as Drummond says, "If the stimulus to the exercise of all the innumerable faculties concerned in nutrition be withdrawn, by the conditions and circumstances of life becoming, or being made to become, too easy, there is first an arrest of development and finally a loss of the parts themselves."

Anyhow, in the autumn of 1861, she left the sheltered boredom of Hauxwell for the independent, arduous, and useful life of a village schoolmistress. Her love of children made teaching a real pleasure, and she very quickly made her influence felt among the pupils and their parents. Her early training as a country parson's daughter now proved very useful, and her natural love for the poor and needy made her visits a delight to those who received them. There was no air of patronage about her,—spontaneous goodwill to all, made her sympathy a very real thing; and although the small salary attaching to her position, and the same allowance from her father which had been given to her when at home, must have made extensive or promiscuous charity impossible, she was soon recognised as a "real lady," whose help and interest could be relied upon in all times of anxiety or trouble. The loneliness inevitable to her life was less felt than would superficially appear, by reason of her independence. Her time was her own, or rather she had no ties within the far walls of her tiny

cottage which rendered her accountable to any one else for the arrangement of her leisure hours. Her meals probably were very sketchy affairs, and she soon learned how much she could do without. It was not so hard for her as it would have been to some people, and she never speaks of any backward looking. Faithfully did she fulfil her self-imposed labours, and when, at the end of three years, she left Little Woolston, she left behind her a record of untiring service and carried with her many happy and abiding memories.

A severe attack of pleurisy, arising from a neglected cold, ended in her being sent to Redcar to recover, and the old longing for the discipline of a Sisterhood reasserted itself so strongly, that on her recovery she resolved to attach herself to the "Good Samaritans," who had a community at that place. Her early experiences here were sufficiently arduous and distasteful to have quenched all enthusiasm in any one less in earnest than was Sister Dora, for her manual duties were heavier than she had expected, and her will had to be submitted entirely to that of the Mother Superior. Her first efforts at real nursing were made at a Cottage Hospital near Middlesborough, soon interrupted, however, by an attack of scarlet fever. She was, indeed, specially subject to infection of all sorts, and said of herself, "I always catch everything that's going."

It was in June 1863 that she was sent to Walsall, which was henceforward to be her headquarters, though she little knew what the years had in store for her there. At first she only went to fill the place of another Sister who had fallen ill from overwork in the accident hospital, but her own labours were again arrested by smallpox caught from one of the out-patients. From this, however, she safely recovered, and once more was established in her position as nurse—sometimes alone, sometimes with the assistance of other members of the "Good Samaritan" community.

Early in 1865 she was recalled to Redcar to act as nurse to an insane old lady who was one of Sir James Simpson's patients, but in November of the same year she was again sent to Walsall.

At first she only occupied a subordinate position, but when those in authority saw her capacity for work, and her determination to achieve success as a nurse, they in their turn helped her to develop that genius for surgery which she undoubtedly possessed.

The in-patients at Walsall Hospital were mostly of the male sex, and her influence with them was wonderful. She had also the knack of inspiring confidence, and the poor, half-civilised, mutilated sufferers who were brought in from the coal districts were charmed into patience by her skilful

handling and cheery sympathy. Of experience she soon had plenty, and at last she was thoroughly happy; having found work—real and absorbing—for which all her life she had longed.

Before leaving Redcar she was strongly urged to marry, but, though of a very affectionate nature, she felt that her love for the gentleman in question was not sufficiently real to draw away her heart from the plan of action which she had mapped out for herself.

To do good and to distribute had always been part of her life, and, like the Jebusite of old, she found no pleasure in giving to God that which cost her nothing. She seems to have weighed the comfortable usefulness of the average married woman against the larger activities for which she felt herself so capable, and the latter finally turned the scale. In grappling with the diseases, both physical and spiritual, of others, she hoped also to obtain some "clear shining" for herself upon the intellectual difficulties which assailed her with regard to the authenticity and inspiration of the Bible, and she was not disappointed. A complete surrender of her intellect to historical Christianity resulted in a complete surrender of her personal devotion to the Saviour of men. Henceforward her life was consecrated to Him in whose service there is perfect freedom.

A good doubter, like a good hater, is at any rate

no fossil. There must be some *thinking* in a man who has "honest doubts," and there is far more chance, as Bunyan so quaintly puts it, for pilgrims who stray into grounds the owner whereof is "Giant Despair" than for the vainglorious fools like "By-ends" and "Vain-confidence," who cared so little for the hope set before them that they never even emerged from "By-path meadow." The curse of the church to-day is not doubt, not infidelity, but indifferentism,—the respectable religiosity that has never crystallised the creed which it professes, and thinks that Christianity is either a safety-valve for emotional women, or a sort of moral deterrent for men who are not cultured enough to be philosophical.

People who were too low down in the social scale to come to the hospital were attended to by her in their filthy dens and reeking alleys, and the out-patients increased in number and in faith after her final settlement in Walsall.

These out-patients, however, were nearly the death of her, for, after coming in, drenched with rain, she constantly allowed her clothes to dry upon her while attending to their needs, and at last nature took its revenge. For weeks she lay in an almost dying state, and then, for the first time, it was fully realised what a power she had become in the town. Anxious inquirers besieged the doors of the hospital, and those who had before known but little

of her, became on her recovery some of her warmest friends.

