

After, which, assuming to demolish Lady Helen Munro Ferguson's logical plea for the efficient organisation and Registration of Trained Nurses by the State, acknowledges the existence of the evils of which she complained, and stands as irrefutable evidence of the necessity for reform.

As we meander with the lady through twelve pages of trickling trivialities, evolved from an essentially mid-Victorian mode of thought, we wonder if it is possible that such illogical verbosity really expresses the views of the Superintendent of the largest nursing school in the United Kingdom, or is merely advanced in the futile effort to obstruct those natural processes of evolution in our work which are absolutely inevitable, and which we quite frankly own would sweep away a system of absolutism which exists in the less progressive of our nurse-training schools. In any case one realises, after reading this article, how hopeless it is to expect that one so completely out of touch with modern nursing thought all over the world, as the writer proves herself to be, should sympathise with a movement which is inspired by the appreciation of the fact that the high privileges and opportunities such as are enjoyed by nurses of the sick entail in each individual case high personal responsibilities.

Thus Miss Lückes' nursing world falls into two classes, as widely divided as were Dives and Lazarus, and we fear if her system prevails that it will be long before the latter reclines in Abraham's bosom. Her "panacea for all the real and imaginary grievances" in the nursing world is the suggestion of a ticket-of-leave system for all certificated nurses, whereby the public are to safeguard themselves from ignorant or unsuitable persons by sending direct to the hospitals when they require a nurse, presumably upon the same economic basis which has proved so eminently profitable at the London Hospital for the last twenty years, and which would effectually prevent certificated nurses ever attaining that freedom of contract with those who employ and pay them which is their indisputable right, and which would keep them in a condition of tutelage throughout their professional career.

We ask well-educated, thoughtful, reliant, and conscientious women, the women who are indeed the backbone of the nursing profession, if they are prepared to accept this demoralising suggestion; if not, let them at once, and in overwhelming numbers, enter their protest against Miss Lückes' autocratic method by associating themselves together to obtain just conditions of work, under the authority of the State, and thus render futile the attempt to prevent their obtaining that degree of professional and personal liberty to which they are unquestionably entitled.

Temperance Teaching among Nurses.

There are many and varied forms of temperance work, but amongst them all a large and influential body of women remains practically untouched—namely, hospital nurses. It is certainly the fact that the taking of alcohol or of drugs is frequently a temptation to nurses, and the excuse generally put forward by those who wish to judge charitably is that the life of a nurse is such a trying one. That statement is true, but it has occurred to me very forcibly of late that there is a great opening for preventive work amongst nurses. It is often because a nurse, during her time of training, has been accustomed to take alcohol in some form that later on in her career she feels she cannot do without it, and, perhaps under some excessive strain, flies to it to an extent which may result in dipsomania or chronic alcoholism. I think that any doctor with a fairly wide experience of nurses would be able to confirm this statement from his or her personal knowledge. It is surely possible that some of these sad cases may be the result of the lavish manner in which alcohol is supplied to the nurses in a great number of the large hospitals. Is not this, then, a field where strong influence might be brought to bear by one of the temperance societies?

What is the state of affairs in many of the hospitals? To take a very typical case, and one of which I speak from experience, in one of the large general hospitals in London the nurses are allowed to have, both at dinner and supper, bottled ale or stout, milk, or soda-water. The nurses come to their dinner straight from the wards where they have been serving dinners to the patients, probably feeding a few helpless or obstreperous patients. They are tired, and don't feel very much inclined for their own meal, which frequently is not nicely cooked, nor served in an appetising manner. What is more natural than that a girl who has no strong temperance principles will think, or have it suggested to her, that a glass of stout will "do her good"? And, for the moment, it does seem to pull her together, and perhaps makes it less impossible to eat some of the unpalatable food which is set before her. More especially may this be the case with new probationers, who are tired both by the unaccustomed hard work and by the strangeness of the new life.

This is what happens at dinner. By supper-time the nurses are *more* tired, and the food is *less* inviting. The nurses are allowed to leave the dining-hall as soon as they like and go to their own rooms. One nurse will sit down at the table, play with a bit of bread and cheese, and drink her glass of stout or ale. Others will simply walk through the dining-hall on the way to their bed-

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