

compulsory. I thoroughly agree with that object, for there is not the slightest doubt that untrained and ignorant Midwives do untold harm every day, in country villages and in the poorer districts of our great towns.

So I was astonished beyond measure to find in this journal, announced to be chiefly devoted to securing the benefit of Legal Registration, actually announcing its approval of Mr. Bonham-Carter's pamphlet, which endeavours to prove that Registration is of no value, but would rather do harm. "We recommend this pamphlet to all who are interested in the question of the Registration of Nurses," it says. "It is certainly the clearest and most comprehensible statement that we have seen on the subject." I should imagine from this that the reviewer must have read nothing except the effusions of our comic contemporary upon the matter, and can quite sympathise with him in his pleasure at finding something clear and comprehensible at last; only I would advise him to read the articles in the *Lancet* and the *Nursing Record* upon the subject, as well as to remember that the principle of Registration which Mr. Bonham-Carter considers unsuitable for Nurses, is by the same reasoning unsuitable for Midwives.

Now, I do not wish to be misunderstood, but I must point out to the editor of *Nursing Notes* that Nursing and Medicine are two totally and distinct subjects, and that it is most unwise to attempt in any way to confound the two callings. The better educated and more carefully trained a Nurse is, the more scrupulous she invariably becomes, not to pretend to be anything but a Nurse. Such an one knows well that she does not possess the knowledge essential to a medical man, and that it is quite ridiculous to make believe that she does. It is only the uneducated woman and ignorant Nurse who believes that because she has seen a large number of cases and has watched the effects of a large number of remedies, that she is therefore competent to pose as a doctor. So the Nurse who considers herself able, on her own person who is rarely, if ever, respected by her colleagues, and who runs the constant risk, if anything went wrong, of bringing grave discredit, not only on herself, but on all other Nurses, and even the calling of Nursing itself.

ALL those who hold these common-sense views, therefore regret to find that *Nursing Notes* regularly publishes or reprints articles which are quite outside Nursing work. For instance, several columns in this month's number are occupied by

an article on the "Treatment of Habitual Constipation in Infants." It is copied from the *British Medical Journal*, and was evidently written only for medical men. It recommends various medical treatments, which I do not hesitate for a moment to say that no Nurse, with any respect for herself or her calling, would dream of employing on her own responsibility; and, therefore, the article is quite out of place in a "practical Journal for Nurses."

BUT the other article—an original lecture on Burns—is, to my mind, a greater mistake still. It was given by a Doctor at the Midwives' Institute, and distinctly advises Nurses to prescribe "Tonics," "Pills," and "Lotions," and actually concludes in these words: "The constitutional treatment of burns is often omitted, and yet so much may be done to keep up the patient's recuperative power, for slowly healing surfaces are often caused by neglecting it. *I would advise you (the italics are mine) to keep the patient as far as possible free from any degree of pain or irritability, no matter how slight, by morphia, and to preserve his strength by giving continuously small doses of quinine during the whole process of tissue repair.*"

IF Doctors, however young, thoughtlessly talk in this strain, they must not be surprised if they find uneducated women taking them at their word and pushing the doctrine to its logical conclusion. My great consolation is that the great majority of Trained Nurses, now-a-days, realise not only the highly honourable nature of their calling, but, also, are fully aware of the obligations it entails. The more a Nurse understands the vast importance of her own work, the more anxious does she become to be recognised simply and solely as a Trained Nurse, and not to descend to the ridiculous role of a demi-semi untrained medical woman. *Nursing Notes* has a great work before it, in which I sincerely wish it all success; but I earnestly hope it will cease to copy or publish such purely medical articles as those I have commented on, and others which have previously drawn upon it adverse criticisms from the medical Press.

IT contains, however, several items of interesting news. For instance, it publishes the questions given at the written Examination for Probationers last month, at the London Hospital, which were as follows: July 5, 1888, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Full marks 60—10 for each answer. The first three questions *must* be answered to ensure "passing." (1) How would you make and change the bed for a helpless patient? How would you prepare the bed for a case of ovariectomy? Name any

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)