to nurse me; they make one much more comfortable—but I detest them." It was a curious back-handed compliment. Then perhaps you will forgive my adding a little anecdote I have told once before of two women watching the army nurses disembark during the Boer War. We were barricaded back whilst some troops landed—and with them two army sisters—who stood quite quietly, shaking hands, and saying "good-bye" to some officers—when a woman standing near me said to her friend, "See them two nurses?" "Yes," said the other; and then in tones of concentrated bitterness—"ugly as they all are." There was a good deal of pent-up, very human bitterness and jealousy in that remark—and it lies at the root, I think, of much of the unkindness with which nurses are sometimes regarded. For it is useless to deny that it is hard lines for a wife or mother to have to resign the charge of her belongings to a stranger—and yet that is now-a-days considered a practically absolutely essential step in all cases of severe illness; and a tactless nurse will often cause a great amount of mischief. Having, however, admitted a kind of uneasy mistrust of certain individual nurses—more especially in what is known as private work—perhaps the most extraordinary change in public opinion during the last thirty or forty years is the complete recognition of the absolute necessity for nurses under any circumstances that could possibly call for their services—not only in hospitals, asylums and infirmaries, but in war and in peace, in town or country, school, factory district, or private house, in every quarter of the globe; there is no outpost of civilisation so lonely that does not either clamour for or possess the ubiquitous professional nurse. Abused she may be—but she has at least the comfort of feeling that she is essential; and I am not sure that the unconscious tribute paid to her usefulness is not a thousand times better than the fulsome nonsense that used to be written about the ministering angel.

This particular growth of civilisation is peculiar to our time. It has no exact counterpart in the past. It is, therefore, still difficult for a public, slow to assimilate, to exactly place this new product. It is also difficult for the new product to realise its real position and true nature.

The public in general is very far from hostile to nurses really, only it has a rather exaggerated notion of the height to which one of its average daughters is capable of attaining after three years' training. A truthful if downright poet has placed it on record that "single men in barracks don't grow into plaster saints," and it is fairly obvious that three years of average hospital training will not eradicate from an ordinary English girl every personal human instinct or desire, every modern tendency. This is not a brutal, but it is certainly not an unselfish age. The groundwork of all happiness is supposed to be—not a high moral and intellectual standard—but a high standard of material comfort, the so-called high economic standard. The strained effort of hospital management, therefore, is not to foster in their nursing staff proper professional pride, personal independence and self-restraint, a high ideal of their work, a dedication of their life to their duty, but to provide them with beautiful recreation rooms, ball rooms, plenty of off-duty time, swimming baths, cosy and attractive bedrooms, and so forth. They are all excellent in their way, but they do not tend to teach probationers either concentration—in which nurses are often lamentably deficient, or self-sacrifice—without which nursing proper is impossible. The lamentable fact will remain now and always—that metal must be hammered into shape, and human beings must be subjected to discipline and severe training if they are to develop the highest type of character or the highest mental attainments. "Thank God for all that I have gained by that high suffering" is true of more things than one. I am a cheerful Pagan myself, and love the joy and cheerfulness of this great and beautiful world, but I am not without some understanding of and a great appreciation for that grand English Puritan spirit, the spirit of self-abnegation and personal self-control that has carried us so far and so well.

There is no type of woman worker who depends more upon the personal sympathy between her and those for whom she works. When one considers the very intimate duties she performs that is self-evident. In private work it is all essential. An ideal private nurse should be, in character, a broad-minded woman of the world, with a sense of humour and great tolerance. It is obviously not easy for a hospital matron to form such an ideal from the material that usually passes through her hands. It is often surprising that under the conditions generally prevailing we Matrons do as well as we do.

It would be rather interesting to hear a paper on invalids and the sick from a nurse's point of view, for the inculcation of patience, consideration, and forbearance on the part of the patient is a thing I have never seen advised. Very seldom have I ever seen grit and courage in illness openly recommended, whilst papers teem with excuses for those who fail in modern life on the score of broken down nerves; and an invalid public afflicted with nerves in the modern sense is not likely ever to be easy to nurse.

The nurse has come to stay. The more we ponder and worry and fuss and "give way" to illness, disease and trouble, the more we pander to nerves and their blighting influence, the more we try to pack three lives into three score years and ten, the more we shall require her assistance. The future of the nurse is assured for many a long day to come, and the question for discussion to-day is the position of the nurse in the estimation of the public, and on that point I should like to have the views of my sister Matrons. Does she stand where she should; has she gained the place she ought to hold; do the public regard her with confidence, trust and appreciation?

At the conclusion of Miss Mollett's Paper, an interesting discussion took place which we shall

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