

helplessness fostered, and a cult of ill-health held up to a race that must lose empire when it loses vigour."

Mr. White infers:—

- (1) Whatever factor is wanting in dealing with distress, there is no lack of money.
- (2) That the struggle for life among professional philanthropists tends to pauperise the masses by killing the wish for self-help, and thus bequeaths to posterity a legacy of moral and physical unfitness greater than that inherited by the present generation from its predecessor.
- (3) That so far from the Queen being honoured by the numerous projects for multiplying and maintaining the unfit, Her Majesty is dishonoured, the country imperilled, and irremediable wrong inflicted on posterity.

The Remedies suggested would have a very salutary effect upon the physical and moral health of the nation. Mr. White would re-people the rural districts with healthy men. He says:—

"The change required is in public opinion. We must abandon the formulæ that the decay of agriculture is really a popular boon; that every poor man in need of help is an innocent victim. Of the London and New York unemployed, at least two out of five are not only unemployable, but unworthy of help. In other words, a sterner attitude by the average man towards pauper voluptuaries is essential if England is to begin to deal with her unfit. Consider the army of 26,000 tramps who infest the high roads of England, rob and rape when they dare, and use the casual wards as hotels. Extirpate them by immuring them for life, not because they are wicked, but because their stock is corrupt. Until we are content to see the idle perish, if they choose to perish, little change for the better in the health of the people can be looked for. If public opinion demands the maintenance of the idle poor, maintain them; but immure them."

"The next stage in the process of sterilizing unfitness and levelling up the national stamina is for generous people to do more of their own charity for themselves. . . . No one should be allowed publicly to appeal for money unless his accounts are subjected to a public audit. A certain standard of accounts should be exacted from public charities as from public companies. . . . If we are to become a healthy people, the permanent segregation of habitual criminals, paupers, drunkards, maniacs, and tramps must be deliberately undertaken before Old-Age Pensions are seriously thought of."

"Secondly, the marriage law requires overhauling. In England, a girl may be married at twelve years of age, and a boy at fourteen. A limit of age suitable to a sub-tropical country does not harmonize with our climate and social conditions. A medical certificate of physical and mental fitness for the marriage state should be exacted by a wise State before union, in the interest of the unborn, who deserve justice no less than their parents deserve compassion. Such a condition involves no hardship. A few wealthy and aged bridegrooms might feel aggrieved. If, however, people are unfit to assume parental responsibilities, and are medically pronounced to be unfit, social stigma should justly follow defiance of the highest social law."

Professional Review.

"PRACTICAL NURSING."*

(Continued from page 340.)

HYGIENE.

Our review of this work last week was confined to the first chapter which dealt with important points concerning "Nursing as a Profession." Subsequent chapters deal with the actual duties of a nurse in connection with the discharge of her duty. It is noteworthy that in the first place is put "the hygiene of the ward." Time was when to keep the sick room warm, or cold, was all that was required of a nurse; but now that her profession is reduced to a science, this is not enough. She must understand the principles of ventilation, so that the air supplied to her patients is fresh as well as warm; she must know the composition of pure air, and endeavour to keep her patients constantly surrounded by an atmosphere which as closely as possible resembles it; she must constantly keep before her, by careful watching the temperature of the ward, judging it, not by her own inaccurate sensations, but by constant reference to the thermometer; and she must further bear in mind that while a glare of light is impermissible, that plenty of sunlight is good both for body and mind, and helps to purify the atmosphere of the ward. All these things are insisted on by the authors, and it will be seen, therefore, that even before a nurse begins her work for individual patients, her senses, highly educated, must be all on the alert if she is to fulfil her duty with regard to placing them in most favourable surroundings.

WARD WORK.

The next chapter deals with the furniture of the ward, which should consist only of what is absolutely necessary. The linen is a most important item of the ward appliances, and one concerning which, we may add in passing, we have in English hospitals much yet to learn. Daintiness and justifiable pride as to the condition and arrangement of linen are not common in this country. If it is whole, we congratulate ourselves on its condition. It is a revelation to visit some of the exquisite linen cupboards of our French neighbours, and wholesome that we should then feel our shortcomings in this respect. In these days, when the proportion of nurses to patients necessary for their efficient care is a matter much discussed, the opinion of such an authority as the Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital is valuable. It is laid down that in a ward containing thirty beds there should be a Sister, a certificated nurse of three years standing, a staff probationer in her second or third year of training, and two probationers in their first year, on day duty. On night duty there should be one certificated nurse and one probationer. This staff, with a ward-maid, and with outside help for the cleaning of the ward floors, should be adequate. Some useful remarks are made as to the necessity for courtesy. Courtesy from nurses to their official superiors, to each other, to patients, to patients' friends; this is surely a quality of the first importance in an ideal nurse, but too often the good work of nurses having many excellent qualities is marred by carelessness in this particular, we are glad, therefore to notice that attention is directed to this point.

* By Isla Stewart, and Herbert E. Cuff, M.D., F.R.C.S. Blackwood & Sons.

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