

totally unfit for work; the second one, after rapidly becoming thinner, paler and less vigorous in the overcrowded cottage, caught a bad attack of scarlet fever, and it is doubtful if she will ever be strong again. To my certain knowledge this girl had refused an excellent situation not a mile from her home, where her wages would have been £16, soon to be raised to £18, and there were two other places almost equally good that she might have had; but she preferred "liberty" and uncertain employment at the rate of £12. If these figures and terms had been reversed, certain employment at £12 and uncertain at £16, I could better have understood the choice, knowing that I have not yet met a boy or girl under twenty who could tell me whether their father would be better off if he worked fifty-two weeks in the year for a guinea a week, or earned 25s. for thirty-five weeks a year. More practical knowledge of arithmetic would have an inconceivably beneficial effect upon the ways of thought and habits of the poor. In one excellently-managed home the wife told me that she was trying to get regular work for her husband at a guinea a week. I said, much surprised, "I thought your husband's wages were considerably higher than that."

"They call it 32s.," she replied, "but I added it up last year, and it averaged 22s. 3½d. We're nine months in this year, and it doesn't fairly make 21s. 9d. Where'd we ha' bin if we'd believed it was 32s.? Counting all the anxiety, and the hanging about wretched when there's no work, we both think we'd be better off at a guinea. My man couldn't see it at first, he's not much of a scholar, but I went through it slow for him so's he could understand, and you won't find him go back on it now."

It may seem to the nurse that when she protests against a state of affairs so plainly leading to the undermining and destruction of women's health, that she makes no more impression than if she spoke a foreign language to the deaf and blind; but if she perseveres long enough, here and there she will score a success, and she will have done a great service if in the whole course of her life as a district nurse she succeeds in saving half-a-dozen girls from anæmia, and preserves them to be the healthy mothers of healthy children.

### Irish Nurses' Association.

On Saturday evening, 19th inst., at the Association Rooms, 86, Lower Leeson Street, Dublin, a lecture was delivered by Wm. S. Haughton, Esq., M.D., Surgeon to Steeven's Hospital, Surgeon Radiographer to the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, University Demonstrator in Röntgen Photography, T.C.D., on "The Value of the Röntgen Rays in Surgery and Medicine." The lecture was most interesting and instructive. The diagrams and apparatus shown illustrated the subject with great clearness.

### Progress of State Registration.

#### MEETING AT THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, NOTTINGHAM.

By the invitation of Miss Knight, Matron of the General Hospital, Nottingham, a meeting was held there on Wednesday, the 16th inst., to listen to an address given by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick on the State Registration of Trained Nurses. The room was crowded, and amongst those present were Miss Dwight, Superintendent of Nurses, Bagthorpe Infirmary; Miss Ross, Superintendent, Notts Nursing Federation; Miss Duncan, Lady Superintendent, Nottingham and Notts Private Nurses' Association; Miss Moore, Lady Superintendent, Children's Hospital; Miss Parmiter, late of the Children's Hospital; Miss Helen Bowers, Sanitary Inspector; and many Sisters and nurses from the various local institutions.

Miss Knight introduced Mrs. Fenwick in a courteous little speech, and the latter spoke at length on the gradual evolution of nursing of the sick from well-intentioned crude beginnings into the highly skilled profession of the present day. She pointed out that to progress on right lines practical organisation was now required, especially from an educational standpoint; with all the wonderful improvements effected in everything touching the condition of the trained nurse, methods of teaching and standards of work were still undefined. Certificates had no definite value because they were awarded at will, without the nurses giving proof that they had attained to a minimum standard of efficiency, prescribed by law. To quote the regulations of the twelve large hospitals in London to which medical schools were attached, and where one would naturally look for some sort of uniformity in the education of nurses, it would be found that the first essential—the term of training for which the pupils could obtain a certificate—varied from one to four years. The rules and regulations referring to the curriculum would be found to vary in the same extraordinary manner. Mrs. Fenwick showed that an Act of Parliament authorising the formation of a Central Nursing Council—composed of experts, on which Matrons and nurses should have ample representation—was the only means by which a definite standard of training and teaching and unprejudiced examination could be attained, and that it was the duty of every trained nurse to work for such reform, so that the public could be provided with a guarantee of a nurse's efficiency. At present there was nothing to prevent women, untrained or inefficient, from posing and working as "thoroughly trained" at the same rate of remuneration as those well qualified. This was unjust to all concerned. Let the law hallmark the efficient as "registered nurses," then the public could with entire liberty choose trained or untrained as it required, so long as the latter did

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)