

with washing would be at least £800 per annum, we cannot believe the Committee would be justified in handing that yearly sum to the National Pension Fund. For, in plain simple language, that is what the proposal of our contemporary amounts to. We consider, moreover, that the ill-advised character of the article is especially to be reprehended. For no Chairman of any social position, and certainly no Committee, of a great hospital would permit such peremptory and anonymous dictation to influence their decisions for a single moment. And, therefore, though Nurses certainly, as a matter of principle, should have their washing provided for them, there is small doubt that these impertinent injunctions to the Committee will simply result in indefinitely postponing all consideration of the subject. In every way, therefore, we consider the action taken by our contemporary in the matter, to be open to the most serious objection and condemnation, and, for its own credit's sake, we would advise it to strictly supervise, in future, any communication from the writer of this misleading, ridiculous, and most ill-advised article.

#### MISS ALICE FISHER'S LIFE IN AMERICA.

IN October, 1884, Miss Fisher left England, to assume the duties of Superintendent of Nurses, at the Philadelphia Hospital. In America, owing to the greater publicity of official life in every sphere, Miss Fisher's work soon attracted general attention. This was at first owing to the calmness and heroism she displayed, in saving the lives of many of the inmates of the lunatic wing of the Philadelphia Hospital, during a fire which occurred there shortly after her arrival. Subsequently, she succeeded, as she had previously done at Cambridge, in interesting all classes of people in the work of the Hospital, which became almost a popular resort of the ladies of Philadelphia, who came in numbers to her lectures on Nursing. In the short time she was there, a large Training School for Nurses sprang up, and an impetus was given to the improvement of Nursing which has been felt almost throughout the United States. The American papers were enthusiastic in her praise, and she received applications from all parts, for admission into the Nursing Home.

In the midst of her work she has been cut off by death, due to an affection of the heart which had troubled her for some months, and for which, as one of her physicians said, she had worn out all "power of compensation" by overwork. Her interest in the work was maintained to the last, and when too ill to walk, she was wheeled through the wards in a bath chair.

Miss Fisher was the eldest daughter of the Rev. R. Fisher, R.N., a distinguished Arctic traveller and

Fellow of the Royal Society, and was in many respects a woman of remarkable powers. Of commanding presence, deeply sympathetic in manner, widely read—especially in the best English literature—and herself the author of several works, showing a profound insight into human character and motives, she exercised a great influence for good over all who were brought into contact with her. As a hospital administrator she had few equals, and every institution with which she was connected still bears evidence of her work.

One of her fellow workers writes of her, "She was the brightest, most energetic, most fascinating woman I ever met, and at Addenbrooke's, with Miss Fisher as matron, my happiest nursing days were spent." In Philadelphia she was universally beloved, and all the papers speak of her work there, in terms of the highest appreciation. It is proposed to raise some memorial to her, in connection with Addenbrooke's Hospital.

#### THE NECESSITY FOR UNION AMONGST NURSES.

BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.

IT seems to me that few Nurses realise the fact that a momentous crisis in the history of their calling has somewhat suddenly arrived, and that its issue is fraught with the greatest consequences to every one of them. The question, which a few short weeks will now definitely settle, is simply this—Is Nursing to remain a mere vocation which can be adopted by anyone, learnt without careful training, and practised without experience being absolutely requisite; or is it to be transformed into the foremost and first female profession, recognised, constituted, and organised by the law of England? Are Nurses to remain, as they are now, individuals who are classed in the public mind with domestic servants; or are they to become members of a great and skilled profession, with clearly defined training, acquirements and duties? I may claim to know something of Nurses, and I am aware, therefore, how every Nurse worthy of the name will answer these questions. But they will ask, as many are asking now, How is Nursing to be formed into a profession? How are Nurses to gain this high position with all its many social and pecuniary advantages? And to both these questions I would make one answer, founded on common sense, all the teachings of history, and the experience of mankind from the very beginning of the world. All this and much more can be gained, and only gained, by *union amongst Nurses, and the assistance and support of the medical profession*. Every trade and nearly every profession which has prospered has done so by this unity of force and purpose amongst its

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