

doubt, like Galen many centuries later, he studied philosophy, and we owe to him a dictum, part of which has passed into everyday phraseology but which tells us eloquently what type of man was this great father of scientific medicine. Hippocrates says—"Life is short, art is long, occasion sudden, experience fallible, judgment difficult." Here, indeed, is a fine philosophical conception of the attitude of mind, the spirit of patience and of caution, in which he would have his fellow-physicians approach to and practise the art of healing. But most of all does the famous Oath of Hippocrates show what manner of man was he who had the mission of carrying medicine out of the mysteries towards natural physical observation and ultimately into science. The "Oath" or "Protestation" of Hippocrates, as it is named by its first translator into English, is still the model upon which physicians seek to develop their professional life.

What is a Mystery?

We have used very frequently the word "Mysteries," and perhaps this might call for some explanation, although it was used constantly by the Greeks themselves, as also by the Egyptians, Druids, Romans and other ancient civilisations. But these "mysteries" did not end with Greece and Rome. They lived in ancient religious houses such as that on the Odilienberg and at Kildare, they lived, too far on in the mediæval ages in the form of alchemy. Paracelsus and other physicians drew from them. Also it is to be remembered that the word "mystery" was used in a higher sense, in this connection, in the middle ages than it is to-day. If a man knew the "mysteries" of his profession or trade, he sought to guard these "mysteries" from being desecrated and misused by others who did not possess adequate knowledge. Hence the City Guilds arose to protect the mysteries of cloth-making and the like. The Barbers Company was designed, in one of its aspects, to protect, to a certain degree, the mysteries of surgery until men like Dr. Peter Lowe in the very early seventeenth century sought for something better in the matter of medical "mysteries," or medical learning, and proclaimed that many of the barber-surgeons were not fit to cut a beard far less to operate upon a man. The Faculty of Medicine of Glasgow was founded by Lowe, while he also sought, at the same time, protective legislation for his own particular "mystery" (*i.e.*, medicine). And so from the mysteries of Epidaurus (most of which were never transferred to writing or this only at a very decadent stage), the healing art passed through important developments for centuries in Greece, culminating there in the great teaching of Hippocrates, and in these present times in a vast accumulation of medical knowledge with the various Acts of Parliament calculated to prevent the unscrupulous or ignorant from practising "Mysteries" which they do not understand. Such is the debt we owe to Greece, which gave the great impetus to medicine in the West and which taught, more than any other civilisation, the responsibility of those entrusted with the practice of the art of healing. Greece emphasised strongly the dignity of such a calling, the high morality which should characterise the conduct of such as follow its practice, and the need for protecting the sick from the unlearned and to some extent unscrupulous.

I. M.

DO YOU KNOW

"That the thing for which we are fighting this very minute—democracy—was first outlined by a Greek—Aristotle?"

"That when you are ill the groundwork of your doctor's knowledge is the work of a Greek—Hippocrates?"

THE PASSING OF VISCOUNTESS NOVAR.

A GOLDEN VOICE IS SILENT.

With the passing of Lady Novar, daughter of the great Marquess of Dufferin, the most eloquent woman speaker in the world is silent. From time to time during the past half-century we have listened to them all, on both sides of the Atlantic, and no woman's voice exquisitely modulated, ever appealed in such golden speech, in competition with that of Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson, when pleading in support of a great cause.

How fortunate, therefore, for unorganised trained nurses, that during the time Sir Ronald Munro-Ferguson, later Viscount Novar, had charge of the Nurses' Registration Bill in the House of Commons, that Lady Helen supported their claims on the public platform and gained sympathy from all who listened to her well-reasoned appeal. Indeed, had not Mr. Asquith wisely sent Sir Ronald as Governor-General and his brilliant wife to Australia, it is not improbable that the long-delayed Act for the State Registration of Nurses would have been placed on the Statute Book before the end of the Great War.

Services in Australia.

Of Lady Helen's public services in Australia during the last war an "Anzac" pays tribute in *The Times*. He records:—

"As soon as war was declared, realising that joint activities would have to be merged in an Australian-wide movement, she forthwith set the machinery in motion for organising Red Cross societies in every State. Within ten days an organisation had been fully established, which during the war handled millions of money and dispensed thousands of tons of material among the Australian troops. After the war the society remained as a vigorous instrument of beneficence, so that at the beginning of the present conflict it was ready again to play its part in the war effort. Among the many women who laboured in a variety of splendid causes during the last war there was none who worked with greater assiduity than Lady Helen herself. Not only by virtue of her station, but by natural capacity, she was in every sense a leader of Australian women, and during the stress of those anxious years she taxed herself almost to breaking point in the service of the Australian nation."

Of recent years Lady Novar has spent her life at beautiful Raith, in Fife, and has heart and soul thrown all her energies into Red Cross work in support of the valiant fighting forces in the present.

A member of her family writes:—

"She would not rest. . . . She was only ill a few days, and passed away suddenly and quietly. . . . She will be greatly missed in Fife, where she did so much to help every kind of good work. . . . To her family her loss is indeed great, as all looked to her for advice and counsel, and her heart was open to all of us—of the older and younger generations—at any time and always."

Many nurses of the past generation will wish, with us, to offer to her sister, Lady Hermione Blackwood, S.R.N., who devoted many years' service to the profession she loves, their very sincere sympathy in her irreparable loss of so beloved a sister.

LEGACIES FOR NURSES.

Miss Clara Willgoss, Boyne Lodge, Grange Road, Kingston-on-Thames, who left £14,617, bequeathed the residue to her nurse and friend, Marie Buesnel, "in loving gratitude for all the care and attention which she has given me in my illness and during air-raid warnings."

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