

more has been accomplished in surgery. It is here that modern medical science has achieved its most wonderful success.

Daily, in our large Hospitals, we see apparently hopeless cases in the hands of a skilful surgeon, assisted by a Nurse who thoroughly understands, and applies, the principles which govern aseptic surgery. And once more we behold the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight. And not only in this department of surgery, but in cases of simple fracture also, we find that "knowledge is power."

Take, for example, a case of fractured femur, where extension and weight have been applied by the surgeon. The Nurse who has been taught knows that extension must be maintained uniformly, if a minimum amount of shortening and union of the bone is to be looked for as a result; while the uninstructed Nurse will, without hesitation, lift the weight repeatedly, all unconscious of the injury she is doing her patient.

Nor will the young aspirant for fame in the region of gynæcology, who longs to rank among the successful operators of the day, think of engaging a Nurse who is not thoroughly posted as to what constitutes the modern idea of surgical cleanliness, and is not thoroughly conversant with the *technique* employed in the various operations in the realm of pelvic surgery. Or what obstetrician, whose proud boast heretofore has been, that he has never once in his own practice been obliged to write as a cause of death, "puerperal septicæmia," will not prefer as his co-worker in this field, a Nurse who understands that even mastitis can be prevented by care and cleanliness, and that phlegmasia alba dolens is possibly the result of septic absorption, and consequently preventable, rather than entrust his reputation to the time-honoured family Nurse, whose skill has been called into requisition repeatedly through successive generations, and who regards the before-mentioned complications as only natural, and reckons them among the ills which usually pertain to the parturient state.

Examples such as these could be furnished without number, were it necessary, but, fortunately for the Nursing profession, it is now generally conceded that a refined, conscientious, thoroughly educated Nurse, is one of the greatest blessings of the nineteenth century. True, there are many so-called Trained Nurses who cannot be regarded in this light. "'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

The further consideration of this subject leads us to note the great diversity which characterises the different Nursing Schools of to-day. Not only is this seen in the character of the education afforded, but in the length of time spent in the various departments of Hospital work.

Some schools have a regular and thorough course of lectures and class-teaching, with annual or semi-annual examinations, and definite standards by which the proficiency of the pupils can be ascertained. Others, again, have no course of study whatever. Possibly instruction of a varied nature may be guaranteed in the prospectus, or in the form of a printed circular, which announces in bold characters — "Course of Lectures for ——— Training School for 1893-4," but beyond this the education never extends.

Days and weeks lengthen into months and years—the Nurse meanwhile either becoming self-educated or not educated at all, and she ultimately receives her certificate.

Between these two extremes there are to be found an infinite variety of methods—or lack of method, as the case may be.

Again, some schools require two or three years spent in Hospital work, while others, whose income depends largely upon the money obtained by Nurses, send out their pupils to nurse in private families—often for many months in succession—the Nurse meanwhile under no supervision whatever.

Again we find Training Schools attached, not only to large and small General Hospitals, but to Children's Hospitals, Private Hospitals, Hospitals for Special Diseases, and Sanatoriums.

It naturally follows, therefore, that the practical experience gained in these different institutions, must, of necessity, be exceedingly varied both in character and amount. Strange, that after thirty-five years, so little has been accomplished in the way of organisation! For our encouragement, however, let us call to mind the fact that only eighty years ago the medical profession was in the same chaotic state, as far as the education of its members was concerned.

In the year 1815, preliminary examinations were instituted, as the first step towards uniformity. These examinations were made compulsory, and year after year new subjects introduced and higher percentages required, in order to demonstrate the fact that a liberal general education had been received, and it was not until twenty years after that the legal profession took similar steps to exclude the uneducated from its ranks.

(To be continued.)

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#### THE NURSING DIRECTORY.

IN response to many enquiries, we are requested to state that this publication is now in the press, and that the edition for 1895 will be issued very shortly. It is THE Official Directory of Nurses, and comprises only the names of those Nurses who have been registered by the Royal British Nurses' Association.

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