

free half day in the week. How fortunate that now I can hear a good concert, or go to a classic play. I will go to the play."

But the hoped-for pleasure is spoiled through weariness. At midnight to stretch one's self upon one's couch seems the only thing worth while. "If it were only not so hard to rise after five and a half hours' sleep. The next half day I will be more sensible. I will rest myself well; perhaps I will take a walk. How long it is since I have enjoyed the woods and meadows, the blue sky, the sunshine! But my world is now the ward and my little room. How is it that I cannot always realize this?"

Can now those who, standing apart from the life of the nurse, consider it objectively, comprehend why it is forced into so narrow a groove? The sister must almost completely give up family, friends, and outside interests. She becomes more and more one-sided, and the consciousness of being behind the times, the left-out feeling when with people of wider outlook, together with the increasing lassitude of every year's work, reduce her finally to a condition of dulness.

The wish to carry on her work, which she truly loves, under easier conditions is indeed there, but she lacks the mental elasticity to struggle against circumstances, especially when to do so might risk her livelihood. These are the reasons why it is so seldom that a voice is raised from the ranks of nursing sisters. From my long service as head of a nursing staff I can assert that many distressing complaints reach my ears, and every year the conviction grows stronger that the old system must not be allowed to continue.

The fear will be expressed on many sides that if a nurse is able to cultivate outside interests her work will deteriorate. I believe, on the contrary, that her cheerful devotion to her work is often lost or changed to a spiritless routine, as a result of the excessive drains now made upon her strength. Health and physical and mental freshness are due to our work. Everyone knows the tonic influence of a cheerful, vigorous, and sympathetic personality upon the sick. It is being acknowledged in all branches of labour that rest and recreation are necessary if one will bring fresh energy to one's work. Why may not this principle be carried into nursing?

Many who wish to study nursing are by its hardships compelled to decide against it, and to vary the theme at the beginning of my paper, I can say that many more educated women would find in it a congenial occupation if a reformation in the system of work were possible. That this reformation must come slowly I well know. In Germany the best intentions must often wait for the necessary financial means. But it is a good sign when the general public begins to feel interest

in the nurse's work and life. When that happens liberal minds will advocate more humane conditions and the nurse's labours will be mitigated. I hope that the Hamburg Association, which, though young, has already so much to be proud of, may become more and more emancipated.

Temperature 90° in the Shade.

Jottings by a Member of the Matrons' Council.

"Of making many books
There is no end; and much
Study is a weariness of the flesh."

It is hot, so hot, that the idea of Duty with a capital D, Work with a capital W, and all kindred and allied subjects, are repugnant to a well-balanced mind. The whole work of the civilised world is carried on under a thinly veiled protest; there is a general feeling abroad that to demand any exertion from anybody is an absolute cruelty. This is beautifully exemplified in the *Daily Mail*—which lauds Sir Redvers Buller for stopping drill and outdoor work for the soldiers and sending them back to barracks "because of the heat." Of course, I am a mere civilian, and a woman at that, but I really cannot see why soldiers in shirt-sleeves and shady khaki hats should be less capable of doing mild outdoor work in the sun than farm labourers, who certainly do not retire from the hayfield and the cornfield "because of the heat." I have a gardener, over sixty, he has been spending some distinctly hot hours, with a cabbage leaf in his hat, digging up potatoes, cutting lettuces, and so forth; whilst the nurses in the wards—temperature 90 degrees—have not been able to abate their exertions; and the engineer in his engine-room—temperature 106—has continued to run his engines. Road-makers are at work laying tramlines, bricklayers build, painters' paint, civilian work is trying and thirsty but not impossible—only apparently soldiering. I don't understand it.

Why does a certain section of the daily press talk about our soldiers as if they were children—and badly treated children too?

I remember at one time there was a wave of sympathy for nurses—I nearly said maudlin sympathy; all nurses were angels, badly treated angels, and they were talked over in language that was exaggerated in the extreme. The pendulum swung back with considerable violence. Then people gradually discovered that nurses were merely women, ordinary women, with good and bad points like other human beings—only they worked a little harder, that was all—and now they are being left much more alone, and there are

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