

To say nothing of unqualified persons nursing private cases on their own account, no one acquainted with the matter can successfully deny that many Nurses, so styled, of the present day, sent out by some Nursing Institutions, and even, I am sorry to say, by some Hospitals, have but little real foundation for their pretensions of knowledge and skill; they are imposed on a trusting but deluded public, who are charged for their services as if they were fully trained. If it were necessary to do so, I could give many instances, which have come to my own knowledge, of this system of deception. All this must cease when the practice of Registration becomes general, and when the public are familiarized with the fact that Registration is within the reach of all who possess the requisite qualities, and have undergone the necessary training.

It is, I consider, of very great importance that the Register should be extensively circulated; and I venture to urge the Association to distribute it as widely as possible even though a considerable cost has to be incurred in doing so. It ought to be in the hands of every medical practitioner, many of whom, I am assured, are at present ignorant that there is such a record in existence. I would also urge the Association to persuade those on the Register invariably to style themselves "Registered Nurses"; this will lead to inquiry, and to the consequent enlightenment of the public as to the difference between a Registered and Unregistered Nurse.

Another feature of the Association that commends itself to me is, that, from the very commencement of their movement, its founders took no step without securing the zealous co-operation of many eminent members of the medical profession. This significant fact is surely an answer to allegations, at one time industriously circulated, that independence of medical control was the real aim and desire of the ladies concerned in the scheme. None know better than Nurses themselves that, in the proper exercise of their calling, they are, and necessarily always must be, ancillary to the medical faculty. Equally significant is the fact that Nurses most cordially welcome the provision of the Royal Charter creating medical men, as well as themselves, constituents of the Association.

I think it is also an advantage that no person, who is not either a doctor or a nurse, has any part in the management of the Association, or is eligible for membership. I know that, in some quarters, an opinion was entertained, and possibly still exists, that lay representatives of Institutions where Nurses are trained, should be admitted to seats on the Council of the Association. That view is not shared by me. The Association, as I understand its objects, has no intention of attempting to intrude into the management of those Institutions. Hospitals will continue to appoint and train their Nurses under such conditions as their

several governing bodies think fit, and the Association will only concern itself to see that aspirants to be placed on the Register possess the *imprimatur* of an Institution where adequate training is given. There is no profession in which it would not be deemed intolerable that anyone not a member thereof should control or take part in its counsels; and I see no adequate reason why the profession of Nursing should be an exception in this respect.

As regards the actual training of Nurses and the facilities they need for acquiring efficiency, this question is one of the most important of the many involved in the successful administration of a Hospital; and, happily, as experience proves, they can be allowed, under a well-regulated system, every opportunity they require without any sacrifice of the interests or well-being of the patients, for whose benefit, it must always be remembered, the Hospital primarily exists, and who ought always to be its chief consideration and regard. Very much might be said of the advantage to patients of being tended by zealous and devoted women, such as have, for some years past, been attracted to the wards of our hospitals, and of the increased efficiency throughout engendered by their presence; but I will not enlarge on those points. There is, however, one matter that calls for remark here, because it bears on the conditions of Registration, that is, the term of training. The period of three years, fixed by the Association, has overwhelming authority on its side, and it is the least time, I consider, that satisfies the requirements of the Institutions where training is afforded. A shorter period means a too frequent change in the *personnel* of the Nursing staff, and necessitates the employment of too large a proportion of Probationers versed only in the rudiments of their work. In this connection, I regard with satisfaction the great good done by the Hospitals and Infirmaries to which training schools are attached. The relief gratuitously and liberally given to the sick poor in the wards of the great Hospitals of our country has not been the only, and perhaps not the least, benefit that those Institutions have been the means of conferring upon the community generally; they have supplied the opportunities, not elsewhere readily obtainable, for the education of men in the science and practice of medicine and surgery, who have gone forth from their walls carrying their beneficent art into all places of human habitation. The demand that has of late years arisen for intelligent, gentle, and skilful hands to aid and supplement the work of medical men, furnishes all Institutions for the treatment of the sick with as grand an opportunity of usefulness, and I rejoice that the governing bodies of most of these Institutions are in this matter recognising their responsibilities and availing themselves of their privileges.

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