

"EVERY contribution to the funds of the Hospital, however insignificant, passes directly through the hands of the Queen herself before being sent to the Treasurer, and scarce a day passes but that her Majesty, accompanied by one of her Ladies-in-Waiting, spends at least half an hour in the wards. Although she makes no distinction, it is easy to see that Queen Olga's heart inclines to the wretched Russian sailors who too often find a refuge in the Evangelismos, and it is said that she always keeps a little soil sent from Holy Russia to sprinkle on the coffins of those of her compatriots who die in Greece."

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LAST week's *Queen* heads a new departure "Professional Women upon their Professions. I. Nursing—A chat with Mrs. Bedford Fenwick." It is pleasant to note that the interviewer is in sympathy with the great movement of Nursing Reform, with which Mrs. Fenwick's name has become so closely identified. The writer says:—

"In the history of all human affairs there are moments of sudden progress and unexpected activity, which are followed by long periods of uneventful quietude, of silence, it may be, perchance, of retrogression. It is so in the case of the professions, in which men and women engage. There are times when the members of a profession are simply doing their duty—as their predecessors have understood it—in a jog-trot way, consolidating themselves with a somewhat cheerless "Virtue is its own reward" philosophy. And there come moments, again, when the members—or rather the younger ones among them—are suddenly inspired with ideas which make their work a delight as well as a duty, and with aspirations for the advancement of their profession which send them forth prepared to encounter and to conquer opposition.

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"Among the professions which are in the throes of renaissance, the Nursing profession is, at the present moment, a notable example. Rumours of its internal warfare, and the sound of its battle-cries—registration and anti-registration—have reached the ears of the public. Finally, as we know, the registration party have come off victorious; for, although registration is not likely for many years to come, to be obligatory, the system of registration pursued by the Royal British Nurses' Association has received authoritative sanction by the incorporation of that body under a charter from Her Majesty. Since the eventful day when Princess Christian, the Association's devoted President, announced that she was the bearer of the Queen's consent to grant a Royal Charter to the Association, Nurses have been flocking in large numbers to have their names inscribed upon the list of the Association, which is also endeavouring to form a registration council, which will be drawn from a body consisting of Matrons of Hospitals and the heads of Nurse training schools. It, therefore, behoves us to understand the ideas of the younger generation in the Nursing world, of whom Mrs. Fenwick is one of the ablest members.

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

"Immediately embarking on the subject of the moment, I begged Mrs. Fenwick to tell me how this demand for registration had come about. "That would be a long story," said Mrs. Fenwick. "I suppose the history of the movement dates back pretty nearly to the time, some twenty or five-and-twenty years ago, when educated women were first introduced into Hospitals, instead of the untrained and often incapable women of the char-woman class who were formerly employed. Ladies effected great and valuable improvements in the methods of Nursing, but the authorities at first hardly knew how to treat them, and expected them to do the menial work which their predecessors had performed. Then came the introduction of ward-maids, and this grievance was redressed. But somehow," she continued, "in our Nursing world we have no sooner removed one abuse than another has arisen. We had, for instance, no no sooner swept the Hospitals of our incapable and oft-times drunken Sairey Gamps, and had put the Nursing of our Hospitals upon a better footing, than an unexpected trouble occurred.

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"The Hospital authorities began, in short, to perceive that they possessed in their lady Nurses an unexpected source of revenue. The public outside the Hospitals began to ask for trained Nurses. At first, no doubt, the public got what it asked for, but gradually some Hospitals slipped into the habit of sending out only half-trained Nurses to a public which did not know the difference. The temptation was a pecuniary one, and was certainly strong. A Nurse at the end of her first year's training will be receiving a nominal salary of from £12 to £16. But let her be sent into private families as a 'fully trained' Nurse, and she is forthwith earning for the Hospital authorities two guineas a week. Everybody is defrauded by such a system—the private employer who pays at a critical moment for the services of a competent person and does not get them, and the Nurse, who is both defrauded of a large sum of money which she has earned and of the training which she entered the Hospital on the understanding she should receive. Nor is this all. Ultimately the Hospital patients suffer also from this dishonest system. Often the supply of Nurses from the Private Nursing Staff runs short, and then Nurses are taken out of the wards to meet the demand. You can imagine what disorganisation of ward work ensues from such a system."

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"I should like to know, Mrs. Fenwick," I asked at this point, "what would be in your estimation a fair system of remuneration for private Nurses—fair, I mean, to all parties?"

"The co-operative system, where the Nurses combine and gain their own earnings, less a small amount to cover the expenses of management, is of course, theoretically the best and the most fair. But the system which prevails at some of the best private institutions is, I think, a good one. The Nurses are there paid a salary of £30 and 25 per cent. on their earnings. This means generally about fifty pounds, with board, lodging, and travelling expenses found. But no Nurse should be allowed to take private Nursing cases at all who has not had three years' Hospital training. There are several Hospitals I could name—in particular, St. Bartholomew's and the Middlesex—where conditions such as those I have mentioned are rigidly observed."

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