

THE
BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, REGISTERED NURSE.

No. 1,767.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1922.

Vol. LXVIII

EDITORIAL.

**"WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE
PEOPLE PERISH."**

When that wise man of the Ancient World uttered these uplifting and inspiring words it was in the spirit of prophecy and meant for all time. The appeal to the human heart is strong. We are living at the present time in a very materialistic world; selfishness and self-seeking are so abundant, and so obvious, that it would be folly to deny their existence. It is sadder than the war, because the most sublime heroism and self-forgetfulness were commingled all the time with the Great Sorrow, and were a soothing palliative. But now! Where is all that spiritual beauty? Life seems largely shorn of it. When one hears of such a remark as the following, uttered by a woman (who, maybe, has done some kind of useful war work in the past), one holds one's breath, and asks oneself, What has happened to old England? Can it be the same country of great traditions, where Florence Nightingale, Josephine Butler, Mary Carpenter, and many other great women, lived and spent themselves for others?

"I have brought my selfishness to such a point that it has become an art; I now care for nobody but myself."

Have we of the Nursing Profession a vision? It is generally admitted that Nursing the Sick is the highest calling of a woman. There is nothing the matter with the *calling*, but what about the *woman*? Has she too become tainted with the prevalent materialistic poison, which seems to be, in some unaccountable way, the aftermath of the war? Listen to what she says, with resentment in her loud voice, as she seats herself at the breakfast table, without a spark of conscious shame: *"I have had an awful case, a most awful case; no time off at all!"* Would you like to be nursed by a woman like that? Who trained her? Who selected her for training? What was the influence of her Matron? Was *she* a woman without a vision—the vision of truth, uprightness, and the "fire of love"? We all

know, and have known, of Matrons who have been, and are, great ornaments to the Nursing Profession—women with a vision, with a high sense of their responsibility on the *moral* side, as well as that of the professional. The need is that they should *all* reach that standard. The present position is this: after thirty years of the most strenuous labour, against continuous opposition, by a minority of women led by one of unconquerable courage, the great reform of State Registration by Act of Parliament is now an accomplished fact, by which the Nursing Profession has been raised to the dignified position it now occupies. The characteristics that went to that achievement were moral as well as mental. Courage, will-power, self-forgetfulness, disinterestedness, and farseeingness, which gave a vision of posterity and a genuine desire to provide for their needs. It is the perpetuity of those qualities, combined with the requisite intelligence and capacity, which will make the profession great; in other words—*character*.

"I sent my soul into the Invisible,
Some token of the After-life to spell.
By and by my soul returned to me,
And answered: I myself am heaven or hell."

I—myself—am—heaven—or hell.

To make ourselves worthy of our great profession, and the position in it which has been fought for and won for us, must be our constant aspiration now. We must ever progress, "march breast forward," and never lose the vision of our ideal. There must be no sliding back by the slippery path of apathy, no stagnation; we must keep the flag flying and untarnished; there must be no blot on the Escutcheon. With apologies to Charles Mackay, I present his poem as a parable, and ask my fellow-nurses to which type does the Nursing Profession belong, in this year of grace:—

THE RETROGRADE.

There are three preachers ever preaching,
Each with eloquence and power;
One is old with locks of white,
Skinny as an anchorite,
And he preaches every hour,

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