

to the conclusion that the Schools were detrimental to the welfare of the patients, they would only, to my mind, act up to their responsibilities if they closed them (the Schools), however regrettable that step might be. It would be an act of duty to the supporters of the Hospital, to them who gave of their abundance, and to them who contributed of their toil, whose sick they are bound to protect from any abuse of teaching privileges. A living philanthropist has said, "There is nothing so sacred as a fellow-creature," and when that fellow-creature is sick or injured, helpless, poor, how much more sacred he!

Now, as to Nursing as it affects the public. Nursing is an industry, in so far that it is an honourable means of livelihood for a skilful woman; and no member of the community should be more trusted in the trials and troubles of serious sickness than a good Nurse. But Nursing differs from all other industries, in respect that it deals not with precious metals nor materials, but precious lives. In all other occupations the errors of incapacity fall upon the incapable often with a severity out of all proportion to the offence. In Nursing it is not so: the errors of incapacity fall upon the innocent, often doing irreparable mischief. How great the need, then, to place it in tried and thoughtful hands!

I know of nothing in life more pathetic than the helplessness of the sick. Manhood's strength laid low; the tender graces of womanhood quenched; childhood's winsome wiles forgotten, on that awful bed of suffering and pain. My heart rushes to my pen as I ask, Can ever woman betray a trust like this? And what is more traitorous to our sick than incapacity? A broken reed, and a very apple of Jordan to the fevered lip. And what is amateurism but incapacity? What is to be done, then, to check the advances of this insidious evil creeping into our midst? Not much at present; but in the future, Incorporation—the Aaron's rod that will swallow up the rods of all false diviners—will compel incapacity to hide its dishonoured head. Like the speechless guest, who, coming unbidden to the wedding feast, and not having on the wedding garment, it will be cast out.

M. HUMFREY.

HOSPITAL MEMORIES.—No. II.

A PLASTER PARTY.

OF the many social gatherings constantly taking place in this great city, there is one which we imagine to be peculiar to the out-patients' department of a Children's Hospital—namely, a Plaster of Paris Party; and it, like most other assemblies which meet by particular

invitation, requires particular preparation, and perhaps in the preparation causes more personal fatigue to the hostess than is experienced by the ball-giving ladies of a London season.

The Sister will send out her invitations in good time, in order that incorrect addresses may be rectified—for out-patients belong, as a rule, to a shifting population—and that no excuses, such as washing-day, or a "head that's like to split," or the temptation of a day's work, may interfere—a matter of great importance to many poor mothers, "which, of course, me bein' a widder," as they explain. Then there is the careful cutting of the bandages, for the muslin has been well boiled to remove stiffness, and declines to tear. The baking of the plaster till it is piping hot; and last, not least, let those who know say how many hours of careful rolling and rubbing will be expended before the bandages are ready to be placed gently in their tin cases like so many soft balls of snow. For the parties that I used to give, each bandage was five inches broad as a rule, and five yards long, and weighed three-quarters of a pound. For a large gathering some five dozen were required, necessitating seven or eight hours of careful rubbing, and much aching of back and limbs on the part of "Sister," for to no less skilful hand could the preparation of these *chef-d'œuvres* of the rolling art be entrusted.

However, all is ready at last, the out-patients' rooms arranged and warm, couches and mattresses well protected and in order, and the little guests beginning to arrive, accompanied by their anxious and adoring female relatives. Those children who have had jackets on before reassure the trembling new comers, and give much benefit of their early experience to their little friends. "He won't 'urt yer. They puts it on warm, yer know, and Sister'll give yer a picture, or summat a'ter'ards." The young rogues are very conversant with the contents of Sister's cupboard. She, meantime, is putting the finishing touches to her preparations, collecting vests, and safety pins, cotton wool, and dinner pads, or irons for insertion where helmets are required, plenty of hot water, basins no end; salt at hand, pens, ink, and note-books, and the different little fads required by the operator for his personal use, for has not each man his own infallible means of removing the clinging plaster from his immaculate finger ends. His apron and sleeves are ready, and she has not forgotten the draw sheets to pin over the attendant mothers' best dresses, and a little back-ground of sweeties and picture-books; while a few furtive cups of tea are being enjoyed by the elders of the party, the tea-pots and cups adorning the end of a bench, for no table could be spared for such frivolity on so solemn an occasion.

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