

cerning the relations of nurses and the public may, and doubtless will, be insisted upon by the public, the reforms as regards professional organization and education will probably be the outcome of demands made by the nurses themselves. Where are the women who, convinced of the justice and rectitude of the demand to place the calling of nursing upon a sure foundation, are willing to make personal sacrifices and to devote their time, money, and energy to attain this end? Reformers are ever unpopular, and anyone embarking upon a work of reformation will do well to count the cost before entering upon it. It is, however, undoubted that it is by those who put their public and professional obligations before self-interest, self-advancement, and popular applause, and who are willing deliberately to accept misrepresentation, insult, and abuse, and to bring whole-hearted enthusiasm to bear upon the problems which confront them, that the advancement of the nursing profession will be achieved.

A WISE DECISION.

THE Belfast Board of Guardians appear scarcely to realize the responsible position held by the staff nurses in their employ, and it has been necessary for their probationers to give them a lesson on this subject. Upon vacancies occurring for staff nurses under the Board this body appointed probationers Stewart and Stark to the vacant posts, and their promotion was communicated to them by Miss M'Mullan, the Hospital Superintendent. These probationers have, however, wisely intimated to the Board that they would prefer to remain as probationers, the reason they alleged for this preference being that they "did not feel competent to undertake the responsible duties of staff nurses." The validity of the objection will be obvious when it is stated that one of these probationers had received four, and the other two months training. One member of the Board expressed the opinion that they ought to advance their own probationers and give them a chance of rising. The *principle* is one with which we cordially sympathize, but the mistake of course lies in promoting probationers whose knowledge does not qualify them for such promotion. The interests of the patients as well as the nurses demand consideration from the guardians, and it is obviously unjust to the sick to place them in the care of nurses who must necessarily be ignorant of many of the duties which will devolve upon them.

We congratulate the probationers in question upon the course which they have adopted, and think that they have regarded the best interests of the sick, as well as their own, by declining to assume a false position, and to undertake duties which they could not adequately fulfil.

TRAINED NURSES FOR KLONDYKE.

WE observe that in a letter addressed to the *Times*, Mr. William Ogilvie emphasizes the wisdom of the action taken by Lady Aberdeen with regard to the dispatch of nurses to Klondyke, and considers that some systematic organization is urgently required. "Last summer," says Mr. Ogilvie, "a form of typhoid fever was epidemic at Dawson; and several deaths occurred, I have no hesitation in saying, more for the want of proper nursing than the malignity of the disease." It is to be hoped that the necessary funds to equip the nursing expedition which it is proposed to send to Klondyke will be quickly forthcoming.

ACUTE CASES.

"ANOTHER chronic bronchitis and emphysema!" grumbles a nurse in the ward kitchen, as she sees a patient who is obviously suffering from these complaints carried into the ward. "Another Pott's fracture! Come in to be washed and fed for the night, I suppose. Why ever couldn't it have been put up in the outpatient department. Fancy taking in a *Pott's!*" Thus the nurse of a surgical ward. Have not all nurses heard such remarks made often by their colleagues, or—if the question must be asked—have they not made them themselves? It really seems to be considered as a personal injury by many a nurse if any cases but the most acute are admitted to the ward in which she works. But imagine the position reversed, my friend; just suppose, if you can, that *you* are the "chronic bronchitis and emphysema," or that *you* have fractured your ankle. Would you, in the first case, not think that you had a claim upon skilled nursing? and, in the second, how would you feel if you went to a hospital and the nurses grumbled because you were a "horrid old Pott's," and grugged you a bed even for one night? You are different to most of the genus "latter-day nurse," if under such circumstances you did not relieve your feelings somewhat expressively. Nurses sometimes need the reminder that hospitals are intended for the relief of the sick, not primarily to provide their nursing staffs with interesting cases.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)