

ailment, or nursed your husband out of a cold, or attended a course of drawing-room lectures on Nursing (which I advise you to go on with), that you have a heaven-born genius in that direction, and require no help in dangerous cases far beyond your power to manage. I particularly emphasise this point with regard to the serious diseases of sick little children, for we know that maternal instinct, unilluminated by a ray of maternal wisdom, has consigned thousands of tender lives to an untimely grave. "A little Nursing is *not* a dangerous thing," if exercised within prudent limits, and intelligent auxiliary aid is very useful to a Nurse, especially in Home work.

"Natus, non fecit," has been said of cook and poet; it may be true of a Nurse; but if the gift be inherent (which I believe), the skill must be acquired. The art of Nursing demands a long and arduous course of practical work, much patient thought, and a wide and varied experience to bring it to perfection, and it is only in tried hands that the splendid weapon can be wielded with its fullest force.

The protection of our sick from unqualified Nurses is a matter of public concern. How are we to know the true from the false? There is our familiar friend, "the woman in the next street," for instance, who, having at some remote period of her career scoured the Ward floors, or been made personally responsible for the refulgence of the grates and "brasses," gives herself out as a "Orsepital Nurse" (?), and deludes the credulous into employing her, often to their own destruction. I have been taunted with the question, *Why* incorporate Nurses any more than cooks? *What* is the good of it? Well, I have not thought the matter out for the cooks, so leave them to answer for themselves—they are incomparable hands at it, as a rule—and reply that I regard this matter of incorporation (which is legalized protection), rather from the side of the employer than the employed. For these reasons:—A well man can look after his own interests: if he have any "friction" with his cook he can defend himself; his servant is at his mercy, and a case of "exit" cook may end the dispute. A sick man is a helpless man: he cannot defend himself, nor look after his own interests; he is at the mercy of his Nurse, and if she fail him, it may end in "exit" he. From the nature of things his friends cannot do much for him; what do they know about Nursing in serious cases?

Who can say, then, that our sick do not require the protection of the law, as well as minors and lunatics? Who can deny that the only just, safe and permanent way to do it, is by welding the whole Nursing talent in the United Kingdom into one profession, to be incorporated by Royal Charter? For such a profession I fearlessly fore-

tell a brilliant future, and until such a measure is granted, the widest and noblest powers of the art of Nursing will not be fully developed.

JUSTITIA.

A CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL WITH INCURABLES.

ON a wild December evening, I was leaning at the window of a German country house, watching the desolate scene outside, the forest trees swaying in the blast, and the weird phantoms of snow the whirlwind tore up and drove past, circling and pirouetting in a crazy valse.

It was not the groaning of storm-tossed branches, nor the moan of wind, that I seemed listening to, but the weary wail of human misery. "No hope! no hope!" the words rang,—rose with the storm, and sank to rest with a sob of despair.

It was Christmas-time. Through the length and breadth of Germany Christmas trees were lighted, and Christmas hymns were sung; and the little manger holding the waxen Christ-child, with gay clay shepherds praying, and innocent cotton-wool lambs with match-stick legs standing round it, was being set up on many a Christmas table, by little fat hands that trembled with reverence and happiness. Christmas trees and Christmas treats are dear and sacred to every German heart, and I too loved them well; yet the one I had been invited to that evening inspired me with sad thoughts only.

Not far from the town of Hanover—almost on the boundaries of a forest—stands a large house, bearing over its portal the inscription: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." This is Bethesda, the Home for Incurables, founded by the Henriettenstift, and worked by Sisters trained in that institution.

There is no one who does not respect the Sisters, and sympathize with them in their difficult task, which no one could well consider anything but a sad one.

It was very difficult to imagine any attempt at rejoicing in a Home for Incurables likely to prove a success, and it was with considerable reluctance I had allowed myself to be overruled into going by an energetic friend, whose carriage drawing up at the door interrupted my meditations, and whose smiling face and brisk manner were an unfailling antidote to gloom.

Not five minutes afterwards we were driving through the forest, *my* friend conversing brightly on the merits of *her* friends, the Sisters of Bethesda. The carriage stopped after about an hour's

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