

have we not started with our Committees and Matrons? For it would even now be interesting to learn how many of the latter are alive to the requirements of the times; how many have yet realised that *Matronage is a profession in itself*, independent and apart altogether from the Nursing profession; how many have realised that their duty is to fill in deficiencies, not to add superfluities—striving to promote the welfare of all concerned? And, Sir, I envy those Matrons of ours their splendid prospects, the many and glorious possibilities within their reach.

"These be thy gods, O Israel!" Whether these are or no, have our Nurses been made sufficiently "free" to utilise to the best advantage the knowledge they now possess? I trow not. "No man should be free until he's fit to use his freedom" holds as good to-day as ever; and our Nurses have, perhaps, themselves to thank for some of the evils which exist in our profession at the present time. All the skill in the world will avail them but little without the exercise of tact, prudence, courage, and practical common-sense. "A man's deeds are the touchstone of his greatness or littleness." Ere, however, a just and unbiassed judgment can be safely pronounced an equitable medium must be arrived at; so hereafter it might be well to deal with this topic under the title of "Our Periscopic Observatory," and this might tend to facilitate the object in view.

Again, think of the immense boon which was conferred upon the world by the observation, experience, and energy of Long, Maxwell, Murton, and Jackson—operative surgery, that was so agonising, becoming so painless—then tell me honestly, is it not surprising that our Doctors and District Nurses should not have commanded long ere this a much larger share of public sympathy and support? Ye men and women of England, think of those sanitary reformers—District Nurses—toiling on silently in your midst for thirty years past, who have taken their lives in their hands, doomed still to live upon a pittance unequal to the wear and tear of their avocation, *buried in lodgings*, and then answer me candidly, Why is this? Is this true economy? Is this practical wisdom? And are not these the women who have laboured so long and well to arouse the sleeping community around them, to purify and elevate our humble Cottage Homes?

On the other hand, I cannot for the life of me understand those eye-servers, those self-pleasing District Nurses, who seem perpetually to abide in Grumbling Street, if our districts fail to readily accommodate themselves to their notions of things, allowing such a perfect opportunity to slip away unimproved. "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it?" Pray do not wait for the world to set its mark upon you; go your way and make your mark upon the world. In the great work of filling in the gulf which now divides class from class, I know of no more powerful auxiliary, properly directed, than District Nursing, its tributaries and outlets; for if the world is to be redeemed at all it must be on its own terms, not ours. "Not practicable?" It is very difficult to say what is practicable until we try.

And our persevering band of Obstetric Nurses will doubtless remember that for escape from the pains of childbirth our honour and gratitude are due to Sir James Simpson. In loving recognition of his services to mankind some writer says, "No energy or knowledge or power less than his could have overcome our fears that the insensibility which was proved to be harmless in surgical operations and their consequences should be often found to be very mischievous in parturition." Added to these fears were a crowd of pious protests raised for the most part by religious men against so gross an interference as this seemed to their theological views of the ordained course of human nature. Passing strange! But remember, religion is not theology; for whilst many of our hard-working Doctors have been (and are) religious men, they are not theologians. So it is not so very shock-

ing, after all, that even yet our Doctors and Nurses alike should be unable to make such mighty and health-giving discoveries accommodate themselves to the size of the minds of the puny-minded "holy fathers."

Let me say, in passing, that it is our duty, as Doctors and Nurses, to strive by every means in our power to lessen human suffering. "But those Doctors and Nurses are not orthodox," they say. Perhaps not. Alderman Peach, the present enterprising Mayor of Stafford, said recently, and I would endorse his remarks, "Every man is fond of being orthodox, so long as it is his own 'doxy'"; but the man who talks about orthodoxy is very like the man who went to a Physician, who gave him a prescription, and he swallowed the paper instead of obtaining and taking the medicine prescribed on it. If our orthodoxy were to get too big a hold upon us, we should be like the old Scotchwoman, who believed no one would go to heaven but the members of her own Church, which consisted of herself and the parson, and she sometimes had grave doubts about the parson."

Says James Platt, "We have been told so long that suffering is a punishment for sin, that we must suffer in patience for the sins of others; and the misery around us is so general, so customary, deemed so inevitable, that, though it excites our horror and wonder that the good God can allow it, we make no strenuous efforts to remove the same, because we have not the right view of life within us to keep alive that hope which excites intense desire enough to encourage hope. The misery is put up with just as we now put up with typhoid fever and sea-sickness, with local floods and droughts, with the waste of health and wealth, in the pollution of rivers with hideous noises and foul smells, and many other miseries all removable or remediable; and our successors, when they have remedied or prevented them, will look back with horror, and on us with wonder and contempt for what they will call our idleness, or blindness, or indifference to suffering."

"'Tis a stern and startling thing to think  
How often mortality stands on the brink  
Of its grave without any misgiving;  
And yet in this stifling world of strife,  
In the stir of human bustle so rife,  
There are daily sounds to tell us that life  
Is dying, and death is living."

Hood.

Ye Doctors, Matrons, and Nurses of Christendom, make "life" a grander thing. "If wise, we shall trust more to men's honour, and less to law. Train men to keep their souls clean and pure." For it is with new delight that we read history, when we are individually in a position to appreciate the contributions of the different minds we meet in our daily rounds, the different nations of representative men, all in turn contributing their quota towards the development of mankind.

With hearty and cordial salutations, believe me, yours faithfully,  
OUR PERISCOPIC SENTINEL.

#### THE POST-CARD EXAMINATIONS.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of the books you so kindly sent me, which I received yesterday. Please accept my sincere thanks for them.—I remain, yours faithfully,  
SARAH KEEVILL.

#### FOR EXCESSIVE PERSPIRATION OF THE FEET.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Dear Sir,—I cut from a contemporary the following, which is at your disposal: "Dr. Winogradoff advises an application of a five per cent. solution of chloride of zinc. The feet are first washed in tepid water and then the solution is applied by means of a sponge, the surplus being washed off after a few minutes. It is unnecessary to add that the application should be made only by the physician.—Yours, very truly,  
A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER,