

The Salpêtrière is a hospice or infirmary for women and children only, and admits the aged and infirm at seventy years of age, chronic and incurable cases, the insane, epileptics, and imbecile children.

Within its walls there are forty-four blocks of buildings, possessing 4,000 windows, and an average of 5,000 souls, including patients, staff, servants, and workmen.

There is a special block for imbecile children who receive special attention on Dr. Bourneville's methods, a hospital occupies another, while diseases of the nervous system are made a special study in another, and so forth.

This is where Mr. Mesureur is building the so-much discussed college for nurses. Mr. Montreuil, late director of Lariboisière Hospital, is now director of this most wonderful and vast establishment, and is one of the most charming, noble-minded Frenchmen I have met. He is as kind as he is just and strict, and is as much loved as he is respected by the nurses and staff. I had the pleasure of an interview with him, and found him an enthusiast on the nursing and administrative question of hospitals. He has a charming, pretty young daughter who is studying medicine, and who visited the London hospitals with him, and is naturally as keen on nursing reform as her father.

Mr. Montreuil opened his first lecture by saying that he had just returned from London, where he had been sent by the *directeur général* (M. Mesureur) to visit English hospitals and to study the nursing question, and to my astonishment he said: "*J'étais émerveillé! La nurse Anglaise est parfaite!*" He then went on to tell them how astonished he was to see how little theoretical knowledge we possessed, and how much more our practical training was developed. This did not astonish me, for I know that French people look upon us as pseudo-doctors, and are quite of opinion that the modern nurse ought to be trained on an intellectual basis, and that she ought to be the social equal of the doctor, and they seem to be under the impression that in England we are *all* ladies!

Whereas, to my mind (alas, I know this journal is opposed to me!), the very power, the very usefulness of our profession is, and has been, that we have ranked from the duke's daughter down to the national schoolgirl, and that each in the social position God has placed her, has served the profession in her way. What should we have done without the social influence of some, the organising, ruling, pioneering of others, the intellectual literary gifts, the stolid patience, and the physical strength of still others? Unquestionably, there ought to be a standard of education required, and, to my mind, the Matron who chose the strong, healthy, common-sense vicar's cook, instead of poor Honoria, his

daughter, chose well. The cook will make a strong, healthy, hard-working nurse, and might probably save the life of her private patient by her dainty dishes, whereas, poor Honoria will only fail as a nurse, and be a constant thorn to those she works with, always expecting the divine rights she and her family have been accustomed to in their little village. No! no! our profession is getting much too respectable, as in the case of the church, which used to be "gentlemanly"—it is the fool of the family now who gets sent to the hospital, the poor Honorias, who are too unattractive to marry, and too stupid to do anything else. Let us have good common-sense women or let us have women of talent and intellectual force, who can rule and organise and pioneer and occupy posts they have won through having passed higher exams. Let it be *that*, that obtains the higher posts, and not the fact that a nurse holds a three-years' certificate and has had a few months' service in the Transvaal, and has secured, with the help of Dr. Snooks, her father's valued friend, and Lord Fiddlesticks (who knew her father when he was Bishop of Timbuctoo) being on the Committee. But this is a digression.

Mr. Montreuil went on to give the reasons of secularisation in France:—

1. Political (liberty of conscience).
2. Progressive (scientific).
3. Administrative.

He apologised to the nuns present for stating these facts, but he said that patients ought to be allowed liberty of conscience. That nuns constantly worried patients about their religious views, and frequently frightened them into confession by telling them they were in a critical condition, thus either causing or hastening death.

Secondly, he said that nursing was progressive, and that it had made enormous strides since it was left in the hands of lay women who had made a study of it instead of a vocation.

Thirdly, he spoke of the administrative question, saying that nuns were not submissive either to the administrators or to the doctors, that frequently when the latter complained to the Sister Superior of a nun for being stupid or hard or neglectful, she only changed her from one ward to another, and that a nun who was a bad nurse in one ward did not become any better in another.

I wondered very much what the nuns thought and felt at hearing this; their faces were hidden by their large white bonnets and black veils while they took down notes, but their very presence showed that they felt that they could not go on with their old ways, and that they were benefiting by the reform movement.

The lectures took place three times a week, from 8 to 9 p.m., on the following subjects, and marks were given thus:—

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