

woman can masquerade in Nurse's uniform without running the risk of prosecution and conviction." Surely these remarks apply also to our society in regard to the in-door uniform; and, fortunately for us, we can possibly cover the ground by approaching the physicians, for the evils the British Nurses' Association has to cope with, I am thankful to say, have not reached our doors. Let us see to it that they do not, for by our efforts, united and individual, we should be able to keep them away. A suggestion I have to make is that a circular be sent by each training-school to all the physicians, asking for their co-operation as follows: To employ no Nurse unless she can produce her diploma or a letter from the head of the school she represents. Then a list of all the graduates of the schools should be sent to the physicians, corrected by the additional number graduating each year. This certainly should be a help. I think if doctors realised the sort of women they sometimes employ they would be quite willing to take the extra trouble necessary to look up their credentials. Most physicians are very particular about this, but that many are not is shown by the Nurses who find employment without vouchers.

I have endeavoured, through the kindness of General Hawley, who enquired at the Patent Office, to get some facts as to the possible patenting of the cap, and I learn it is not practicable, at least if it has been worn already; that "honourable feeling alone can protect it." Alas! that it should be so scarce a virtue. To those who wish a national uniform, here is a chance to invent and patent a composite cap and dress!

As to the advisability of the general use of an out-door uniform I do not think it desirable or likely to be adopted here. In this climate of extremes one would need at least four different cloaks of varying thickness, and I cannot picture one cool enough for an August day in Philadelphia. It is useful for pupils in training, saving time and the trouble of dressing when going out during off-duty hours. For the district or parish Nurse it is a necessity. No woman could go into the courts and alleys unprotected, as she has to, in ordinary street-dress, but the respect invariably shown a Nurse who comes to help the sick member of the community, no matter how low the slum, enables her to pass in not only unmolested, but welcomed. Here is protection by the uniform, it being as much use to her as a coat of mail to a warrior in the middle ages! It also simplifies her work, her apron and sleeves being easily carried in her bag. For private Nurses or Hospital women, other than those in training, I would not advocate the out-door dress. Hotel-keepers have found that a Nurse cannot wear her uniform in

the hotel dining-room on account of the guests, who fear contagion whenever they see a cap and apron, and who dislike to be reminded of illness in any way, and unless she can wear her dress at all times under her cloak, the out-door uniform is of little use.

It is questionable taste to wear it at a concert or theatre, or any place of amusement, it is so essentially a duty dress, and had better be laid aside when on pleasure bent. Since writing on this subject I see, by the January number of a London paper, the matter is being discussed in England; and I am glad of it, for whether the use of the outdoor dress has much increased of late years I cannot say, but never before had I been so struck with the multiplicity of Nurses in the regulation bonnets and cloaks as when last in England in 1894. The whole country swarmed with them. In cabs, at railway-stations, in churches and theatres, on the moors and in the city streets, they seemed as numerous as the soldier and the clergy, giving one the impression of the presence of a violent epidemic of illness, which was enhanced by their generally appearing to be pressed for time.

A Nurse need not relinquish her taste for artistic and becoming dress because she is a Nurse; indeed, I think few women feel the need of recreation, in the shape of the beautiful in any form, more than one who spends so large a part of each day surrounded by the grim spectres of disease. I sympathise thoroughly with the pupil who, when on special duty to three men with a peculiarly horrible type of purulent ophthalmia, went out one day and brought into the ward a beautiful bunch of pinks because she "had to have something nice to look at."

A woman with a nice sense of the eternal fitness of things certainly wields a greater influence over those she comes in contact with, if she knows how to dress well, than if she is careless of her appearance. Besides this, in the case of a Nurse, a change from her official dress,—and I speak now more particularly of Hospital Nurses—to the more frivolous one of fashion is often beneficial to her for the reasons I have already given. Let us not for a moment undervalue the uniform. We cannot think too highly of it, or deprecate too strongly those who wear it unworthily or illegally. It is more than simply a costume; it is, to use de Goncourt's words, "a dress that bears a blessing, something that inspires awe like the robe of the priest, and yet that attracts like the dress of a woman."

It makes much possible and even easy which could not be attempted without it. Who among us has not felt its power? It soothes the restless patient, checks the oath and the coarse word, brings a smile to the face of the Hospital baby, and relief and comfort to the ill and the

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