

that there is some injustice involving a principle which affects all, is it not much more proper that when we come to present the particulars of that injustice we should go forward, not as simply individuals but as voicing the opinion of the whole mass who, though not definitely interested in the act of injustice, are nevertheless vitally interested in the principle which lies behind that act? And again, and this might well happen, the members of the craft, after receiving training, would consider they ought to receive a certain amount of remuneration for their labour, which is the only commodity they have to sell. If, by the bringing up of inferior assistance there is created a large body of inferior journeymen who are prepared to offer their inferior work at a rate lower than is proper to be paid to the equipped journeyman, you are bound to generate a competition between the skilled man in the craft and the imperfectly-trained man, which is bound inevitably to result in the reduction of the standard placed upon the remuneration for highly-skilled work. In your profession that is one point which I am informed is of very great importance to you. (Hear, hear.) There cannot be any nurse who is anything but a menace to the community who has a second best to sell. She is like a doctor, or should be, and I know of no profession in which the standard of equipment is so high as in the medical profession. It would be fatal to that supreme efficiency of the medical profession if the standard of excellence on the part of the nurses were to be allowed to fall below what it is now, and inevitably it would do so if the profession is to be left open to be flooded by unskilled, semi-skilled or partially-trained persons. Now, all these things of which I speak to you as applicable to all trade unions apply equally to your own profession.

May I say to you that in the Corporation of which I have been a member for just upon eleven years every individual who is employed by the Corporation can come to the Corporation, not by himself, but through his association—all except the nurses. (Exclamations of surprise.)

And that leads me to refer to a statement that is sometimes made with regard to nurses, and that is, that they regard their work not so much as an exchange of service for remuneration as a vocation a heavenly calling to an earthly work. Well, be that as it may, there are other departments of Corporation work in which people have just as high an estimation of their services and of their singular aptitude to perform their work, and of the inestimable benefits obtained by the community from the performance of their work, as the nurses have. One would say, for example, that the town clerk of a city like Glasgow, who has in his hands the control of honourable departments involving the lives of a population greater than the whole population of New Zealand, involving the funds of the only solvent community in Europe, one might think that he might probably regard his calling as a vocation, and not merely as a profession, because he is not in the ordinary sense

a practising lawyer. But the town clerk, with his deputies and his assistants, and all others in the service of the Corporation in the higher sphere have quite recently made themselves into a trade union, and to show the absence of all feeling that might exist between them and those they are serving as representatives of the community, their first step has been to invite all the members of the Corporation to come and join them in a little "At Home," which they hope to hold next week. (Laughter.)

Now, there are many among them who looked upon it as rather derogatory to themselves that they should join a trade union, a thing associated with "strikes." But an examination of the principles laid down referring to strikes showed that there was one clause relating to strikes, and about sixty-three relating to vital matters, and all of them—and all over the country—have gone into this union; and there has not been one single word heard from the other side of regret that they formed it, or on their side that it was formed by them. Consequently, the question of vocation should be left out. Those of us who are dealing with matters apart from the immediate working of our fingers can regard it as a priesthood. If we regard it so—as a contribution to the common good—then it does not matter whether we feel ourselves peculiarly inspired to be nurses, to be lawyers, to be doctors, or to be ministers, and it is absurd to say that because we have a heavenly calling to do such a thing, therefore other people are to take advantage of our piety, for the purpose of depriving us of the economic necessities which alone can fit us to carry out our heavenly calling; and that in the past has been a very glaring thing in your profession. (Loud applause.) You have been perhaps the most grossly underpaid set of ministers to the public good that we have had. (Hear! hear!) Now, you find that ministers, who more frequently than others refer to their work as a heavenly calling, have had to take steps to call upon the public to realise that they cannot perform their ministry properly unless at least a minimum salary is paid to them, and if in spiritual things we take the advice of those who lead us in that sphere, should we not also in our different departments join together in order that every man and woman should have sufficient to do their work efficiently?

As an individual cannot stand alone in these days, because it is completely contrary to the evolution of all industrial and professional organisation, similarly you might think that it was not possible for even one union to stand by itself. But, directly you become a trade union you have the right to place your case before all the other combined industrial and professional trade unions in the country. You are linked up with all those who have something to give to the common good and you do not stand alone either individually or as a profession, but you stand as one of many, and you would link up with the medical profession trade union, which I understand is being formed, with all other professional unions, and you would

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