

natural effects of the confusion now prevailing—effects which cannot be altogether obviated by the most careful and conscientious superintendence; for in the event of a Nurse acquiring an unenviable reputation in one Institution, she generally succeeds, without difficulty, in finding employment in another in which her defects may long remain undiscovered or be regarded with indifference. Even some of the Institutions which are attached to the great Hospitals, and prepare their own pupils for undertaking the duties of private Nursing, have been known to yield to the very human weakness of regarding with too lenient an eye the failings of their own offspring; and some, indeed, have gone so far as to send out, as fully trained, their own half-tutored Probationers.

Now, laying aside the consideration of how far such a state of things must fall short of meeting the just requirements of the public, let us ask ourselves whether it can be regarded with satisfaction by members of the medical profession. To such a question there can be but one, a negative, reply; and, if so, where lies the remedy?

The burden of such reflections as these brought together in anxious conference the physicians, surgeons, general practitioners, matrons, and Nurses, who founded, and those who in greater number now constitute, the Royal British Nurses' Association; and, recognising that one of the main causes of existing evils is the diversity of aim and practice which prevails in Schools of Nursing, they have sought to establish a uniform standard by requiring a minimum of three years' hospital training and service from all candidates for membership. With a view to providing the medical profession and the public with a ready means of ascertaining the length of training and the qualifications of such Nurses as they may desire to employ, a Register has been established as nearly as possible on the lines which have been laid down by the Council of Medical Registration under the sanction of the State, which exacts the three years' period of training from all Nurses, whether members of the Association or not, who aspire to be placed thereon. It cannot be asserted that in so doing the Association has advanced extravagant demands, for the Committee of the House of Lords which brought the management of the Hospitals of London under prolonged and exhaustive examination, have placed the seal of their approval on that requirement;

while the Lords of the Privy Council have decided that it is for the benefit of the public that the incorporated Association should maintain such a Register of Trained Nurses as had already been established, and has confirmed it in the power it already had exercised, of visiting with the penalty of expulsion those who might prove to be unworthy to remain inscribed on so honourable a roll. It must not be overlooked that the constitution of the Corporation makes provision for a definite proportional representation of the medical profession in the Governing body and the several Committees which transact its business, and that, by this means, the subordination of the nurse to the medical attendant is recognised as a fundamental principle.

Turning to the future, one is constrained to enquire whether the measures which have been instituted by the Royal British Nurses' Association can be regarded as embodying finality either in fact or aim; and, speaking for myself as a member of the medical profession, I can express no other opinion than that they do not. The public and the profession will soon demand further steps in the direction of organisation and of uniformity of procedure in the training and certification of Nurses. Already, in Glasgow, a gifted Hospital Matron, and some no less distinguished medical men, have decided to abandon the practice of examining and certifying the pupils of their own School of Nursing, and, following the example of other professions, to promote the institution of an independent examining body qualified to bestow a diploma which shall be beyond cavil or suspicion of partiality. It needs no prophetic eye to discern that the evolution of the Nursing vocation is advancing with rapid strides in the direction of organising its members into a recognised profession of which the portal will be an examining and diplomatising body recognised by the State. Nothing less will meet the growing requirements of the medical profession nothing less will satisfy the honourable and legitimate aspirations of those enlightened and cultured women who form the front rank, and constitute an ever increasing proportion of British Trained Nurses.

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