

## A School of Quack Nurses.

CHICAGO is a wonderful city. It produced the Great Fire, it originated and carried through the World's Fair. It also claims the credit of pig-slaying on gigantic lines. It is a city of contrasts, of beauty and ugliness, poverty and wealth, philanthropy and fraud. Its people are large-hearted and generous. Its swindles are huge and plausible. It has among other devices for deceiving the public a quack school for Nurses, a huge mill by whose machinery "frauds" are turned out wholesale to deceive the sick public and to defraud *bona fide* Nurses. The quack school rejoices in the name of the Chicago Polypathic Sanitarium, Chicago. For 10 dols. and a few months' reading of a few minor works, "a handsome diploma suitable for framing" is granted *these trained Nurses*. The circulars issued by this establishment are plausible and the methods employed—even to the production of "trained Nurses by correspondence" are interesting.

Their circulars and advertisements are plainly headed, "How to become a Trained Nurse," and the method is this: "If you would like to fit yourself for a Nurse, or desire an introduction to the study of medicine, allow us to call your attention to our *correspondence course for Nurses*, established some years ago to meet the wants of those who either could not leave home or could not gain admittance to a training school.

We have improved the course from time to time until now it is thoroughly practical and well nigh perfect.

You will see by the accompanying sheet, headed *instructions*, that the course embraces *one hundred* subjects covering the entire field of Nursing. We call the course *polypathic* because it embraces all pathies and all schools of medicine. It prepares you to nurse under a physician of any school."

It has been a time honoured proverb that there is no "royal road to learning." But here we have a very royal road to the science and art of Nursing. It is delightful news to those who are not able "to leave home," or "to gain admittance to a training school," to find they can receive a beautiful certificate without the least effort or inconvenience. Such a minor point as actually seeing one sick person is left out of the curriculum as a mere detail, and we are not astonished that the circular states: "We have daily evidence of its increasing popularity. Hundreds write us that it is just what they *want*."

The circular goes on to say:—"The regular time allotted to the course is *six months*, reading *one hour* a day. The course may be completed, however, within *three months*, or prolonged through *twelve months*, according to the progress of the student.

By the time you have completed the course you will possess a thorough *theoretical knowledge* of the *art of nursing*, and be prepared to take charge of any *case*.

We do not *promise* to secure positions for our students. But we have a private *sanitarium* of our own, and influential connections with a number of other institutions. We are *often* able to secure desirable positions for those well qualified."

This is acquiring Nursing on "easy terms," and we find a little further on that "easy payments" are also the rule of the Sanitarium.

"To be in harmony with the *hard times*, the price of the course has been reduced from 25 dols. to

almost *nothing*. The total cost to the student for books, matriculation, tuition and examinations is 7 dols., payable as follows: *Two dollars* at the beginning, and *one dollar* each month thereafter until the full amount is paid, or *one dollar* with every twentieth examination paper sent us.

An additional charge of 5 dols. is made for the *certificate*. This is not required to be paid until the course is completed.

*Ten dollars* paid at the beginning of the course will be accepted in full payment for *tuition, examinations, and diploma*; a saving of *two dollars* to the student by paying in advance."

We will now analyse the methods of the so-called examination.

We seek light from the convincing and re-assuring circular. We feel confident that a system which is so kindly arranged as to allow us to receive our "training" in the happy bosoms of our family, and which makes so little pecuniary demand upon us, will let us down very gently when it comes to examinations. And here again we find the philanthropy of the "quack-producers."

"You are examined upon each of the *one hundred* subjects as follows: You read up on a subject, for instance, *typhoid fever*. As soon as you feel that you are perfectly familiar with it, you write out on an examination paper, which we supply, what you know about *typhoid*. You do the writing in the presence of some *reliable person* who affirms over his or her own signature that you wrote, from memory alone, without any prompting from any source whatever.

Upon the receipt of your examination paper or papers, as you are at liberty to send in several at a time, we read them carefully, mark the mistakes, write your grade on each and return the sheets to you. We grade on the scale of 100. We take *off 5* for each erroneous idea found in an examination paper. We also take *off 1* for each misspelled word, and 1 for each time you neglect to place your *name, address, date* or *student* number upon your examination paper. If your grade falls *below 80* on any subject, you are required to fill out a new examination paper.

As soon as you have sent us an examination paper on each of the *one hundred* subjects, and have made a grade of 80 or more on each, we give you a *handsome certificate*, suitable for framing, stating just what you have done."

And thus the mill-wheel turns round, and "handsome certificates" are produced by the mile. In the matter of age, the projectors of the "correspondence system" allow a good deal of latitude.

"The youngest student we have ever had was only *fifteen years old*. Her grade on every subject was 100. We have one student *sixty* and another *fifty-eight*."

The student who made the most rapid progress was a lady *forty-four* years old. She kept boarders, and did all her own work. She had the disadvantage of a poor education. Her success convinced us that every woman can find time to take this course if she wishes to do so."

Another part of the circular tells us that candidates up to the age of *sixty* will be received, so that it is "never too late to become" a Nurse.

A bait of the wages to be obtained when "qualified" is also set forth, as follows:—

"Young women possessing intelligence, strength and good health cannot enter a better field than that of a *Trained Nurse*. It is about the only one that is

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