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EDITORIAL.

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF NURSING.

For those who have the mental vision, the Nursing Profession is in a state of rapid spiritual evolution. This is but a component part of the great spiritual crisis through which the civilized world is passing, by the revolt of women against age-long repression.

Faculties are being liberated, minds are broadening, we are learning to look beneath the surface for causes, and we are learning, it may be slowly, to acquire the scientific habit of mind, in order to deal effectively with them.

We recognise that the triune human being is composed of body, soul and spirit, and that our ministrations must be worthy of these indivisible parts of the whole. Consequently, greater reverence for life is the cause of the evolution.

Nothing is more self-edifying than to take a mental survey of all that has been striven for and accomplished throughout the whole civilized world in the field of nursing of late years. The very word has taken on a new meaning—wider, deeper, higher; making it a much more comprehensive, a much richer word.

It does not mean for us mere attendance on the sick, mere ministration—the mere letter of the law of ministration. The spirit and the letter closely woven together as the warp and woof of the fine texture of personal service, form the sacrament of nursing which we recognise to-day, because it is the “outward and visible” form of nursing, with the “inward and spiritual grace” of *Love*. Trained Nurses are the trustees of the Nation’s health. That is the situation, to our enlightened minds, the consciousness that we *are* our brother’s and sister’s keepers, and that we make ourselves liable to the

impeachment of “blood guiltiness” if we passively allow the tide of want, degradation and misery—the effectual wreckers of health—to flow on without taking definite steps to stem it.

Yet we are not satisfied. Mediocrity is a crime to the minds of enlightened people; they go in fear of committing it—a very wholesome fear. We have set up a high standard of professional education, but we have not yet reached it. We accept, and make our own, the concise and wise definition of education:—“*Preparation for complete living.*” For ourselves first, in order that we may make ourselves, in our enlarged sphere, intelligently and effectively ministerial to others. We long for greater facilities for the highest development of knowledge in the service of mankind, but we have not yet realized our longing.

“Longing is God’s fresh heavenward will,
With our poor earthward striving,
We quench it that we may be still
Content with merely living;
But would we learn that heart’s full scope
Which we are hourly wronging,
Our lives must climb from hope to hope
And realise our longing.”

Our conception of this truth must be embodied in consecrated work, through the medium of the highest education; professional, sociological and moral. The straightened limits of the barren education given to nurses 20 years ago will not suit us now. Our intellectual stature has outgrown the conceptions of that day. Agitation for reform is in itself educative, and the agitation for State Registration and standardization, which has seemed such a dreary waiting, has not been without its fruits.

We have learnt to know our own needs, negligences and ignorances. We see more clearly what we want, and when we get the power to press our claims, attainment will quickly follow.

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