

paper on "Women as Gardeners." Later on, occur in it these sentences: "It is not reasonable to speak of gardening as a profession. Gardeners holding situations and paid by the week are not members of a profession any more than hospital nurses or cooks, useful as they all are in their several ways." Is this a ray of light from the newer wisdom or an *ignis fatuus* leading to a still more hopeless quagmire over this already vexed question? Facts as opposed to theories seem to suggest that even doctors frequently receive fees daily, while cooks and hospital nurses are rarely paid by the week, but more frequently by the month or quarter, sharing this distinction with many honourable gentlemen who fondly imagine they belong to well-recognised professions, but by this new test are reduced to the level of the purely "useful" a status which might be to some of them a novel experience.

ONE WHO BELONGS TO A PROFESSION
AND TRIES TO BE USEFUL ALSO.

[The splendid work done by Mrs. Garrett Anderson in opening the doors of the profession of medicine to women gains for her a consideration in these columns which would be accorded to no one else who expressed the same views with regard to nurses. It must be remembered that when Mrs. Garrett Anderson went through her hospital career, nursing was on a very different plane from the one which it occupies to-day, and no doubt Mrs. Anderson speaks of nurses as she knew them when she was waited upon in her student days by uneducated and very imperfectly trained women. It is satisfactory to know that a younger generation of medical women have a juster appreciation of the value of the services rendered by the well-trained nurse of the present day. We have only to point to the speeches of Mrs. Scharlieb, M.D., and Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson at the Matrons' Council Dinner last July, and recorded at the time in the *NURSING RECORD*, as proof of this assertion. It is, however, not altogether surprising that the general public fail to realise that nursing has attained to the level of a scientific profession, and moreover that this level must be maintained if those they love best are to receive the full benefit which nursing can bring to them, when in the ranks of nursing itself such various standards are recognised. Until those responsible for the training of nurses define a minimum standard, and obtain recognition of this standard by the State, so long will it be possible for others to speak and write of nursing as if it were a branch of domestic service, and a calling suitable for uneducated women, instead of recognising that it is a scientific profession, demanding the whole-hearted devotion of highly educated women. The ignorance concerning nursing matters is proved by the way in which nursing as a profession has been ignored during the present war by the Committees organizing the various hospitals. On no one of these Committees has a representative nurse been invited to take a seat, and the selection of nurses by these lay Committees on the same lines as they would engage cooks or housemaids proceeds apace. The present low esteem in which the profession of nursing is held is due no doubt in a great measure to the betrayal of trust by the Royal British Nurses' Association on December 17th, 1897, when they sanctioned the new bye-laws drawn up by Mr. Fardon and his supporters, depriving the nurse members of the power of self-government, those consenting to which sold their birth-right for a mess of pottage.—ED.]

THE YEOMANRY HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of "*The Nursing Record*."

DEAR MADAM,—It will come as a surprise to most nurses, though they are becoming somewhat used to being ignored, that the Committee of the Yeomanry Hospital is venturing to organise this great hospital, at least equal in size to Guy's Hospital, without the assistance of any trained nurse. They will, I fear, learn their mistake by experience, unless they profit by your remarks in the *NURSING RECORD*, and invite some representative nurses on to the Committee. In the interests of the sick I can only hope they will do so. It does seem a pity that so much good work should be marred by the neglect of so palpable a necessity. Imagine any lay Committee trying to organise the nursing department of a good hospital without the assistance of a qualified Matron. Why then should it be supposed that ladies of title can do so?

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

COMMON SENSE.

[We have expressed our opinion on this matter in another column.—ED.]

PRIVATE NURSING HOMES.

To the Editor of "*The Nursing Record*."

DEAR MADAM,—May I, having now had considerable experience in nursing in private nursing homes, express in your columns what I most strongly feel that all such homes should be licensed and periodically inspected. Furthermore, as a condition of a license being granted, I would make it compulsory that the Superintendents of such homes should be trained nurses. I am quite sure that the want of discipline amongst so-called trained nurses, and of which the nursing profession gets the blame, is, in a great measure, the result of the smattering of knowledge of nursing matters which girls with no previous training get in these nursing homes. Here too they form acquaintances and make friendships, not always desirable, with patients, which are by no means dropped when these patients leave the home. No discipline is enforced as a rule in relation to these matters by an untrained Superintendent, and the result is that much discredit is brought upon the nursing profession as a whole by these spurious members of it. I should also like to add that I would make it a necessary condition of granting a license to these homes, that proper accommodation should be provided for the nursing staff. At no time is it desirable that nurses should sleep and dress in their patients' rooms. Often it is unseemly. Proper night nursing should be provided, otherwise the patients do not get adequate attention, neither do the nurses get their proper and necessary rest. If they work hard during the day they should be away from the atmosphere of the wards during the night if they are to return fresh to their work in the morning. Nurses are but human, and to work in the wards by day and to sleep in them at night is calculated to spoil the sweetest temper, and to break down the strongest nervous system. When legislation on nursing matters does take place, I hope that the reform of nursing homes will be one of the points included.

I am, Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

NOMAD.

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