

themselves fit in body and nerve to face a foe that is as courageous as he is brutal in war."

Mr. Lloyd George in February 1915 was very emphatic when he said that "drink is doing us more damage in the war than all the German submarines put together."

"O that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains."

References:—(i) Horsley and Sturge, "Alcohol and the Human Body."

(ii) W. E. Dixon, "Manual of Pharmacology."

(iii) Sir A. Clark, "An Enemy of the Race."

(iv) "B. M. J.," Nov. 26th, 1914.

THE LADY DOCTOR.

By HYGEIA.

(From "The Grant Medical College Magazine," March 1918.)

LESS than half a century ago the lady-doctor was a very uncommon feature among the few professions that were thrown open to women. Teaching and Nursing alone practically, were considered suitable for them. At that time the majority of women were confined to their homes. Needlework, cookery, and other branches of domestic economy were all that they were expected to know. Gradually the education of women spread, and more pathways were opened for them. They began to see and judge what was best for themselves. A few ambitious ones took to teaching and nursing. But when the lady-doctor appeared on the scene, she was viewed with great consternation. Because she had to study Anatomy and Physiology, the medical profession was considered unfit for her.

The women of to-day owe much to a small gallant band of ladies who fought so hard and unflinchingly against the prejudices of their times. Their efforts seemed to meet with disappointment on all sides and they had few to sympathise with them. But in spite of all the hardships and defeats they triumphed, and they were free to take a Medical degree side by side with the men. To-day we see how their efforts have been blessed a thousandfold. The lady-doctor is a much needed acquisition to the individual and to the nation. Who would understand the needs, and sympathise with the sufferings of the weaker sex, better than she? When one reads of the deaths and disasters among the poorer classes of women who entrust themselves to the care of midwives, who scarcely know anything of their work, one cannot help but acknowledge that the lady-doctor is a blessing. With her keen insight and inborn sympathy for the suffering, she has found ways and means to better the condition of her sisters.

Now almost every University has thrown open to women its degrees in Medicine, and the women have not been slow in making the most of their opportunities. Within a few years the number of lady-students at the Medical

Colleges has increased rapidly, and the lady-doctor become very popular. She has been able to pass her examinations with the greatest ease, sometimes gaining the honours so much coveted by the opposite sex. Having now obtained a certificate which enables her to heal the sick and relieve the suffering, her womanly instincts first guide her attention to the women and children. She sees the misery among her less fortunate sisters, she strives to help them by establishing Maternity Homes, and Hospitals for Women and Children. Her toil to relieve the misery of working people, and her good work, have been crowned with success.

A lady-doctor was once asked what the necessary qualifications for a student to become a successful doctor are, and she answered, "good health, common sense, and hard work." The Indian lady-student is apt to neglect the first quality, which is so essential to the making of a good lady-doctor. She usually possesses the last quality to an extraordinary degree. Sometimes she works so hard that she finds no time for outdoor sport, and for widening her knowledge beyond the text-books prescribed. This is a regrettable fact, and when inexorable life asks her very practical questions she finds herself at a loss. Her health must be her first thought, and to ensure that, fresh air, good food, and exercise are the essentials. For without good health the mind and body cannot do the maximum amount of work and thereby much is lost.

During her student-life a girl ought to be released from all household cares. But there are some conscientious girls who try to combine the duties of home and the duties of college. There are others who try to support themselves by teaching during their college career. In such cases the results are generally disastrous for they often fail both in work and health. While studying a girl ought to be in a place where she can devote herself to the full development of her studies and she must not think of doing anything else.

A few beneficent citizens have awarded scholarships for ladies. This has met a long-felt need, and enabled a few girls to gratify their ambitions, when otherwise their means might not have permitted them to do. The question of co-education was a serious hindrance to many girls joining the Medical College. But that difficulty has now been removed by a Medical College for Ladies being established at Delhi. It is still in its infancy, but in time we hope the training will be as efficient as the training in other Medical Colleges.

After obtaining her well-earned degree the lady-doctor is launched upon the sea of life. She has to decide the direction which she must take. She can take up a post-graduate course, or a post in some hospital in order to gain experience and put her knowledge into practice, or she can set up a private dispensary. The training she receives during the student life develops tact, sympathy and a knowledge of human nature, and deepens and broadens her intellect. It has been argued that the training in medicine tends to unsex a woman. But that may be the exception. As a general rule the girl who has received a good education at home cannot fail to be the better for the training she receives. The lady-doctor who is a real lady can do a large amount of good

work. Her sympathy and tenderness make her heart overflow with a desire to help her less fortunate sisters. She is able to heal or relieve the suffering body and when, as often happens, she becomes the friend as well as the doctor of her patients she can also brace and comfort the shrinking soul.

Medicine for women is a flourishing institution. It opens its doors to a useful and satisfying career to the right sort of girl. The girl who wishes to be independent and earn a comfortable livelihood, can always be sure of obtaining her desire by taking up the Medical profession. It is one of the few professions in which women receive the same fees as men. This fact is being realised more and more, and it is interesting to note that among the students there is an increasing number of doctors' daughters. Overcrowding of the profession is prevented because the life is arduous and the training expensive. In the special case of India, where the purdah system exists, lady-doctors are much in demand. There are also some women who prefer a doctor of their own sex to tend them. Besides, where the treatment of babies is concerned women are apt to feel contempt when advice comes from a man.

To the girl who wishes to live a self-sacrificing life, a life devoted to the welfare of her suffering brethren—the medical profession offers the fullest scope. She can go among the poorer classes relieving the suffering and healing the sick. In the case of Christians the Missions offer a vast field for doing good work. The lady-doctor is a great help for she can attend to the women whom the missions wish to christianise. She can give lectures to young mothers on the care and upbringing of children, thereby giving to the nation healthier sons and daughters. And to the girl on whom devolves the care and support of a family, the medical profession again will offer the best means for doing so.

In a time like the present when the blood of thousands is being shed, she can tend and heal by the touch of her loving hands. Womens' Hospital Corps have been organised in England and sent to France and Belgium. The work they have done and are still doing there deserves great praise and commendation. In the midst of the horrors of war they have displayed great courage and cheerfulness. Even in England their thoughtfulness, consideration and unselfishness, have made them open out hospitals for the care of babies, whose fathers have perhaps given up their lives for their country, and whose mothers are unable to give them proper care. Thus they help the State by making these children grow up into useful citizens.

A woman's resourceful brain has found various ways and means of making herself extremely useful as a lady-doctor. Where she is good and conscientious she is much revered and loved. Children take to her for she knows exactly what they want. Wives and mothers go to her for advice and treatment, and her sympathetic womanly nature understands their need. A woman's proper place is the home, and the lady-doctor has enlarged it, by embracing in her home all suffering mankind. She is like the witch of the ancient days healing by her magic touch and mysterious decoctions.