

sented themselves. The result was, when the Local Government Act became law nearly all the nurses were Protestants, and placed on the pay-list according to the date of their appointment. 2nd. For a year or so after the Local Government Act things remained much the same, and most of the candidates were Protestants. For the past few years, however, there has been a welcome change, and now the numbers of candidates of both sections of the Christian religion are nearly equal. About two years ago the Committee decided that the nurses who had completed three years' training should have £25 per annum salary. The result was that those nurses on the list who were qualified, and most of whom were, as I have shown, Protestants, got the increased payment by virtue of their length of service. Of these, when the controversy arose, six were Protestants and three were Catholics. As time progresses, and our senior nurses obtain other appointments, the disproportion will be quickly remedied, and the nursing staff will be about equal, as far as religious belief is concerned. I need not say how distasteful it is to me to mention the question of religion at all. My own religious views are pretty broad, and embrace the doctrines of perfect faith in the justice and love of the Almighty, of doing all the good one can, and paying particular attention to those who are sick or suffering or in want; but, as the Monsignor will have it, and as he has laid it down as a principle, that those who are the greater in number and pay the most should have the larger number of nurses, and, as he also states, that as there are no chaplains, which, I need hardly say, are quite unnecessary appendages of a small hospital with very limited funds, the Catholics should have the larger proportion of nurses in order to minister, &c., to the sick and dying, I think it right to let it be known how the case really stands. We have in the hospital generally about two Protestants to three Catholics, and to nurse them we have two trained nurses, one a Protestant and one a Catholic, and eight probationers, five of whom are Catholics and three Protestants. This constitutes the nursing staff of the hospital. Now, as regards our private nurses, they are all thoroughly trained, and must have spent at least three years in the hospital. Applying the Right Rev. Monsignor's principle, what do I find? That 6½ Protestant patients are nursed by our private staff of nurses for every one Catholic. Last year we received £270 17s. for nursing Protestants, and £41 4s. 10d. for nursing Catholics, exclusive of what we received from public institutions. If, then, we apply the Monsignor's principle, that where there is a majority of patients of one Church there should be a majority of nurses, what becomes of the Monsignor's contention about the more highly-paid nurses, who are all, except two, employed in nursing outside the hospital, and who nurse 6½ Protestants for each Catholic? If the principle enunciated is good inside the hospital, it should be quite as good in the nursing department outside it. I am glad to say, however, the Protestants and Catholics who send to us for nurses seldom or ever mention the word religion, and are quite content with the nurses we send to them. I have tried to explain clearly the exact position of this nursing question, in order to satisfy the public. As regards the other matter in dispute, which it is admitted could not have happened within the past twenty years, I think the less said the better. There is such a thing as a delu-

sion, which may be interpreted as a spurious fact, enhanced by over brain exercise, and this is the only explanation I can give for such statements as the cursing of the Pope, which no one in connection with the hospital remembers to have ever happened, and which I would deeply regret to think could occur in any institution under my control.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD THOMPSON, F.R.C.S.I.

### Arrangements for the Berlin Congress.

Miss Mollett, Matron, Royal South Hants Hospital, Southampton, is making arrangements to conduct a party of twenty to Berlin in June next, to attend the International Congress of Women, and the meeting of the International Council of Nurses. Those wishing for further information should apply to Miss Mollett.

### Comments and Replies.

*To Numerous Correspondents.*—In reply to many inquiries as to the position of nurses not holding a three years' certificate, if the Bill promoted by the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses becomes law, we beg to refer all inquirers to the Draft Bill published in our issue of January 30th. Under the heading "Provision for Existing Nurses" they will find, in Clause 15, that express provision is made for the registration of such nurses during a two years' term of grace. If the Bill becomes law it will be found that no injustice is contemplated, or will be done, to existing nurses of good character.

*Miss Edmonds.*—General hospitals do not accept pupils for training, as a rule, under twenty-one; the age more frequently is twenty-three or twenty-four. We should advise you to apply to the Matrons of some of the Children's Hospitals, such as the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, W.C.; or the North-Eastern Hospital for Children, Hackney Road, E.

*Mrs. Stower, Derby.*—The article on the State Registration of Nurses by Lady Helen Munro Ferguson appeared in the current issue of the *Nineteenth Century and After*. It will well repay careful study.

*Nurse B., London.*—Messrs. Krohne and Sesemann, surgical instrument makers, 37, Duke Street, Manchester Square, supply oxygen and inhaling apparatus. They would send you an illustrated catalogue of their specialties post free on application.

### Notices.

#### THE SOCIETY FOR THE STATE REGISTRATION OF TRAINED NURSES.

All those desirous of helping on the important movement of this Society to obtain a Bill providing for the legal registration of trained nurses will find an application form on page vii., or can obtain all information concerning the Society and its work from the Hon. Secretary, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, London, W.

#### OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

Rules for competing for the Pictorial Puzzle Prize will be found on Advertisement page viii.

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