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SOPHIA CARTWRIGHT, Secretary Registered Nurses' Society, Member Executive Committee.

FRANCES E. MARQUARDT, Matron St. Giles' Infirmary, Camberwell, Member Executive Committee.

We regret we have not space in which to insert further signatures.

What Registration has done for the Medical Profession.

By A. T. BRISTOW, M.D.,

President of the Medical Society of the State of New York.

(Concluded from page 228.)

Twenty years ago there were few training-schools in this country. In the hospitals most of the nursing was done by orderlies or very ignorant women, who received a monthly wage equal to that of a domestic servant. Indeed, the nurses who came under my observation when I was an interne in a large hospital in 1875 and 1876 were far inferior to the average domestic. Not a few of them had been patients who, when convalescent, had been elevated to the position of nurses. Some of them were faithful souls and did their best, but most of them had a fondness for Sairey Gamp's teapot and smelt of Sairey Gamp's tea. With such attendants modern surgery was an impossibility, certainly the kind of surgery we see practised in our large hospitals to-day. I need not here trace the history of the training-schools of this land. The art of nursing has undergone a process of evolution, and the trained nurse of to-day is a very different personage from the graduate of fifteen or eighteen years' standing. The time of training has been increased from two years to three, so that the girl who enters a training-school graduates but one year sooner than her sister of the medical college. In point of fact, she devotes more actual time to her education, for each year of her training is a year of at least eleven months, instead of the eight months required by the medical school, so that at the end of her term of service she has been at least thirty-four months in the hospital, as against the thirty-two months spent in college by the graduate in medicine.

These thirty-four months of training are arduous in the extreme and are the severest possible test of endurance, fidelity to the minutest detail, and of courage. I believe that few young women appre-

ciate the task that confronts them when they make application for admission to the superintendent of nurses. Not long ago I received a letter from a young lady whom I had met in the hospital when she was visiting one of my patients there. She was attracted by the trim uniform and becoming cap and gown, and a few months afterwards wrote to me from a distant city stating that she had decided to become a trained nurse and asked me to get her admitted into the training-school. I promptly mailed her an application blank, but at the same time wrote her a frank letter and told her just what she might expect, and added that from the time she entered the hospital until her three years were passed she would find that she belonged to the hospital except on vacations. Evidently the prospect did not please her, and she has never handed in her application. She did not realise what every nurse in this room knows full well, that there is no more arduous work in the world of which a woman is capable than that which the hospital must exact, that it is a life not of romance, but of sternest self-denial and restraint. I have before me an advertisement cut from a journal for women which reads as follows:—

"BECOME A NURSE.

"No occupation open to women can compare with that of the trained nurse. It is elevating, enjoyable work—graduates earning 15 dols. to 30 dols. a week. We teach this profession by mail.

"For attractive booklet giving full details with valuable suggestions, address, &c."

There is an attractive picture, besides, of a nurse in uniform bandaging the arm of a good-looking young man, who is regarding the lady with affectionate interest. It is a very touching picture in more senses than one. What a contrast between the career of deception and fraud to which this advertisement invites a woman and a genuine course of training in a hospital! It does not seem as if impudence and unblushing greed could go so far! What protection has the real trained nurse against the so-called graduate of a school of correspondence like this? The fraudulent nurse will certainly never lack assurance. She can don the white uniform which graduate nurses so frequently wear, and to the inexperienced eye she is just as much a trained nurse as any of you. For this reason I have always believed that the abandonment of the training-school uniform by graduate nurses for one that is not distinctive was a mistake. People in the rural districts and small towns wherein there is no hospital never inquire as to the school of graduation of the nurse they employ, nor do the doctors always inquire minutely into the antecedents of the nurse they want in a hurry. What protection is there for the young woman who has given up three of the best years of her life to fit herself for her profession against the unprincipled and dishonest person who is willing to lend herself to so monstrous a fraud? There is but one remedy, and that is registration.

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