

CHEERFULNESS.

BY ANON.

"THE day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all the day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonoured, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep."

This prayer of R. L. S. which is so suitable for nurses—it might have been written specially for them—comes to my mind while reading an article by Lord Riddell on Laughter, in a well known Weekly paper.* Discussing a new book by Mr. J. C. Gregory on "Nature of Laughter," Lord Riddell catalogues the various kinds of laughter and adds an apt quotation for each and after touching on the laughter of amusement, of satisfaction and so forth he speaks of laughter as an aid to digestion. "Laughter has long been recognised by mankind as a valuable aid to digestion. One of the prescriptions of the celebrated Medical School of Salerno, which flourished in the Middle Ages, was

"Use three Physicians,
Still, first Dr. Quiet,
Next Dr. Merriman,
And Dr. Diet."

Pavlov is quoted, the Russian Physiologist who proved that melancholy inhibits digestion while metabolism is stimulated by laughter. Lord Riddell's own belief in the value of laughter is shewn by his suggesting the old adage "Laugh and grow fat" be changed to "Laugh and grow fit." He supports this suggestion by Shakespeare's "A merry heart goes all the way, your sad one tires in a mile-o."

We of the Nursing World will support this theory and could give many illustrations, not only of the sustaining power of a cheerful spirit but of the recuperative power of laughter and its aid in helping to lighten the burden of convalescence and to bring about that state of mind in which one's powers of resistance are at their highest.

This power of drawing out the powers of resistance of one's patients is one of the highest forms of nursing and only found in those to whom nursing is an art and a vocation. We do indeed need "Hearts that feel and eyes that smile" to help us go "Blithely on our way" and also a capacity for using at the right time that wonderful power of laughter.

* John O'London's Weekly.

In a well known little Nursing Home in the Hills a patient once said to me "I thought I was coming here to a Nursing Home, but I find I have come to a House of Laughter."

GOD'S SUNSHINE [OR GOD'S SMILE.]

Never—once—since the world began
Has the sun ever once stopped shining.
His face very often we could not see
And we grumbled at his inconstancy ;
But the clouds were really to blame, not he
For behind them he was shining.

And so behind life's darkest clouds,
God's love is always shining.
We veil it at times with our faithless fears
And darken our sight with our foolish tears,
But in time the atmosphere always clears,
For His love is always shining.

John Oxenham.

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