

# THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED  
**THE NURSING RECORD**  
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,688.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 1920.

Vol. LXV

## EDITORIAL.

### THE NEW ERA.

The whole world is in the crucible; this fact is abundantly apparent to all thinking minds. The great cataclysm of war has wrought changes in our social structure of every sort and kind; changes both good and bad; but our optimism leads us to think that when the great upheaval has subsided, it will prove to be a great sifter of human hearts, and the changes will—in the main—be for the good of mankind, for human betterment generally. As proof of this contention it is noticeable in a marked degree that people of torpid minds, who usually allow their minds to be controlled by newspaper-mongers, are beginning to do a little thinking on their own account, to acquire a sense of corporate responsibility, and to realise that much of the evil that is now happening is due to our neglect in this respect in the past. This is a wholesome sign.

We wonder if this good moral heart-tonic effect is sufficiently noticeable among trained nurses? Do they interest themselves in the wider issues of life; are they stirred by the live forces for good and evil around them? Are they making any contribution—small or large—towards the solution of the many and great problems that confront us in this country and many others to-day—national problems, international problems? Or are we still to have the dull lifeless cry: "I have no time." "I am too busy." "I am too tired." "It does not interest me." This last excuse is selfish and inexcusable; the others might be reasonably made by many other people besides nurses, who work quite as hard, and are quite as busy. It will not do. A new and better day is dawning; we are on the threshold of a

new era, and we must be new men and women, ready and willing to have new hearts and minds, renewing our strength to meet the new insistent demands that will be made upon us. "Life is real, life is earnest" now, and the practical realisation of this is the only thing that brings true satisfaction.

Almost every great question is—in the ultimate resort—a health question, and therefore an appeal to the well-trained, intelligent selfless nurse—the guardian of the nation's health. Here are some big comprehensive ideas for her consideration. The housing problem, to take the most fundamental. Is there a nurse so apathetic as to declare she takes no interest in it? Surely not. It touches everything of the most vital importance—health, happiness, morality. Our highest aspiration in respect of Infant Welfare, and ante-natal care of mother and child, cannot be realised, until a proper standard of healthy housing is established. An A.I. race cannot be produced from slums. The new era will not countenance slums.

To take a wider outlook still, does not the establishment of an International Health Bureau—an important item embodied in the policy of the League of Nations—interest trained nurses? It does not require any great stretch of imagination to realise the incalculable benefit that would accrue to mankind, by an effective international instrument for the prevention and control of disease. Great epidemics, spreading all over the world, would be under such judicious control that the present resulting high rate of mortality would not be possible. These are questions of vital importance, and nurses must wake up to a sense of their responsibilities concerning them.

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