

in good times, you may, when a war or an epidemic should occur, call in all these young women, who have been taught, that they have learnt but very little nursing, only just enough to work under the direction, under the supervision of a nurse, whom they are to obey, and to whom they will be a good help, if they obey her, and if they are to be relied upon.

If every trained nurse, every three or six months of her hospital work, drills a young woman, you will finish by having at your disposal a very great number of them, and they will take affairs much better than when they have never been inside a hospital before. And I almost think they might do better service than if they had had a whole year's training, for then it would be difficult to make them understand that they are only to do what they are told, that they must not act upon their own responsibility.

The hospital where they are drilled might keep lists of them, and here you might give each of them a character as to whether they are likely to be able to do good work or not.

If such propaedeutic classes were added to the nursing schools, you might, moreover, try a young woman before you accept her for training as a nurse.

If this system be adopted, I think that the trained nurses would be able to find hands enough to assist them in the days when much help is needed. And we would profit of it, all of us.

The young women who wish to be able to offer their service, when a war or an epidemic should occur, would be most happy to learn so much that they might expect not to be rejected, and, at the same time, they would learn other things which would be of much more value to them, probably. They would learn how to nurse their own parents, brothers and sisters, their husbands and babies, when a light illness happens, and, if their relatives should become seriously ill, they might be of valuable assistance to the nurse, who would help them to save the dear life.

In my opinion, the value of thus spreading the knowledge of nursing can scarcely be sufficiently estimated.

Every one of us feels a keen desire to be helpful to our dear ones when they suffer, and every nurse knows that we may learn very much which will help us to soothe sufferings of illness, and even to alleviate the pain of death. And the dearer the patient loves the nurse, the more help she will be able to tend. If only we will lift a patient, we do it much better if he or she like us, and reposes well in our arms. And the patient will the better obey his nurse when he loves her, when she is his own dear wife, or sister, or mother, or daughter. If he relies upon

her, he will do as she asks him to do; the fully untrained woman often may render better service than the best nurse—but there is no reason to fear that a young woman will forget to love her parents, her husband, or her baby, if she is taught how to nurse them, when ill.

Every true nurse will have felt, I suppose, that a wrong is committed towards the women, who are set to one side, when their dearest need help. Let us alter this, and let us give the nurses the assistance they need in their work.

My proposition is not quite untried. I have, for several years, held ambulance classes, in order to call forth more interest for nursing, and to spread knowledge on ambulance work, too, of course. Seventy-two of the pupils of these classes have passed at least three months at hospital work. They have all been very glad for what they have learned, and many of them have made good use of it afterwards.

And, I have heard, that in France and Germany this system has been tried on a far larger scale. It would be extremely interesting to me to hear something about the experience of these ladies.

There is one fear which is often expressed in connection with this: that you might, by admitting young women for a short time to hospitals, educate a corps of quack nurses.

As far as I can see, this fear is very badly founded.

Every man or woman is taught to write, though very few of us are expected to become authors. You might as well, in my opinion, teach every one of us elementary nursing. These three or six months will not transform us into quacks, if we are honest women before we enter the hospital, and might be an excellent way to protect the public against quack nurses. We may claim an examination on practical and theoretical nursing before a person be allowed to practise as a nurse.

In Denmark, nobody is allowed to practise as a doctor, or as a midwife, unless he or she has passed an examination, prescribed by the State.

Why do not the nurses join with the public and have it stated that nobody may practise as a nurse without having passed, in a satisfactory way, an examination, which might protect the nurses and the public against the quacks.

#### DISCUSSION.

OPENED BY CAPTAIN NORTON, M.P.

CAPTAIN NORTON said:—I am one of those who believe that woman's sphere is the highest and noblest to which she can attain, and that the only boundary should be that which nature herself has drawn. Even those who differ from me must admit that, in every age and nation, nursing has been woman's special province. I

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