

training at the Royal Northern Infirmary, Inverness, her fever training at the County Hospital, Strathpeffer and subsequently acted as ward sister at Ross-shire County Hospital and Sanatorium before joining the staff of the County Hospital, Invergordon, where she is Joint Assistant Matron and Sister-in-Charge of the X-Ray department and out-patients' tuberculosis clinic. The scholarship offers the holder a three or six months' course of study in England, Scotland, Norway, Denmark or Sweden, and Miss Mackay has chosen to spend three months in Scandinavia.

Vocation for Nursing.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON (The Right Rev. J. W. C. Wand, D.D.) wrote in the March issue of the *London Churchman*, published Friday, February 24th, 1950:—

"The other day I received a letter from the radio-grapher of a hospital not far from London. She said that her hospital had fifty beds lying empty. It also had a very long waiting list of patients desiring to receive treatment. The reason why they could not be admitted to take the empty beds was the terrible shortage of nurses. My correspondent believes that there must be many people who would respond to the vocation of nursing if it were properly presented. She says that the Church could lead a crusade to arouse such vocations, promising not good wages and conditions but aching backs, sore hands and broken hearts with perhaps a smile from a sick child or the trust of a sick woman. 'If,' she continues, 'you would take your Mission to London into every town and village in the country there would be no nursing shortage.'

"I confess that I am very moved by this *cri de coeur* and also by the confidence it displays in the effects of our Mission. Is it possible that these words may produce an echo in the heart of some girl who is wondering what God wishes her to do with her life?"

The British College of Nurses, Ltd.

A MEETING of the Council of the British College of Nurses, Ltd., was held at 19, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7, at 2 p.m. on February 22nd, 1950.

The President, Miss H. McLoughlin, S.R.N., F.B.C.N., was in the Chair.

Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last Meeting were confirmed.

Very satisfactory progress was reported concerning legal aid provided by the College in support of a Fellow.

Financial Statement.

A satisfactory Financial Statement was presented and adopted.

Bring and Buy Sale.

It was agreed that contributors be asked if they will be good enough to send gifts in cash or kind not later than the first week in September, 1950.

The Next Meeting of the Council.

It was decided that the next meeting of the Council be held on Wednesday, March 29th at 2 p.m., to be followed by a further lecture on "The Drama," by Mr. Francis Edwards at 4.45 p.m.—following Tea at 4 o'clock.

The Drama.

By Francis Edwards.

THIS afternoon I am going to discuss very briefly the functions performed by the Drama in human life.

Let us begin with an examination of a simple form of dramatic action, that of a man falling headlong over a bucket of whitewash left on the footpath by a house painter. The example is common enough and has been used in one form of variation or another for more than two thousand years. Usually one expects to find such a situation only in farce where a particular type of character is involved to excite the audience to laughter, but I want you to consider it at first unconnected with any association which you might be tempted to conjure up in your imaginations or your memories. It is to be considered as an event, as a "fall" and nothing else. If we do this I think it will appear that we cannot react in any way to the event without having some knowledge of the qualities of the persons and things associated with it.

Suppose then, the figure of the man who falls over the bucket to be portly, and suppose in him an exaggerated sedateness of carriage which might well indicate an over-abundance of self-esteem that receives further emphasis from the expression of a countenance in which you perceive certain unmistakable signs of ignorance and arrogance. And suppose further that his failure to see the bucket is due to the angle at which he carries his head: an angle befitting a man so self consciously dignified. Then we have a type of individual who would most probably in his fall excite an audience to laughter.

Now consider the probable reaction to a different kind of person in similar circumstances. Let the second man be portly like the first. But let his dignity be real instead of assumed, and let him trip over the bucket, not because his head is held high in contemplation of his own greatness, but because his eyesight is defective. And, further, let him reveal in the face of catastrophe the qualities of courage and patience. Then I think you will find a spectacle more likely to provoke an audience to tears than to laughter.

The result, you see, in each case depends to a very great extent upon the human values or qualities represented by the character involved. The false, subjected to a fall, provokes the onlooker to mirth; the true, to grief.

These examples, simple and crude though they are, represent much that lies at the root of man's conception of the dramatic art. The "fall" that I have instanced here as taking place through the agency of a bucket of whitewash has for thousands of years been one of the greatest obsessions of mankind. It represents man's conception of that which, lying beyond the orbit of his own will and perception, frustrates him and brings him down in the course of his endeavours. It is that which is known under the various headings of "chance," "destiny" or "the inscrutable will of God," and men have sung their recognition of its power in epic, ode and anthem at every stage in their development. The Christian sings it in the words of the *Magnificat* "He hath put down the mighty from their seats."

The various interpretations that might be given to the power behind the "fall" may be seen by studying all the possible attitudes towards the painter in our example. Why did he leave the bucket in the path of the walking man? Was it through the carelessness of ignorance? Was it a deliberate, malicious trick? Or was it perhaps that the painter believed that his act would assist in the evolutionary process of selection and segregation of the percipient from the non-percipient? Assume that we go in search of the painter to question him and do not find him. We are left to form our own conclusions, or perhaps not to conclude at all. Whichever we do will depend upon the constitution of our own individual characters. But we shall all of us be left with an uncomfortable feeling that what has happened

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