

some of the many activities of trained Nurses in the social work of to-day. Your sympathy with women workers is well known, and has been shown on many occasions, but I venture to say that not one of your many kind actions has been more gratefully appreciated than is your presence here to-day by the Nurses of the City of Birmingham.

Besides the Exhibits made by Nurses, there are Exhibits by some well-known firms, whose admirable products and appliances are of great assistance to us, who have care of the sick and afflicted. It goes without saying that they are all of world-wide reputation, and that Birmingham firms are well represented.

May I ask you, my Lady Mayoress, to declare this Exhibition open?

THE LADY
MAYORESS' REPLY.

The Lady Mayoress replied in the following speech most gracefully delivered:—

Ladies, it gives me very great pleasure to be here to-day to open your Exhibition. Before saying a few words on the subject, may I take this opportunity to thank the nurses of the General Hospital, Birmingham, League for giving me this most beautiful bouquet. They are lovely flowers and I appreciate their kind attention very much. We must all feel that the work done by the trained nurse is a very important work, and it appeals to me very particularly as being essentially women's work and without distinction of class or party or religion. Although the profession of nursing is of such importance, it is an insufficiently organised profession, and I think we all owe much to those who are working so hard in the present day to alter and improve matters in this direction.

What is needed now in the nursing profession

is progress, improved organisation, and education to fit nurses for all the work they are called upon to do. Years back, as we all know, nursing was almost the only profession open to women, and now that so many other doors have been opened, I feel sure the best women will not be attracted to the nursing profession unless the conditions are improved. Salaries are, I know, an important item, but what I consider of even more importance is that the trained nurse shall have more leisure and more holiday, to prevent her growing old and worn out before her time, as so often happens,

and if I may mention another point upon which I personally should lay stress, it is good nourishing food. A friend of mine (not in the nursing profession) told me the other day about the refreshment provided for a nurse coming off night duty—in a hospital not a hundred miles from Birmingham—and the meal consisted of a pork pie and junket! When we consider how hard a nurse has to work—and I do not believe there is any other body of professional women who work so hard—I think everyone will agree that meal would hardly provide the required nourishment.

We are always being told, and it has been proved to us again and again that *Union is Strength*. It is hoped that the Conference and this Exhibition connected with it will encourage nurses to unite for the benefit of their



Photo.]

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profession and of the public, for the whole community is affected directly or indirectly by the nurse's work. Also, I take it, the time has come for us, the community, to do our utmost to improve the position of the trained nurse, to whom we all owe so much. This we can do by interesting and stirring public opinion. If we do not do it I fear the day may come, to look at it

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