

the Royal British Nurses' Association has been struggling so hard to obtain a remedy."

SIRS,—It has often struck me as a remarkable fact that although London appears literally to swarm with "Hospital Nurses" in picturesque and appropriate costumes, it still remains as difficult to obtain a really efficient Nurse upon short notice as it has ever been within my recollection. The following instructive example of the great ease and rapidity with which the modern "trained Nurse" is manufactured may perhaps throw some light upon the curious discrepancy observed between the quantity and the quality of these ladies. A uniformed and certificated Nurse was recently sent to me with the highest recommendation by a relative of a lady who was under my care. The Nurse expressed her readiness to take charge of my patient—a serious and somewhat complicated medical case. Upon inquiry I ascertained that this "trained Nurse" had never received any systematic instruction in medical or surgical nursing, that her entire professional training had been accomplished in *eight weeks* at a certain lying-in Hospital in London, and that at the expiration of the above period of probation she had obtained from the authorities of this Hospital a "first class certificate" as a monthly Nurse. In answer to an expression of surprise and alarm on my part the Nurse assured me that her training had been exceptionally long, since the majority of the pupils of this beneficent charity obtained their certificates at the end of five weeks.—I am, Sirs, yours truly,

JOHN CAHILL.

\* \* \*

AN American correspondent sends us the following from the *Brooklyn Medical Journal*. Of course, it is only a fresh illustration and new expression of facts with which all our readers are familiar, and of views which we have often put forth. But they show how the necessity for Registration is being felt all over the world:—

"The recent attempt to murder the wife of a demented patient by the male nurse employed to care for him, emphasizes not only the importance, but the necessity, for Directories, the managers of which shall be held responsible for the character of those whom they send out to nurse the sick. It seems hardly possible that such a villain as the one to whom we refer could ever have obtained recommendations from reputable physicians, which would have procured for him registration in a directory for nurses such as is maintained by the Medical Society of the County of Kings at its rooms, 356, Bridge Street. It is true that the character of all applicants for registration cannot be always fully known, and that black sheep will be found in every flock; still the probability of securing the services of a scamp in the capacity of a nurse is greatly diminished by having recourse to an organization, the very object of which is to investigate the character of all who seek its privileges. The duty of physicians who become sponsors for nurses is also brought into prominence by this occurrence. It is a serious matter to certify to the good character of a nurse, and unless the physician who is called upon for such a recommendation knows the fact, he should carefully avoid making the statement of it. Fortunately these remarks apply only to male nurses, as we have never heard of any of the other sex proving recreant to the trust imposed in them. It seems to us that the lesson to be learned from the history of this crime is that physicians who are in need of nurses for the care of

their patients should procure them from the directories, as by so doing they not only insure their patients and their patients' families from possible injury, but they at the same time relieve themselves of what may prove an awful responsibility."

\* \* \*

A DRAWING-ROOM meeting, having for its object the establishment of new associations for the supply of Cottage Nurses on the Holt-Ockley system, was held last week at 24, Park-lane. Lord BRASSEY presided, and there was a large attendance of ladies.—The chairman, in opening the proceedings, explained that the object of these associations, which were first instituted by Miss BROADWOOD, at Ockley, in Surrey, in 1883, and were now rapidly spreading all over England, was to bring good and skilled Nursing into country districts, and to do so at a reduced rate. The results in Ockley had been most satisfactory, and he was not surprised to hear that Miss BROADWOOD's example had been followed in about fifty other country districts. The system was both efficient and economical, and the good that had already been done was incalculable.—Miss BROADWOOD, in describing what had been done by the Ockley Association, said all the Nurses employed had received some amount of training, but they did not engage skilled Hospital Nurses, firstly because their charges were too heavy, and, secondly, because they would not do the rough cottage work as well as the nursing. Then, again, it was found that, in the great majority of cases of illness in the villages, a highly skilled Nurse was not required. Under their system they were able to supply good Nurses at very small cost to the patient. The scale of yearly subscriptions was for labourers 2s., artisans, gentlemen's servants, &c., 3s., farmers and tradespeople 5s., and gentry 10s. A weekly fee of the same amount was charged when the Nurses' services were required—viz., 2s., 3s., 5s., and 10s. respectively. Non-subscribers could have a Nurse if she was unemployed, but they paid higher fees, and they had to take their chance, whilst subscribers could claim a Nurse as a matter of right. The class of Nurses employed were strong, healthy women, able to rough it and face all weathers, and who were willing to perform the usual household work in the cottages. Although the primary object was to benefit most the poorer classes, who stood in the greatest need of help, the Holt-Ockley scheme was not a charity, and should not be looked upon in that light. It was more like a huge benefit club, embracing all classes of the community, and binding them together in a common bond of mutual kindness and assistance in the time of trouble which sickness

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

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

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)