

—loss of nerve power. In either case it becomes necessary to give the stomach some assistance in its work, and therefore there has arisen an immense multitude of artificial digestive agents. Amongst these the various extracts of Malt hold a well deserved place, because they contain the important constituent known as *diastase*, which is the most active digestive of starchy matters. Amongst the various malt extracts which are at present on the market that known as the Standard Malt Extract is deservedly esteemed, for analysis has shown that it is not only pure, but that it contains an unusually large proportion of *diastase*. And practical experience, which has shown that it is agreeable to the palate, free from harsh or sickly flavour, and that it will keep well for some time without change, goes to support the claim which is made, from the theoretical standpoint, to its dietetic value. The manufacturers of this also produce a preparation of the Malt Extract mixed with Cod-Liver Oil, which is most valuable, especially in the treatment of consumptive patients. Further particulars can be obtained from the manufacturers, the Standard Malt Extract Company, 23, Billiter Street, E.C., or the preparations mentioned can be obtained through any chemist.

Outside the Gates.

THE CRY OF ISHMAEL AND HAGAR.



MADAM, — I am intensely glad to see a discussion going on in your paper on this very important subject. And I would take this opportunity of thanking you for the progressive tone you are taking in the Record. We Hospital Matrons have little time for reading, and it is therefore of great moment to us that in our technical paper—the NURSING RECORD—we should get a peep outside the gates into the wide world of “women and things.”

I am the more interested in this particular subject, having had charge for some time of a Maternity Hospital in New York city, where some three hundred such babies as are indicated in the title of my letter had the misfortune each year to open their eyes and encounter the cold comfort and the indifference of the world—a neglect to which these poor waifs cast up on the shore of life so soon have to accustom themselves.

There are many points of view from which to regard this question—the moral, the eco-

nomic, the social and legal. By the laws of our country the illegitimate child has no human rights. By the law and custom of the United States, the illegitimate child and his mother have a distinct claim, not only on humanity, but on property.

If any woman in New York State, and in many other States of the Union, can prove that she has lived with a man as his wife, she can, on his death, claim for herself and her children a portion—I believe it to be a very fair portion—of his estate. I hope later to look up the question from the legal status point of view, and shall have much pleasure in sending you a further contribution on such a “burning question.”

As Matron in Charge of the New York Maternity Hospital of which I have spoken, my experiences were most interesting, and perhaps to some extent unique. In England we are somewhat apt to regard children as superfluities, because family life with us is decidedly elastic, and most “quivers” are very full. But this is not so in America. As a recent novelist pointed out, it would almost seem in some of the towns of the United States as if the Pied Piper of Hamelin had passed that way and absorbed unto himself the bulk of the little ones. And where the supply is so limited, demand is necessarily increased, so that the American-born illegitimate child has possibilities and prospects opened up to him which do not exist in this country.

By the laws of New York State every facility is given in the various Institutions under State control for the “adopting” out of deserted and illegitimate children, or children whose parents are unwilling or unable to provide for them. In the New York Institution in which I was at work, it was a common experience to receive visits of “inspection” from childless couples, or from those who had only one child, with a view to selecting one or more of our “waifs” with which to found a family. “Now I must have a little girl with blue eyes and black hair,” one would say, while another would make flaxen locks a *sine qua non*. Some were quite willing to take brother and sister. When due selection had been made the transfer was made in legal form. The new parents undertook to train the boy or girl to some means of livelihood, or to suitably provide for them in another way. I can look back with pride to various “transfers” of poor babies with which I was connected, and am very glad to think of many little lives now spent happily and comfortably in homes with fathers and mothers none the less kind because they are so only by adoption. One instance I may recall of a charming little girl-baby, illegitimate by birth, who was adopted by a Bishop, and is growing up in a beautiful home sur-

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