

The Registered Nurses' Society.

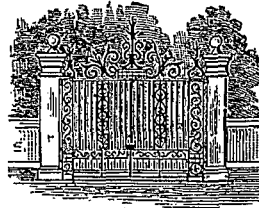
— Outside the Gates. —

DEAR NURSES,—A good many people are asking the very natural question, What is the Registered Nurses' Society, and why was it started? And when they are told that it is a co-operation of Registered Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and that its object is to secure to its members full remuneration for their work as Private Nurses, they inquire further, How does the Society differ from other Nursing Institutions? To this, we can reply that the Society was founded to maintain certain PRINCIPLES, while most other Institutions are worked to fill certain POCKETS. Our Principles are, *Protection for the Public and Justice for Nurses.* Protection of the sick against untrained, inefficient women, who, destitute of knowledge, and often of characters also, have the effrontery to term themselves trained Nurses, and to undertake the most responsible duties in that capacity; and who, by their carelessness and ignorance, cause incalculable dangers to the patients committed to their tender mercies. Justice for Nurses by distinguishing skilled workers from impostors, and thus saving the former from the unmerited disgrace which the latter so frequently brought upon them in former days; and, now, by obtaining for them the due reward of their work. The first Principle caused the movement for Registration of Trained Nurses—the formation of the Royal British Nurses' Association; its six years' struggle against immense opposition and the greatest difficulties; its final success last year in gaining a Royal Charter; and the first recognition by the State in this country, and by the Parliament of a great Colony, of the principle of Registration. The second Principle has evolved the Registered Nurses' Society, and, judging by the success which has attended its work so far, its results will not be less important. Because, there can be no doubt, that your success means, in measure exactly proportional, the success of the principles you tacitly advocate as members of the Registered Nurses' Society. Leading medical men in London and the Provinces are anxious to obtain Nurses with the high professional guarantee of competence which those have gained who have satisfied the keen scrutiny of the well-known members of your Committee; and as the constitution of the Society becomes more widely known, it will be possible gradually to increase the number admitted to membership. It will then grow every month more difficult for public or private Institutions to "sweat" their Nurses or to employ semi-trained or altogether ignorant workers. Then, only those Institutions will be able to continue in existence which treat the public fairly by supplying Nurses who have had three years' Hospital training, and which, moreover, treat those Nurses justly in the way of remuneration. The foundation members of the Registered Nurses' Society are therefore not only working for themselves, but for the whole of their profession and for the maintenance and success of principles of immense importance. It is a great responsibility, but I feel convinced it has been courageously undertaken, and that every individual member will faithfully fulfil her part in carrying it out.

"MATRONA,"

WOMEN.

SHALL WOMEN HAVE THE VOTE?



THERE is no doubt that the Women's Suffrage demonstration, held at the Queen's Hall on the 7th instant, was an inspiring gathering. Earnest enthusiasm is rare in these superficial times, and a sentiment which inspires it must be dealt with.

The *raison d'être* of the meeting was the fact that the Registration Bill pending in the House of Commons did not make provision for the Parliamentary franchise for women, but Mr. Walter McLaren, M.P., had given notice of an instruction to the Committee for rectifying this oversight.

Lady Henry Somerset is a magnificent Chair-woman, and she presided over a meeting, the most significant feature of which was the *co-operation* of the following important Women's Societies: The Women's Liberal Federation, the British Women's Temperance Association, the Central Society for Women's Suffrage, the National Women's Suffrage Society, and the Women's Trades Unions.

Lady Henry Somerset made the following womanly and eloquent speech: "We have met to-night with one intent and one conviction, but the manner in which we have arrived at that conviction, and the lines that have deepened in our lives the interest that we feel in the question that we are here to consider, have been drawn in ways various and sundry. History repeats itself, and each reform pursues much the same line of argument, and finally arrives at a triumphant issue when some who did not watch its progress believed it to be only in its infancy. There is no name more intimately associated with the great question of the enfranchisement of women than that of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton; and the manner in which the vast import of the woman's vote was borne in upon her soul, is characteristic of the deep impression made on many a mind almost before that mind has learned to understand the *rationale* of the question which it had already grasped. Little Mistress Elizabeth Cady, of New York, was the daughter of Judge Cady. A motherless child, she spent many hours in her father's office, where, when tired of her toys, she would sit with wide eyes listening to the stories that were poured forth into his sympathising ear, many of them concerning the wrongs of women; and as she listened to the trembling tones and watched the quivering lips of white-faced helpless women, standing by her father's side she would lay her little hand upon his arm and entreat him to protect them, for she knew how powerful he was. And in reply, in grave, deep tones, he was wont to answer her that he could not help the women because of the law.

TO RIGHT THE WRONG.

"This answer was so frequent that after many importunities the child, clambering on her father's knee, bade him show her in the great brown volumes the passages in those law books that seemed to forbid

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)