

phere and surroundings, and the veriest tyro knows well enough that bad drainage in such an Institution means not alone death to the patients, but fever and sickness, if not death, to the Nurses who give their lives to the blessed work of tending those who suffer. Yet it will scarcely be believed that such a condition of things exists in the unseen and underground arrangements of a great charity in the midst of our great city that it can now no longer be concealed, and the public hears for the first time of imperfect drainage, such as was considered sufficient nearly a hundred years ago, and which has never been inspected or modernised since it was first constructed, so that rats make their way through the old brick drains, and with them noxious and poisonous gases which sap the life of all who breathe them, and produce a low state of health, even in those who are said to be well !

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"ONE would have supposed that this discovery would have been sufficient to fire the energy and rouse the fears of the most apathetic body of governors in the world, and that supplies of food, medicine, or surgical appliances would be as nothing in comparison with this deadly evil, which ought to be remedied at once and at any cost. It can scarcely be believed that the suggestion of a thousand pounds or more as the probable cost of doing what is absolutely necessary should so alarm the Chairman of this Hospital, that the matter is practically abandoned, and that things are left pretty much as they were, with the exception of a little tinkering proposed by a local authority. I feel very indignant when I think not only of the poor ill-used patients, but of the good women who ought to have every care and every facility for leading as healthy a life as possible whilst engaged in their beneficent work of mercy. Would that I could induce every subscriber or benefactor to a Hospital to defer rendering any financial assistance to the Charity, until by an undoubted and well attested certificate from some unprejudiced engineer, it could be proved that the chief and most important precaution against disease had been already taken by the Governors, and that the Hospital drains were sound and good, and that every possible means had been adopted to prevent the intrusion of sewer gas into any part of the building by the most approved sanitary contrivances of the present time.

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"UNDER such conditions as I describe, it seems to me that the pretty white coverlets on the hundreds of beds ranged around the well-cleaned Wards, in which sickness and suffering dwell, the pleasant and comforting pictures hung on the whitewashed walls, and the bright blossoms and waving greenery, which kind hands have arranged

on the tables to gratify the weary eyes that see them, are but snares and delusions when they divert attention from such facts as I have stated, and do but cover up the neglect of more important matters. It is the cleansing of the outside of the cup and the platter, and neglect of the weightier matters of the law, which we hear denounced every Sunday in our churches, and which prejudice or ignorance disguise, so that the deadly crime of murder is not easily recognised by those who 'mean to do well.' Of all people in the world, those who 'mean well' are I think the most dangerous. With a reputation for goodness and charity, outsiders are apt to trust them, and not to suspect their actions, as though they were likely to benefit themselves, or even as if they did not give of their own time and money to forward any special work of philanthropy.

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"I HAVE, however, a very distinct conviction that those who wish to benefit any institution ought to give their first and earliest efforts to discovering whether those who distribute the funds do so wisely and well, and whether in each department that has to be dealt with there exists at least one competent and trustworthy authority to direct and to be held responsible for the result. I earnestly wish that all those who have money at their command, and desire to use it well and for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, would ascertain that the very foundations of their kindest intentions are not rotten. In schools, hospitals, and other institutions where a number of persons live together, the very first and primary inquiry should be as to the sanitary conditions of the place. If these be neglected, arranged by incompetent hands, what appears to be a benefit may after all only be but a trap for disease and death, into which unwary victims may be allured to their cost ; almost worse than a "coffin ship," of which we have heard so much at different times. What signifies education, scientific skill, philanthropy, or kindness, if every breath is charged with poison, and the atmosphere is contaminated with the germs of disease? I cannot write more strongly on this subject than I feel, and I earnestly hope that I may infuse into the minds of my readers some of my own sense of responsibility in public and domestic sanitation. Better by far to have bare walls in your house than that a whiff of sewer gas should gain access to it through a sink, a bath, or a rain water pipe. Do not buy pictures whilst you have a doubt about your drains, or fill your rooms with choice flowers when you are utterly unable to ventilate them properly."

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It is reported that Mr. Mansell-Moullin has been appointed Lecturer to the Probationer Nurses

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