation seemed to dawn upon the unfortunate man. 'But, my dear sir!' he sputtered, 'what in Heaven's name shall I do with

it? I saw a crowd of people looking at something. It turned out to be this. So I picked it up and brought it along. No one else,' he added, with a look of injured innocence, 'no one else would touch it.'

"It would a been a d—d sight more convenient for you if you'd done like no one else,' coolly remarked the doorkeeper.

"If I can't leave the thing here,' cried the now thoroughly wretched man, 'where can I dispose of it? I can't walk in the street with *this*. I can't throw it away, for fear of suspicions being attached to *me*. I can't take it home. I don't dare to go to a police station, lest unpleasant consequences result.'

"In his agitation he strode up and down the room gesticulating with one hand, while, in the other, he held the filthy bundle stiffly off from his side.

"This is a dreadful situation,' he muttered. 'Can't you advise me?'

"Don't know,' said the uncompromising doorkeeper. 'Better take it to the police. Can't do nothing for you *here!*'

"Once more into the street went the haunted man. Later I heard that he met the Warden near the hospital, and tried as a last resort to persuade that ever amiable but diplomatic man to hold the bundle 'just for a moment.' He was last seen walking up Thirty-fourth Street with the 'little object' swinging in time to his rapid steps. Who knows? Perhaps he is still striding on; afraid to leave his burden; afraid to remain with it; fearing to take it home; unable to rid himself of his dreadful load, while every moment the horror is deepening and the situation growing more desperate. It is to be hoped that he fell into the hands of a sympathetic policeman, and is now free of his bundle and still possessed of his reason."

"ON DUTY AT THE SEVENTH STREET OFFICE.

March 22, 1884.

"It was a very rainy morning, and consequently we expected

a rather larger delegation of maimed, halt, and blind, than have of late been presenting themselves as objects for our consideration. The Board, composed of the House Agent and myself, came to order at half past ten o'clock.

"Case 1. An old soldier; fought for his country; entitled therefore to special notice; paralyzed; destitute condition; poor but most respectable; never expected to come to this. So much for his own story and opinion of himself. Now, in fact, he turned out to be a case of old, long-standing fracture of the thigh, a regular old bumner. Finding that the paralysis dodge would not work, he assumes a very gentle manner, as one using careful management over something that might go off suddenly and throw him out, but which he purposes to manipulate by tact. His manner was a kind of apologetic superiority. With an air of profound secrecy he slides his hand deep into an inside pocket of his long, greasy, dank, and sodden overcoat. Eyeing me while thus engaged, he says, 'I'll show you something.' He speaks almost tenderly. I'm a wilful child. He will reason with my juvenile prejudice and, incidentally, he will play his trump card. Having fumbled about for a moment, he slowly draws out his hand as though it held something almost sacred. It is out at last. With a whispered, 'Look at that!' he presents to my gaze a six-ounce bottle containing a very closely packed and uncomfortable-looking *tapeworm*. In a husky voice he says, 'The head remains!' But no! It is surely a pity to disappoint such ingenuity, but the head will not at present be removed; at least not at Blockley.

"Case 2. Some one is slowly stumping up the stairs. Slowly, painfully, one foot dragged after the other. Gradually a man's head emerges above the landing, and soon the whole total wreck stands tottering before me.

"'What's the matter, are you sick?' 'Well (a long gasp), if I *ain't* sick, there ain't nobody *lives*. I'm just knocking about.

I've no place, no place. I've lost my common senses and I'm near a loony!' He speaks in a weak, low, spiritless tone, and gives an unexpected emphatic drawl on certain words. 'I ain't bin so bad 'til last night,' he continues. 'Then I fell on me back, and the spine of me back is broke.' Mr. B., the House Agent, talks some time with him in regard to his means of support. 'I didn't take a stitch of clothes off me, I may say, since Christmas,' he announces in a sort of general and indefinite way. In a final and overwhelming burst of despair, the old man moans out, 'Ach, the spine of me back is gone and I hain't got a tooth in me head!'

"I think that this last wail broke down our stony hearts, for we gave the old fellow a ticket of admission. He had nothing the matter with him worse than senile asthenia. However, when I catch that, perhaps I shall realize that the old wanderer had sufficient reason for asking the City's charity.

"Case 3 is a youngish man, red-haired, with red, blood-shot eyes, unsteady hand, flushed face, and all the other unmistakable signs of a long debauch. The whole affair seems a great joke to him, quite amusing indeed. He has a brisk, easy, genial air, and tells his tale as one would a first-class story.

"'Well, Doctor,' says he, 'I'll just tell you! When I take a breath a pain takes me right through the chest; and the fact is, Doctor, I've got something else' (a sweet smile comes over his face). 'Yes, I've been drinking, and my friends put me out this morning. I've just raised Hell! The neighbors all thought the very Devil was loose. My friends put me out, and I want to get a little shelter. I've been in bed since Paddy's Day.'

"I strongly intimate to Mr. B. that the gentleman is not a very serious case. 'Yes, Doctor,' says the man reproachfully, 'I *am* sick and I've got a sore *throat*.' He receives an order upon the district doctor. His disappointment is great, but he

finally yields gracefully and accepts the situation. At Seventh Street we are ever mindful that our colleagues do not excuse any errors that the man on duty may make in admitting unimportant and uninteresting cases. It is fully understood among us that we should relegate such to the district physicians of the City. These latter can always order that a patient be admitted to the hospital, if they find that such necessity develops.

"Case 4 was a decent, respectable looking woman, but with terribly dirty hands, who suffered from rheumatism. 'I got some horse liniment to rub with but it don't do no good. I've been sick such a long time, I've run short of funds; can't do no work. Here's a purscription some one gave me. I don't know if it would do any good?' I copied the 'purscription' for the use of the profession in general.

10 cents worth of spiruts of juniper.

5 cents worth of oil of terpene (turpentine?).

10 cents wurth of spiruts of wine.

I told the woman that, to me, it appeared that she had shown rare good judgment in restraining any impulse to invest twenty-five cents worth of capital in this speculation. We sent her to the hospital.

"Case 5. A tall, worn-out-looking woman with a child in her arms. She wore an old black velvet hat with a discouraged-looking, bedraggled ostrich feather hanging from the back. A blue and black plaid shawl encased her thin shoulders. The woman works out in situations where she can take the child with her. She has no place in which to leave it. Her husband went to sea, and has not been heard of for many months. She stayed the previous night at the Almshouse among the 'Casuals.' 'I don't like to go there at all. Of course I have to go somewhere.' 'This is on account of the child, who is ill. 'Yes, I was over there before. I was there when the child was four days

old. I had no home. No, I don't want to stay long.' The two waifs, mother and child, receive their tickets of admission.

"Case 6. A sad-faced, desolate-looking woman. Her story is a short one. 'My husband gave me the Disease.' We admit her.

"Case 7. A perfect, splendid tartar, a man-killer! Perhaps, too, a loony, as the old man said of himself. Her dress is covered and eclipsed beneath a fiery red shawl. A bonnet perfectly sublime in its disregard of all arrangement and order adorns her head, and she brandishes an explosive-looking cotton umbrella. Her son is in the insane department, and surely she should be keeping him company. She has merely dropped into the office, this morning, to ease her mind and ventilate her opinions. Her complaint is that her son is ill treated by Dr. R., the chief physician of that department. Her language is torrential, and her frankly insulting characterizations of the dignified Dr. R. and the stately and courteous Chairman of the Hospital Committee of the Board were amusing in their absolute untruth, and want of proportion even as good lies. The gesticulations with the dangerous umbrella were particularly telling. 'That old bald-headed d—l R.! goes around among the women like an Irish rooster! Playing checkers when he ought to be at his duty. D—d old fool! I'll make it hot for him before Wednesday! Just look at my arm! Twisted all about in the Poorhouse! Spittin' up blood? I've been spittin' it up ever since. Pat Dailey's first cousin can tell the same thing.' Mr. Patrick Dailey was one of the Guardians of the Poor. 'G—d! I'd die before I'd go to the Poorhouse! They're giving them soup in the Insane there on Fridays. Ha! Ha! they've changed fish for flesh! I'm wishin' I'd meet Pat Dailey here. I'd settle things. They're a dirty mean set, that committee with the old bloat H., the whiskey-head!'

