

driven in 1885 to their present quarters in Henrietta Street, which occupy the ground of two houses. During all these long years, Mr. Todd has been the moving spirit of the Theatrical Mission. But he has recently had to give up active work in consequence of failing health. Nevertheless, the work goes on; and long may it prosper, through many a New Year.

Theatrical Mission! It sounds as if the stage people were being preached at, and expected to attend Bible classes and Mission services, and all that. Not a bit of it. Bright short services are held on certain days, but the authorities regard it almost as a matter of honour not to undertake any proselytising. Their first object is to get the trust and confidence of the girls, and then they find the opportunity to drop the right word at the right season; and, being the right word, it is sure to have its due weight, whether uttered by Roman Catholic, Dissenter, or Methodist. It is curious, by the way, to study the various religions in their bearing upon the stage. By far the greater number of actors and actresses are Roman Catholics. Is there any analogy? Or is it because of the Catholicity of the religion which refuses absolution to neither the ascetic on the one hand, nor the exuberant, full-blooded creature on the other?

Be that as it may; all we know of the profession is that its members are kind-hearted, generous, impulsive, unselfish, and, perhaps, rash and imprudent; but, whatever their individual shortcomings may be, they all recognise one great commandment, "Do unto others as you would be done by." For instance, if an actress in the Club finds that she has only threepence in her pocket, and she knows that a comrade has tasted nothing for hours, the pot of tea and the bread and butter is forthwith shared.

Since its inauguration, several thousand girls have passed under the influence for longer or shorter periods of the Theatrical Mission—the greater number being either beginners or in the second, third or fourth rank of the profession. However, those in the first rank, possessed as they are, or ought to be, of talent, not to say genius, may be trusted to look after themselves! Actors and actresses have to contend with many hardships which, perhaps, scarcely one in a hundred realise. A great many temptations are placed in their way, which surely might easily be spared them. What right, for instance, has any man to send a card round to an actress whose pretty face or clever bend of the ankle have struck his fancy, begging her company to supper after the theatre. Again, another exasperating evil is signified by the cards stuck up almost at every corner of Macready House warning ladies to be most careful in engaging themselves to go abroad. It appears that some Managers get a certain number to join them on a supposed tour. Then, when they arrive in some such district as, say, St. Petersburg, the bubble Company comes to an abrupt finish, and the workers are left friendless and penniless

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The Link Shell Truss Co., 171, Wardour Street, London, W., have a new truss, it is claimed that by this method of manufacture a truss is provided which will be more comfortable than the one in ordinary use and better able to adapt itself to the various movements of the body, especially if these are of a sudden character. The truss is fitted with a hip-joint regulator by means of which the pressure is increased or diminished as required and with a soft hollow shell pad perforated for ventilation. The Truss as thus completed is an efficient one.—*Lancet*, August 4th, 1894.

in a strange land. Complaints and appeals have been made to the British Ambassadors, but little or no good has resulted. Another hardship, unavoidable perhaps, is the discomfort experienced by those on tour. Lodging-housekeepers seem to vie with each other in the utter desolation and ugliness of their apartments. The Mission endeavours to remedy this evil as far as possible, by keeping a list of, at any rate, respectable lodgings in the various towns, at home and abroad, that are likely to be visited.

Then, again, as to health, the members of the profession are so constantly subjected to extremes of temperatures that it is not to be wondered at that they suffer often considerably in this particular. Especially is this so on wet or stormy nights when, perhaps, having missed the last 'bus, they are compelled to trudge home to their lodgings. But those who are fortunate enough to secure one of the cubicles at Macready House cannot be too thankful for such an advantage, and especially at this season of the year.

But in spite of all hardships, in spite of the harshness and sometimes brutality of managers, and in spite of the rough times to be endured when out of an engagement, there is a frightful fascination about the "boards"; and the magnetic influence of the foot-lights is so strong, that not a few declare they would rather die than change their occupation for anything more certain, and consequently monotonous. Those who are responsible for the Mission fully comprehend the hold that the stage has upon its devotees, and though they know well that it is difficult—though, be it remembered, by no means impossible—to live the highest, best, and truest life, amidst such surroundings, never persuade or suggest that members should give up their work. What indeed can they offer of equal remuneration? But some, owing to religious scruples, have turned their backs on the profession, and engaged themselves in other employments.

And here we have a point of contact with the Nursing profession. Not a few, comparatively, of these have entered Hospitals, have been thoroughly trained, and are now particularly successful Nurses. It would seem, indeed, that Nursing demands many of the qualities which go to make the successful player, such as sympathy, tact, intelligence, readiness to take the cue, and self-repression. But there is yet another point of contact which it is pleasing to dwell upon. Her Royal Highness Princess Christian has identified herself with the Nursing profession. She is also Patron of the Theatrical Mission, which can boast as Vice-Patrons H.R.H. the Duchess of York, and H.R.H. the Duchess of Teck.

Unfortunately, there is no time to dwell upon many useful branches of the Mission, such as its orphanage for a few children, its maternity bags, its country holiday home, its visitors (not only in London, but in other large towns in England and the Continent). But enough has been said to give an idea of that part of an actress's life into which Macready House may enter, and to remind our readers of a fellow profession which does so much to make Christmas the merry, joyous time that it is.

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