

New Year Greetings to our Readers.



Niki pauses to wish all our readers a Happy and Successful Year.

“THE NEW YEAR occasions a wave of kindly feeling, and we extend to all our readers the hope that happiness will be their fortune, and as we command content by contributing to that of others, we are mainly responsible for our own serenity of mind and content is ours if we deserve it. No group of professional women have their duty more clearly defined than Registered Nurses, as none are equally privileged to serve the people from birth to death, and as life is sweet we are giving all the time. Let our aim, therefore, be to maintain our right to serve with all the skill and efficiency possible, and to tenaciously climb higher and higher up the path of knowledge and skill.

With tenacity of purpose it can be done—it must be done.”—ETHEL GORDON FENWICK.

In these New Year Greetings from the pen of Ethel Gordon Fenwick, our remembrance of her was her great love for animals, and we feel the photograph of “Niki” a fitting gesture of her wide sympathies.

Evasion of Responsibility.

THE COUNTRY’S CONCERN, awakened by the increasingly frequent appearance of youthful offenders in the criminal courts, calls, in the first place, for fundamental changes in the nation’s conception of Parenthood.

We read, with great interest, the following article published on December 13th, 1952, in the Daily Mail:

“The sound of the shot which killed Police Constable Miles should reverberate in the ears of our generation and give us no peace. No peace until we discover, and subdue, the influence that pulled the trigger.

“We know that the fatal bullet was fired by a boy named Craig, aged 16. But what was behind Craig?

He and his associate, Bentley, are not isolated phenomena today. We delude ourselves if we think that.

“There is something in our midst which the British people have not known before. It is the menace of the evil child—or, as it would be expressed in some countries, the problem of the dead-end kids.

“Let us not think there is something inherently wicked in these children, for that would be against Nature. The young are innocent until they are corrupted—and if they are corrupted the adult world is to blame.

“Much attention has been given to the illiteracy of Craig and Bentley. And rightly too. What a dreadful commentary on our system of education that some of its products cannot read or write.

“It would be nonsense, however, to say that illiteracy is synonymous with wickedness. Many people can neither read nor write yet are of the highest character. Literacy is, after all, a modern attribute. Britain was not a criminal nation before the Education Act of 1870.

“Indeed, there are good reasons for believing that the British were a better living, more God-fearing people than they are now. Can it be that in bestowing literacy we have taken away something else?

“It is that question which we of the mid-twentieth century must ask ourselves, and answer too, as we value the future of our race. Have we, in giving a little enlightenment, taken away a great faith?

“It would seem so. The certitude of our fathers has gone, and in its place is all too often a vacuum—an emptiness of the soul and spirit which is seen in a growing scepticism and a loosening of moral codes.

“It may be that we have all set too much store on the material and not enough on the spiritual. The Welfare State is an admirable thing, but it has placed more emphasis on rights than duties.

“To argue from this that we should abandon education and welfare would be ridiculous. All that we have to remember is that education means more than the three R’s and welfare more than bodily well-being.

“Because we have forgotten these things we have the cosh-boy with us. But we were warned of his coming. In 1943 the Women’s Institutes published a book called ‘Our Towns,’ which wrote in unforgettable terms of some of the dirty, foul-mouthed, undisciplined children of the cities.

“Their condition was not due to poverty, but to the low standards of their parents, and to the absence of religious teaching. There is too little of that in the schools.

“We do not believe that ‘comics’ and the films are responsible for child crime. Boys have been reading ‘penny dreadfuls’ for generations without coming to any harm because they had something else as a counterweight.

“This was the beneficent influence of home, school, and church, coupled with a healthy fear of the stick. If we would only return to those simple but age-old specifics the cosh-boy would soon be a figure of the past.”

We warn our colleagues that there are signs of this lack of responsibility seeping into the Nursing Profession.

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