"Other applicants came up, the usual round of real deserving sufferers and the shams; the latter often hard to recognize



from the worthy, even as the tares look like the wheat. Bitter stories of want and sickness, we hear, in which the poor souls struggle on a little longer that they may keep away from the Almshouse. Old men, young weak women; stained, battered, broken! Like ghosts they come from haunts of vice, filth, disease; yet still clinging to the old landmarks, until, at last, deserted, sick or dying, absolutely without hope in life, they enter at our gate and join the nameless throng who pass through this to find a pauper's home. To many of them it is indeed, home, and its kind nurses are the truest friends of their wretched, friendless lives. But with the tragic picture, there is much, too, of comedy at the Seventh Street gate; and without doubt one can hear more clever lying in two hours there, than at a convention of promoters of the gold brick business."

"DOWN IN THE SLUMS.

March 30, 1884.

"The nearer we approached St. Mary's Street, the more evident became the fact that a large portion of Philadelphia's citizens found some means of living that obviated sweating of the brows. The street itself is narrow, scarce wide enough for two wagons to pass. The houses on either side are of the hovel variety, built of wood, two stories in height, and the fronts slant as though the scrawny buildings were about to collapse upon their miserable inmates. Some buildings are of brick, the doors reached by wooden stoops. Most of the doors and windows, being open, reveal long vistas into darkness with smoke and dirt begrimed walls, or into filthy dens called rooms. That tall, white-fronted building, on the left, evidently was once a church. Like all the surrounding dwellings it is covered with foul stains and crumbling to a near destruction. As we pass the 'Ram Cat,' a large tenement inhabited by blacks and whites and containing I am afraid to say how many ledgers, we become objects of interest to the entire colony. Bleary-

eyed, besotted women of both colors gaze at us from the windows. They lean far out from upper stories, and call to one another above and below and across the narrow street to friends in opposite houses. Uncanny, deformed, and unwholesome-looking children amble to the gutter's edge and make uncouth gestures at us as we pass. Evil-faced things in men's clothing creep along by the walls and glare at us with stupid, brutish eyes. The street is rank with filth which is strewn everywhere. Through the gutters, which are so full that they overflow their channels, moves a sluggish mass of thick, opaque fluid in which floats decaying animal and vegetable matter. The very ground seems alive with humanity. It pours up out of dark cellars, out of narrow courts. The houses on either side are literally packed and swarming with mankind. The ambulance stops before No.—, a miserable, filthy shanty between which and the adjoining house a narrow, low-arched alley runs to some region beyond. Up this way I go, till, arriving at a still more unsightly hole at the rear of the main house, I knock. The room was very small and dark. Its one small window was tightly closed. A stove occupied the space beneath a crowded shelf which served as a mantle. On this shelf was a varied collection of religious emblems, dirty articles of apparel, and cracked and broken plates filled with half-eaten, greasy-looking food. The stove was without fire and plentifully besprinkled with stains from tobacco juice, as were also the walls and floor. On the latter was a perfect covering of dirt, ashes, débris of all kinds, tramped down into a species of matting, so that the original boards could scarcely be distinguished. A table upon which reposed a miscellaneous mass of everything, shoes, combs, rags, and paper, occupied one corner of the room, and along the same side were heaps of rags and indistinguishable objects in a vague mass of blackness. In another corner was a large bed upon which lay an old, debauched, drunken and besotted individual, once a man and

a blacksmith, now 'a fit subject for the Almshouse.' Two young, ill favored, hangdog-looking men, both of whom will probably be jailed or hung in the course of time and justice, lounged about the room in company with a young woman. The latter was quite bedraggled in appearance and although, like most of the women of this neighborhood, she was probably common property of all the men, had a not unpleasant face, and her voice had in it almost a tone of refinement. This tone was noticeable, for she repeated many of the men's remarks immediately after them, and thus produced a startling contrast, although merely a refrain to what they said. They were told to make the old man ready for his journey across town, and this was soon accomplished. 'Getting ready' consisted of investing the legs of the aged, whiskey-wrecked, and retired blacksmith in a pair of trousers that for grease-spots and stains were most remarkable and noteworthy. The old man expressed some disgust and disapproval of what his heirs were doing for his comfort, but being told to 'Shut up,' that 'It's too late to kick up a row now,' he submitted. The girl finally wrapped him up in a filthy sheet. This shrouding of the patient in a sheet was evidently an attempt at gentility, and did not meet with the approval of the two sons. However, the girl remarked in her clear, sweet voice, that 'It is a shame to send father out uncovered.' Supported by his two promising-looking sons, while I bore up his legs, the old fellow was lifted from his bed and carried to the street. What would have seemed to me most peculiar, had I not become accustomed to the ways and manners of the Blockley class, was the utter indifference these people displayed to all the open filthiness of their surroundings. They had no thought of shame that I should see that filth-covered bed, or the dirt about the room and on themselves. It was all a part of their everyday life. They had never been clean, and never desired to cultivate the state of cleanliness. By the time that we reached the street

a great crowd had collected and stood about the ambulance, which had been backed up to the narrow entrance to the court. The crowd was delighted and greatly impressed by the corpse-like appearance of our burden, and several remarks were made as to the strong probability that the man was dead. 'Ah, there's mony a dead un car'ed out there!' remarked an old hag, as we raised the patient into the ambulance.

"St. Mary's and Alaska Streets, although very short, must contain as many inhabitants as any ordinary street of several times their proportions; for the district all about seems to open into them like sewers and drains into wider conduits. The alley into which I went was a sort of side current, and I noticed many others that were like it."

"DOLCE FAR NIENTE."

May 14, 1884.

"Spring, indeed Summer, has come; and, with the appearance of grass and leaves and birds, the old pauper inmates of this institution crawl forth into the sunlight. Every morning the old women can be seen along the front of their building, sitting in groups upon the cellar windows or beneath the trees. Each group consists, I imagine, of intimate friends who together form distinct social circles from which all outsiders are rigidly excluded, and each little coterie seems always to occupy the same especial locality. To these places they bring their cans of tea, left over from breakfast, and there they sit until dinner time. One would suppose that they would knit or sew or do something by which the time would be occupied; but no, there they remain in absolute *dolce far niente*, mumbling and gossiping together. Professor P. said that a friend of his, when a resident physician here, overheard two old crones talking together. I've heard similar conversations myself. 'Well,' drawled one, and paused to whiff twice at her pipe, 'when I was born I was that small that they could set me in a pint cup.'

“Her friend assumed a listless air of interest, and inquired, ‘And did you live?’ ‘Yes!’ replied the first, with an air of conviction, as though announcing a weighty fact, ‘I *lived* and I done *well!*’ This exemplifies the sort of pleasant conversation carried on between the old ladies of Blockley.”

“CO-LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD, WHO WORKED AND  
SLEPT AND STARVED TOGETHER.

May 20, 1884.

