

societies, asking for their co-operation. The plan is for the work to be done by an affiliation of the Leicestershire District Nursing Association and the approved societies, those participating to pay a capitation fee, and also 1s. 4d. a visit up to thirty visits, and 5s. per week for attendance afterwards for each person nursed.

A joint committee would consider the scheme, to come into operation on April 1st next.

The following logical letter appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* and the more progressive dailies during the week:—

"SIR,—More than once from the pulpits of the Church of England we have pleaded for ladies of education and culture to take up nursing as a definite work for Christ. Many have responded, mostly to be flung back after a few months, broken in spirit and nearly always in body.

"A maternal Parliament has compelled employers to provide seats for their shop assistants, but not even the hospital doctors, who must know of the unnatural strain, are heard appealing on behalf of the nurses.

"The trade unions are threatening to withhold their grants if their members on the domestic staff of the hospitals are not given greater consideration, and we of the churches are considering if the time has not yet come when we should withhold our offerings (which for the year 1921 amounted to £50,000 and legacies and donations, &c.) until the hospital authorities consider the crying need of probationers and nurses for shorter hours, for a better stipend, or, in the case of probationers, of a real honorarium, for better sleeping accommodation and in some cases more suitable messing arrangements.

"The primary care should be for the nursing staff, for is it worth while to cure the illnesses of the patients at the expense of the health and spirit of the long-suffering nurses, and especially of the probationers?"

"What irony it is to see patients themselves, ardent trade unionists, strong on the justice of a six- or eight-hour day, being nursed by those of the weaker sex for ten to twelve hours a day at the constant pressure of a modern hospital?"

"The *Westminster Gazette* has initiated and carried through many reforms; will it remedy this crying evil, so that we can again plead for ladies to take up this work, for which they long, and certainly for which they alone are eminently fitted?"

"Yours, &c.

"WILLIAM GALPIN,
"Hon. Chaplain, Royal Air Force."

In urging the right type of girl to take up nursing as her profession we have been disturbed to learn of the deep-seated prejudice against it expressed by many. They compare

the environment of the probationer with that of the young woman medical student in the same hospital. They claim that their status is lower, their lives too cramped, and that they are "bossed" from morning to night, that "character" is suspect, and "merit" disregarded, and that even when "certificated" there is no real freedom, as they exist on a sort of "ticket-of-leave" system. "It is not the work I fear," writes one, "but the eternal pettifog."

We are bound to confess our recent experiences of the "eternal pettifog" in nursing affairs has been an eye-opener.

At the recent massage examination of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics, the five blind women students, trained under the auspices of the National Institute for the Blind, who entered, all successfully qualified. Two, both trained nurses who lost their sight during the war, also entered for and successfully passed the remedial exercises examination.

We note a nurse has been accused (maybe quite falsely) of recommending morphia to a young woman—presumably cured of the drug habit—who found herself in court charged with uttering three forged medical prescriptions, and thereby obtaining a quantity of morphia sulphate. All the same, nurses cannot be too scrupulous in never recommending morphia in any form to patients. One never knows the misery which may result.

Miss Elizabeth Selden, R.N., writing in the *American Journal of Nursing* of "The Community Nurse as a Health Factor," says in part:—

"The medical profession of to-day aims to practice preventive rather than curative medicine; by this I mean educating the masses in the principles of right living, thus preventing the original illness as well as its recurrence. To accomplish this desirable result it will be most necessary to have the right sort of people as the educators in order that the gospel of health be taught thoroughly and correctly. There are many of these groups of educators; in fact, we find them in almost every line of work. It is the Public Health Nursing Service group of educators which interests us, and especially the worker herself as a factor in health. . . .

"There has been growing up in the public mind a stronger consciousness and a more

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)