

which trained Nursing is now employed, in the treatment of sickness or injury, these difficulties will by no means tend to diminish. In the first place, there is the difficulty which everyone has experienced of obtaining thoroughly competent Nurses. Considering the large number of Hospitals which are now engaged all over the country in training and certifying women to act in this capacity, it is a matter of extreme surprise that such a difficulty should exist. It is perhaps explicable to some extent by the fact that many women who are possessed of the best Nursing qualities and Nursing knowledge prefer to continue to work in the orderly and well-disciplined wards of a public Hospital rather than amongst the inconveniences and drawbacks incidental to the care of patients in private houses. In the next place, and partly arising from the first cause, the market is flooded with women who have had little or no education or experience to fit them for the grave duties which, with a light heart, they are quite willing to undertake. This evil, moreover, has been fostered by the system of 'farming-out' Nurses, which was formerly prevalent. A house was taken, for example, by a man or woman who had a little money to invest; specious advertisements were issued to the medical men in the neighbourhood; women, whose first qualification apparently was that they must be good-looking, were hired for small wages, the inducement being held out to them that they would be trained as Nurses and then be able to command a higher salary. These women were then sent out, dressed in becoming uniforms, designated as trained Nurses, and for their more or less inefficient services, the public were charged from a guinea and a-half to two guineas per week. Until seven years ago, this system flourished exceedingly, with the result that medical men found their best efforts frustrated while the public were victimised to an even dangerous extent. It is within the knowledge of most of our readers that a *coup de grâce* was given to this system by the institution of the British Nurses' Association, under the auspices of some of the best known members of the Medical and Nursing Professions. This Association, which last year received the well-deserved honour of incorporation by Royal Charter, established a system of registration of trained Nurses, which, growing steadily and surely in public and professional favour, has incidentally led to the establishment of greatly needed reforms, and is slowly but surely bringing about the abolition of the fraudulent system to which we have alluded.

But thirdly, there is a greater difficulty still, because the Nurses of former days were, to a large extent, independent of medical control. Nominally the Nurse was, of course, under the doctor's orders; practically, when he was away from the patient's house, he had no knowledge of how she performed her duties. And when he found her inefficient, careless, or disloyal, as unfortunately used frequently to be the case, he might dismiss her, but with the certainty that the institution from which she came, if it dispensed with her services, could do no more, while she would probably find no difficulty in obtaining immediate admittance to another institution in the next street, and would retail therefrom and all over the neighbourhood, more or less highly-coloured accounts of himself and his patients.

The institution of the register, however, has provided, as it was expected, a professional court of appeal, with the immense advantage of diffusing through the Nursing profession generally a feeling of better discipline and more professional loyalty than was the case a few years ago. For these manifest advantages the medical profession has—as we have on various occasions pointed out in these columns—much cause for gratitude to those of its members who took so prominent a part in the formation and organization of the Royal British Nurses' Association."

An interesting ceremony lately took place in the City of St. Paul, in Minnesota, when a Training School for Nurses was inaugurated at St. Joseph's Hospital, under the active patronage of Archbishop IRELAND. We learn "that the class which entered

upon its studies consists of thirteen Nuns and ten young women of the world." With all their loving devotion to the sick, the one great drawback hitherto to Nursing by Sisters of Mercy has been that they have not had the advantage of a theoretical teaching upon a scientific basis. We do not doubt that, after acquiring such instruction they will prove themselves the very best type of Nurse in the world.

It is an interesting fact that Mrs. CAFFYN, the authoress of "A Yellow Aster," was trained when a girl as a Nurse under Miss FLORENCE LEES—now Mrs. DACRE CRAVEN—at the National and Metropolitan Nursing Association, which has its headquarters in Bloomsbury Square. Miss LEES was one of Miss FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE's first assistants, and was in charge at one time of the ambulance at Metz. Mrs. CAFFYN's training as a Nurse was also carried on at St. Thomas's Hospital. When she married, some fourteen years since, she went to Australia for her husband's health, and there they lived till a year ago.

OUR Melbourne correspondent writes:—

"The close of 1893 was not regretted by most people in these Colonies, either in private or public life, and the charitable institutions, alas, suffered severely from the terrible financial disasters which befell the community generally. But we are thankful to see one of them—the Alfred Hospital—has surmounted its difficulties, and paid off its heavy debt to the bank, and now has a balance to its credit with which to begin the new year. This is owing to the indefatigable efforts of the committee and officers to effect retrenchment and economy; at the same time, keeping up the standard of comfort for the patients and others in the Hospital. The Alfred Hospital has just had a loss, which it will not easily replace, in the resignation of Dr. Anderson, who, for six years, was first house-surgeon, then house-physician. His untiring devotedness to his patients, as well as his skill, made him much beloved, and still more respected, by all who worked with him. As a mark of their esteem, the officers—nursing and general house staff—presented him with a handsome gold watch. He has now commenced private practice, carrying with him everyone's good will. Typhoid is coming on with rapid strides with the increasingly hot weather, and no wonder, for the commonest sanitary precautions are not taken to prevent it. There is no underground drainage in Melbourne—"Marvellous Melbourne," as it loved to call itself in "the boom time," which is so far behind other cities in these colonies in matters of sanitation. Slowly the new sewage scheme is being carried out. Everything is at a standstill for want of funds. The Women's Hospital, notwithstanding the great effort made by the public to help it with the handsome sum of £7,000, collected in the week of self-denial, is again groaning under its pecuniary difficulties. I fear there is want of good management in that Institution. I am glad that they have one new rule (made some months ago), which will be approved of by the English Nursing world. The non-paying pupils have to train in the midwifery wards for twelve months before they obtain their certificates. *Paying pupils*, by paying 12 guineas, get the same in *six months*. Let us hope that may soon be altered. Many of the Alfred pupil Nurses go to the Women's Hospital for a third year, as soon as they obtain their certificates, to learn midwifery. This has been found so useful at the Women's Hospital that they no longer care to take pupils who have not had general Hospital training."

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