

orders do not produce nurses who are acceptable to the demands of science (I do not say "scientific men" but science). But why is it? It is because religious sisters are controlled in every act of their lives and every detail of their work by men, in the shape of the clergy, who hamper, restrict, and confine their abilities in a thousand ways, interfere and meddle with their work, and, in a word, cramp them as the Chinese shoe cramps the foot of the Chinese woman.

The whole history of the nursing in the Middle Ages is the history of a series of efforts to break this bondage and reach a freer stage, a series of evolutions towards freer forms. Notable women's movements took place, too much ignored to-day, and men of sense and acumen were never lacking to support and strengthen them. Such were the St. Vincent de Paul nursing reform movement and the rise of the Bèguines in Belgium.

It is not clearly enough recognised that an arbitrary and unintelligent control by men has been the sole cause of the deterioration of the religious Sister as a nurse. I know, personally, of an instance where the surgeon of a large hospital was most drastically rebuked by a priest, because under his orders a nun had assisted at a perfectly natural and necessary piece of nursing work. And to complete the chagrin of the surgeon he was informed that the nun had to do severe penance.

The condition of patients in hospitals of Southern Europe and France where this control is unchecked, is too well known to refer to. And when one thinks of this army of women, by nature and by inclination fitted to be perfect nurses—for they are devoted, they have the qualities, many of them have the social position and the preliminary general education—and realises what has been made of them, one is heart-sick at the waste and ruin of good human material.

No better results are seen in Austria where the most important public hospitals are nursed (?) by a staff of lay attendants. Here the *personnel* of the men in control varies. They are no longer priests, but men of science, and, as such, famous throughout the world. Their control over their women subordinates is absolute. And what the results are must be seen to be appreciated. I have tried to give an idea of it in my article on the General Hospital in Vienna.

What else is the lesson of the piteous and most pathetic failure of lay nursing in Paris, in spite of the strenuous efforts of a really noble and earnest set of men, for whose characters and efforts to reform nursing no one has more admiration than I.

What else was the lesson of Miss Nightingale's work? Did she not with one stroke set aside the cramping *control* of men and put in its place the unrestricted activity of women in nursing management?

In our own recent nursing history how many lessons there are on this point! If we learn nothing from history, how are we different from

vegetables or molluscs? I cannot agree with those who see in the repetition of historical facts only a desire to rake up personal disagreements. The persons are nothing, but the principles are everything. I hold it to be an essential of progress that the experiences of the past should be unremittingly and untiringly held up as object-lessons for the present. Once the lesson is learned it is easy to recognise the new forms under which subjugation of character and of life-conditions threatens us. That very organisation which raises us and allows us to work for our patients' protection and for our own better education, when we ourselves control it, can be our ruination and the ruination of all our efforts, if controlled by the masculine domination which, in one form or another, has always worked to the undoing of a high type of womanhood. For—and I would like to say this on every house-top—the men who try to control women and regulate their education and their callings are not the manly men—they are not the magnanimous men—they are not the broad-minded, clear-sighted men. Even though they may be well-meaning, and in some ways excellent, they are the one-sided, the unenlightened men. But more often they are the descendants of the Sultan and Czar types—to be ever feared and guarded against. To-day, in every country where progress in nursing education is being pressed, the men who stand highest in public esteem and in their own professions are helping the nurses' efforts, but they are not trying to dominate them. Far be it from me to agree with those philosophers who claim that there is one set of duties cut and dried for men, and another set of duties cut and dried for women. Neither can I see the profit in those lines of argument which prove that men or women would have done thus and so if everything had been different. On the contrary, my ideal is that as both are human beings they should stand first as human beings, and work together, not against each other. But in practice we must realise that as, at present, men have all the machinery of the law, all the powers of possession, in their hands, and women have *only* their moral force and their influence, we must, at present, be intelligently certain that "*working with*" does not simply mean "*working under*." This, I hold, is a duty which we owe to the great body of women in general, one might even say, to humanity in general, and as much to those who come after us as to those with whom we are working now.

At a recent meeting of the Greenwich Guardians the night nurses, who objected to being compelled to return from their monthly leave at 1 p.m. when they had only to go on duty at 7 p.m., had their monthly leave fixed to extend from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the following day. This will certainly mean that the majority of these nurses will not have sufficient rest before going on duty.

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