LIFE'S **FITFUL** ANDERSON NORRIS.

tossing. As she tossed she talked.

"I am so lonesome without you!" she said. "Come back to me. If you only knew how lonesome I was, you would colder with the wind in the north." come back to me. I know you would."

A young nurse, a mere girl, arose from a chair near the table and approached the bed. She beckoned to another nurse, who was old.

"Come here," she whispered, "and see what is the matter with her. She talks so. I have given her medicine again



A YOUNG NURSE APPROACHED THE BED. and again, but it hasn't quieted her. I am afraid she is going to die, and I haven't got used to seeing them die yet. Oh, I wish the doctor would come!'

"If you are going on like this," said the old nurse, "you'd better give up at once and take in plain sewing for a living. You'll never make a decent nurse."

The girl interrupted her with an impatient gesture. "Listen," said she. "It's enough to

break your heart to hear her talk." "Nurses have no business with hearts," asserted the old nurse. "Give her some more medicine."

"The days have been so long," moaned the woman, turning her head, heavy with tawny hair, from side to side, "and the nights have been so long without you! Are you there? Have you come back? It is dark. I can't see. When I look up, I see only spider webs thick in one corner. They spread and spread. The whole world seems to be filled with spider webs." And she shud-

spoon and, placing her strong young arm beneath the woman's shoulders raised her up. "There now," she said soothingly.

"Won't you take this medicine? Take it for me, please. Won't you?"

The woman shook her head. "No, no!" she murmured. "Let me lie right still and rest. I am so tired. Put my head back on the pillow. I can't do anything with it myself. It doesn't seem to belong to me somehow or other. It seems to belong to

somebody else. "It is all wrong, this head of mine," she went on by and by-"all wrong. Do you know why? It was because I wrote stories. So many stories had to come out of it a week-they had to, or I couldn't live-and that was what ailed it. The brain was overworked. It couldn't stand the pressure. And I was doing so well with my work, too,

"Who is Jean?" asked the old nurse. "I don't know. She talks of him constantly and to him. He is her husband or her sweetheart, I can't tell which. And he is dead-that is, sometimes I think he is dead, and then again I think he isn't."

The woman smiled faintly.

"If you were here, you would be proud of me," she said; "really you would, but now that you are gone there is no one who cares. Isn't that very hard-to have to work and work and work and then to have nobody in all the wide world who cares for your success? You might almost as well not succeed-quite as well, I sometimes think. Don't you, Jean?"

"I wish she wouldn't talk to him like that," said the girl tremblingly. "I imagine I see the wraith of him standing here by her side."

"To be a successful nurse," remark ed the elder woman, "you must leave imagination out of the question altogether and deal with plain facts."

The plaint of the invalid once more filled up the silence.

"Think of stopping at a bookstore and finding your story in a magazine,' she said, "then coming to the house and saying at the dinner table, 'I have a new story out,' because you must tell It to somebody, you know. I don't suppose there ever was a soul in the world that didn't reach out now and then to some other soul for sympathy. Was there? But you are not often surrounded by sympathetic souls, Jean, particularly if you write. Those about you appear to take the fact of your having stories in print as a personal affront. That is strange, isn't it? But it is true. I have found it to be the case. Not only I. but others. They raise their eye brows, these people, and say: 'Indeed, is that so? And in what magazine? Then when you tell them the name of listened to it? The moonlight whitenthe magazine, 'Oh.' they exclaim, 'I

In one of the narrow white beds in a | never heard of it before! Is it a new dormitory of a hospital a woman lay one? Where is it published? And hasn't there been a tremendous change in the harden your heart. You will succeed weather since morning, don't you think? It has grown quite a good deal

"I wish you would take this medicine for me," pleaded the girl. She still held

the spoon in her hand. "Won't you?" "No, no! Let me rest. I want to be right quiet, so that I can think. And so, after all, what good does it do you, since there is no one to care-because now that you are gone there is no one to care, Jean-no one at all?

Her wide, bright eyes stared unsee ingly at a little white curtain which was strung across the window pane.

"It is a queer thing about these stories, Jean," she continued. "Do you remember what you used to say? I remember. You used to say, 'You are too happy, Nan, to write well.' Nan! Nobody ever calls me Nan now. I never hear my own name from one day's end to another."

She sighed and half closed her eyes for a moment.

"Well," she added, "since you cannot utter it, I don't want to hear it. I don't want to hear it from anybody else."

"He must be dead," whispered the

"'You will never write well until your heart is broken,' you said, and you were right about that, Jean. Your heart must break first; then you must struggle and struggle, you must know privation and suffering of all sorts and hunger even before you can touch the hearts of others who have also known these things."

She fell to moaning, the two nurses standing by and looking helplessly on.

"You could hardly accuse me of being too happy now, Jean," she resumed falteringly. "I have known what it was to suffer, I have known privations, I have known want, but, worst of all, I have known what it was to live without you. All the rest was as nothing. And no matter how I suffered I must work. I must keep on working, working, working! Sometimes while I worked I tried to imagine that you were near me, because otherwise my mouth got hard and dry and my heart seemed about to stop beating altogether, I was so unhappy, I was so alone!

