

Institution Workers.

MISS GOSLING AT THE LIVERPOOL
LADIES' CHARITY AND LYING-IN HOSPITAL.

FROM external appearance the Liverpool Lying-in Hospital is more like a row of suburban villa residences than a public institution devoted to charity. There is a home-like look about the curtained windows, and its black and white gables. Inside, also, there is an absence of that severe and odorous atmosphere one is accustomed to associate with hospitals generally.

The Matron's room on the left as you enter the hall is bright and cheery. A large writing table, well covered with papers, standing in the window recess, shows that work is predominant. Some choice flowers here and there, a piano partly screened, and some comfortable easy chairs, go to form a cosy *ensemble*.

"I want you just to tell me something about yourself, Miss Gosling, if you don't mind," I said, as the Matron took a seat on a low chair by the fire, and faced the interviewer.

"I'm afraid there is not very much to tell," was the ready reply. "I trained at St. Bartholomew's, and from thence went to Queen Charlotte's. While there, I received my present appointment, which I have now held seven years. You see, I still wear the old 'Bart's' cap, which nothing will induce me to give up," smiling as she pointed to the neat, close-fitting net cap she wore.

"And now, Miss Gosling, what about your work here?"

"Well, that I'm, of course, devoted to. My whole time is occupied in training the resident pupils, giving them instruction, superintending the indoor work, as well as the outdoor or district department, which is very extensive. Obstetric and general nursing are two distinct arts, and no one can do both with justice to the patient. Our branch is certainly a very interesting and important one."

"I suppose the competency of midwives now, as a class, is much improved to what it was ten or fifteen years ago?"

"Yes, to a certain extent. The certificated monthly Nurse may be relied upon as being trustworthy and efficient, but on the other hand there are a number of women who attend lectures for a short time, and through one cause or another fail to pass their examination and obtain a certificate. They go away, then usually enter a "Nurses' Home," or open one for themselves, and are sent out to all kinds of cases, both general and obstetric, when

often incompetent and quite unfit for the responsibility. I could give many instances of this from my own experience."

"Then the public are the sufferers."

"Certainly; but it is a good deal their own fault, as they never think of asking a monthly Nurse to show her certificate—one of the first things they should do, and their best safeguard."

"And what about the burning question of registration?" I ask.

The Matron's face lit up at once, and I saw I had touched on a subject which was near her heart.

"My opinions are very strong on that point," was the reply.

I know the hardships many Nurses have to suffer in silence, and I know the difficulties many Matrons have to combat, but I think registration will improve the position of every Nurse, as well as protect the public against incompetency. I feel this especially for our own class would be a great advance, as well as guarding those who employ us from being taken in by inexperienced and unskilful persons.

If it is made compulsory for every woman practising as a Nurse to be properly registered, it would be regarded as a kind of guarantee of her ability, and would put a stop to the evil I mentioned just now.

Many strange things were said before the Parliamentary Committee which inquired into the question of the registration of midwives, and we were much misrepresented by certain witnesses. The monthly Nurse has no desire to usurp the power, or take the place of the medical man, and on the other hand she desires to give the assistance required in her department in as skilful a manner as possible.

All great reforms meet with opposition, but they are none the less sure to come.

It has even been stated that male and female students were allowed to meet at the bedside in this Hospital, when, as a matter of fact, we do not admit any men students to the wards at all.

I'd spend all I had, and die happy over yonder (indicating the gloomy workhouse opposite) to know that the Registration of Monthly Nurses was an accomplished fact," concluded this true and energetic worker.

"Now, I know you'd like to see through the Hospital," and I was led away across the hall, up the rubber-faced stairs to the wards in which most of the patients were enjoying their afternoon sleep.

Miss Gosling at once impresses one as an earnest woman whose heart and soul is in her work, and who would inspire a similar enthusiasm in those who work with her.

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