“V. has gone home for a week, in order to look for a place in which to lay his head after his term at Blockley expires. And our terms are fast expiring at Blockley for all of us. R. and P. both leave at the end of this month, V. in July, and I shall follow at the end of August. Six new men have already arrived; or rather five new men and one new woman. The year has been a delightful one in many respects, especially in the daily intercourse of the members of our resident staff. We have been a united family and free from domestic jars; no one exactly remarkable for brains yet no one really dull. V., my roommate, is a most amiable fellow, impulsive, capable of bursts of energy but not steadily energetic; prone to excitable periods of high spirits, with intervals of much depression; easily encouraged and easily discouraged. P—lps is the bright member of the group, even-tempered, always the same, full of fun, a good story-teller. M., my present colleague in the obstetrical wards, is the scholar of the staff, well-read in medicine and up to date in all theories. He is a handsome man, with genial manners, but disposed to be argumentative and dogmatic. If his opinion differs from yours, he will tell you just how and why you are entirely in the wrong, and will instruct you in the only right way, which is his own, and is derived directly from the last author whom he has read on the subject under discussion. His roommate, R., is tall, straight as an arrow, and with breadth of shoulders to correspond with his height.

He is long limbed and lean, belongs to an old Virginia family, and has the best traits of the Southern character. Cool-headed as a prize fighter, he is the last man any one would care to arouse pugnaciously. He has a fund of negro songs and stories, and, although not talkative except among friends, he is quick to see the ridiculous side of a situation. L. is another Southerner, coming from South Carolina. In years, he is the oldest member of our staff. There are many traditions about him, one of which is that he served in the Confederate heavy artillery during the Civil War. He is full of fun and good nature and has the air of a man who has seen much of the world. His hearty laugh is a pleasure to hear and always rings out at the first hint of anything amusing. P—k—I is the typical ladies' man of the staff. C., a rather elderly member of our group, is from Barbados. He is a cynic, a doubter, a fault-finder, always searching for the truth and finding it not. He has read much and can be entertaining and agreeable, especially as he has a certain dry, Scotch-like sense of humor. H. and S. and M—ch are all agreeable in their way, and take their places in our harmonious circle. McL., the Hospital Warden, is a young, fine-looking man, with black, rather inscrutable eyes. He is a good violinist. He lives and moves in a mist of diplomacy of the Machiavellian type. No one ever heard him refuse any request directly. His assurance that the matter will be 'attended to at once' means that nothing will be done. He is more like us, than as a superior officer, and we never think of him otherwise than as a pleasant companion upon whom we can shake off any unpleasant matter, with the assurance that, although it may not end in accomplishment, still it is off our hands and will not greatly burden his. Dr. Mary R. is respected and liked by all of us but is somewhat apart from our masculine circle.

"So much for the individuals. Collectively we are said to be the most efficient resident staff that Blockley has possessed,

and have proved the advantages of a competitive examination as a test for appointment over the old system of political or personal influence. We are quite willing to accept the good opinion of the authorities of the Hospital in that same cordial and frank spirit that was displayed by Mr. Dandy Jim, that gentleman of color, a resident of South Carolina, who being highly complimented upon his personal appearance, reported that

“‘I looked in the glass and I found it so.  
Just as Massa told me, oh!’

“It is a peculiar sort of life that we lead together, and one which could be experienced nowhere else than in such a place as Blockley. Many jolly evenings have we passed meeting haphazard in one another’s rooms or in the billiard parlor. Our conversation is not always directed in strictly scientific channels. In the freedom of friendly intercourse much is expressed and related that would cause some astonishment in a community of very conventional or pious people. But all of this is interspersed with talk of peculiar or interesting cases in our wards, and discussions as to their etiology and treatment. In the daily, almost hourly, contact with one another, we have learned of each other’s characters, of all our weak points. Then, in our isolated positions, we are engaged in common work and interested in the same subjects. It is much like college life, yet differs from the latter in this very fact of a common occupation. We have been a united family, not one row breaking in on our general comfort. We are far from being a mutual admiration society, however, for I imagine that we all see each other’s faults although somewhat near-sighted as to our own. But this very knowledge causes us to avoid dangerous ground, or to accept the shock good-naturedly when we do touch, or are touched, upon tender spots. All this will soon be over and we shall separate far and wide, as

hundreds of other residents have done before us, while new men come in to fill the vacant posts. But I believe that, with the experience of practice and insight into human character gained in our everyday work, we shall carry away also the unseen, almost unfelt, influence of each other's lives, and shall look back upon our Blockley days with as much satisfaction for the experiences and friendships as for the opportunities for medical training."

"OUT AFTER GAME.

June 6, 1884.

"The afternoon suggested August in temperature, but only June could produce such a blue sky and foliage of such fresh and vivid green. Having loaded two holders with plates, I tucked my tripod under my arm and stalked forth after game. Game there was in plenty. All along the outwards front, lolling lazily under the shade of trees or walls, or strolling along the shadow covered walks, the old outwards offered all that could be wished for in the way of ragged picturesqueness. Nor was the usual requisite amount of filth wanting to make the subjects well-nigh perfect. Passing through the gateway into the Hospital yard, I came upon a different class of humanity yet of about the same grade. This was younger stock. A few more years and these younger subjects will be found across the wall advanced one more degree in the order of Pauperism. A former Superintendent of Blockley, who must have been fond of phrases and aphorisms, once remarked when speaking of its inmates, 'Once a pauper, always a pauper.' Over the archway of our entrance should be carved the well-known legend, 'Abandon all hope ye who enter here!' The association between Hospital and Almshouse is degrading and demoralizing. Most of our patients belong to the discouraged class of citizens, when not to the actually vicious. The habit of looking to the Hospital and its associated department, the Poorhouse, as an easy and natural means of support develops easily in people



without pride, energy, aspiration, and without any means of support. We are well supplied with habitués who enter either Hospital or Almshouse on the slightest excuse, and the influence of this class of professional bummers, men and women, over the younger patients with whom they associate in the Hospital is all for evil.

“On I went, past groups of convalescents sitting on benches beneath the trees or lying on stretchers in shady angles of the walls. High up along the balconies of the fire-escapes, up on a level with the tree branches, sat those less strong than the patients below, who must be content to use these perches. And not so uncomfortable are the lofty seats, for one obtains a fine view there over the yard and what transpires therein, and there is always more or less of a breeze. Halting by the Hospital gate, I bring my camera into position and ‘take it’; then out into the great yard of the men’s outwards. Far off, up by the wall of the Insane Department, I see a large group of old men, halt, blind, broken in every way. Two are sitting side by side, apart from the rest, beneath a shadowing tree. This is good for a foreground; then, back of them, the larger group, and, as a background, the high, whitewashed wall of the Insane Hospital, with its low, wide, gloomy arched gateway where stands the porter’s box. All about are trees with thick foliage. The sunshine falls glaringly white in the open spaces. There is stillness everywhere, except when broken by the low hum of listless conversation. All this scene must be taken ere yet my subjects are aware. Carefully the camera is placed and focused. Everything is ready. Just then, the two old pals look up but maintain their position. Six seconds, and I have them forever. One other group now before I go! There is a heterogeneous collection, all on one bench. At its end is an individual leaning forward with elbows on his knees and hands idly clasped. He may have been a pirate, pickpocket, or peddler. I do not know. He was bad at all events. Next to him, sitting bolt

