

TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD.

Their elders tell them that they are having the best time of their life; but are they?

Looking back on my own childhood, which parents and relations would tell me, should have been a happy one, I emphatically say, "No."

Children, especially sensitive girls, are often terrified by the discussions of their elders, carried on, often unintentionally, in their presence; they hear, and only half understand, conversations about disease, death, and operations.

A child who thinks often makes itself miserable over some presentiment of future unhappiness, which it has not the courage to speak about.

Don't we remember the dreaded bedtime, and how we clung to any excuse for remaining in the well-lighted room downstairs.

At last, when everything failed, we faced the darkened bedroom, with its weird shadows, and the familiar corners of walls, and furniture turned into sinister mysteries, the tapping of ivy against the window-panes, chilling our little souls with terror.

Many a child has suffered nightly martyrdom because she dare not say she is afraid.

How cruel the Spartan mother, or nurse, who ruthlessly turns out the light, and leaves the poor little mite alone with its imaginary terrors. We show them pictures, and tell them stories of wild animals stalking their defenceless prey, and forget that when the light goes out those lions and tigers prowl under the nursery windows, or lurk in the shadows, and the melancholy yowls of an amorous Tom cat are transformed into the wails of a lost child.

Happiest of all is the child without imagination. The period of rapid growth is often a miserable one.

When one heard people say, "M— is all hands and feet," and visiting aunts make unkind remarks about long legs and bony, protruding wrists and big feet, and when one was constantly being told to "Hold your head up," and "not to be so clumsy," etc., and when conscious of criticising glances one became more nervous than ever, and was liable to let things fall, and bump one's head when picking them up.

And the agony of humiliation when one was obliged to wear clothes one loathed, that had descended from someone else.

I can still remember my own strange appearance at the age of 11: dressed in a black satin garment of my mother's, cut down, and a middle-aged-looking hat of black straw, with yellow satin trimmings.

My very soul scorched when I heard the remarks of the street boys, whose taste it offended.

M. B. V.

Mr. John Graham, of Tippermallo, Methven, Perthshire, farmer, who died on June 17th, left the residue of his property, which, it is stated, is expected to amount to about £60,000, to the Perth County and City Royal Infirmary.

THE MATRONS' COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.



A meeting of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland was held by kind invitation of Miss G. R. HALE, R.R.C., Matron, and the Committee of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for Women, on Saturday, October 21st. The President of the Council, Miss M. HEATHER-BIGG, R.R.C., was in the chair.

Forty members attended and as many letters were received expressing disappointment at being unable to be present.

The Minutes of the last meeting having been read, and confirmed, Miss A. E. HULME, Hon. Secretary, reported, arising out of the minutes, that she had forwarded to the Minister of Health, and to the Chairman of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, copies of the Resolutions passed at the last meeting.

Brief acknowledgements of the Resolutions had been received.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MISS HULME also read a letter from a member with regard to the refusal of her application to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales for registration by that body. It was resolved to ask for further details, and to tell the member that the Matrons' Council was prepared to help her if it found she had been unjustly disqualified.

APPLICATIONS.

A number of applications for membership were considered and accepted. One was referred for further information.

RESOLUTION.

MISS KATHLEEN A. SMITH, R.R.C., then moved the following Resolution:—

That the Minister of Health be urged to sign the Syllabus of General Training framed by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, so that Nurses may enjoy the educational benefits provided by the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919.

Miss Smith said that when she was asked to move the Resolution she felt how right it was that such a Resolution should be sent to the Minister of Health by the Matrons' Council as the pioneer and most progressive Association of Matrons in this country. But while it was an excellent thing that the Council should do this there should have been no necessity for such a Resolution.

The Education and Examination Committee of the General Nursing Council had, she understood, spent several hours weekly for a year in considering and drawing up this Syllabus of Training which,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)