

it) was rude and noisy, and quite within a measurable distance of being "locked up." However, he was spared that misfortune, and wended his way back. Let us just precede him, and see what took place in his absence, which to those he left behind him appeared an age.

Their fears increasing every moment, one of the women went to a neighbouring Doctor to urge his attendance. A pale-faced young man came back with her. He saw clearly enough how matters stood. He said, "It is not our case, but I will go and ask the Doctor to come." He opened the window, and told the women not to crowd round the bed so much, and left the house.

Soon after the husband returns. He is sobered now, for the fresh air—it was a bitterly cold day—and the exercise have cleared his brain. He sees all his sorrow now, and is conscious of the awful shadow that has fallen on his path. In an agony of grief he kneels, sobs, and prays by that dying bed. Father Gueney is there, who knew them both from childhood—married them not so very long ago; but his words of sympathy and consolation fall unheeded upon the dulled ear of his despair. He takes her cold hand between his own, warm with life and youth, and knows that the wife of his heart is lost to him for ever. Like one felled by a physical blow he falls prostrate on the floor—"a strong man laid low." May I ask the sympathy of my women readers for the chief mourner in this true and tragic history? Was he not more wronged than wrong?

The young man came back with the kind Doctor. The aid that might have averted the tragedy was unavailing then, for the last faint spark of life had flown.

(To be continued.)

THE PROGRESS OF HYGIENE.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION BY DR. W. B. CHEADLE.

THE subject of hygiene is intimately associated with nursing.

In the first place, a sound knowledge of the laws of health is essential to an intelligent and correct performance of the duties of a nurse. Without such knowledge it is impossible for any one to give perfectly efficient assistance in guiding back to health those who are sick, under all conditions of life.

But, further, the influence of the nurse is not limited to skilful attendance upon her patients. By the very nature of the case it cannot be so limited, even if you attempted thus to narrow and confine it.

Your practice in the sick room, your service to the patient, the conduct of your own regimen, must necessarily be a constant object lesson in the close and often prolonged association with patient and household and in social intercourse with friends. Points of hygiene will often be discussed, and your example and the bias you give will certainly bear fruit for good or evil.

I look upon the great army of trained nurses, now growing up so rapidly, as health missionaries, as a powerful means of diffusing through the mass of the population, in every grade of society, the knowledge of how to live a wholesome life. And if it is a good thing to save life and ease suffering, it is a still better thing to prevent sickness and suffering from arising.

So that nurses have their part in hygiene, and it is twofold. First, by acquiring a sound knowledge of its laws, to perfect their own efficiency in the actual nursing of the sick; and, secondly, by their influence in diffusing a sound knowledge of these laws to others, with whom they are brought into association in social life and in the exercise of their vocation.

Now an enormous amount of sickness and death is due to what are called faults of *private* hygiene—*i.e.*, to evil habits of life, the violation of sanitary laws by individuals or by households. And it must be borne in mind that the mischief does not end here. Many diseases brought upon the individual by his or her own action, in following unhealthy habits, do not affect the erring individual only. The disease thus induced often becomes hereditary. The parent acquires gout, or consumption, or dipsomania, and transmits the fault of constitution thus developed to his children and children's children. In this way it is true that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation.

Now it is obvious that diseases which have their origin in the unhealthy practices of individuals and of households—faults of private hygiene—are in large measure preventible.

It is surprising, when you come to think of the matter, as Mr. Herbert Spencer has pointed out, how many of our bodily ailments might really have been prevented, at some point or other in the chain of events which led up to them, if only the causes had been understood at the time, and the necessary measures to avoid the evil taken at the right moment.

For instance, the common cold, or rheumatic fever, or nephritis, or pneumonia, or pleurisy might have been escaped if the reckless exposure to chill, which gave rise to it, had been avoided; or if the body had not been rendered especially susceptible by indulgence in over-heated rooms. The dyspepsia would never have arisen if food

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