upright, is an old man with a long beard and a rather respectable face. His hat is aslant, just a bit to one side. He may have seen better days. Beside him is a helpless, weak-faced-looking object, incompetency and shiftlessness written all over him. Then come two nondescripts, characters that are nice and bummy, but not especially typical of any specialization in the down and out class. I take them in one lot, and then stop by the door of the store to have a short talk with the storekeeper and Mrs. H., the schoolma'am. The store contains a little of everything. It is like a large country establishment, and has groceries, dry goods, pottery, hardware, all the articles needed about the institution. Books are kept with each department and payments are made by written orders, which are countersigned by the Superintendent. Next I stray out through the under passages beneath the Superintendent's quarters and reach the street. There is an attractive view from the outer gateway of the Insane Department, looking eastward. Beneath the trees which meet above it, forming an arch of limbs and foliage, runs the street, which is really a country-like lane, called Vintage Avenue. Along one side, separated by a high fence and narrow garden, extends the front of the Almshouse. The central part, with its Ionic columns and Greek attic, can just be seen high up above the level and gleaming through the trees like an old temple. Beneath the verdant archway goes the road into an indefinite vista, while, along its right side, sloping downwards towards the river, extend meadows now planted with various crops of vegetables. Going back through the front buildings, I enter again the great courtyard and take my way down to the Hospital. The sick are still there, breathing in the fresh outdoor air, looking at the grass and flowers, hoping perhaps for a better future. I am sure that the little children do. To them life has not yet opened up all the horrors of its possibilities. Some on crutches skip gayly about the walks; and that little, sweet-faced girl lying in her

wheel-chair, a look of quiet contentment on her face, was brought by me in an ambulance, last winter, from a miserable hovel way down in the slums; from a small crowded room up three flights of narrow, winding, rickety stairs. There she had suffered an existence in the midst of foul air, foul talk, and foul lives. Beneath a long awning fastened to the top of one of the high walls and extending out over quite a space of ground, is seated a row of women of different ages, while an old man in a rusty long black coat and with a dilapidated, worn-out, black silk hat is entertaining them with an eloquent address or lecture. His hearers interrupt him with frequent bursts of laughter and piquant repartee. The old gentleman's body is slim and spare. His nose arches downward, like a beak, to meet his pointed, protruding chin, made more prominent by his sunken lips where the teeth have long been absent. I cannot make out the subject of his talk to-day. Generally it is a rambling disquisition upon his own varied abilities as a singer, orator, man of the world, and temperance advocate. He is a strange, addle-brained, harmless old man who, not confined to the insane side, wanders about all over the institution. He collects newspapers and gives them away to the inmates, and thoroughly enjoys exercising his power as a conversationalist. One of his chief rôles as an entertainer is his ability to sing one song in twenty-five different tunes. The song is 'Old Hundred,' and he not only employs this variety of tunes in its rendition, but he indulges in a great range of keys and variations in pitch. From moderately deep but very strained bass he soars suddenly to high, shrieking falsetto. He knows also a large number of temperance songs in high praise of water and low estimation of wines and liquors. He considers himself to be one of the really distinguished characters of the place, and, when feeling that an occasion demands that he should appear to full advantage, he dons a cap, made by himself, of striped ticking, shaped with a peak and decorated with tassels and a number of brass

objects which the old fellow considers to possess an immense value. Thinking that, even with this remarkable and striking headgear he yet lacks the one thing needful, the final touch, to finish the correct costume worthy of his importance, he formed a large pair of spectacles from an old cigar box and fitted it with window glass in lieu of lenses. It is seldom that he presents himself in this complete and overpowering 'war paint'; but, thus accoutred, I once found him in the entrance hall at the Front, and, having my camera with me, I persuaded him by dint of much barefaced flattery to step out upon the pavement and 'be taken.' So I have his picture somewhere among my collection standing in all his armor, in the peculiar attitude which he fancied best suited his splendid presence. Poor old man! His harmless little life goes on here from day to day, sheltered from the rough jeers of a thoughtless and heartless world. Here he is taken more or less seriously or good-naturedly, and I believe that many fellow paupers, impressed by his manner and pretensions, value him almost at his own estimate. It was late into the afternoon when I climbed the long stairs to my room, put the camera into its corner, and fixed up preparatory to making my evening rounds through the wards."

"CONSPIRACY.

June 17, 1884.

"For several weeks past M. has been desirous of a grand combined attack upon Mr. S., the Superintendent. His roommate, R—1, having gone, M. feels that it devolves upon him to maintain the aggressive position of the resident staff towards the tyrant of Blockley. Mr. S. has always regarded us with suspicion, has employed his 'runners' to note our behavior and spy upon our acts. A cause for war was not wanting, for the table, during the month passed, has been growing steadily weak in quality although the supplies have been abundant. In January, a similar condition of affairs had called forth numer-

ous unpleasant comparisons from myself and others, even in the dining room, which, coming to the ears of the ruler and governor of the feast, had aroused his wrath and indignation. He summoned us all to a conference in which he revealed all the secrets of his housekeeping, the prices paid for all our table supplies, together with the amount of the appropriation made by the Board of Guardians for our maintenance. He closed his very candid explanation by requesting us to come directly to him with any complaints about the table, in the future. All seemed well, for a time, but beneath the apparent candor of the Superintendent's behavior was concealed much dark and deep distrust. On our part there had always been a very positive dislike of the head of Blockley, and we were disposed to suspect him of insincerity and a desire to make us uncomfortable. We did not like him and he did not like us. All this situation could have been endured, but the food began to deteriorate again. This was too much; tough beefsteak, roast beef that was uneatable, and a diet weak at every point. So M.'s opportunity developed. He proposed that we should make a demonstration before the Superintendent, in order to bring him to terms. M. is usually a quiet and peaceable man, and I could not understand his thirst for the fray. However, I promised to join him with the rest, mainly to keep company and for the sake of some possible element of amusement. Saturday night was selected for the time of our explosion. Now it so happened that, on that especial night, we had an unusually excellent dinner. Mutton chops were a part of the fare, of such good quality that I partook of four of them and ate largely and with zest of everything else. My companions seemed to be indulging quite as freely in the substantial elements of our feast. The absurdity of the affair struck me while eating. Here we all were, eating largely of an excellent dinner, and, when finished, we were about to descend to the office of the Superintendent and inform that official that he was only half-

feeding us, and that his viands were worse than worthless; that they were positively dangerous to our health. However, we had the memory of many bad dinners, and we were about to assert ourselves after long forbearance, and stand up for our rights.

“McL., the Warden, had received a chop that was decidedly questionable as to freshness. We would have desired rather *stronger* evidence, but this could serve as something right in hand for complaint. Suddenly H—n came in with a friend. He ordered steak, as the chops had all been consumed. The steak appeared. He took the dish, smelled at the contents, exclaimed, ‘My G—d!’ and threw up his hands in a gesture that might be interpreted as hopeless despair. Of course every one laughed; but M. seized the dish and, getting on his feet, began haranguing an imaginary Superintendent, holding the plate in one hand and gesticulating with the other. The plate was then passed all about for our inspection, and, of course, we all pronounced the steak to be very foul and noisome. M. took the lead and we all stormed down the stairs to the Superintendent’s office. McL. slipped out before our onset, and had warned the Superintendent of the coming fray. Mr. S. received us coldly, and with a frown upon his face. M. at once began his attack.

“‘Well,’ said Mr. S., ‘what do you complain of?’

“‘Well, Mr. S., I will begin with the breakfast. The steak is so tough that no one can eat it. The butter is rancid and—’

“‘The butter is all right,’ broke in S. ‘It’s the very best creamery butter.’

“‘H—n mildly suggests here that ‘It had a very queer taste.’

“‘Yes,’ said Mr. S. ‘That’s garlic; it’s in the grass.’

“‘Mr. S.,’ said M., solemnly, looking the Superintendent sternly in the eyes, and speaking as though he frequently fed on grass and knew its peculiarities, ‘I never tasted anything

in grass like that. No, sir, it is rancid. Then the milk is sour or smoky, and we can't drink it. The beef is never eaten, but goes away untouched. To-night the meat was spoiled, and had the odor of—'

"I see nothing out of the way with the steak,' interrupted Mr. S.

