

Motif of the Nursing Masque.

The *motif* of the Nursing Masque that Life has a Right to Health appeals to all those wise people who deplore the physical degeneration from which our town dwellers are suffering. Poor quality adulterated food, dark unventilated dwellings, little sunlight and warmth, and an inadequate supply of water! How are people so unhappily situated to obey the laws of Health? The very elements are denied to them by a misapplied civilisation.

A Dinner is to be given at the Lyceum Club, Piccadilly, W., on Monday, February 6th, in support of the Evolution of Trained Nursing, when Mrs. Bedford Fenwick will take the chair and enlist sympathy for the claims of nurses for an adequate curriculum of professional education and registration to enable them to fulfil their duty to the public in the most efficient manner. The lack of professional status discriminates against trained nurses socially, for, whereas journalism, art, crafts, photography and other occupations qualify women for membership of the Lyceum, nursing does not, and we learn that in the qualifications accepted for membership of a new club for professional women, nursing is not included amongst them, indeed, the proposal is to exclude it. This proves the attitude of public opinion towards our profession. At first one feels indignant, but when one looks around and notes the low standard of both education and manners permissible in nursing ranks, we must realise that there is no standard for the public to judge by, and as many members of it have been sufficiently unfortunate to come in contact with semi-trained undisciplined women presuming to act as "trained nurses," one must admit that "self preservation is the first law of nature."

It all comes to this, we have got to have just recognition from the State, a miserly mother where women are concerned. We have got to have the public on the side of those nurses whose intelligence and conscience demand just consideration for their work, and protection for sick people from fraudulent persons, and those who by fighting against State Registration are giving them a free hand.

Hence we want the public to come to see our Pageant, and to listen to our Petitions for Organised Education, for gratitude for centuries of devotion to the care of the sick by the saintly women past and gone, and for Legislation, so that our honourable work shall receive the recognition which is its due.

Stray Thoughts for Nurses.

To all thoughtful people who work among the poor in any of our large towns the questions must often present themselves: What is the cause of all the disease we meet with among the children? Why, in the 20th century, in this so-called civilised country, is it allowed to exist? What are we all doing to improve this deplorable state of affairs?

Ignorance on the part of the parents, overcrowding, bad feeding, immorality, youthful marriages, and various other things are, in a great measure, the cause. Doctors give their skill, gained by scientific knowledge, in endeavouring to cure, or alleviate, the diseases from which the little ones are suffering, and a noble work they are doing. The Government appoint health inspectors, nurses and doctors are employed by the County Council to visit the schools, and there are many philanthropic people, and voluntary health visitors, some of the latter undertaking to look after the babies and advise the mothers how to feed them until they are one year old. Then there is the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; all these are doing good work. But of all people the nurse has the best opportunity of improving the condition of the little ones. A large field of useful work, not only to the individual but to the nation, is open to her. The School Nurse finds a child dirty and neglected, she visits its home, and with tact and sympathy she can often influence and teach the mother to take better care of her child. In a hospital ward nurses again can do much to teach the little ones, by explaining to them the necessity of cleanliness, decency, and modesty.

Anyone who has had much to do with little children knows that they are creatures of imitation—to them example is everything. If they see those in authority over them doing wrong, they naturally copy them and *vice versa*. It has often been a surprise to me to see how intelligent children become directly they are removed to better surroundings, and are placed under the care of people who understand them and enter into their lives. One realises then how quickly they respond to kindness, how anxious they are to please. It is on these points I wish to say a word to nurses who are training in children's hospitals, or have charge of children. Try to put yourselves in their places, remember the hard lives they have lead, scarcely ever having had a sufficiency of food or clothing, or having been taught cleanliness and decent habits; probably the whole family live in one room, with no

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