

operations, and especially at childbirth, and these associations were the corner-stones of the nursing profession; so it was not surprising that even at the present day many German Sisters were totally ignorant of things in which great responsibility fell upon them, but this ignorance could no longer be tolerated. It had repeatedly been emphasised during the Congress that prevention was better than cure, and the nurse should strive to become a powerful factor in raising civilisation.

It was not enough to have hundreds, or even thousands, of Sisters at work amongst fallen women and waifs and strays, or even an increasing number of nurses appointed as police assistants; nurses must try to have an enlightening influence in parochial and social work and whenever they came into touch with women. In connection with the moral depravity which so often flourished in large towns, the school nurse would often meet with serious tasks.

In Berlin there had recently been opened in charge of one of the Sisters of the German Nurses' Association, a home for children born with hereditary diseases, owing to the influence of Dr. Heller, who in 1900 visited a hospital of this kind in Stockholm. Another movement in Germany deserved special notice, the Society for the Protection of Young Mothers. It helped mothers of illegitimate children to find places and to maintain themselves and their children, and also maintained a home where homeless girls could be received for their confinements. The journal of the Society, *The New Generation*, combatted with great energy the old idea of morality based on utter ignorance, and strove for a new ethical standard. The Society had most excellent workers, both men and women.

Up to the present time, doctors had, as a rule, felt obliged to leave the Sisters in ignorance of the cause of many illnesses, but it was necessary that they should know how many thousands of men undermined their health and that of their families by the "black plague"; how many women and children perished miserably after much pain in consequence. Knowing that, every nurse must feel her responsibility for endeavouring to reduce and avert this awful social misery.

MISS MAUDE, R.N., said that in New Zealand there was increased illegitimacy, but there was not the amount of gonorrhoeal infection in children and mothers which there used to be. Mothers' Unions and Fathers' Unions had been founded, and mothers now would tell their girls the fundamental facts of life, but fathers often had not the moral courage to instruct their boys on these questions. The age of consent was still 16, but the courts were very strict about rape; also the Criminal Courts could be closed to the public if the Judge considered this advisable in the interests of morality. The speaker said she was connected with a purity society, but it did not get the sympathy it should do from many women, who held their skirts aloof and considered that the social evil should not be spoken about. Until the community realised the dangers of disease, and self-control was taught and practised, little good would be done.

MISS WORTABET said that in the East early mar-

riages prevented a good deal of immorality.

BARONESS MANNERHEIM said that in Finland the women had been able to secure the passing of some laws—one dealing with offenders in the class of cases mentioned in Miss Burr's paper.

MISS G. A. ROGERS said she would like to bring to the notice of the Congress the number of young children on the streets. They were met with in the out-patient departments of our hospitals, but it was impossible to obtain a conviction against any particular man. What was to be done?

The Leicester Infirmary employed a few children in the laundry. Two of these, coming to work at 7 o'clock in the morning, were insulted in the street by men. What was to be done?

As an instance of the advantage of greater knowledge on sex questions, Miss Rogers gave that of a boy who was being sent to a public school, whose parents applied to a nurse for literature for his information. A book was supplied, but the parents said they could not give it to their boy. Later, the boy found it in his father's bookshelves, and said: "If I had read that book before I went to school no one knows what it would have saved me, but it is not too late." Three years later the boy was killed in the hunting field, and his master wrote to the parents that it was impossible to say what an influence for good he had been in the school for the last three years.

MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK said that she constantly noticed reports in the press of cases of the violation and murder of little girls of five and six years of age. She watched for the capture and conviction of the criminals, but in the large majority of these cases there was no further allusion to them after the inquests; the perpetrators of these horrible crimes remained undiscovered, unpunished, and at large. A matter which also called for publicity and reform was the condition of the morals in our large public schools, in which the future legislators of the country were educated. The system on which they were managed was wrong, the mother's influence was eliminated, and many public schools were hotbeds of vice in which innocent little boys were contaminated. Mothers should demand that their influence should be more felt, and that a more careful supervision should be exercised.

Again, in the lower classes, the moral standard was often deplorably low, not only in cities but also in rural districts. Propinquity, and the housing conditions had much to do with this. Decency could not be taught when the father, mother, and children occupied the same bed. The years of innocence of such children were brief indeed. Then there were the so-called nursing homes and massage houses, which, in reality, were immoral houses. In the parish in which she lived a negro who kept a so-called massage establishment, which was pronounced by the magistrate to be a house of ill fame for white women, was sentenced to nine months' hard labour. It was stated by the prosecution that the "nurses" whom he employed and provided with uniform were mostly women whom he had first seduced. The prostitution of the trained nurse's uniform in the streets of London was a scandalous abuse, which the police appeared to entirely ignore.

What women needed was the Parliamentary vote,

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