"Mr. S. has lately deserted our common dining room and has all meals served in his own private apartment.

"At the resident physicians' table, Mr. S.," said M., most severely, 'there is very much out of the way.'

"I have the same fare as you,' snapped Mr. S.

"Then, Mr. S.," said M. slowly, and with a tone of great sadness in his voice, 'you do very wrongly and foolishly to bring up your family upon the kind of food we receive.'

"That's my own affair,' interrupted Mr. S.; and then, as though he counted it as a telling stroke, he added sternly, 'You can speak of me all you wish, but you shan't bring in my family.'

"M. apologizes instantly for anything that would have implied this discourtesy. The talk drifts on. We all take a part. It is finally agreed that the money appropriated for our table shall be spent upon a few really good articles, with less variety and no unnecessary viands. Thus shall we strive to have a few good things rather than many indifferent ones. This seemed very nice, philosophical, and within good common sense; but the Superintendent took the matter to the Board of Guardians, who referred it and us to the tender mercies of its *Committee on Diet and Classification*. This committee considered the whole affair, and determined to classify us as unreasonable rebels, and the diet as too good for our over-delicate and too particular appetites. And we seemed to be on such very strong ground! Yet thus failed our grand demonstration."

## "BY THE WAY.

June 24, 1884.

"The Hospital clock, strangely right, has just struck the hour of ten. It is very warm to-night. Scarcely a breath of air is stirring, just enough to rustle the leaves of the trees beneath my window. From far away somewhere comes the sound of a piano, probably in some house on Darby Road. I am alone to-night. V. has gone, leaving Blockley forever. Last evening he began the work of packing his trunk, and continued thus engaged far into the night. I had gone to bed and to sleep before the trunk was filled. Business took him to the City this morning, and I met him, just as with hands filled with plate-holders I was on my way to the pathological laboratory, darkness, and the red light. V. was rushing about the Hospital in high spirits, shaking hands with the nurses and bidding farewells. I walked with him over to the Front and down Vintage Avenue to the Weigher's Corner. He was full of jollity and life, glad to get away and evidently hopeful of the future. So I left him,—at his best. We have lived peacefully together, in the close association of roommates, for almost one year. He has many faults and so have I, and we recognize each other's defects, but have never insulted one another with criticisms based upon our experiences of one another's temperamental weaknesses. V. has endured much discomfort at my hands without one word of protest. When not engaged in squeaking and scratching on my fiddle, I occasionally fire my revolver at a thick target placed against the headboard of my bed. The only redeeming feature of my conduct has been my respect for my roommate's side of our joint apartment. I am sure that he would have thrashed me soundly if I had trespassed. There must have been times and mental moods in which V. found these diversions somewhat trying to his nerves. The pistol practice has usually been indulged in when he was away from the room. All this will indicate that V.



can be a very patient man. I wish to remember him always in that mood in which we parted. It will surely be long before we meet again."

There is a lapse in the journal of almost six months. This marks the time of strenuous service in the medical wards. It was in the heat of summer. The visiting chief had gone to Europe for a vacation tour, and the doctor of the diary conducted his ward work as best he could with his very limited training.

The medical wards of Blockley were among the most valuable in any hospital of the City for their varied experiences in all sorts of acute, but more especially in complicated chronic diseases. The necessity for constant service in these wards, study of the patient's conditions, the reading of books and journals, consumed the hours of the long, swelteringly hot days. When night came there was little desire left for any literary efforts upon the diary. Doubtless it is the steady strain and tedious drudgery of this service, during the exhausting heat of Philadelphia's summer, that influences the tone of the journal when the young doctor resumes the record of his life in Blockley.

The term of work in the medical wards lasted four months. There was a wealth of cases of pulmonary tuberculosis that today would not have been admitted to the Hospital, or would have been kept apart in a separate building. In those days the pulmonary tuberculosis cases were not separated from other patients, although an effort was made to place most of them in one large ward. In this same department was a narrow ward, containing about ten beds, called the "Drunk Ward." It was seldom at any season of the year that most of the beds in this chamber of horrors were not occupied. Many of the patients were strapped to the frames of their cots, so as to restrain them during the stage of wild *delirium a potu*, when the

sodden mind is in a state of terror under the fancied visions of devils, evil spirits, goblins, snakes, and all unclean beasts, that hover about, gibber at the victim, jump at him, and clamber over his bed. Many of these patients we saved by dint of careful watching and proper medication and nourishment. The fight seemed to be hardly worth the effort, as the drunkard was sure to return to his cups, and a recurrence of *delirium tremens* was as certain as the early termination of the miserable life. The fatal cases of this condition died usually from bronchopneumonia, from sheer exhaustion, or from an intercurrent chronic disease of the liver, kidneys, or heart; sometimes from a combination of such diseases in the same subject. It was not a pleasant part of the medical service, and yet always in evidence and always demanding close attention. These rather dreary days have carried the diary man on into August, before the journal begins once more to tell its story.

“IMPRESSIONS AND MEMORIES.

August 5, 1884.

“I have had a busy afternoon. After working for about two weeks in the Pathological Laboratory, which is nothing more nor less than a lumber room for rubbish, M. and I made a grand clearing out. The room is entered from the great clinic amphitheatre, its door being at one corner of the great square hall on a level with the upper gallery. The gallery itself, on the side occupied by the laboratory, is walled with glass cases containing specimens in jars of alcohol of almost every phase of morbid anatomy, gathered through long years from the post-mortem room. M. and I changed the positions of tables and cabinets, so as to gain more space in the room, moved out a mass of useless material which dated far back to former years and had labels signed with the names of resident physicians long ago forgotten. Then we swept up the filthy room, and J., my new roommate, washed the floor thoroughly with a mop.

The room is thus much improved, and will be more comfortable and convenient. It was quite an act of unselfishness, for M. and I can only benefit by the renovation for the space of three more weeks. It has been a busy summer and will always be an isolated one in my memory. The departure of the older resident physicians, who belonged to our special circle, and work in common, have thrown M. and me much together. In some respects it has been the pleasantest part of my Blockley experience. Only now and then comes a desire to be away up North; but work soon causes forgetfulness of everything except itself. To-night is a real August experience, not quite so entertaining as a midsummer night's dream. It is hot, close, and damp. My gas is fully lighted and adds to the general heat. Outside, there is not a breath of wind. The leaves hang lifeless in the hot heavy air. Lead-colored clouds are above, in irregular masses or drawn out into long ragged rolls. There is a constant low vibration of insect sounds, broken occasionally at irregular intervals by croaking choruses of frogs, coming up in a sleepy monotone from the low-stretching country along the river. Above this mixture of the noises of a night in summer, floating across the fields from Darby Road, comes the jingle of an occasional street car, with the clatter of the horses' hoofs upon the cobblestones and the dull rumble of the wheels. A few notes of a far-off piano mingle with these various sounds and tend to increase, instead of to soothe, the general sense of oppression so characteristic of a night in Philadelphia's August.

