

which is now the customary fee for skilled workers.

The public nurtured in the doctrines of Free Trade is only too glad to obtain what it believes to be a similar article at a reduction of 25 per cent. off the customary market price. And therefore, while this so-called charitable institution can show a net profit of some £1,700 a year upon its private Nursing transactions, large numbers of excellently trained Nurses are quite unable to obtain employment. The effects of this have been disastrous, inasmuch as it has led to the belief amongst many that there is no necessity to strive after efficiency in Nursing; that the public rather prefer to receive an inferior, so long as they can obtain a somewhat cheaper, article; and that, therefore, no advantage is to be derived from passing through the entire three years curriculum which the best observers now unambiguously consider to be necessary for the efficient training of a Nurse.

It has led, therefore, to a great lack of *esprit de corps* in the ranks of the Nursing profession, and to an even greater carelessness as to the maintenance of contracts made with the authorities of training schools. Fortunately, the tide has been stemmed by the institution of the Registration of Nurses, and still more by the recent success of the Registered Nurses' Society; because now, for the first time, the real, practical, and pecuniary benefit of a thorough training is made apparent to all Nurses. We look forward with considerable hope to the success of the latter society to bring about a complete revolution in the manner both in which the public regard trained Nurses, and in the relations which exist between some training schools and the Nurses whom they undertake to educate.

In future it certainly must be made an essential condition that every Nurse shall obtain her actual three years' training under skilled supervision in the wards of the hospital, and that upon no pretence shall her training be interrupted during that period.

Then, if Hospitals choose to have private nursing staffs, we regard it as certain that these will have to be conducted upon a co-operative basis. The enormous profits made, must go to those who have made them, and not to a charitable-commercial undertaking. Finally, the private nursing staff must be held to be entirely distinct, and under completely different management from the ordinary ward workers. From these reforms others will inevitably follow, and justice and fair play will be introduced into the relations which exist between the training schools, the nursing profession, and the public.

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#### ART AND CREMATION.

Many of our novelists have made great capital out of cemeteries and tomb stones. The heroine is often to be found either spreading flowers upon the grave of some beloved one, or, if none of her friends are

dead, even strewing the grave of a stranger. There it is that a knight comes across his lady-love; and it is found that he too takes a melancholy interest in graveyards, and is devoted to the cult. In the novel, especially of Lytton, and occasionally Dickens, the cemetery has attractions. But who shall dare assert that the cemetery is a thing of beauty; still less, a joy for ever? A walk through such a cemetery as, say, Brompton, with its graves packed closely together, is enough to give a fortnight's depression to the most light-hearted Mark Tapley; and as for the æsthetic, they shudder at the sight unless they take delight in an infinite number of straight lines. Only give one's thoughts depth as well as height, and it is awful to contemplate the promiscuous corruption below the surface. The myriad tilted paving-stones above bear no relation in point of number to the bodies beneath, they merely mark the spot where are buried five, eight, ten ugly coffins on the top of each other. And if the imagination remains above ground, there is little enough either beautiful or restful for the eye to gaze upon. Because of frequent disturbances of the ground, Nature has no opportunity to display herself; trees are confined to a few borders here and there, and flowers are either absent or planted without taste or care. On one grave will be found a few cut flowers half dead in a dirty jar, on another, a tawdry wreath of bead flowers. What is to be said of the tomb-stone? They are all marked with a dull uniformity of ugliness and total lack of individuality. The inscriptions, if not eaten away by time and the weather, are almost all impious in their total disregard of truth; and well justified the cynic in writing: "Here lie the dead, and here the living lie." Where, one asks, are the bad, or even ordinarily good, individuals hidden away. Look at another picture for a moment. Why not consume the material and corruptible part of a body in the pure flame of cremation, and transfer the calcined ashes to an urn. This urn may be fashioned in a hundred different ways, and from a score of materials. What a grand opportunity for the artist, the sculptor, the designer. Here would be scope for the most delicate taste, the most finished workmanship. Marble, porphyry, terra cotta, bronze, granite, are all at our service. A building might be erected embodying all the noblest aspirations of ecclesiastical architecture in which to enshrine those urns with which relations hesitate to enrich their own home decoration. Under such a system Westminster Abbey may hold the ashes of the great for centuries to come. "God's Acre," at present consisting of a series of irregular furrows with no harmony of form or colour, would be converted into a beautiful garden of lawn, flowers, trees, and climbing plants worthy of the use for which it, in conjunction with the neighbouring Church, was set apart. It is pure farce to talk of a "last resting place," when Churches and burial grounds are periodically disturbed and the contents desecrated. Urn burial would ensure non-interference; and in that far distant time when a New Zealander shall be found sitting upon a pillar of London Bridge sketching the ruins of old St. Paul's, an archaeologist might be seen holding aloft some treasure trove, offering the meanwhile a tribute of admiration to the age that so respected its dead as to collect its purified ashes in a receptacle worthy of the object, and give them an honourable burial.

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