"Think of being alone, Jean, after being with you-alone with only memories to keep me company! And memories are sad, sad company. Do you remember the White City, where we The girl dropped some medicine in a were so happy together? Do you remember the white bridge, with its electric pyramid in the water below, al shining with different colored lights, and the blue grotto and the Mexican who came out every evening and sang his little song? What was the song? I can't remember the name of it, but ! know the tune. If somebody would only hum a snatch of it, I could remember it directly. Will somebody?" She waited. Presently she began to

> mutter impatiently. "Will nobody hum the tune? It is strange I can't remember it. I can't remember anything any more, it seems Those spiders on the wall have spun their webs across my brain."

"There isn't a single spider on the wall," said the girl.

"Of course not," assented the other. 'If you take all their ravings literally. you will presently be raving yourself. What is this place she is talking about?"

"I imagine it was some sort of expo sition held somewhere. I can't tell where. Maybe they spent their honeymoon there. Sometimes I think it must have been the World's fair. She talks of white buildings and white bridges. I believe I would know the place if I saw it, I have heard so much about it. She talks of it constantly. They sat a little tables and looked at the crowd, The women were pretty women. They



THE MEXICAN WHO CAME OUT AND SANG HIS LITTLE SONG.

were dressed in light, flimsy organdles. with flowers at their belts. In one of the buildings there was a concert, and the orchestra often played Chopin's funeral march. She hums it by the hour. Listen! She is humming it now."

"That was the strain which followed us, wasn't it, Jean?" said the woman when she had finished humming. "Do you remember the green arbors covered with gourd vines, where we sat and ed the tuberose beds outside. Oh, oh, it makes me sick and faint and dizzy get .- Somerville (Mass.) Journal.

now to smell tuberoses! I pass the stations where the boys sell them in a rush. I can't bear it—to be reminded so of you now that I have lost you." "Things like that," said the girl,

"make me believe he still lives and is only lost to her. She never says that he is dead-just lost to her." "You can't tell anything about it." Drug Co. declared the old nurse. "The best way

is to look upon them as cases. Don't attempt to get into the minutize of their lives. It won't do them any good; it won't do you any good."

She smoothed the pillow and pressed the woman's tangled hair back from her white forehead.

"Perhaps the whole thing is a dream. They are full of fancies, these poor. sick people. Turn a deaf car and all the better in your work of caring for them." But notwithstanding her sage advice her old eyes were full of pity as she listened to the incoherent muttering of the invalid, which resolved itself at length into words: 'And the moonlight, the moonlight! I shut myself-in the house-so I can't see that. It breaks my-heart!"

"If the doctor would only come! sobbed the young nurse."

"Well, we will try to forget that there is such a thing as moonlight, won't we, Jean? That is the only way to live without going mad. Tear such memories out of your heart and trample on them. Oh, me!"

She commenced lightly and delicately to pick at the coverlids.

grow famous. What is fame? The admiration, in some cases even the adoration, of people you have never seen spackage. Sold by all grocers, and whom you never will see. Then how can fame benefit a woman? A tively at home of all weakness and dis man might manage to live on it, but a ease. woman is different. What a woman needs is somebody to care for her. What she needs is a little love!"

Her voice sank lower. "Take a seashell," she whispered, far you carry it, hold it to your ear your druggist. and you will hear it moaning for the sea-moaning, moaning!"

Her head no longer tossed from side alone moving.

"Since you left me, Jean, my life has been one long ache. My heart is like an empty seashell, moaning for you. I am so far away from you! Come back to me!"

They bent forward in the effort to catch her words.

"Come back to me!" she repeated. "Take me by the hand once more and lead me. I am-so tired-of standing-



"THE GREEN ARBORS WHERE WE SAT AND LISTENED."

alone-of walking-stumbling-groping my blind way about! Come back to me! I am so-tired-tired-so-tired"-Her words once more tottered into incoherence, then stopped altogether, like a clock that has suddenly run down.

The young nurse sank upon her knees and covered her face with her hands. "She is dying!" she cried. "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

The old nurse strode to the head of the bed. She gently pressed the woman's white lids down. After a moment she took her hands away.
"Be quiet," said she. "Look up and

see how beautiful she is now. See how well she rests after life's fitful fever." She laid the woman's hands across her breast.

"When you have lived as long as I have, child," she added softly, "you will find that it is not death that is hard; it is life."

English English.

An English journal recently wondered whether the pronunciation of some of the ignorant classes or of some of the cultivated classes is the worse. For instance, the groom says, "'Arry, old my 'oss."

But the curate says, "He that hath yaws to yaw, let him yaw." And the doctor's wife says, "Jawge, please go to Awthah and awdah the hawse, and don't forget to look at the

fiah." And the vicar says, "If owah graclous sovering wur-ah to die!"

His Past.

Mrs. Jacksen-Speakin ob your husban, Mrs. Wimple, did he evah convey to you dat he done propose to me befo' he married you?

Mrs. Wimple-'Deed he didn't tell me! He was so ashamed ob some ob de fings he did dat I nevah insisted upon a confession.

His Physician.

Sometimes you hear a man say, "my physician," with such an air of proprietorship that you would never dream that he owes the doctor \$50 which the medical gentleman never expects to

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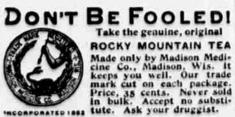
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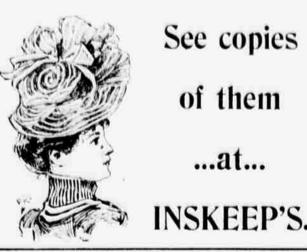
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