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EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

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**EDITORIAL.**

**THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER—THE MINISTRY  
OF HEALTH ACT.**

It is of supreme importance to those who have to earn their means of self-support that they shall have a clean Bill of Health, for any defect or falling short in this vital matter is a permanent handicap; the battle is to the strong.

Yet how few of our wage earners are sound of limb, and robust as to constitution, doctors and nurses know too well.

Visit the overcrowded out-patient department of a large hospital in any part of the United Kingdom, and you will see any or all of the following typical cases.

Weary mothers, with babies at their breasts, many of whom will obviously soon become mothers again, suffering from mal-nutrition and in nearly every case from defective teeth, crowding the clinic of the gynæcologist to obtain relief of diseases, or conditions, which are but symptoms of underlying causes, which remain untouched; underpay, and its correlaries of overwork, overcrowding and under-feeding—the under-feeding of workers, and particularly the unskilled workers of the artizan class, being specially marked in the mothers, whose unwritten rule, as regard to the apportioning of food, is husbands first, children second, themselves last. How is it possible to breed a stalwart race under such conditions? It is impossible.

Look into the children's department, and you will again see evidences of malnutrition resulting from improper feeding or under-feeding. Rickets, tubercular disease manifesting itself in a variety of forms, but deadly in its results, marasmus, and other diseases which will mar the happiness of childhood and leave indelible and lifelong marks upon their victims.

Note again the varicose veins and flat feet, the result of conditions which should be suppressed by law; the dilated hearts, the neurasthenia, the mental trouble resulting from over-strain.

Saddest of all, look into the venereal department, and, if you have the practised eye of the doctor or nurse, note the leaden complexion of syphilis and all that it implies, the woman who will never bear the child she longs for, because gonorrhœa has deprived her of the crown of motherhood. Observe the faces where the nose has fallen in because disease has destroyed the bone, the babies wailing and fretful because in their bones is the pain of disease which they have inherited from a diseased parent, and the pitiful group condemned to lifelong blindness because they contracted the form of ophthalmia neonatorum due to the germ of specific disease at the time of birth.

And all these diseases are preventible. If preventible, why not prevented?

Please God they will be.

Read the clauses of the Ministry of Health Act published on Saturday last.

"It shall be the duty of the Minister (of Health) to take all such steps as may be desirable to secure the preparation, effective carrying out, and co-ordination of measures conducive to the health of the people, including measures for the prevention and cure of diseases, the avoidance of fraud in connection with alleged remedies therefor, the treatment of physical and mental defects, the treatment and cure of the blind, the initiation and direction of research, the collection, preparation, publication, and dissemination of information and statistics relating thereto, and the training of persons for health services," and "There shall be transferred to the Minister . . . all the powers of the Board of Education with respect to attending to the health of expectant mothers

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