

Portland, Oregon, published in the December number of the *Nurses' Journal of the Pacific Coast*, contains many good things. Notably—

"The nurse must cease to take her cases purely from their pathological side, and regard them also in the wider light of their relation to society in general. It is disease in this regard which she is to consider, health in its broadest social aspect which she is to promote. Regarding her as a private in an army of which the physician is the officer, she must prepare to do battle in a cause which concerns itself not only with the rescuing of the individual life from the clutches of disease and suffering, but with the forcing back, step by step, of those dark legions, and the advancement, bit by bit, of the frontiers of health and enlightenment.

"This is the spirit in which the nurse must face the problems that confront her, and which leads to them their most passionate interest, and inspires the deepest sense of the sacredness of her profession.

"Looked at from this standpoint, the nature of the nurse's work presents the opportunity for peculiar effectiveness. It is she, with her residence of weeks, and months, perhaps, in the homes of her patients, if well to do, or as the neighbourhood nurse of poorer districts, who can best observe conditions there, who can most directly influence the ways of households for better things. To her comes an intimacy of knowledge denied the physician. She is able, for considerable periods of time, to be an object-lesson to larger or smaller groups, to whom she may bring the first knowledge of a rational way of life. It would imply strange stubbornness or indifference on the part of these, or great remissness on her own part, if on her departure she leaves behind her no larger appreciation of light and air, food values, proper drainage, and of at least those elementary hygienic measures which masses of our heterogeneous population so woefully ignore. Where she has been, there should remain at least a percentage of households whose waste will never again pollute a stream, where soiled hands will no more poison the milk which is life to our babies, where food stuffs will be screened from flies, where yards will harbour no more vermin-breeding garbage. And if her walk shall be with those by whom these simple lessons are unheeded there is still a psychic factor—that factor whose prime importance is being to-day so increasingly recognised, for in the majority of cases there is in the mind of the patient a therapeutic reservoir waiting to be tapped. Upon whether or not this is successfully done the cure often largely depends; and here it is that the nurse, even more than the physician, must exercise the utmost skill and intuition. Upon her personality, her poise, command of her own resources, the wavering scale will often turn. And by these she may effect not a transient but a lasting miracle. What high-strung, morbid woman but may be influenced profoundly for her good by the presence of one who is steadfast of eye, light of step, yet masterful and soft of speech? In her is illustrated the beauty of efficiency, of knowledge, of self-control, the capacity to govern by gentleness, to face emergencies quietly, to deal with the ugliest aspects of life in a spirit which lifts them on to

another plane. The day may come when we will recognise that the cure of bodies necessarily involves in a greater or lesser degree the cure of souls. And if, in advance of logic or demonstration, the nurse shall have divined this, it will prove but a reward to incentive to rise to the opportunities of her high calling.

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"It is a characteristic of our day that in every walk of life there is a demand for higher efficiency, a broader, and at the same time more specialised, training; and this is so, whether for the self-made business man taught only in the rough school of life, or for the professional, the heir of all the ages in his own particular knowledge. But there is no nurse truly placed in the vocation to whom the sense of an ever greater demand is other than a trumpet call stirring her to a renewed enthusiasm and devotion—for this century of ours is no niggard; if it demands greatly it rewards greatly. You are honoured of all men; they turn to you in their affliction, trusting you, leaning on you, holding you all their after lives in gratitude and affection. Often, very often, life and death are in your hands. You shall see much of suffering, but without shrinking, for you hold the means of lessening it. Your place is in the foremost of the battle; it is your chosen post, and if the fight is won how great a privilege to have helped in some small way to bring that victory about!"

#### SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

Bishop Montgomery, as Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, has issued an appeal, in which, as reported by the *Times*, he says that the S.P.G. has for years been engaged in medical mission work, but it has never created till to-day a separate medical missions department with its own separate fund.

He appeals to the humane man who has studied the medicine of such countries as China and India, and realised the suffering caused to millions by ignorance and quackery. The S.P.G. desires to place highly-qualified doctors of both sexes among masses of population in Asia and Africa, far from the haunts of Europeans, and therefore from the proximity of official doctors, to give the best skill to the suffering, simply in the name of the Good Physician, and as a testimony to a practical belief in the brotherhood of man.

He appeals still more to the Christian man and the lover of missions, for there is no agency so potent as medical missions on the Asiatic and African continents. Besides all the medical work the S.P.G. is doing to-day in Asia and Africa, it has appeals at this moment for 38 doctors, 20 hospitals, 21 dispensaries, and an adequate staff of nurses. Funds are needed to build these hospitals and dispensaries and to furnish them, as well as to support the doctors and nurses.

He appeals for a qualified medical staff—for men and women doctors. They must be efficient, and must be Christians and missionaries at heart. With their profession more, perhaps, than any other there lies the duty of being in the first line in the army of Christian conquest, especially in Asia and Africa.

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