“In contrast to all this I cannot help recalling past summers at Kennebunkport on the coast of Maine: the quiet river; the old drawbridge and seaweed covered wharves; the quaint village, elm-shaded, its wide square houses with dark cool rooms within filled with old mahogany furniture and with East India relics that recall lives of old sea-captains, long voyages, and foreign ports and return to quiet, well-ordered homes. They belong to an old-time epoch, these homes; but, in the

hush and twilight of the present, one fancies that he hears faint voices and the laughter that echo the life and gayety and pleasant social ways of generations past. I see in memory the long line of rocky coast, sweeping away in circling outline till it ends in a far-off misty point of ragged cliff. Across the bay towers up the cone-shaped, flat-topped form of Mount Agamenticus, while seemingly at its very foot gleam white-housed villages, with here and there a church spire rising as a beacon above the general level. Then there were the excursions, the moonlight nights on the river, freshened by sea breezes, while even the land winds were cool, freighted with the incense of pine forests. There are upland pastures, rocky, covered with low scrubby growths of fragrant sweet fern and blueberries and bay. Stretching far and wide, they lay warm in the summer sunshine. From barren, wind-swept summits wide landscapes spread out, bordered inland by dim, blue-lined mountains, seaward by the ocean's flashing, changing, varitinted surface; and over all a summer sky of blue, flecked with snowy masses of slowly moving clouds. Away over the bare, undulating country, narrow roads go, winding between irregular stone fences over which wild vines grow in tangles, some of them bright with flowers. I am on a road that enters a forest of tall hemlocks where every sound seems hushed. To either side long vistas stretch away over the clean-kept forest floor strewn with cones and needles, flecked with spots of sunlight. There is a spring by the narrow roadway, moss-lined, formed in a crevice of the solid rock. Beside it lies an ocean shell for cup, and, from the spring, a fine clear rill of water flows away beside the road as it goes onward. There comes a break in the line of trees; a turn in the road; and, right ahead, through the long dark foreground in perspective, bordered by tall, gaunt, ragged pines, bursts forth a view of the ocean's cliffs, and the sea itself lies in purple splendor just beyond.

“These are some of my memories, to-night, as I sit in my

hot, stuffy, hospital room, hearing the mixed, inconsistent, and incongruous sounds of suburban life. Near at hand are the wards filled with suffering, complaint, deceit, vice, crime, and amid all this wretchedness a few heroic lives living on from day to day, friendless, dying by inches in an Almshouse; and yet with brave, patient faces, with sad but ready smiles awaiting the end. Good and bad, these are my brothers and sisters in the flesh, as God and afterwards the Devil made them; filled with desires, with lusts, with ardent passions, all dominated by intense selfishness. Call them modern barbarians? Nay, friend! They are not so very different from yourself, your respected parents, your brothers and sisters, your esteemed wife, bereft of the conventionalities that blossom under the mellowing influences of social culture and inherited instincts of refinement. What can be done to help them into better living? Thus far we seem to play about the outskirts of these vast multitudes with our Church, our Benevolences, our Science of Social Order. The priest speaks to Christians who sit on cushioned seats, object to any crudities in the literary style or substance of his sermon, listen to the soft ecclesiastical music, view the mystery on the marble and gilded altar lighted by the ecclesiastical light from ecclesiastical stained and pictured windows, and then return to well-laden tables and well-cooked Sunday dinners. Some dollars have been dropped into the offertory under an impression that thus somebody is going to be clothed and fed and led to see a little of sweetness and light. The benevolent direct, contribute money, and engage in learned discussions on the way to manage those strangling, struggling, submerged multitudes; and they may give temporary material help to a few, so few in proportion to the mass, that it resembles a child's offer of an apple to an elephant. They scratch the surface of the vast marsh. But it needs to be drained, trenched, filled in here and there, before it can bear the fruit of bettered lives. It is a tremendous question, needing

management on a large scale. I doubt if anything more practical than the developing of a mild and moral amusement for members of churches and private societies can be gained by such effort. It is so great that it needs the care of the nation, of a government that can act as parent to this mass of grown-up and mentally-delinquent children; a government that can educate, separate the hopeless from the more efficient; that can coerce, compel, punish; and all this on the basis of laws that are just but which never fail of execution.

“Meanwhile, there still exist St. Mary’s Street and Alaska, Bandbox Row, and all the squalor of Port Richmond, long lines of misery on Front Street, Second Street, on so many streets that one cannot name them. It is at your next door or in the alley behind your house.

“And so, what is the conclusion of this August night’s rambling thoughts? I cannot answer. A year of Blockley life stands between me and much that seemed established and forever, before I entered at these gates. The experience has been somewhat demoralizing. At all events, the experiences of Blockley and its inmates and our vast stretches of slums combine to induce a sense of contentment that I am just a plain, unimportant, and unknown medicus rather than a Hamlet, born to a station and responsibility where he must exclaim:—

“The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!  
That ever I was born to set it right!”

Bacteriology in its modern aspects was at the very beginnings in the days of the diary. The splendidly equipped laboratories of all great modern hospitals, with the efficient specialists in charge, were represented by the very meager and primitive appliances described in the journal. Young men were beginning to visit the institutions of Germany, and training thus acquired was to develop a great change and most needed improvement in all departments of American hospitals and medical schools,

but especially in those that related to the scientific study of Pathology in all its phases. And yet the members of the resident staff at Blockley in that antediluvian time,—somewhat better than the Stone Age, it is true,—took themselves and their laboratory work rather seriously, although the modern Pathologist would have been amused, as well as saddened, at the waste of valuable material for investigation, the primitive methods of work, and the great lack of necessary training and information and definite plan of action on the part of these young medical scientists.

“THE PATHOLOGICAL LABORATORY; A SACRIFICE UPON THE  
ALTAR OF SCIENCE.

August 8, 1884.

“In the Pathological Laboratory, the other afternoon, it was found that we had need of the fresh blood and other tissues of an animal. The laboratory is a small, well-filled room way off in one corner of the clinic building. It overlooks an old courtyard, high walled and carpeted with tall grass except where clotheslines, hung from one old rugged tree to another, have caused clearings of trampled grass to be made by the capacious feet of the washerwomen. Cats, wild in nature and appearance, infest this antiquated and secluded quarter, and prowl in the shadow of the high stone walls with their jutting eaves of tiling. In the laboratory we are working up the subject of bacteria culture under the direction of Dr. S. McL. suggested the sacrifice of a cat. This seemed to answer our requirements, and he and M. went off in search of one. But the Blockley cat is a wise animal, and looks upon doctors only from high roofs and far-off vistas. McL. and M. returned empty handed, but they had set a small boy upon the warpath. His instructions were to bring any cat alive, no matter from what quarter of Blockley it came, except a certain black and white cat that lives in the Hospital Kitchen. This

cat, being pregnant and well on to full term, was to be respected. The boy returned in the course of half an hour bearing in his arms none other than the very forbidden female. He assured us that she was *not* pregnant; never had been; might never be; but his persuasive powers were in vain. He was ordered to take her back and produce another within half an hour. The fellow must have chased all over the institution, but he appeared finally with a large, indignant, and irate Tom-cat struggling and spitting in his arms. Now McL. is not one of our scientific circle but a mere interloper, and he has an agreeable way of making a cat's-paw of any one. True to his habit, he now proposed cheerfully that he would give the victim chloroform while I held the excited beast. By this time the cat, being released, had bolted to the nearest window sill, was howling most dismally, and presented a perfect battery of teeth, claws, and luffed up hair to any one who approached. The prospect was not peaceful or pleasing, and I suggested to McL. to go and soothe the Tom before I did the holding. McL. would rather have sat on a hot stove than touch the enraged and frightened Thomas. However, as we all laughed at his backwardness, he finally determined to attack the enemy. The cat was his own suggestion, and, in addition, he had no especial association with the laboratory work. We felt that, under the circumstances, he should be glad to make himself useful. A small, strong box was brought. McL. plunged for the cat, landed him in the box, and called loudly for me to put on the cover and pour in chloroform. This I did, and the cat died without any evidence of suffering. We obtained all the needed material for our work, and then the poor dead pussy was placed in a clean box, covered with cotton, and ordered to be taken to the Potter's Field.

