

## Sanitary Sunday.

### THE VIRTUE OF HEALTH, AND THE LESSONS OF PAIN.

**I**N spite of narrow-minded theologians who would exclude every secular and social subject from the pulpit, it is becoming more and more popular to make the sermon a vehicle for conveying to the indifferent or careless a sense of their responsibility to themselves, to their fellow-citizens, and to the State. Last Sunday was an example. A number of clergy at the invitation of the Church Sanitary Association addressed their congregations on the subject of Sanitation and the value of Health. In St. Paul's Cathedral, Archdeacon Sinclair, who, by the way, is one of the finest specimens of "muscular Christianity" the English Church possesses, opened his remarks with the words: "It is noticeable, my brethren, that our Lord never acquiesced in conditions of disease and bodily misery as an inevitable disposition of Providence, to be met by nothing but submission. Disease is an evil, disease is a departure from health; it is not a natural condition; to a very great extent we manufacture our own diseases. According to our Lord's teaching, the Christian physician, the Christian philanthropist, the Christian sanitary inspector are no less near the divine purpose than the Christian preacher. We need to take to heart the duty of promoting health in ourselves and others, that we may the better serve God and man." The Archdeacon then quoted a number of ancient and modern classics, showing the pre-eminent position assigned to health in relation to virtue, enjoyment, wealth, intellect. "Health," he continued, "like the daily advantages of sun and air, is hardly appreciated till it is lost. The health of the people is of supreme importance. All measures looking to its promotion against the spread of diseases, and to the increase of sanitary knowledge for its purpose, deserve our careful attention. In past ages ignorance and carelessness have had terrible reminders in such awful visitations as the Plague and the Black Death. In the present age the study of Health has become a science eminently needed, by reason of the overcrowding of the labouring classes in large towns, by which every physical evil, every social and religious disease, is engendered and fostered. The imagination sinks back appalled by the facts that are brought to light from time to time. Even in villages many evils exist, partly through ignorance, greatly through indifference. The parson could do much by enlightening his parishioners on the advantages of pure water, satisfactory drainage, dry soil, wholesome food, fresh air, cleanliness. He could see that they knew something about the laws of illness, the principles of infection, of conva-

lescence, and the importance of the first symptoms of disease. The clergy might begin by setting an example in Church buildings which in some cases are insanitary. The space below the floor is sometimes crowded with dead bodies, a musty smell from the dust of ancient mortality pervades the air, ventilation is defective. Never was there a finer opportunity of well-doing than in the second half of the nineteenth century; the principles and laws of sanitation are known, they only need to be universally applied. The Parish Councils offer a good opportunity for stirring up a healthy public opinion in relation to sanitation, and its importance to the community at large and to the race. The management of children, the value of skilled nursing, the evils of stagnation, and of damp, are points upon which the poorer classes of our people need enlightenment."

In St. Margaret's Church, the Archdeacon of Westminster, Canon Farrar, delivered an eloquent discourse on a subject that must ever be as interesting to Nurses as the above, namely Pain. Taking as his text the words "Neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. xxi., 4), he said: "That is a blessed promise, for to us encompassed by our mortal existence, Pain is perhaps the most difficult of subjects to understand, the most inexplicable of the problems which surround our mortal lot. It affects everyone of us in turn, from the youngest choir-boy to the oldest in the congregation. Pain falls under two great conditions, bodily and mental. Take bodily pain: it has been made a terrible indictment against nature, it has even been turned into an argument against the existence of God. Such an argument, however, could not for one moment be held by a Christian. But mental anguish is even worse to bear than physical torture. When the drugged conscience becomes the throbbing conscience, when a soul has felt the burning agony of shame, and sees itself no longer through the mist of self-deceit and self-delusion, but covered all over with guilty stains, and white with moral leprosy, then that soul has suffered the pangs of hell. You will say yes, that the guilty should suffer is not so strange; but the problem is that the innocent also suffer. . . . That is true, but surely there is all the difference in the world between the sufferings of the innocent and the sufferings of the guilty. Faith can feed on suffering and knows no disappointment. Pain, mysterious as it is, has its own blessedness, and its own utility. Can we not at once see the value and necessity of pain as a preservative, as a warning? Pain does not exist for its own sake; it exists to show us that something is wrong which needs a remedy; that some law of nature has been violated to which was due inviolable respect. Hence pain teaches the avoidance of danger, and the maintenance of life. By pain, by ruin, by destruction God

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