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EDITORIAL.

"THE HEARTLESSNESS OF PARLIAMENT."

Mr. John Galsworthy makes a much needed protest in the press on the heartlessness of Parliament in ignoring the great social questions, which urgently demand immediate attention, a long list of which he recites, including the sweating of women workers, the insufficient feeding of children, the foul housing of people who have equal right with those in more fortunate circumstances to the decencies of life, the export of horses worn out in work for Englishmen, for a few pieces of blood money, the slaughter, for food, of millions of creatures every year by obsolete methods that none but the interested defend.

Mr. Galsworthy might have added to his list yet another social reform urgently needed, in which delay means unnecessary suffering to that most helpless class of the community the sick, wherever the disorganization in the nursing profession results in inefficient standards of nursing education. It is because medical practitioners and trained nurses are well aware of this that they have for the last quarter of a century urged the necessity for the definition of a minimum standard of nursing education, together with the State Registration of those who attain it. This would at once differentiate between fully trained and partially or untrained women, and enable nurses through a Central Governing Body appointed by the State to maintain discipline in the ranks of their profession. But, though a Bill making such provision, has been introduced annually for eleven years, Parliament has turned an indifferent ear, notwithstanding that there is evidence enough of the suffering of the sick and helpless, owing to the ignorance of their nurses, and the exploitation of the nursing profession by every kind of fraudulent person.

Year after year the plea for power to organize the Nursing Service, and develop its powers of usefulness, has fallen on deaf ears.

Is it any wonder that nurses feel hotly, when they have constant evidence before them of the barbarity which results from the ignorant and callous treatment of the sick, or that girls deciding upon a career in life are increasingly ignoring the claims of nursing? There can be little inducement to adopt a profession invaded by adventuresses, thieves, white slave traffickers, abortionists and other criminals who pose as nurses, and who are permitted to do so without let or hindrance, provided they do not bring themselves within the arm of the criminal law.

Mr. Galsworthy referring to his list of "shameless barbarities done to helpless creatures," which we suffer year after year, says "They are admitted to be anathema; in favour of their abolition there would be found at any moment a round majority of unfettered Parliamentary and general opinion. One and all they are removable, and many of them by small expenditure of Parliamentary time, public money, and expert care. Almost any one of them is productive of more suffering to innocent and helpless creatures, human or not, and probably of more secret harm to our spiritual life, more danger to human nature, than questions that sop up *ad infinitum* the energies, the interest and time of those we elect and pay to manage our business. It is rotten that for mere want of Parliamentary interest and time, machinery cannot be found to deal with these and other barbarities, concerning which, in the main, no real controversy exists. Rotten that their removal should be left to the mercy of the ballot, to private members' bills, or to the hampered and inadequate efforts of societies unsupported by legislation."

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