M., J., and I are up in the laboratory almost every afternoon, and the work there consumes most of one's time from dinner until supper. It is a queer place. On one side are vessels



of tin and felt with water jackets. Rubber tubes run in various directions about the room from a central gas pipe. On shelves along one side are crowded bottles containing every imaginable substance from the bodies of former patients, all preserved in alcohol, labelled with the names of former owners, and awaiting to be prepared for the microscope. On other shelves are glass pipettes of every size and shape, glass retorts and flasks, test tubes, and many strange and rusty machines long unused and the very uses of which are forgotten. Tables by the window are covered with glass slides and cases of instruments. A large cabinet in one corner holds our microscopes and the various appliances which must be kept from dust and dirt. In the centre against one wall is a small closet, absolutely light tight, painted a dead black within, and containing numerous bottles together with a large lantern with red glass. This is the finishing-room for photographic work, and many hours have I spent there in developing my views of Blockley scenery, of its life and customs and queer inmates.

“Such is the Pathological Laboratory; never a cheerful apartment, but most dismal towards the close of a dark, wintry afternoon. Then cold, fierce winds come sweeping down into the high-walled courtyard, sway the gaunt old tree tops, whistle shrilly along angles and into corners. The tall, dreary wall of the Hospital buildings, with its blank, dark windows, cuts off all western light and makes an early gloom down in this retired spot. Then it is that the bottles take on queer shapes; that shadows seem to betoken more than their full value of significance. One has the feeling that then, if ever, the souls of departed paupers may revisit this alcoholic charnel-house, and gaze with eyes of personal interest upon the aspect and conditions of their preserved viscera.”

## "ONE SUMMER DAY.

August 16, 1884.

"At ten o'clock in the morning, three youths ran down the long stone steps of Blockley's front entrance and walked rapidly away down the shaded lane to Thirty-fourth Street. The tallest, about six feet two inches, was clad in dark blue trousers, along the outer seams of which ran stout but tarnished gold cording. His coat was of some mixed stuff, while his head was covered by an old weather-beaten, Blockley uniform cap. His name was M. The second youth was arrayed in dark trousers with fine light stripes varying their duskiness. He wore a black diagonal cutaway coat, and sported a modern light felt plug hat; a very correct costume. This was P—lps. The third was clad in a well-worn suit of greyish-green mixture, with trousers rather bagging in the knees and in sad need of pressing. A dilapidated old Blockley uniform cap was his headgear. This was the diary man.

"We took a car and rode to the steamboat landing at the Zoölogical Garden, and came within an ace of missing the boat. By dint of rapid walking and running we stepped on board in time, and were off up the Schuylkill River for Riverside. It was a brilliant day; cool, with a clear atmosphere and a cloudless blue sky. Every point on trees and on buildings stood out in sharp relief. The steel grey of the river, with its banks of vari-tinted green above which the hills rose in smooth grassy slopes, glistened and flashed in the bright sunlight. A cool breeze blew from the west and the weather was perfect. On reaching Riverside we sat down on the long porch of the ancient tavern, overlooking the grove with its many small tables and music pavilion, and fortified ourselves with sherry cobbler. Then we started for our walk up the Wissahickon. On our right the steep bank descended directly to the river, while the left rose in forest-covered heights, and huge boulders and cliffs jutted out along the pathway in strange,

grotesque forms. I had promised my friends much good scenery on this expedition, and M. and P—lps assumed an air of appreciation by sudden starts and stoppings, dramatic gestures, and rapturous exclamations in exaggeration of feeling and expression. They had their fun at my enthusiasm for the landscape, and our laughter and joking took much breath and wind that was needed for hill climbing. We passed several picnic groups, and finally, in a secluded nook, came upon a long, rustic table at which were seated two rows of girls clad in black jerseys and white dresses. These maidens smiled very pleasantly upon us, and P—lps suggested that they were quite ready to invite us to dinner. The invitation was at once forthcoming to the extent of a cordial offer of lemonade. They brought out a tin pail and passed the lemon-flavored drink around. It was amusing to see P—lps standing with a whole group of laughing girls about him, his white felt hat tipped back on his head, holding the half-emptied glass in his hand and smiling most benignly upon his entertainers. M. was much admired by the ladies, and one black-eyed siren, especially, stole to his side and darted enraptured glances at his handsome face. The girls told us that they were the 'Daughters of Veterans.' On being asked where the sons were, they said that the sons were all at work, but would join them in the afternoon.

"On we went along the wild beautiful road that has no equal in any park in the world; that is like a remote gorge among rugged mountains far from the haunts of men and Blockley patients. The cool air was heavy with mingled perfumes of forest and moist river banks and flowing stream. It was a day to be stored away in memory. Life seemed free and before us, and we had escaped from the gloom of Blockley and were off with nature under the greenwood tree. We dined at the Valley Green Hotel, an ancient road house. Then we continued our walk far up the valley, until the lengthening

shadows warned us that the afternoon was waning. We turned back and walked in the cool dusk of the deep and now sunless gorge. A bridge takes us across the little river, and we climb the long hill by a road which runs through woods so dense and heavy that at noon they are in twilight, and arrive finally at the Wissahickon Inn. We walked all over the lower floor of this spacious hotel in search of the bar, but were informed that there was none. This news was quite disappointing, especially to P—lps and M., who had become excessively thirsty and claimed to be in dire need of stimulants. Then we strolled over to the railroad station and returned to the City by train, arriving at Blockley in time for supper."

"ON THE EVE OF DEPARTURE.

August 30, 1884.

"The position of a Blockley resident physician has always been one of authority. In the former years, before the competitive examination regulated the choice of candidates; in those balmy old days of the old Board's reign, at that time when every Board meeting is said to have closed with a wine dinner or supper; in those lazy, shiftless, and extravagant days each resident doctor had his especial Guardian who would always support him, and upon whose friendly and powerful aid the young doctor could call, whenever he found himself to be wedged in a 'tight place,' either professionally or morally. This relation between Guardians and doctors is said to have been so intimate and cordial, that the gentlemen of the Board and resident staff got drunk together. This is surely a test of very close friendship. If the pauper inmates of those times numbered among them as many individuals as capable of social and convivial enjoyment as some of my patients in wards and outwards, an assorted and carefully selected number of elect paupers might well have joined in the festive combination of Guardians and doctors. The merriment of the occasion would not have

been lessened by their presence. As a natural result of this close association between the Guardians and the resident doctors, the latter were regarded with profound respect by all Hospital attendants and officials. Gradually the resident medical men acquired more and more authority, until the resident physicians almost owned the Hospital. Into such a place as this we, coming from stations in which we had never held much authority, were suddenly placed upon our merits, not by appointment but by competitive examination. Our relations with all under-officials, nurses, and pauper inmates were almost those of masters and slaves. After living in such circumstances for several months we became naturally overbearing, dogmatic, and, it must be confessed, more or less brutal. We met the slightest curtailment of our rights with indignant protest. Trouble came at last. We were at odds with the Superintendent. But now there was no Guardian for each man to visit. The Board at once took grounds against us and supported the authority of the Superintendent. There is a certain degree of unfriendliness and suspicion that has developed among the heads of the various departments of our institution. This forms a rather interesting picture of phases of institutional life. I imagine that such epochs of internal strife occur at times in most institutions, public as well as private; the various heads of departments all at enmity, the under-officers joining the factions of their respective chiefs, while every one is pretending to be cordial or at least diplomatically friendly. Perhaps Blockley just now needs another meeting of that efficient, antirevolutionary force, the *Committee on Diet and Classification*. M. and I had even thought that we might experience some difficulty in having our baggage removed from Blockley without some troublesome interference, as the time for our departure had arrived. The authorities could hardly suspect us of an attempt to pack away a pauper in our trunks, but might fancy that we had purloined some bit of Blockley to serve as a memento

of our experiences. M. and I engaged the express yesterday afternoon, and this morning at seven o'clock it arrived. The heavy trunks and boxes were loaded into the wagon, and our goods were passed out through the gates.

