

Annotations.

JUSTICE.

Week by week the Church provides that its members shall pray for magistrates and judges that they "may truly and indifferently (impartially) minister justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice," a petition which would seem to be specially necessary at the present day, when the wickedness and vice of the rich can be condoned by a nominal fine, while the same crimes in the case of the poor are visited with imprisonment and the subsequent stigma attached to those who have been in gaol. Of the inadequacy of the sentence passed by Mr. Justice Bigham on Mrs. Penruddocke for her cruel treatment of her little daughter little remains to be said, for the spontaneous outburst of indignation on the part of the Press has been deep and widespread, and the one hopeful sign in connection with the sentence is the unanimous condemnation which has been accorded to it. No class of the community will appreciate more than nurses the refinement of the cruelty which meted out harshness and ill-treatment to a nervous, sensitive child because of a physical infirmity over which she had no control. Such a child needs, and should receive, more than usual care and affection, and, as a rule, even the most brutal and abandoned parents realise that physical defects on the part of their children call for special kindness and love on their part. The vanity which resents any defect on the part of an offspring, and wreaks its vengeance on the innocent exciting cause of this despicable feeling, is deserving of the deepest reprobation. We are glad to think that above the voice of the judge who imposed so inadequate a punishment on this heartless and callous mother is heard, in unmistakable terms, that of the nation which has passed sentence upon her with no uncertain sound.

THE KING'S HOSPITAL FUND.

The Prince of Wales, who presided at York House on Monday over a meeting of the General Council of the King's Hospital Fund, moved the adoption of a report recommending the distribution of one hundred thousand pounds, twice the amount available in the previous year. The report recommended that the additional sum should be devoted to four principal objects, viz.:

1. The opening of closed beds.
2. The wiping out or diminution of debt.
3. The carrying out of improvements by building or otherwise; and
4. The supply of various special needs and increased aids to general maintenance.

It is to be regretted that women are again excluded from representation on the General Council,

and that in consequence the Nursing and Domestic departments of the London hospitals cannot be adequately inspected and reported upon. Meanwhile, large sums of money were acknowledged as donated by women in support of the Fund.

THE NURSING OF SMALL-POX AND THE FOUNT OF ALL HONOUR.

The small-pox epidemic of 1901-2 in London cost the Metropolitan Asylums Board, in round figures, £500,000. The number of cases notified in 1901 was 1,760. Of these 1,743 were admitted to the hospitals, and only 257 died.

We consider that it is quite within the duty of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to bring to the notice of the Fount of All Honour the splendid and self-sacrificing work of the medical officers, the Matrons, and nurses who cared for those suffering with this loathsome disease, and by whose untiring labours so many sufferers were comforted and their lives spared. Surely such real work for the public good merits recognition, and would receive it if brought to the notice of those who have the power to reward public servants. Much genuine and justifiable indignation has been felt by the hard-working rank and file of Army Nurses, who have spent years in performing the most arduous labours in South Africa during the late war, that absolutely no acknowledgment of any sort has been theirs, whilst pushing, advertising Society women have nobbled Red Crosses and other honours.

It is needless to say that this class of woman did not risk her stock-in-trade by attending the small-pox sufferers in their hour of need, therefore let right be done, and the people encouraged by finding noble, self-sacrificing conduct receive its just reward.

THE DANGER OF SEWER GAS.

The householder who has a dread of sewer gas—and where is there one who has not?—will learn with regret that the Registration of Plumbers Bill, which has passed the House of Lords and is now before the Commons, stands but little chance of being placed upon the Statute-book this Session. There are now some 30,000 plumbers connected with the registration movement, but they admit that without the Government giving them some form of statutory regulation they can do no more, however anxious they may be to safeguard the public health by good plumbing work. It is impossible to over estimate the value of first-class workmanship in plumbing. Without it every scientific discovery in the realms of hygiene, every improvement in our methods of drainage, is alike defeated and neutralised.

The plumbers, in their just demand for Registration, are showing an excellent example to Trained Nurses, which it is to be hoped they will follow.

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