In 1867 it was determined to build a new hospital, and, as funds rapidly flowed in, it was opened in 1868. The entire management now devolved upon Sister Dora, and with almost superhuman fortitude she not only attended to all her multifarious indoor duties, but nursed numbers of small-pox patients in their own homes during an epidemic of that disease which broke out in Walsall just at this time. One striking instance of her innate perspicacity in diagnosis may be given here. A fine young fellow, full of health and strength, was brought to the hospital with his arm terribly mangled by a machine. The doctor prepared to amputate it at once, but Sister Dora, in answer to the man's imploring cry, "Oh Sister, save my arm!" turned to him and said, "I believe I can save it if you will let me try." The doctor was angrily doubtful as to the possibility of doing so, and left all the responsibility upon her, saying, "Are you mad? Mortification will set in, and nothing but amputation can save his life. If you choose to have his death on your conscience, I shall not interfere, but I wash my hands of him."

Day and night for three weeks she watched and tended and prayed over that young fellow's arm. *"How* I prayed!" she said afterwards. At the end of that time she was able to show to the doctor

a straight and healthy-looking arm, which for many years made life worth living to the young workman. The surgeon's magnanimous pride in her achievement was the last drop in her cup of happiness, and she simply cried for joy.

This was not a solitary instance of her skill and perseverance. "Conservative surgery" was not so much practised then as it is now, and it was her delight, whenever she was allowed to do so, to spare no trouble or time in doing her very utmost to save not only the lives but the limbs of those who entered the hospital. Her patience and sympathy with children was quite remarkable to one so impetuous. Though she had put aside the idea of having children of her own, she was a mother indeed to all the dirty, sickly little things who were constantly admitted to the hospital; and the sense of being loved calmed many a frightened child, while a story told by Sister Dora was a treat in which both they and her older patients delighted.

She had many quaint devices for coaxing the men into good behaviour, and one man who swore hard on every possible opportunity, she condemned to say "Poker and tongs, poker and tongs" at intervals, instead of the profane oaths with which he had previously polluted the whole ward.

Many a night she was aroused from her brief and hardly earned rest to attend to sufferers from drunken brawls, or to men who were brought in from some accident in pit or engine-room. When

the little bell at the head of her bed rang, she used to say to herself, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," and straightway hurry down to do her Master's work in His own way, first dressing their wounds, and then giving a word of reproof or warning or sympathy, as the case might require. As one of her poor friends said after her death, "Sister Dora was as like the Lord Jesus Christ as any one could be."

But she never "rubbed in" her religion. It was all about her; as one of her friends told us, "It shone in her face."

Spurgeon says truly, "It is too often taken for granted that wit is wicked and humour sinful, while dulness is holy and solemn stupidity full of grace; but we have our doubts about both propositions, for if dulness were a divine power the world would have been converted by now, for the pulpit has never been without a superabundant supply of it."

"Make you laugh!" said a big Irishman—"she'd make you laugh if you were dying."

Full of spirits, dauntlessly cheerful in the most uncongenial surroundings, she was yet recognised as "real tender-hearted," and her patients found in her a never-failing friend who could always be reckoned upon in every phase of suffering or disease.

[1] Motto of John Hacket, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. Died 1670, aged 78.

It was while at Walsall that her affections really became engaged. Her life, though lived as it were in the midst of a crowd, was singularly lonely. There was no one with whom she could associate on terms of friendly equality as regarded intellectual matters, nor indeed had she much time for things outside the wards of the hospital. Just when least prepared for the temptation, and perhaps, too, when most ready to succumb, she met a gentleman who was her equal in all ways but one, and, like Christina Rossetti, she had to choose between all that this world could give of happiness and fellowship without God, and a life which must often have been very wanting in social communion. It may be that half unconsciously the independence which she had snatched so eagerly had begun to pall, and that a womanly longing for nearer and dearer ties asserted itself all the more strongly because of the self-abnegation which she had practised for so long. Passionately attached to each other, she doubtless hoped that to her might be given the joy of bringing over this man to her own way of thinking.

Be that as it may, after a brief delay she surrendered herself utterly, and for the first time, to the joy of loving, and for a short time they were engaged. She was very human in spite of all her saintliness, and this new happiness was for a while all-sufficing. The best and wisest part of

her nature, however, came to her rescue, and the friend who had before helped her in her intellectual difficulties now urged upon her the alternatives of suffering, which she would probably be called upon to bear did she deliberately marry a man whose highest aspirations ended at the grave. He pointed out that either her own faith would be overthrown, or else that she would have the misery of differing with the one she loved best upon those subjects which she knew to be all-important.

His arguments, and her own sense of their justice, determined her to break off the engagement; but the trial was tremendous, and the mental and spiritual strain almost unbearable.

No wonder that a severe illness ensued. Weakened by the conflict between love and duty, and the sense of injury inflicted on the man she loved by her own temporary failure in principle, her physical health naturally suffered. An attack of blood-poisoning supervened, from which it seemed likely that she would never rally. The doctor feared that her leg would have to be amputated, and when she declared that she would sooner die than submit to such an operation, the poor old surgeon left the hospital in tears, saying, "If Sister Dora dies, I'll never enter these doors again."

Her strong will, no doubt, helped her to recover, and without any period of convalescence she rose