

Hospitals or of Ward Sisters or of Nurses. At present they can have no such legal recognition of their qualifications in either department, as is obtained by sisters who become school-mistresses, or who are students and teachers of Art. That this ought to be remedied can hardly admit of doubt; but it rests with the women of England to decide whether what is here advocated has their support as well as their approval." Miss LEES clearly approved of the suggestion made by her distinguished editor, because in detailing a very elaborate system of examination, which she recommended for Nurses, she wrote (p. 47), "If successful she will then receive the 1st or 2nd class medal of a superintendent, and be registered as such at the school, or, if such register be legally recognised, at the office of the General Medical Council." It need only be added that Sir HENRY ACLAND was, in 1874, the president of the General Medical Council—the body formed by Parliament to supervise the education and registration of the medical men of the United Kingdom; that Miss LEES became Mrs. DACRE CRAVEN; and that the book in question was dedicated to Miss FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. And there is reason to believe that the latter lady did not express her disapproval of the suggestion of registration, thus publicly made by one old friend of hers, and adopted by another, nearly twenty years ago. More than a decade passed and the subject attracted only academic discussions at sporadic intervals, until the quick development of the Nursing profession and the still more rapid production of Nursing abuses, compelled the more far-sighted members of the calling to consider the necessity of instituting remedies and reforms. Because, as Nursing became more popular and its work more highly appreciated, thousands of women destitute of all practical knowledge donned cap and apron and dubbing themselves 'trained,' went forth, at considerable profit to themselves and at equal loss to the sick, to act as private Nurses. Coincidentally, many others, who were destitute of character or who had even been imprisoned for theft or even graver offences, adopted the same rôle, and thus obtained entrance into private houses and into positions of trust, with the result in too many

cases that they brought fresh disgrace upon themselves and upon the whole body of Nurses.

The Hospitals which trained and certificated Nurses claimed that it was no business of theirs to control women who had left their service, and that they had, moreover, no funds for such a purpose. And, although it was again and again pointed out to these great public Institutions that women whom they had trained and certificated as Nurses were known to have, by their misconduct, brought repeated discredit upon their Training Schools, and danger to the sick, the same reply was made, and the Hospitals proved that they were absolutely helpless to shield themselves or anyone else from a Nurse whom they had once certificated, however incompetent or untrustworthy she might thereafter prove herself to be. They had no power to cancel or withdraw Certificates already given; and, what was more, they refused to take the slightest steps to protect the public from possible imposition in the future. Then it was discovered that a system of forging Certificates was growing up in different parts of the country, and that utterly disreputable people were, by such means, palming themselves off on the sick as trustworthy, upon the reputed testimonial of leading Hospitals in which they had never worked. Still, the Hospitals would not move one inch in defence either of their own good names or of the public safety. But the scandal became so grave that, at last, the Matrons of several important Institutions began to discuss, amongst themselves, various measures of reform, and among these, the half-forgotten proposal of Registration soon took the most prominent place. Their first idea of this scheme was that every Nurse who had a Hospital Certificate should have it "registered," so that the public should be able to learn who were, and, comparatively, who were not, properly educated to undertake the care of the sick. But in 1886, many Hospitals gave no Certificate at all, and so the idea broadened into the proposal to register the name of every woman of good character who had passed through some definite term of train-

---

The "NURSING RECORD" has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

---

Why does the Bracher-Patent Water Condenser give such general satisfaction? Because all impurities are removed and the Apparatus is simple, perfectly automatic, and quite reliable. Price lists post free.—JOHN A. GILBERT & Co., Sole Manufacturers, 4, Mount Pleasant, Gray's Inn Road London, W.C.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)