

devotion and demands self-discipline, wisdom, and training. Anyone who is at all in touch with district nursing will readily admit that the nurses take all these qualities into their work—the work that takes them into the homes of the honest mechanic, into the living places (or rather, I should say, into the *existing* places) of the respectable and worthy poor; and even into the haunts of the paupers, the slave of poverty, if not the actual prey of licentiousness and intemperance. Through their ministrations in countless numbers of cases the integrity of the home is maintained, and practical lessons in the value of sunlight, fresh air, and water are given that will prove to be more powerful remedial and preventive agents than any amount of medicine, either judiciously or injudiciously prescribed. They never lose sight of the fact that, all other things being equal, fresh air, sunshine, and water are among the most powerful forces we can pit against that grim couple—Disease and Dirt. When we add to that their sympathetic and skilled care of those sick and in trouble, and their almost unlimited tact displayed many times under circumstances trying in the extreme, then shall we begin to realise that nurses are a power in this particular phase of social and philanthropic effort.

“Their work will be found to be especially effective in the fight with tuberculosis. After the State has done all it can or will do towards the establishment of special sanatoria for the care of consumptives, after the municipality has established special hospitals and free dispensaries for similar purposes, after continuous distribution of free literature giving simple and explicit directions for the care of those thus afflicted, the dread disease will still be found in our midst, and the truth will sooner or later force itself upon us that, in the end, the monster must be fought and conquered in the homes of the poor. That is now his stronghold and will eventually be his final lair. Unless we can dislodge him thence, we can never be safe from him. Insufficient and improper food, impure air, hard toil, and close confinement are his strongest allies. In the hand-to-hand conflict that must come (and the sooner the better) none will do more effective work than the district nurses. They thoroughly understand the conditions of these homes, and have won for themselves through their own untiring efforts that love and confidence of the people which will ensure obedience to instructions given by them. Their personal influence and constant contact with the people will be to them an arm of strength that must be reckoned with in the coming struggle.

“Then, too, there is a great field for nurses' work in the public schools. Perhaps there has been no more impressive fact brought to light in the management of the Japanese forces in the great war now being waged than the way in which they have *prevented* disease in the rank and file of their men.

Prevention of disease is surely more glorious than the healing of it. We in America cannot afford to let that object-lesson go unheeded. In our schools is an army greater than those on the fields of Manchuria or floating on far eastern waters. They represent the future strength or weakness of this nation. Among them are communicable diseases that can be prevented; care for slight ailments can be given during school hours, thus preventing loss of time to the pupils, and proper personal and hygienic instruction imparted to children approaching and of the age of adolescence. This is all of infinite importance to the children, and through them to the future of the people. It is essentially nurses' work. The good accomplished in the home will be strengthened by the instruction given in the schools, and *vice-versa*. Too much emphasis cannot be given to the importance of this work in the schools.

“So much for the *Individualisation* that makes for the actual elevation and redemption of the poor, and the part the nurse must take in it in times of sickness and of health:

“We will now consider her part in the *Consolidation*, that makes for the provision of the means and methods necessary for the carrying on of the work.

“Consolidation is for the most part represented by charity organisations—charity spelled with a small *c*—and these are managed by Executive Boards—I take the ground that a well-balanced board should be composite in character. There should be on it those who understand the practical management of its finances, those who are competent to deal with the ethical problems that present themselves, and those who can intelligently and authoritatively interpret to the management the duties and needs of the nurses employed in the work. For this last duty, all other things being equal, none are so well qualified as trained nurses—particularly those who are not engaged in district nursing—the reason for which you will find in what follows; with such representation upon the board, the nurses engaged in the practical work will always be sure of a sympathetic and professional understanding of their efforts by the management. Nor will this influence and understanding be confined to the members of the board only. Owing to the nature of the work engaged in by many of them, they have frequent opportunities of discussing the subject with people of means and power, people who only have to be shown the value of the work in order to secure from them their hearty co-operation and support. Taking this into consideration, it would be impossible to estimate the value of their work and influence, it is so rational, so far reaching, and so constant. It is a matter of the greatest surprise to me that such Executive Boards do not eagerly seek for members from among this class of workers. But such, I am told, is not the case—in fact, the opposite is true. Speaking of the work I know the best,

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