

the nursing public owe to her a debt which can only be repaid by the endeavour to follow humbly in those same footsteps of wisdom and mercy.

But while we thus rejoice, while we congratulate ourselves upon our progress, while the Mother Gamps of the past excite now a laugh and now a shudder, is there not a side to the question which we somewhat ungenerously ignore? Nursing has now become an honourable profession—to a certain extent a “fashionable” career; but what of those who served when it was said “no pure or modest woman could become a nurse in a hospital”; what of those who then smoothed the pillow, though with a rough hand, and gave the needed drink, who did their poor best when no one was *for* them or their profession, and they themselves ignorant, perhaps coarse, perhaps evil, yet still attempting that which was neglected by everyone else?

True, they served for money, as do nurses still; yet they served. Their class has been entirely hustled out of the work, but to them is due the word, “I was sick, and ye visited me.” No kind word, however rough and uneducated; no attempt at comfort or solace; no task fulfilled for the sick, shall lose its reward in the eyes of One who does not always see as men see. Much tender “charity” in many a ward of the past will “cover a multitude of sins,” from which we gather up our neat skirts. We, the better educated and cultivated women of the present, cannot be humble enough as we follow in the footsteps of those women who, though they were rough and ignorant, were yet pioneers in the work of ministration to the destitute sick in hospital.

Those who are acquainted with some of the still surviving nurses of the old régime will endorse the above remarks. To the present day it is not an unknown event in hospital life for the modern nurse, with all her advantages of birth, education, lectures, reading, &c., to be seen hurrying through her work that she may fly off the very instant her time is up; or yet again, idly gossiping, or flirting charmingly, “for indeed there is really nothing to do”—while the old mother in the same ward, who has spent more than half-a-century at the work, has never a moment to spare, is never off her feet, but always busy for the poor creatures under her charge, always finding some service to perform, some ministration to render.

Not for one moment would the writer desire to pit one régime against the other; it would be as foolish as it is impossible so to do: but while we rejoice, let us not throw this frequent stone into the past; let us rather admit that we are one with those who bore the brunt of the fight, and who nursed the sick when no one else cared to nurse them at all. We shall be none the poorer, but all the richer, if we reach a hand back into the past for “a cup o’ kindness yet,” to our nursing sister of auld lang syne.

NATIONAL HEALTH SOCIETY.

AT a meeting, held on Monday afternoon last at Grosvenor House, under the presidency of His Grace the Duke of Westminster, the certificates of the society for attendance at nursing and ambulance lectures were distributed by the Duchess to two hundred and twenty-five ladies who had passed the society’s examinations. The Duchess was presented on her entrance with a bouquet of roses by Master Vivian Hodgson Burnett (the original “Little Lord Fauntleroy”).

The Duke, who is president of the society, spoke in warm terms of the useful work being now carried on amongst rich and poor—classes for the purpose of instruction in domestic hygiene, such as those recently organised by the society at the Parkes’ Museum, home nursing and first aid to the injured being carried on all over London, its suburbs, and the country.

Sir Spencer Wells, Bart., Sir Crichton Browne, F.R.S., Dr. Farquharson, M.D., Dr. Schofield, Dr. Gell, Mr. Owen Lankester, and Mr. Ernest Hart addressed the meeting.

There were present: F. D. Mocatta, Esq., Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, Lady Crichton Browne, Mrs. Priestley, Miss Homersham, Miss Barnett (lecturers), and many other members and supporters of the society, as well as a large and interested audience.

The offices of the society are at 44, Berners Street, Oxford Street. Membership is 21s. annually, which includes admission to all lectures, and copies of all the society’s publications.

DISCIPLINE.

By MISS MOLLETT

(*Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary*).

NO lesson is harder for a new nurse to learn than that of discipline—the subordination of her will unquestioningly to that of another, and to that of one of whom she may be inclined to think slightly. She must learn to carry out orders when she is sure that her own ideas on the subject are far sounder and more correct; to obey regulations and rules whose use she cannot see, but of whose discomfort she is well aware; she must be unceasingly punctual even at times which seem to her unnecessary; she must bend under a law which is by no means always a law of love; never ask “why,” and as seldom as possible “how”; be content to bear unmerited blame without murmuring, to be scolded for mistakes that were made in all good faith; she must not be surprised to find herself vehemently repressed if she ventures on the faintest suggestion, and generally, especially if she is at all forward or clever,

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