

next week. This contest has evoked the greatest possible interest amongst the artistic portion of our Nurses.

I HEAR that Miss Mary Bouchier has been re-appointed Matron of the Jessop Hospital for Women, Sheffield, having previously held the same post for a little more than four years, when she resigned in order to take charge of "The Robinson Ray Home for Incurables," near Manchester. This Miss Bouchier held for sixteen months, when she was compelled by ill-health to retire altogether from active work. Miss Bouchier entered upon her duties at the Jessop Hospital on the 22nd of last month, after an interval of nineteen months. Miss Bouchier was trained at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge; had charge of a Male Accident Ward in the Sheffield Public Hospital, also holding the appointment of Night Superintendent at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, altogether having spent nine years in Hospital work. S. G.

THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER.*

An Autobiographical Story.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD, LL.D.,
Author of "David Elginbrod," "Alec Forbes," "Within and Without," "Malcolm," &c.

CHAPTER II.—I TRY.

I HOPE no one will think I try to write like my father, for that would be to go against what he always made a great point of—that nobody whatever should imitate any other person whatever, but in modesty and humility allow the seed that God had sown in her to grow. He said all imitation tended to dwarf and distort the plant, if it even allowed the seed to germinate at all. So if I do write like him, it will be because I cannot help it.

I will just look how *The Seaboard Parish* ends, and perhaps that will put it into my head how I ought to begin. I see my father does mention that I had then been Mrs. Percivale for many years. Not so very many though—five or six, if I remember rightly, and that is three or four years ago. Yes, I have been married nine years. I may as well say a word as to how it came about, and if Percivale doesn't like it, the remedy lies in his pen. I shall be far more thankful to have anything struck out on suspicion than remain on sufferance.

After our return home from Kilkhaven, my father and mother had a good many talks about

me and Percivale, and sometimes they took different sides. I will give a shadow of one of these conversations. I think ladies can write fully as natural talk as gentleman can, though the bits between mayn't be so good.

Mother.—I am afraid, my dear husband (this was my mother's most solemn mode of addressing my father), they are too like each other to make a suitable match.

Father.—I am sorry to learn you consider me so very unlike yourself, Ethelwyn. I had hoped there was a very strong resemblance indeed, and that the match had not proved altogether unsuitable.

Mother.—Just think, though, what would have become of me by this time, if you had been half as unbelieving a creature as I was. Indeed I fear sometimes I am not much better now.

Father.—I think I am then; and I know you've done me nothing but good with your unbelief. It was just because I was of the same sort precisely that I was able to understand and help you. My circumstances and education and superior years—

Mother.—Now don't plume yourself on that, Harry, for you know everybody says you look much the younger of the two.

Father.—I had no idea that everybody was so rude. I repeat, that my more years, as well as my severer education, had, no doubt, helped me a little further on before I came to know you; but it was only in virtue of the doubt in me that I was able to understand and appreciate the doubt in you.

Mother.—But then you had at least begun to leave it behind before I knew you, and so had grown able to help me. And Mr. Percivale does not seem, by all I can make out, a bit nearer believing in anything than poor Wynn timer herself.

Father.—At least he doesn't fancy he believes when he does not, as so many do, and consider themselves superior persons in consequence. I don't know that it would have done you any great harm, Miss Ethelwyn, to have made my acquaintance when I was in the worst of my doubts concerning the truth of things. Allow me to tell you that I was nearer making shipwreck of my faith at a certain period than I ever was before or have been since.

Mother.—What period was that?

Father.—Just the little while when I had lost all hope of ever marrying you—unbeliever as you counted yourself.

Mother.—You don't mean to say you would have ceased to believe in God if he hadn't given you your own way? What is faith worth if it depends on being indulged?

Father.—No, my dear. I firmly believe that had I never married you, I should have come in the end to say *Thy will be done*, and to believe

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