

a desirable one, and is attracting good candidates. The commencing salary is £150 per annum. Further particulars will be found in our advertisement columns.

Life is one huge advertisement, we recently heard a medical man state. So it is. There is so much to cram into the fleeting years that if one cannot get publicity at the top pitch of one's voice, no chance is there to be heard at all. We were reminded of this fact this week upon receiving a letter from Miss L. L. Dock, most ardent of suffragists. On the envelope, which contained a letter on the gentle art of nursing, was stamped in large blue letters, "Votes for Women." Splendid, we thought. All the way from far Pennsylvania this little envelope was trumpeting forth to every person through whose hands it has passed the cry of women for justice. Let us hope it has awakened some persons to a sense of their duty to women.

Then we thought if "Votes for Women" why not also "State Registration of Nurses"? Excellent. We ordered a stamp at once, and soon shall impress all our letters with this demand for efficient nursing of the sick, in the hope that the recipients will want to know what it means, and thus be interested in the necessity for reform. May we suggest that others do likewise, or at all events write the demand in red ink in the left hand corner of envelopes used?

We constantly hear complaints of insufficiently trained cottage and village nurses in so far as lack of reticence and discipline is concerned. They come from the same class as their patients, and go in and out of their houses, and often also hurt their feelings with thoughtless gossip. It is not long ago that one of these nurses was threatened with a libel action for spreading the report in a country village that a baby born was "eaten up with syphilis." Whether true or not, it was a very gross breach of trust to mention it, and resulted in the parents leaving the village in question. There is very little practical control of these cottage helps by a trained superintendent who lives a three hours' journey away. It may be that in these rapid times a cottage girl may become an expert midwife and trained nurse in a few months, but apparently many of them find it impossible to acquire the rudiments of professional ethics and etiquette. To divulge matters of which knowledge has been gained in the course of professional duty is a grave offence.

At the annual meeting of the Kirkcaldy Victoria Nursing Association, held last week, Lady Helen Munro Ferguson stated that the three nurses on the staff had attended 586 patients and paid 9,130 visits. It is satisfactory that the financial report, presented by Mr. J. Brewster, showed a balance on the year of £23 19s. 10d.

Dr. Phelps has a very interesting article on "The Missionary and the Military Ideas in Nursing" in an American exchange. He writes:—

"Nursing is fast trending towards becoming an ordinary occupation, an occupation entered into primarily as a means of obtaining a livelihood. It, therefore, may be useful to take a look backward for a few minutes over the dusty road that has been travelled, and to note some of the purposes and ideas that have determined its direction and contour.

"As we do this, we are at once struck with the prominence and the prevalence of the 'missionary' idea and the 'military' idea in nursing work of the past. Not the missionary idea in its meaning of teaching religion to others, nor the military idea in its meaning of fighting. But the missionary idea in its broad meaning of 'doing good' to others, and the military idea in its sense of adherence to discipline, and its sacrifices not marked by money remuneration.

* * * * *

"Thus we see that the central ideas of missionary work and military work, the doing good, the self-denial, are very prominent. Lessening in prominence they possibly are, wholly disappear they hardly can. To apply an 'eight-hour day' and a 'double pay for overtime' is indeed theoretically possible, but not without taking the heart out of the ideal nursing. Moreover, it would likely take the pay out of it, for the prevailing wages are comparatively high in America for the grade of the work, because of this very sacrificing element. If the hours come down to any commercial compact, the pay will undoubtedly come down also.

"To all nurses, then, we still commend this spirit as one to cultivate. Do not lose sight of the 'doing good.' Do not push the purely commercial idea. Cling to the ideals of 'service,' and do not let them sink from daily view. No law can enforce them, it is true. They lie in the innermost sanctum of the nurse's purposes and aims. But they exist also in the public opinion as the elements which call forth the honour and admiration which nurses get. Of course, nurses are but human beings, fallible as are we all, but even with these frailties the ideal nurses are trained to a line of action which rises by habit and purpose above the exhibition of the failings which may still exist. Cultivate your ideas and habits of sympathy and of self-denial, then, if you would worthily bear the name of 'trained nurses.'"

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)