

with us?" But we should be wise, and we should certainly be shorn of our Pharisaical spirit; if we studied, not the best, but the worst systems of training current amongst us. For, it is not only by our well-trained nurses that our profession is judged, but by all the undisciplined, semi-trained, and ignorant women with which it is flooded. The discarded of the training-schools; the workers in Nursing Homes with but few beds and under untrained superintendents; the women who have spent a few months in a special hospital—lying-in, mental, consumptive, and others—all these flood the private nursing world, and it is largely by them that the public estimate our worth and efficiency. What would be the reputation of medical practitioners if they worked cheek by jowl with every quack who has ever set a bone? Would the public have a high ideal of their professional or personal qualifications? Assuredly not. And, well knowing this, they have demanded, and obtained from the State, a hall mark of those who have attained to the minimum standard of knowledge which they consider essential to the safety of the sick public. Surely the profession of medicine then will see the justice and the wisdom of applying the same test to the members of an allied calling, upon which they rely for conscientious and detailed skilled work in regard to their patients between their professional visits, and will help us in our demand for legal registration, by which means alone the efficiently trained can be differentiated from the inefficient. What inducement is there at present to a woman to spend three years in obtaining a thorough training, when she sees that one who has spent two or three months in a lying-in hospital is kept employed, nursing every kind of disease all the year round, and apparently giving satisfaction to the medical profession? Do doctors, to whom quacks are taboo in their own profession, approve of them in ours? It would almost seem so. We cannot forget that if the medical profession made a stand against the employment of half-trained women who pose as fully-trained nurses; they could not exist as such for a week.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
FAIR PLAY.

THE REPUBLIC OF NURSING.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I am sorry that both you and the lady who signs herself "Once a Paying Pro" should have imagined that by two classes—two standards of exams.—I should have meant *those who could pay and those who couldn't*. I have been brought up differently as to what constitutes a gentlewoman.

But, even amongst gentle-folk, there are those who are strong of physique and nerve and limited in intellect. Even now, at this moment, I could tell you of the daughters of two admirals, of a general, and another of a bishop, who were some of the most unintellectual of my fellow nurses; in fact, I just missed by a few weeks the daughter of a duke who was by no means conspicuous for her brilliancy nor for her distinguished appearance, but, I am glad to say, for her goodness and her humility. My days of probation have passed; I have gone through training, training others and organising a hospital on my own lines, and the last eighteen months I have spent thinking, writing, and taking a retrospect of the past. I have come to

the following conclusion: Nursing might be divided thus:—

Organisation and administration.
Instruction or theory.
Technique.
Practical work.

Now, of the most remarkable women I came across in our profession (I exclude Matrons of the large hospitals who were neither my contemporaries nor my instructors), I met two who possessed administrative ability, a knowledge of technique, and were capable of practical work; but they were both as hard as nails, knew little about theory, and were thus incapable of instructing others. The technique of nursing can be taught in a year, and practical work in one month, but the woman who is to rule, organise, lecture, write, and serve her profession must be a woman above the average, or she is unworthy of occupying a high and responsible position. We need such women to advance our profession; we need a higher standard for them. We need a higher intellectual tone amongst nurses, or we shall stagnate and stand still.

Yours faithfully,
E. R. WORTABET.
Cairo.

Comments and Replies.

Miss Evans.—The International Congress of Women takes place in Berlin in the week beginning on June 12th, and the meeting of the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses during the same week. Miss Mollett, Matron of the Royal South Hants Hospital, Southampton, is organising a party to attend the Congress from this country, the inclusive cost being £7 16s. for ten days. If you think of joining the party, you should communicate with Miss Mollett as soon as possible.

Provincial Nurse.—You would find an excellent selection of cloaks at Messrs. Garrould's, 150, Edgware Road, London, W. If you are not able to pay a personal visit to this establishment, write for their Red Cross catalogue, which gives illustrations of many shapes.

Miss Thompson.—We do not advise your entering any institution for training which does not give a three years' certificate. This is the shortest period in which a thorough training can be given, even if it is well organised. Also, without a three years' certificate you would find yourself ineligible for many of the best posts eventually.

Nurse A. Stewart.—The fact that the Nurses' Registration Bill has been read a first time does not mean that the victory is won, rather that the struggle which must precede its ultimate passage has just begun. Everyone who realises what the enforcement of such an Act means to the sick, and to trained nurses, must now work heart and soul to further its interests.

Notice.

OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

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

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)