

order to be of any real service to the public, a complete statement of the essential qualification of each individual, is not adapted to the calling of a Nurse, as from the nature of the case it could not be otherwise than imperfect and untrustworthy, and, therefore, misleading to the public and the medical profession.

(3) That such a Register would be prejudicial to the interest of the Nurses themselves, by lowering the position of the most competent, without correspondent improvement to the less capable, and would therefore have the effect of lowering the standard of Nursing generally.

(4) That the British Nurses' Association being opposed in its views by all the leading Nurse Training Schools, and not having any substantial claim to represent the great body of Nurses for the sick, is not entitled to claim the privilege which it seeks; and that a copy of these resolutions, signed by the Chairman of the meeting, be forwarded to the President of the Board of Trade.

It was further resolved that each of the large Hospitals and Nursing Institutes of the country be requested to nominate two representatives to form a Committee of Observation, and that this Committee, should it consider it necessary, be empowered to request the President of the Board of Trade to receive a deputation on the subject.

Copies of these, and of documents marked "private and confidential," have been sent broadcast over the country. We have received letters from several Hospitals asking what all the fuss means, and what should be done in the matter; and we have recommended the nearest waste-paper basket as the most fitting depository of these literary effusions. Some Hospital managers have, however, taken a very honourable course, and definitely declined to pledge their Institutions to condemn Registration merely because they were told to do so. A few, we are told, have looked into the matter carefully, and have come to the conclusion that the Registration scheme of the R.B.N.A. is highly laudable. A good many very wisely decline to take up an attitude which savours strongly of persecution, especially now, when the public conscience is being so keenly aroused on the subject of the treatment of their Nurses by Hospital Committees. For my part I believe that Guy's and Westminster have made a fatal mistake in attempting to prevent the public being protected against ignorant or even criminal women, who can now safely term themselves Trained Nurses.

THE following letter, culled from our spirited little contemporary, the *Woman's Herald*, and signed "M. M. D.," may interest my readers:—

"Madam,—I have been much struck by receiving within two days letters from Edinburgh and Liverpool reiterating the complaint that in neither town can a sufficient supply of Nurses be obtained to meet the demand by the public. One of my letters was from the Superintendent of a large Nurses'

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Home, in which she said they already employed forty Nurses, and were anxious to obtain ten or twelve more. The other letter says: 'Forty Nurses were asked for in one week, and they could not supply them.' Now this seems strange in presence of the constant demand for fresh employments for women. True, all women have not the gift or genius for nursing, but it is a gracious and honourable calling, and attention is being continually drawn to, and improvements effected in, any defects in their position. It is not wise to begin nursing till a girl is over twenty, and many institutions will not engage a Probationer till she is twenty-four or twenty-five, but all Probationers now receive £12 a year, and generally some uniform. The rate at which they rise varies in different Hospitals, some rising £5 annually up to £30, others commencing at £16 and taking rather longer to rise. In some of the military Hospitals the Sisters (not religious) rise to £42, and £4 for uniform. These, however, are bound to proceed in their turn to Gibraltar, Malta, or Egypt for five years. This to some would be a great temptation, while to others it seems to be a deterrent. The hours in the military Hospitals are not so long, neither is the work generally so hard, but there are probably drawbacks which equalise the civil and military work. After a certain number of years spent in a Hospital a Nurse may fairly expect to obtain a change. She may go into Private Nursing or may obtain the Matronship of a Cottage Hospital or larger institution, if she has the necessary qualifications. Then there are District Nurses. Who can tell the blessing of hope and comfort a well-trained Nurse brings to a miserable home, in her clean white cap, apron, and skilled hands, to dress the wound, or arrange the bandages, and ease the weary limbs?"

IF "M. M. D." would inquire further into this subject she would find that it is becoming more and more difficult to get thoroughly-trained Nurses to affiliate themselves to Private Nursing Institutions, a disinclination which I rejoice to observe. "Nurse Farms" are unknown in the United States, and of late years the gross system of sweating indulged in by the proprietors of some Institutions in England has become notorious.

TRAINED Nurses are paid from £20 to £30 per annum by the heads of these institutions, whilst their services are paid for by an innocent public at the rate of two guineas a week, so that the employers of Nursing labour make enormous profits out of Nurses. It is much to be regretted that some of our largest Hospitals consider this system justifiable, the London Hospital leading the way, as in 1889 it made a net profit of £1,200 a year out of its wretchedly-paid employees.

THIS so-called charity pays the Nurses on its private Nursing Staff £28 per annum, rising at the rate of £1 a year to £40; so that a Nurse must have served the Hospital fourteen years

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