

At Lugershall, on Salisbury Plain, where a battalion of the Senior Officers' Training Corps Cadets, a junior camp of 4,000 public school boys, and many other troops are in training, a number of ladies, members of the Red Cross Society, are putting into practical use, under their Commandant, Miss Montgomery, the lessons which they have learnt theoretically, and have pitched their camp between the senior and junior encampments. Their outdoor uniform is a long blue cloth coat with a red cross on the sleeve, and a smart white cape.

The public do not always appreciate the fact that agents potent for good when prescribed by men of science, and applied by nurses trained and skilled in their use, may become injurious and destructive in unskilled hands. The X-ray, Finson light, and radium treatment are only beneficent therapeutic agents because of the extreme care exercised in their use, as the patient of a Birmingham hospital will, it is feared, find to his cost. A working man who was being treated for an affection of the skin with an infinitesimal portion of radium, lent for the purpose by Messrs. Southall Bros. and Barclay, valued at £100, innocently took the precious element home with him, and, anxious to make a speedy recovery, proceeded to apply it at home, with the unfortunate result that before its whereabouts was discovered he had applied it to his nose with such purpose that its partial loss is likely to be the result. It is possible to have too much of a good thing.

The Duke of Devonshire, who was accompanied by the Duchess of Devonshire, last week opened a new extension of the Nightingale Nursing Home, Derby. The Home was built as a tribute to the work of Miss Florence Nightingale. His Grace said that the Insurance Bill contained no doubt many excellent clauses, but he hoped nothing would be done by Parliament or the State which would sap those sources of help which in the past had been so cheerfully rendered by those able to assist their less fortunate fellow creatures. The Duchess of Devonshire afterwards presented silver badges and Bibles to nurses who had gained them during the past year.

The July number of *The Visiting Nurse Quarterly*, published by the Visiting Nurse Association, Cleveland, Ohio, which is a "Baby Welfare Number," contains a contribution on "The Work of Midwives," by Miss Margaret Breay.

The same journal publishes an admirable article on "The Civic Value of the Visiting Nurse," by Mr. James R. Garfield, who says that the work of the visiting nurse is an admirable example of practical recognition of the obligation resting upon all of us to lend a helping hand to those of us who are in need through illness, adversity, or ignorance. It is a charity in the best sense of that noble quality; that is, it is not a mere giving of things to those who suffer, but it is a giving of personal service under conditions and in ways that will take sweetness and light into dark places and teach people how to be cleaner, healthier, and happier.

Society as a whole is slow to recognise its obligations; new movements are started and new needs are supplied in the first instance by individuals. It is only when the general social good or common welfare is concerned that the crowd is stirred. The public mind is prone to apathy and indifference; startling statements, like lightning flashes, show things as they are, awaken, often rudely, the public conscience, and shock men to action.

In recent years there have been many striking examples of such awakenings. The overcrowded, foul tenement house could not be destroyed until all the hideous details of its degrading effect upon its inhabitants had been exposed to public view. The crusade against tuberculosis and other contagious and infectious diseases found public support only when the threatened destruction of our vitality as a people was disclosed. The simple, strong stories told in the survey of big cities are compelling immediate action to improve living conditions in the great industrial centres. The widespread interest in child welfare work is due to the astounding reports on infant mortality and the neglect of children.

Those are a few of present-day problems with which society as a body must grapple. They are too big, too extensive, and too vital to be left in private hands alone. Gradually, but more rapidly than heretofore, the public, through its political divisions of city, State, and nation, must assume the burden of solving these problems. But until the public does take over the work it must be carried on by private organisations.

The Visiting Nurse Association stands in unique relation to the work, having to do with all of these physical, social, and educational problems. Its field of usefulness is co-extensive with the city; its work is distinctly civic in that it directly affects health, vitality, and morality. While its work primarily is with and for individuals, its influence goes straight into

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