

charging high fees to nurse the long-suffering public. The salaries paid these Probationers are very low. This system cannot be defended for a moment. The Nurses should be thoroughly experienced (not less than three years being allowed in which to gain a thorough knowledge of their work) before the lives of the sick in private houses are entrusted to their care. Registration of Trained Nurses (by printing the qualifications of a Nurse) would soon sweep away the obsolete system in vogue at the Westminster. The authorities of St. Thomas's Hospital will do well to recognise the fact that they are no longer in a position to dictate to the nursing world in general, as no Hospital has made less progress in the science of nursing in the last ten years than St. Thomas's. I lately held a copy of the nursing regulations in my hand; it was dated sixteen years ago, and these regulations are still in vogue, during which period a revolution in nursing matters has taken place, at all events outside the walls of St. Thomas's. No certificates are awarded to the Nurses, however devotedly and long they may have served in this Hospital. An obnoxious system of bestowing upon Nurses petty gratuities of the value of two pounds yearly is still practised, as an incentive to good conduct. This reprehensible method of encouraging virtue may have suited the tastes of the lower class domestic servants working our Hospitals sixteen years ago. It is an insult to the class of women who should be encouraged to enter our Nursing Schools in 1897, and would not be tolerated at the more modernised Hospitals for one moment. I should advise the authorities of St. Thomas's to investigate the organisation of the nursing department of their own Hospital and leave Trained Nurses to legislate for themselves. To judge from Miss Entwistle's evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, many reforms are urgently needed. The Treasurer of Guy's Hospital permits the Nursing Staff to use their own judgment in this important crisis, so I can only hope that when he sees the number of excellent Nurses certificated at this grand old Hospital who have registered their qualifications, that he will cease to pledge the Governors (who were not consulted, by-the-bye) to an unreasoning opposition to their wishes.

And now for the "London"—great octopus of nursing abuses. The gentleman who signed the protest has kept so carefully in the background during the exposure of the nursing scandals by the Select Committee of the House of Lords that it seems to me it would have been wise on his part to let sleeping dogs lie. The public are asking, why is the London Hospital taking the lead in the opposition to the Registration of Trained Nurses? You, Sir, have fearlessly given the public its answer—"Because it has sent out semi-trained Nurses. Because, when Registration of Trained Nurses is more widely known and adopted, the public can no longer be duped." Allow me, Sir, to thank you in the name of all the honest Nurses I know for your outspoken championship of nursing reform—a fearless condemnation of oppression and wrong.—Yours faithfully,

REFORM.

PHASES OF MORAL DISCIPLINE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Sir,—Will you be good enough to allow me, through the medium of your columns, to thank the watchful "ravens" who have flown to my relief in the case mentioned in your issue of Feb. 5. Names I will not publish, as this mode of procedure might tend to detract from the dignity of Nurses and Nursing, and each compassionate little messenger will know to whom I allude without it.

At the same time, it is gratifying to learn that the *Nursing Record* newspaper is so thoroughly cosmopolitan and non-sectarian that its columns are open alike to the Atheist, the infidel, the Jew and the Gentile, as well as to the Christian, so called. If it were not so, then I for one should feel inclined to deal with it as I do with all sectarian newspapers—never

open them. Indeed, Sir, I will not waste another moment of my life in fighting for a creed.

"We are all going to heaven at are house, but are Jim," said a man to me the other day. "And why, pray, is poor Jim to be left out?" was my rejoinder. "Well," replied the man in question, "because are Jim's a Wesleyan." Of course, one had a good hearty laugh at the man's expense, as this definition tickled my fancy immensely. Poor Jim! Notwithstanding this, that such a state of things should be so common in this last decade of the nineteenth century is, it seems to me, a painfully startling paradox indeed. But to proceed. My own ideal is, perhaps, set forth in the poet's song, "My Friend":—

"I ask not for his lineage,
I ask not for his name,
If manliness be in his heart
He noble birth may claim;
I care not though of this world's wealth
But slender be his part,
If 'yes' you answer when I ask,
'Hath he a noble heart?'"

"I ask not from what land he came,
Or where his youth was nursed;
If pure the stream it matters not
The spot from whence it burst:
The palace, or the hovel,
Where first his life began
I seek not of, but answer this,
'Is he an honest man?'"

"Nay, blush not, what matters it
Where first he drew his breath?
A manger was the cradle bed
Of Him of Nazareth.
Be nought, be any, everything—
I care not what you be,
If 'yes' you answer when I ask,
'Art thou pure, true, and free?'"

Says Mr. Gladstone, and very wisely so, "What we have most to desire is to make our countrymen think."

By the way, in perusing Carpenter's "Essay on Custom," the following passages struck me as worth remembering. May I take the liberty of giving them to your readers? As I am unable to dislodge the conviction which has grown with my years, viz., that it is in every case "the woman," and not the skill only, which must ever constitute the true Nurse. And some of your readers will, I doubt not, be prepared to coincide and meet me on the affirmative side, when I say that if we take into our new spheres of labour, where we mean to lay down our lives—and a glance at our registers of obituary will corroborate this assertion—the simple charm of love, our lifework is bound to succeed. We can take nothing greater than this, and it is pleasing to know we may take nothing less. "Love and skill," in the Nurse's case, should undoubtedly dwell lovingly together; for we shall not pass this way again. And how many soldiers from our ranks have already outstripped us, and reached betimes yonder silent land. I repeat, "We may finish nothing, but others will begin where we leave off, and those who come after will not reproach us for the clumsiness of our workmanship, or the poverty of our material, if we bequeath them a noble design, or, at least, one worthy of imitation."

Moreover, it does not yet appear to be generally admitted by the world's workers that it is awfully possible for obvious reasons—all unconsciously it might be—to become too respectable to serve humanity acceptably. Just now, however, one would fain believe that there are signs of an universal awakening, that there are signs of a general shaking of the "dry bones." For to every man and woman there must come a time when that "still small voice," which no listening soul has ever yet failed to hear, must make itself heard in accents somewhat like the following: "Get thee out of the place of despotism and dogmatism, out of the house of intellectual bondage." And I would assert most emphatically that it is the duty and privilege of each one of us to pass "from the Egypt of superstition to the Canaan of rational belief;" and until we have done this we have not thrown

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