

Government Board we believe it would be rectified. His care for the children in institutions for which he is responsible is well known.

An excellent article entitled "Why we want the vote," by Miss Beatrice Kent, appeared in the last issue of *The Vote*. Miss Kent says: "In my opinion no class of woman requires and deserves the power and protection of the Parliamentary vote more than trained nurses." After showing that for over twenty years trained nurses have been working for their professional enfranchisement in order to safeguard the sick public against the untrained nurse, to safeguard the trained nurse against unfair competition, and to raise the standard of the nursing profession, Miss Kent continues: "Their long fight as voteless women has shown them, as nothing else could, that, had they been armed with that powerful weapon—the vote—they would have been victorious long ago. Some wise writer has said, 'No race or class or sex can have its interests properly safeguarded in the legislature of a country unless it is represented by *direct suffrage*.' (The italics are mine.) This truth is being proved every day in the case of male voters.

"Seeing, then, that every race, class, and sex is dependent in time of sickness upon skilled nursing quite as much as upon medical attendance, and seeing also that trained nursing is intimately bound up with the health and life, and therefore with the comfort and happiness of the nation: putting aside for the moment the question of justice, does it not appear that the State *needs* the nurses' vote?"

"It is a commonplace, but one that will bear repetition, to state that the health of the people is the nation's greatest asset; and it would be wise, as well as fair, to give to these skilled professional women a voice in the making of laws, so many of which affect the maintenance of health.

"The nurse's point of view of the suffrage movement is, of course, mostly the health point of view, and the health point of view is largely the moral point of view.

"The most important and most beautiful part of the nurse's duty is to prevent *preventable* sickness and disease, and no woman knows so well as she does—by painful experience—the awful results of vicious indulgence upon the health of the nation. The health, if not the lives, of thousands of innocent wives

are sacrificed every year, and infants born and unborn have to pay the penalty in their innocent bodies of the uncontrolled passions of men. A good woman once said to me 'It makes one dumb with anguish.'

"Politically dumb we are, but as sure as I write this, I believe the time is near, very near, when the enfranchisement of women will be an actuality, and then, but not *until* then, with our fetters removed, we shall, with this powerful weapon, attack the strongholds of vice, and insist upon legislation which will raise the standard of national purity and, as a consequence, national health. I cannot resist giving one concrete example of this diabolical indulgence. An infant aged one week was taken to the hospital to save its eyesight. That hapless child was one of two others: one was quite blind and the other was an idiot! That alone is sufficient to make the heart of a true woman bleed.

"Is there anything more beautiful among the works of the great Creator than a sound and healthy infant? And yet man—who is intended to be only a little lower than the angels, makes himself a great deal lower than the animals, and mars the beautiful work of 'the Lord and giver of life.'"

Miss Georgina Scott White, who, as we reported last week, was appointed Assistant Matron at the Swansea General and Eye Hospital, has decided not to accept the position. Miss Husband, of St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, the candidate next on the list, has been asked to take up the duties, and has intimated her readiness to do so. Both candidates had unexceptional qualifications.

#### NURSING LEGISLATION IN SWEDEN.

At the last Riksdag a Bill, introduced by Mr. Carl Lindhagen, *borgmästare* in Stockholm and member of the Second Chamber, relating to nurses passed both chambers. The Bill provided that an inquiry should be made into the conditions under which nurses work, the salaries they receive, and their treatment during illness and old age.

Although most nurses support the principal provisions of the Bill, which however they consider exaggerated in some respects, yet it is not owing to agitation on their part that it has been introduced, and they knew nothing about it until it was placed before the Riksdag. They are, however, looking forward with great interest to the result of the inquiries to be made.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)