

not occurred to them hitherto that they verily earn the money by their abasement, that they sell favours, which should be priceless, to persons who only pay for what seems to be value received; else, if they must earn in order to give, would they surely earn in some more seemly fashion. Doubtless they will retort that they do well if only they foster a spirit of philanthropy in undeveloped spheres, but it may be asserted without cynicism that those who can only be brought to coquet with charity as a means to a social end are no great acquisition to any cause. We do not question the motives of the actors and singers, who are always zealous of good works. Indeed, we might complain that their kindness is often imposed upon, were it not that they find an inevitable guerdon in the advertisement, which is necessarily part of their stock-in-trade. By all means let them congregate, sing, dance, juggle or jump, to the eventual solace of the poor: this is their profession and they are giving nothing away by the performance. Let us also prefer those entertainments whose proceeds are allotted to charitable purposes, but this without arrogating to ourselves the roles of Lords and Ladies Bountiful or any other travesty which shall befit us just as ill. Qui meruit, ferat the cap and bells; nor let us grasp a gratitude we have by no means earned."

WE are in cordial agreement with our esteemed contemporary, and in the name of nurses thank it for its scathing criticism of such sham charity. But it is, perhaps, the worst feature of this show that it supports a system which the best nurses condemn. They not only strongly disapprove of being used as the stalking horse of cheap philanthropists, but, as the early history of the R.B.N.A. proves, nurses are quite able and willing to defray the expenses of their own association. It is simply to meet the extravagant expenditure of the last five years that appeals for charitable aid have been rendered necessary, and they come with a very bad grace from those who have so woefully mismanaged the nurses' affairs.

THE *World* says: "Everybody was on the tip top of expectation to see "La Belle Otera" dance, and she did not disappoint them."

ONE gentle "lady with the lamp" inspired the noble profession of nursing some forty years ago. Surely, surely, she never contemplated living to see her almost sacred vocation contemptuously supported by the "ladies of the ballet." Let us hope that the details of this grievous affair may be kept from her.

"Nurse Isabel."

A NURSE WE HAVE MET.

THE nurse of the period, as reflected in the literature of her time, must always be of interest to the nursing profession, and nurses, therefore, will no doubt carefully read the study of an up-to-date nurse, as portrayed by Miss Beatrice Harraden in her new book "The Fowler." And, indeed, Nurse Isabel affords us food for reflection. In bygone days we had a picture of Mrs. Gamp as the typical trained nurse, and it is universally recognized that the picture, if somewhat exaggerated, is *true*. Later, the fashion was to depict the nurse of fiction as an almost perfect heroine, and this picture, though also exaggerated, was to some extent true also. For the re-action following upon the realization of the condition of the sick in the hands of Mrs. Gamp was strong, and the result was that women of culture and refinement entered the ranks of trained nurses. The conditions of service, however, were hard, the life unattractive, and, therefore, only those imbued with a real love of humanity, and possessed of sufficient grit to carry them over many rough places, became professional nurses.

THESE pioneers without doubt merited the high place which they were accorded in the public estimation, but with the reform of hospital nursing, the advance of nursing education, and the improved arrangements for the comfort of the nursing staffs in public institutions, a considerable alteration in the *personelle* of nurses has taken place. The conditions of work no longer deter all except those who are in "deadly earnest." The life of a nurse attracts the average woman now-a-days. There is the girl who would have probably been a governess, but who prefers the greater freedom of hospital life. There is the one who would have been an assistant in a shop, but who thinks nursing more "genteel." Nursing is, upon the whole, probably the most lucrative profession, excepting that of medicine—in which a large initial outlay is required—upon which a girl can embark at the present day, so that there is little wonder that all hospital Matrons are inundated with applications for vacancies, and that women of varying suitability enter the nursing ranks.

HENCE the point of view of the novelist when describing the trained nurse. The heroine is still with us, not confined to one section of the social scale, but recruited from all. Opportunity, or special circumstances, reveal her to us sometimes, but more often she is to be found, perhaps, patiently and thoroughly doing her daily work, giving to her patients a glimpse of what the life

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