



AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.

Which is Braver in Face of Death.

HOW SOME WOMEN CAN DIE.

Heroism, courage and fortitude are human qualities belonging to the entire human race at large, and are not confined to any age, sex or condition.

Nature is kind, and when the time comes almost every one is ready to die. Yet the period of life at which death arrives, the form it takes, the time for preparation, the circumstances, the temperament of the person about to die, all have an influence and increase or decrease natural bravery.

"Execute this man first," said the great Mme. Roland, pointing to a friend, "for he has not courage sufficient to see me die." Her wish was gratified, and when her own head fell into the basket the executioner relates that streams of blood gushed up like fountains from the large arteries in the neck, something that seldom happens, for terror slows the circulation and numbs the heart.

Mme. Roland died as she had lived—bravely. Hers was sublime fortitude, a radiant courage in face of disaster. The time, the circumstance, the act of saving another pain and anguish, together with the strength of her mind and body, her temperament, made it possible for her to meet death as calmly as if it were a sleep of hours instead of ages.

Women generally have a firmer faith in orthodox religion than men, and its teachings in regard to a future life naturally for them mitigate the sting of death to a greater degree. The rewards that the upright expect to receive in heaven make the transition as easy as stepping through an open door into another house.

One such woman showed quiet fortitude to a remarkable degree. Suffering

severe pain intermittently for years—pain due to an aggravated heart trouble—the time came when all forces tended to extinction, when "death came a-knocking at the door." In turn each member of the family was called to listen to a brief farewell—the little children, husband, father, brothers and sisters—and to receive a loving message for the absent. Then, turning to a nurse she said quietly: "There is nothing more that can be said now, so I shall not speak again." And turning her face to the wall, she rested with closed eyelids for nearly an hour, when "sweet, amiable death," as Shakespeare calls it, struck for ever the tired heart.

For many women it does not require much courage to die—just to stop breathing and be at rest—so hard for them is the strife and turmoil, the strain and struggle of daily living. "Why bother about dying?" said one such humble philosopher. "Either you've reached home or you're nowhere. And both ways are better than this."

The plight of being alive presses heavily upon women who have survived their loved ones and who have outlived their social position.

Off the West Coast of Africa a ship suddenly struck a rock and began filling with water. An officer walked through the bright moonlight telling each passenger that the vessel was going down, that rescue would be impossible.

Some of the men fainted at the thought of those dependent upon them, their business liabilities and matters of personal honour. A rich woman suddenly bethought her that now she would never be obliged to give all her money to a poor little woman whose husband was dying of African fever—a kind deed she had originally planned—and was greatly consoled with the idea that her purse need not now be emptied. Another

woman, who had travelled all over the world, lamented in anger that her life must end off the wretched West Coast of Africa, the last place in the world to die in. An opera singer began a little serenade.

A mother sat in a state room with two sleeping children.

"Will it be long before we go down?" she asked quietly.

"No; only a short time," the officer answered.

"Then I'll not wake the children," she said, and with a calm smile she awaited what seemed to be the inevitable.

Happily all were rescued.

"Listen! I want to speak to you." It is recorded that a woman spoke thus as she stood at the port hole of the Saale, one of the big ships that was burned in the terrible fire in New York harbour not long ago. She was penned in amid the flames that roared all about her. The face was so swollen in its horror of agony that rough men turned away from the lurid spectacle. "Listen! I have a message. Remember it. It is too late to save me. I am dying. It will soon be over. Send a message to my mother!" She gave the name and residence.

"Tell her that my last thought was of her. Tell her to take all my money from the bank; it is hers. God save us all!" She screamed out the words. A burst of flame, and the face disappeared. So died this steadfast daughter.

In the same terrible disaster, there were many acts of heroism. It is also upon record that a stevedore was equally brave, penned in the hold, gaining a porthole for air. He was quite calm, but aware that he was to die. His resignation, as he discussed his terrible surroundings, was an extraordinary exhibition of fortitude, and the men who heard him wept at the horror.

Which are braver in face of death—

men or women? Who can tell? Humanity is brave.

I have never known but two persons absolutely unwilling to die when the summons came. (One was a young girl, who lamented bitterly as long as breath lasted the injustice of her departure from the world before tasting all its joys and pleasures.

The other was a beautiful young woman, the mother of four sweet little children, the youngest but a few days old.

It required all the fortitude of a faithful heart, all the discipline of a well-trained mind, to enable this lovely creature to retain her composure with a steadfast front. She kept repeating reassuring verses from the Bible and from the poets.

"Death once dead, there's no more dying then," was quickly followed by this: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

The question of bravery depends upon the age of the person and the manner of dying. Those who are for a time ill in bed, with lowered vitality and all the processes of life tending toward extinction, gradually become willing to go and die bravely.

When well, strong, and walking about it is not so easy.

As to which sex is braver when facing sudden and unwelcome death, our decision must always remain in doubt. There is no sex in courage.

Suggestions for the Sick Room.

Nothing is so exasperating to an invalid as to have attendants or members of the family whispering about something or other. The sick person is generally in more or less nervous excitement, and, even if it were otherwise, nervous excitement would be produced by the whispering.

The mystery of it is irritating. No matter how weak or apparently unconscious the patient may be, in nine cases out of ten he is trying to hear what is being said.

A loud whisper, "Do you think he is going to live?" or even, "Hush; you mustn't come in here!" is alarming, and lessens the chance of recovery. Whatever must be said should be in an ordinary tone of voice. There should be no mystery about the sick room.

Gas logs, or gas stoves, are now, for two reasons, used much in the sick room. Their use involves less noise, and they are always ready to light. Care must be taken, however, that there is no leak in the connections, for hardly anything is more insidious in its effect on a sick person than escaping gas. A vessel of water with a large surface should always be placed near the stove or hearth where the log is burning, to moisten the atmosphere of the apartment. A boiling kettle on a gas stove, when the stove is used, is even better.

In sudden illness those who attend the sick are too much inclined to fly to stimulants, especially brandy. It is a principle of first aid to the injured that when there is bleeding, even when fainting has ensued, alcohol should never be given, for it causes increased heart action, with a consequent increased loss of blood. This is particularly important to remember in cases of bleeding from the lungs.

When a person faints he should be laid flat on his back, and all articles of clothing that appear tight should be loosened. Fresh air should be admitted to the room, smelling salts or hartshorn should be applied to the nostrils, and the face and head bathed with cold water. If neither salts nor hartshorn can be found, a smouldering rag will often revive the patient. When the person has regained consciousness, if the fainting was not accompanied by bleeding or the result of bleeding, then a small quantity of brandy or other alcoholic stimulant may be safely administered.

Many doctors still encourage the use of the old-fashioned mustard plasters or the flax-seed and bread and milk poultices of our grandmother's time. When a mustard plaster or a hot poultice is removed, it is important to dry the parts quickly and cover with flannel of cotton wool. This is to prevent cold from exposure.

The sick room should be a large and cheery apartment. The windows must be arranged so that the room can be