

Royal Charter which authorises Registration for Nurses will be the first legal enactment recognising and controlling Nursing, or, indeed, any other female vocation.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that with this clear example before them, so many leading physicians and surgeons are supporting with all their eloquence, influence, and energy the present movement. They are fully convinced, both for their own and the public good, of the utility—nay, the necessity—of such a system being adopted. But for those of our readers who do not realize how it can affect the members of the medical profession we will briefly explain a few of the many points in which Registration of trained Nurses will lighten the difficulties, lessen the responsibility, and forward the work, of every medical man. It will, moreover, greatly increase the success of his endeavours in the treatment of injury or disease, and thereby advance the progress of the art and science of medicine; for it must be remembered that after the Register is once formed, and those then nursing by "prescriptive right" have been placed thereon, only the names of those Nurses will be in future inscribed, who have given proof that, by training and knowledge, they are fully qualified to tend the sick.

And as the importance of scientific nursing is universally acknowledged, it follows, in the first place, that Registration, by eliminating in time all untrained workers, must remove also the harm that such have hitherto wrought; and, by substituting instead skilled labour, doubly act for the benefit of the invalid, and thus, at least, add two-fold strength to the measures adopted by the medical attendant. That must be as clear as noon-day. But it may be asked—How can Registration possibly lessen the onerous responsibility which must ever attach to the doctor's care of the sick? If it can in any way do so, surely it must be, not only of great benefit to them, but clearest proof of the importance of the subject to the community at large.

We maintain that it must do so, in many ways. For example, now-a-days, when a Nurse is sent for to a case and arrives—in the great majority of cases a perfect stranger to the medical man—he has no further knowledge of her capabilities, experience, or trustworthiness than can be derived from her own account of herself. She may be a first-class Nurse, or she may not—time only can show her Nursing qualities to him. If he doubt her intelligence, her obedience, or her truthfulness, he is harassed by constant doubts as to whether she understood this order, or carried out that, or correctly reported the presence or absence of the important symptom for which he was anxiously watching.

But if she be Registered, half his doubts disappear, and the other half are minimised. He turns to the Nursing Register, which stands upon his desk beside his Medical Directory, and subserves a similar

purpose. He finds her name enrolled there, and her efficiency thereby guaranteed, like his own, by a legally-constituted authority. Opposite her name, he finds the date of her enrolment, and other particulars, such as, for example, the School at which she was trained, and how her knowledge was tested before Registration was granted.

He knows, furthermore, that he can now depend upon her fidelity and truth completely, because she has to maintain the high position she has gained for herself, and which, as in the case of medical men, would at once be risked by any unprofessional conduct.

Surely it needs no further argument to prove how such a knowledge, in place of the present uncertainty, would enormously lighten the responsibility of many an anxious case to the overworked and overworried doctor.

But, again, we must see how it would lighten his difficulties. At present it is only too true that a "so-called" Nurse increases them. Semi-trained or altogether ignorant, as so many now engaged in private Nursing are, it is a frequent complaint on the part of medical men that half their time is taken up in adjusting differences which the "Nurse" has aroused, or correcting statements that she has made.

We lately heard of a case which clearly points the moral. A gentleman of high position was taken ill with Pneumonia, his wife having been just confined. A nurse arrived—we will not say from where. The next day, the doctor had to give half-an-hour of his overtaxed time to composing a violent quarrel which had arisen between the new-comer and the much-esteemed monthly nurse, who had been told by the former, that unless she had been trained in a hospital she could know nothing about her work. The second day, the doctor had to pacify the rest of the household, who had unanimously "given warning" because of the dictatorial behaviour of this young woman. She was sent back at once to where she came from, and inquiries being made, it was discovered that she had frequently distinguished herself in like manner before, and that the only knowledge of Nursing she could have gained, must have been acquired while acting as a ward-maid in a small provincial hospital. Yet by easily forged, and more easily accepted, testimonials, she had palmed herself off as a trained Nurse; had occupied the place of, and taken the remuneration away from, qualified women; had done grievous harm to many patients; brought intense discredit on the profession of Nursing, and caused the greatest anxiety and trouble to already over-harassed doctors. This story and hundreds of similar ones, it is almost unnecessary to say, would be impossible if Registration were in force. So it is surely needless to pursue the subject further, or multiply evidence to prove the incalculable benefits that must accrue to Medical Men from the Legal Registration of Trained Nurses.

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