

Dr. Norman Porritt's articles on nursing conditions, now appearing in *The National Weekly*, should be read. It is well to note all points of view. Last week he had something to say about "Bumble and the Nurse's Health," in which he enlarges on the horrors of night duty. "At one hospital," he writes, "in this Christian, eight-hours-work-in-the-daytime country—it was a Poor Law infirmary in a cathedral city—the night nurses were compelled to work fourteen and fifteen hours at a stretch. They had so much to do that they had to begin washing the patients at 2 a.m., and then, when they came off duty, burrow into beds which were in continuous use night and day." Dr. Porritt quotes Dr. Hecker's opinion as applied to nurses in Germany:—"The German nurse's health does not appear to count; it is her business to look after other people's health, and not her own!"

A letter received this week from a reader reminds us of a very discreditable fact. She contends that women who are "paid workers" lose caste. We quite agree with her. Not, of course, in the opinion of those whose opinion is worth having, but in that of the majority of leisured men and women who compose committees controlling women's work, who, with no expert knowledge, treat both industrial and professional women as their "paid servants." Such an attitude of mind is snobbish and domineering, but it is a very unpleasant fact. No one who has ever sat on public bodies, or even on private committees can deny this fact—and now that so many women support themselves honourably, it is high time this vulgar attitude of mind towards them by those whose needs are usually supplied by others, and for which they have not done an hour's honest work in their lives, was determinedly resented. We were once admitted to a royal residence by the side door, and passed on through domestic offices. We left it by the front entrance, which took two resplendent males to fling open!

Then our correspondent bewails the narrowness of the official mind and conduct, tied up with red tape! Here we sympathise with her again. It may not be their fault, but we have noticed that an "Inspectorship," no matter what has to be inspected, appears to render null and void all but the most buoyant and courageous of women. To the average companion, in public life, they become colourless, secretive, and uninteresting.

We hear from an official source that the Leper Settlement which the Principal Medical Officer in Basutoland, Dr. Long, has been working for for such a long time, is now almost complete, and that in a few more months it is expected to be in working order, when probably some 700 lepers from that province will enter it. It is anticipated that they will do so readily, as it is in their own country, and is therefore deprived of the terror of isolation, which is a factor in connection with the settlement on Robben Island. The life of a leper is at all times so tragic that anyone who succeeds in ameliorating the lot of these unfortunate people, as Dr. Long has done, is to be congratulated.

The State of New York owes Governor Sulzer a debt of gratitude for his Message on Public Health, with which is incorporated the Report of the Special Public Health Commission. The Message opens with the words: "One of the first duties of the State is to protect the life and promote the health of the citizens. There is no more important subject of public administration than public health. The State comes very close home to the individual when it saves him from sickness, and even from death. This it can do, does do, and should continue to do in a much larger degree."

Among the many reforms the Commission recommends, 9, 10, and 12 are specially interesting to nurses; 9 provides for "Authority for each city, county, village, and town to employ trained nurses as infant welfare nurses, school nurses, tuberculosis nurses, and to visit the sick. 10. That the tuberculosis law be amended so as to provide (a) for more complete reporting of cases; (b) for supervision of reported cases by trained nurses; (c) for compulsory removal and detention of dangerous cases; and 12. That a bureau of child hygiene, and a bureau of public health nursing, be added to the State Department of Health.

At present in the City of New York there are in the service of the Department of Health over 300 trained nurses, in addition to those employed in the hospitals for contagious diseases. Three counties and a considerable number of cities, villages, and voluntary committees employ tuberculosis nurses. What is required is that specific authority be given to each city, county, village, and town to employ one or more trained nurses for all the public health purposes for which trained nursing has now been found to be practicable.

Governor Sulzer appears to be the right man in the right place so far as nursing is concerned.

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