

to make many sacrifices, and to bring many costly offerings to her shrine. It is even claimed by some that the vocation of nursing is so absorbing as to be incompatible with the discharge of religious obligations, and that these must in consequence be foregone by those adopting nursing as a profession. If we examine the question further, however, we shall find that when the work of nursing was dissociated from religion, and handed over to seculars who regarded it simply as a means of livelihood the standard both of work and of morality sank very low; indeed, at the beginning of the present century it had sunk into such disrepute as a calling that it was almost exclusively in the hands of the ignorant and incapable, a condition most detrimental to the comfort and well-being of the sick.

It is noteworthy that our most noble profession was raised from the low and degraded level to which it had fallen, by the efforts of women inspired by strong religious convictions. *Frederica Fliedner, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Agnes Jones*, were all actuated by the highest motives in their endeavour to raise once more the vocation of nursing to its proper place, and they gathered around them bands of noble and devoted women inspired by the same strong religious motives. There is no doubt that many of the brightest ornaments of the nursing profession are those who have received their inspiration from their religious convictions, and that many excellent women are working devotedly and unobtrusively in our hospitals to-day whose motive power is their religious belief. It behoves Committees, therefore, to be tender with regard to the religious convictions of these nurses, and not to put unnecessary obstacles in their way in the fulfilment of their religious duties. Such difficulties, we believe, are more often caused by want of thought than want of heart, but they press none the less hardly for this reason. Many nurses, for instance, value highly the possibility of attending an early celebration. When this is arranged, as it can be arranged, at an hour which does not interfere with their duties in the wards, there can be no possible reason for a prohibition issued merely in the interests of red tape. There are many nurses who derive strength from attendance at such a service which is a benefit to them, and consequently to their patients, throughout the day. There are not a few who feel that without the possibility of such help they cannot adequately

fulfil the duties which devolve upon them. There is no doubt that Committees, who, by their regulations, make such attendance impossible, will suffer by a lowering of the standard of their nursing staff, if they drive from its ranks, to work elsewhere, where the privileges which they value are attainable, women who perform their work from strong religious motives. In these days, more especially, when the profession of nursing is being adopted in many instances from mercenary motives, or a desire for social advancement, they cannot afford to dispense with the services of some of their best nurses.

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### Annotations.

#### THE SOLDIERS' FAMILIES ASSOCIATION FUND.

WE are sorry to learn that subscriptions to this Fund, of which Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales is President, are not coming in as they should do. The Society desires to help the wives and families of the soldiers and reservists in South Africa, but this it can only do if adequate assistance is afforded by the public. We hope that the merits and needs of this fund will not be overshadowed by the Mansion House Transvaal Refugee Fund. Donations may be sent, as we have previously stated, to the offices of the Society, 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.

#### THE LORD MAYOR'S NEW FUND.

IN response to an appeal from his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge the Lord Mayor has opened a fund for the benefit of the widows and orphans and other dependents of officers and men who may lose their lives in the present war in South Africa. He proposes that money so contributed shall be handed to the Patriotic Fund Commission for administration, money given for the benefit of the sick and wounded to the British Red Cross Society, for soldiers disabled by wounds to Lloyd's Patriotic Fund, and, for the wives and children separated, to the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association. He therefore asks that contributions sent to him shall be clearly marked (1) Widows and orphans (2) Sick and wounded (3) Disabled soldiers (4) Wives and children. Any contributions not marked will be handed over for the benefit of the widows and orphans,

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