“The walls of my room look bare to-night, and the room itself has a cheerless and forsaken appearance. This afternoon I worked for the last time in the laboratory, where I have spent so many afternoons. I could overlook the quaint old courtyard with its high stone walls and ancient trees. The cats that prowled through its long grass have most familiar yowls, and should I ever hear their peculiar pitch of voice, no matter in what corner of the world, I shall always think of the old, sleepy courtyard overlooked by the laboratory with its preserved horrors. I finished my work, summarizing the results of observations made during the month, just as dusk was settling down. For the last time there I heard the slow, deep tones of a neighboring church bell ring out the hour that suggested supper. For the last time, hastening to respond to the suggestion, I put away the instruments and closed the windows. As I locked the door and passed through the great empty and darkening clinic room, with its huge amphitheatre of seats, I could almost imagine them peopled with shadowy medical students of the past and future, while from away down in the arena comes the memory of a voice repeating the oft-heard words, ‘The next case, gentlemen, which I bring before you, is one of especial interest.’ The case will come in, and the lecturer will expatiate, and the students will take careful notes and lose them on the way home; but there will be new men to assist, for we are about to step down and out.”

“THE FULNESS OF THE TIME.

August 31, 1884.

“It would be an interesting work to sum up one's experiences in Blockley and strike an average of how much good and how

much bad was contained in the result. But I believe that these pages record considerable observations of that character and, at the close, it might be well to drop a somewhat worn-out subject. The close! Trunks packed and off and all the various preparations accomplished that denote the final breaking up and end of the term of service! To-morrow closes the journey of the year and introduces us to new experiences. P—lps said to-day, speaking of changes, that he had no desire to settle down for three years yet, but was going to be content with 'odd jobs.' For his part, he had no ambition beyond contentment; and if he had enough money to supply food and to buy cigarettes, his strong hankering after gold and glory were but short-lived and came at intervals. He is a philosopher, in his way, and one feels that his idea of living is a very comfortable one, at least in theory. Whether one could really be content thus is a question. It is twelve, midnight, and I have just had a call to visit one of M.'s patients in the 'Drunk Ward,' a miserable sot who has come here with *delirium tremens*, and is bellowing and roaring like a bull. Not having as yet had the 'rams,' I fail to note much sympathy for those in that unpleasant condition. Of course, one should have pity for the miserable and afflicted; at least, the popular idea is that one should have, whether the misery is self-inflicted or is the result of uncontrollable circumstances. But sympathy as a sentiment is at a low par in Blockley. One is so frequently deceived, that he becomes disposed to attend to what is evidently required, without much expenditure of sentiment. Regarding the worthiness of an inmate for any more physical excitation, we are forced by sad experience to regard the subject in an inverse method from that common to the law, and to consider him or her guilty until innocence is proven. I imagine that there may be natures, rare it must be confessed, which can progress in the study of human character beyond the knowledge of man's evil traits, and see the elements of good even in the

worst characters. This ability to rise above the conception of human meanness and degradation is certainly a mark of a greater mind than most of us possess.

“Life among unmasked humanity reveals a certain simian degeneration that gives little encouragement to look for regeneration and reform. It has at least the advantage of shocking one’s sense of moral security. The observation of human hoggishness in others recalls one to himself, and he soon learns that among a world of hogs he himself may become none the least of the swinish herd. The study of humanity in the rough can well weaken one’s smug confidence in himself. Why am I not as bad as that sot whose alcoholic ravings at this very moment are disturbing the medical ward? Possibly only because I have not had his surroundings. Why are the apparently pure-minded ladies of this City not similar to those women who wait in Dandy Hall until the hour arrives for the birth of their bastard offspring? Is it possible that the pure would fall if subjected to temptations and influences such as the impure suffer? But, instead of hinting at such a possibility, if one could only believe that the low and degraded have much that is good in their natures in common with the so-called respectable! Perhaps it requires a much more extended knowledge of the world, a deeper study of mankind, and a more kindly temperament than I have had, before one can appreciate the goodness of man. It certainly requires but a short time to appreciate the bad. The proper spirit, born of prolonged and intimate relations with various grades of society, must be that which induces Julian Gray, in Wilkie Collins’ ‘New Magdalen,’ to exclaim, ‘Who but a Pharisee can believe that he is better than his neighbor? The best among us to-day may be the worst among us to-morrow. The true Christian virtue is the virtue which never despairs of a fellow-creature. The true Christian faith believes in man as well as in God. Who shall dare say to man or woman, “There is no hope in you”?’



Who shall dare say the work is still vile, when the work bears on it the stamp of the Creator's hand?"

"As yet I cannot fully appreciate these words. I am not yet educated up to their standard of judgment and their broad liberality and hopefulness. But I would like to let the paragraph stand as an expression of hope in fallen humanity which the murk of a year's life in Blockley envelops with a cloud of doubt but yet not quite of denial. Life in the open, in an atmosphere free from close contact with the slums, may give a clearer and more optimistic point of view.

"It is far into the night. The new day comes, and with it I and my comrades go forth into the outside world again, among the ways of busy, active, robust men. It is like one who emerges from the twilight of a sultry and windless forest into the sunlight and breeze of ocean cliffs. And there he sees his ship ready, straining at her cables; and all the exhilaration of life and effort calls him out where the heaving, rolling water is blue and to the far horizon and into the unknown beyond."

Almost twenty-nine years have run their course since the journal of Blockley days was tossed into a box with other papers and forgotten. Times have changed. Methods in medical and surgical practice have been revolutionized. The slums of Alaska and St. Mary's Streets have been cleared to give place for a children's playground, or have experienced a change of population. Russian Jews have settled where degenerates of the Black and White races once lived in promiscuous intercourse. The large Italian Colony is quartered to the westward of this area. The efforts of several private societies for social betterment have been crowned with a success that should encourage similar work on the same lines but on a much more extended scale and affecting larger areas of the widely-extended slum districts.

But the union of almshouse and hospital in our great cities is still too often in force, and the shadow of pauperism darkens the whole public institution. It is not essential that the poor of a community should be petted. It is far better that justice without sentimentality should prevail in all the conditions of life. It is not a virtue to be poor. In this country of ours, except for ill health or old age, the causes for absolute poverty are apt to be gross shiftlessness, want of thrift, or are the outcome of drunkenness and vice. Yet our fellow-citizens who are poor because of physical weakness or ill health should be cared for by the city as a part of the regular functions of government, not as a charity grudgingly given. The man, woman, or child who is forced to seek the shelter of the general hospital of any city should enter its protecting walls without a thought of dread that such a step in any way is associated with pauperism. Every society or church hospital admits patients who are cared for without charge or who pay but a small nominal fee. No thought of disgrace attends the acceptance of this free service. Surely our great wealthy cities should care for their invalid poor under the same honorable conditions. The medical attention in all its details should be executed at least as efficiently as in the hospitals conducted by various church organizations or by private benevolence.

It is exceedingly strange that the conscience, as well as the interest and good judgment, of our citizens has not long ago placed the Almshouse as a department apart and separate and entirely foreign to the City Hospital.

The writer of the diary and his colleagues separated to the four winds. But each took his place in the plain rank and file of his great profession, perhaps all the better equipped for service by the knowledge of good and evil, of true and false science, of loyalty and good-fellowship gained by the experiences developed during one year of life in Blockley.







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