

or death to their patient, and success or failure to a new and daring operation.

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BUT, bless me, dear reader, how we are "running on," and the whole condition of affairs and its remedy seems so simple. We must come to the rock bottom of the question, the financial basis, and then we are face to face with truth. Sick people must have trained nurses, training costs money, the committees of our training schools are not justified in providing luxurious colleges, and an elaborate scientific education such as is now necessary to qualify educated women for the profession of nursing, by which they can earn a good livelihood. So either nurses in training must submit to present conditions, or they must pay for their own apprenticeship as men do in the professional and industrial world.

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WE have received the following interesting letter from a French lady, to whom we had sent information concerning the forthcoming Nurses Congress, in Buffalo, knowing her to be deeply interested in the question of nursing educational reform in France. It seems almost impossible that the part played by women in the care of the sick in that country should be in such an elementary condition in these days.

"You amused me much by your request to try and interest any official person in the Nurses' Congress at Buffalo. In France *nursing* is an unknown thing, a word with no meaning and those who serve in the hospitals, nuns, lay-assistants, the latter common and ignorant men and women, wouldn't dream of going off to a nurse's congress."

It is now some years since I have taken up this subject of nursing and it was with the greatest difficulties that I collected information.

Whilst I was working at the question, I was told that a lady at the head of a *lycee* (girls high school) was thinking of a nursing school like the English ones, to create a new opening for the young ladies coming out of this school who couldn't possibly *all* turn school mistresses. I saw her and gave her advice. She had *no* notion of *how* the thing was to be started. Shortly afterwards a Jewish and rich lady took the thing in her hands as a way of attracting the public's attention and without any knowledge of the subject. A great deal of fuss has been made about this new school. When I was in Paris I saw what it was and talked it over with this lady, told her the mistakes and what it should be—she was very much put out and declared that it *would* be a success. In fact this—the *only* ladies' nursing school in France—cannot possibly, in *my* opinion, give good results.

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There are about ten girls; they pay 80 francs per month and receive board and lodging. What should be a *home sister* is a former governess who told me she had never had any experience of nursing or nurses. These girls are sent by two's and three's in the hospital wards of the civil hospitals of Paris, but only at the time the visiting doctors are there. They talk and joke with the students, look on at the work

done by the medical men and help in the dressings. The nursing (?) in these hospitals is done by men and women of the most uneducated type, and it is by this way the new school authorities expect these girls to be trained into good nurses! Some of the most celebrated doctors give lectures to these girls at their own school, but French doctors not *knowing* nursing, *teach medicine* when they try to instruct nurses; *now*, the school announces that "*a hospital*" is attached to it—but I hear it is only three or four beds in which they mean to receive the ladies of the telephone, if they are ill and willing to come.

In one of the advertising articles it was said that these nurses would be so capable that they would see if the treatment was good or not and cleverly get it altered . . . and the doctor changed, I suppose! You see how very bad it is all through and yet here, this subject is so little understood that no one sees how useless it is to make a nursing school with such principles.

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I have had endless fight on this subject, and the fact that this little school is upheld by eminent doctors and rich fashionable society ladies prevents others from trying something better. And yet to grow corn you must sow wheat—to train *nurses* you must have them taught by someone who knows *nursing*. Besides this want of understanding what real nursing should be, there is the dreadful question of the all-powerful *nuns*, and to many you may as well set up persecution if you dare to criticise the nurses in the hospital.

A great many have been dumbfounded reading how nursing has developed in England and elsewhere. The first book in France on this subject appeared this year, and the comparison is a great shame to French hospitals.

By this work the writer excited the bitter wrath of *nuns* and their defenders, the Paris hospital authorities of the *soi disant* nursing school of *Infirmier et Infirmiere*, and all the directors of the smaller schools of which none are practically good. Even the *diacannesses* are very angry with criticism, the more so as the writer is a Protestant, and they cannot say it is a matter of religion.

I should be delighted if I could have been sent on a mission to this Congress of Nurses, but it is a most impossible thing to hope for.

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I have seen a good deal of English hospitals and read a great deal about nursing, and it interests one always more and more. But circumstances differ very much in English and French hospitals, and the *lawful arrangements* of our hospitals will never allow the same system as in England; but that does not hinder real nursing being introduced. French hospitals are all maintained by the government or towns, the mayors elected by *all* citizens are by right chairman of the hospital boards, which members are named by the municipal council and by the *Prefet*; therefore they are sometimes respectable people, but mostly *not* so, and they usually *never* understand those questions. Doctors and students are all powerful in the wards, and the poor patients have often to suffer from it. In France they have been very much surprised, and even shocked, at the power of nurses in English wards, and they wonder *how* it is possible for students to learn anything there. Rules and customs are so different, but patients are the same, and they badly want good nursing here."

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