

NURSING AS A CAREER.

Work is only done well when it is done with a will ; and no man has a thoroughly sound will unless he knows he is doing what he should, and in his place.—*Ruskin.*

THE choice of a career for girl or boy often causes parents, teachers or guardians many anxious movements ; the wise will try to discover the natural bent, and weighing the " for " and " against " will allow the young idea to make its first essay in choosing its life-path. It is for want of accurate data that many mistakes in life are made, and we are not here concerned to dictate respecting any profession, but the one for which this paper stands. There are a number of girls now in school who should make excellent nurses. Of the nobleness of a life of unselfish devotion to the needs of others in their helplessness, we merely speak in passing, it is so well recognised ; but with many, it is looked upon as a profession quite up in the clouds, and the stern qualities of nerve and intellect required for success are recognised only we think by those who have intimate knowledge of nursing as patient or as nurse. It is of absorbing interest and it has scope for genius, a bookworm indeed in it would be a fish out of water, but a student of science quite in her element. It requires the highest type of mind to rise above the petty annoyances and disagreeables of daily duties, and to live in a community without giving or taking offence. Every item of knowledge and every accomplishment will come into use at some time during a nurse's career and without some of these things she will often find herself at a loss only seriously realized when too late, and quite irreparable, for a nurse's work takes her entire being, her time, her thought, her life and it will be too late to begin to wish for time to study when the lack is discovered. Strength of body and good health are a *sine qua non* ; strength of purpose and will, perseverance and patience, gentleness and tact, courage to face difficulties, dangers and death, in fact, all the good qualities are required, but let not the list frighten some unduly, for many of these are capable of development, it is part of the training to call them out, and increase them. } From the days of a Fabriola and Flaccilla (Rome A. D. 379) the foundresses of the first systemized care for the sick to the present day when the announcement is made, " that Lady Beatrice Cecil, elder daughter of the Marquis of Salisbury and her most intimate friend, Miss Angela Manners, twin daughter of Lord Manners, are about to adopt the profession of hospital nurse, that calls attention to fact that there are a great number of wealthy people who feel that their lives are more or less spoiled because their riches prevent them from finding an outlet for their talents ; there have always been some forth-

coming from Prince's houses like Queen Amelie of Portugal and the Duchess d'Aosta who have given of their time to this great work in person. Are there not high-souled women who would like to place their well-educated daughters to live and work on a plane with these noble ladies? Are there not members of our noble Indian families and daughters of Government servants ready to devote their energies to nursing with such examples before them? The pioneering is done, the roughest of the ploughing is over, things are beginning to look ship-shape, fine hospitals arise everywhere, easy to work in compared with what our fore-runners had to put up with; a systematic teaching and preparation for examinations is given, in place of haphazard picking up of knowledge in odd moments. Already there are *far more doctors* at work in India than *nurses*, a thing unheard of in the homelands and that should not be; the nurse's duty is to be on the spot when the doctor cannot be, for in the intervals of his visits, the patient may undo in a minute the careful and anxious work of hours or weeks. Let it not be said of India as of the continent of Europe "that the calling as such has not attained the same dignity as in England, and, with some exceptions, is pursued by an inferior class of persons, less capable and less well instructed. But the pressure of modern requirements particularly in surgery is being felt even in the most backward quarters and is compelling gradual improvement. It is impossible therefore, for nurses to be over-educated in the fullest sense of the word; but it is possible for them to be inappropriately educated, and perhaps that is sometimes now the case." There are responsible and dignified posts waiting for all who are fit to fill them, but neither in this or in any other profession can the top of the tree be reached with one jump. We would not have the phase of nursing as a *fashionable pursuit* that England has just gone through although it had the effect of bringing to the front doubtless many staunch adherents who might have hung back had not "so and so" tried it! And we would not have war to bring into prominence the sufferings and necessities of the sick. Religion was the first inducement and in the latest developments it is the religious woman, the merciful who is blessed, and who becomes the real nurse. It was lately remarked to us "we have made a mistake, we have begun at the wrong end, giving scholarships to anybody and everybody to study nursing—we ought to have kept them out and kept them out till they came on bended knees, the very best of them begging to be trained." There is something in this--this is too high a calling to be degraded to the level that some would have it; in some institutions there is such a low class of nursing that patients would

rather die than face a hospital. Let this not be said of India. Again, elsewhere, it was said of a very average girl when hospital work was suggested for her. "Oh! I hope she will do something better than that!" I ask "what better could there be?" "If you answer "doctoring," I would like to say emphatically that this is unsuitable to the average woman. A general diffidence, want of self-confidence, inability to apply practically and speedily in emergency the book-knowledge acquired, these things dog the footsteps of the Indian practitioner, fatalism is another bar to success. To be able to memorise well and pass exams : is not all that is required, and this fact is so often ignored. Of course so long as a girl thinks herself worthy of something "better," so long is she useless for any position—but it does not take her long in hospital to find her level. Another advantage for the Indian girl of nursing over doctoring is the absolute safety of her position so long as the hospital has been well and carefully chosen ; while permitted sufficient freedom, she is amply guarded, and gradually finds her path to complete independence. Now that science has taken the hospitals in hand, nursing is no longer work for the dull and stupid (if ever it was) too much is expected of the nurse for her to be satisfied with ought but the very best.—THE EDITOR. //

Souls grow white, as well as cheeks, in these holy duties,

One that went in a nurse may come out an angel.

God bless all good women !

To their soft hands and pitying hearts we must all come at last—

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

SELF-HELP IN PHOTOGRAPHY.

UNDER the above title a fascinating little booklet has just been issued by Burroughs, Wellcome & Co. containing much useful information on the art and even upon the science of the camera. The folly of doing one's photography vicariously is insisted upon and the simple and satisfactory methods of development, etc., which have been worked out by means of 'Tabloid' Photographic Chemicals are graphically described. The tale of the tank and all that it stands for is told once more, and told in a way which convinces the reader that not by observation only, but by calculation also, he may attain to well-developed negatives. The problem of exposure, always a knotty one, is laid, bare, and helps and hints on printing out paper, toning gaslight and bromide prints, getting warm tones by development and many other matters are scattered through the well-illustrated pages.—Copies will be supplied gratis to our readers on request by the Company.